

Campus Wars: Reclaiming the Socratic Legacy

By Solon Simmons, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, ssimmon5@gmu.edu

As with most conflicts of consequence, most people know of them, while many live in ways that enable them to ignore or avoid them altogether. Such is the case with the various struggles over higher education in the United States that erupted over the past century, characterized in a turn on James Davison Hunter's phrase as the Campus Wars. These struggles are the result of persistent and perhaps natural ideological tension between professors and



Sifting and Winnowing Plaque. Courtesy of UW Madison Archives.

Commentary

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the broader community. The tension results from the relatively liberal or progressive political views of the professoriate and from its willingness to share those views. The fact that this tension only

occasionally results in overt conflict is probably more a function of emergent political opportunities than of objective changes in political orientations.

The history of the conflict is rich. Previous waves of contest produced the controversies that led to the original declaration of the principles of academic freedom by the American Association of University Professors in 1915, academic complicity and

reaction to the intrusions of the House Un-American Activities Committee of Joseph McCarthy, and the criticisms of university practice as characterized by moral confusion, victim centered activism and epistemological relativism. Today, the American university is again a kind of battleground on which rival camps struggle over new issues. The stakes in these

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ICAR Alumni Give Generously

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

Each year, ICAR alumni provide critical financial and volunteer support to show their commitment to the work of ICAR and its students, the field of conflict analysis and resolution, and the training of the next generation of professionals. These contributions are essential to the success of ICAR and demonstrate a very strong connection between the institute, its students and alumni. Bruce Engelbert and Cynthia Irmer, two such examples, have been a part of the ICAR family for more than a decade.

Bruce, a retired federal employee, worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Energy for more than 30 years in the areas of environmental management, community involvement, conflict prevention and dispute resolution. Bruce helped establish EPA's first conflict resolution program, which evolved into the EPA Office of Conflict Prevention and Resolution. He is a certified mentor-mediator in the state of Virginia and president of the Northern Virginia Mediation Service. When he graduated from the M.S. program in 1995, Bruce knew that he wanted to maintain a connection to the ICAR community. In 2005, seeing a growing need for ICAR students to attain employment and set career goals, Bruce co-taught a course focused on employment opportunities in the field of conflict resolution with his wife, Cynthia Irmer (a course still taught today).

Cynthia, who received her Ph.D. from ICAR in 2003, is a conflict prevention officer at the State Department. At State, she blends her expertise in the law with theory and practice in conflict prevention, peace building, public participation, and capacity building. Cynthia has also held senior level positions at the international consulting and

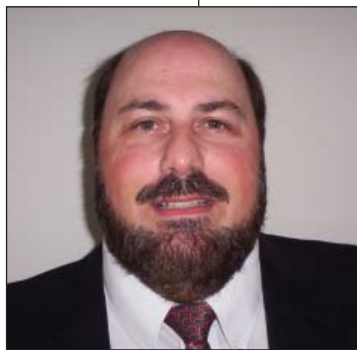


Above: ICAR Alumni Bruce Engelbert and Cynthia Irmer.

humanitarian development firm PADCO, the EPA, and Gannett Publishing, and is an adjunct professor at ICAR and George Washington University.

As donors and volunteers, Bruce and Cynthia spend many hours working for the ICAR community through teaching, organizing, volunteering and donating financial resources. "It's really about service and working together and learning together," said Bruce. "We get almost as much out of our work for ICAR as the students do. It is a constant learning environment that continues to stimulate us and our work in the field. ICAR has been a wonderful community to participate and learn from. We strongly feel that we all have something to offer one another." ■

network



Above: ICAR Alumnus Rob Scott.

Rob Scott: ICAR Board Member and Alumnus

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

Rob Scott has been involved with ICAR for more than 20 years, beginning with his enrollment in the M.S. program in 1984. Since completion of his degree in 1990, Rob has been active in the field of conflict analysis and resolution as the Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Mediation Service for over ten years and currently the Disaster Attorney and Cadre Manager in the Agency for Dispute Resolution at the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Rob has been very active in the ICAR community for nearly 10 years, playing a key role on the Board of Advisors and financially supporting the work of ICAR and its students. Believing that ICAR had given him a truly unique training experience that he could not have received in a more traditional program, Rob committed to help ICAR secure the funds needed to support its students and operations. He joined the Board of Advisors to further guide the institute and provide access to professional networks. "It is critical that we support the field of conflict analysis and resolution through our support and participation in ICAR," Rob said. "ICAR produces high quality professionals in our field. It is very rewarding to be a part of this dynamic, growing community that continues to train the next generation of professionals." ■

ICAR Launches Career Intensives

Fall 2007 Workshops Feature Development and Security

By Julie Shedd, Director, Student Services and Graduate Admissions, jshedd@gmu.edu



Above: Development Career Intensive Panelists from USAID, World Bank, Bread for the World and ARD. Photo: Julie Shedd.

initiatives

ICAR's Career Services took another step forward this year with the inauguration of a series of Career Intensives. The day long workshops help ICAR students and alumni build the skills and knowledge to successfully job search in a particular sector. The key component of the workshops is practice in framing academic and work experience and tailoring resumes and interviews toward specific career goals. The October 27 intensive focused on careers in Development. The November 17 intensive focused on Security and Intelligence careers. Planned intensives for Spring 2008 include Development, Public Policy, and Organizational Conflict.

Prior to the workshop, participants prepared resumes and cover letters and received individual feedback. Preparation extended to include preparing for mock interviews. On the day of the workshops, the participants and facilitators started the day with information on job searching and mock interviews and peer resume review. After lunch, professionals working in each sector joined the group to talk

about their particular career path and the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully land a job in that field. Breakout sessions provided students the opportunity for individual feedback from the professionals on resumes and practice with mock interviews. Said ICAR M.S. student Sandra Tavera, of the intensive: "Very appropriate and interesting! The panelists were honest but also encouraging. The organizations that were chosen gave us a really

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—SANDRA TAVERA

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These workshops, limited to 10-12 students, were developed to complement other ICAR Career Services and course options. Besides the intensives, ICAR also offers resume clinics, individual

resume reviews, employer presentations, on-campus interviewing, a March Career Fair, and a one-credit Professional Development Course focused on job skills.

Career Services is grateful to the knowledgeable and enthusiastic panelists who gave up Saturday to help ICAR students and alumni. Development panelists were James VanDenbos at USAID, Sarah Mattingly at World Bank, Asma Lateef at Bread for the World, and Donna Reed at Associates in Rural Development. Security panelists were Joe Rouge at the Department of Defense, Mary Hackman at the Department of State/Overseas Security Advisory Council, Rhian McCoy at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and Lt Col. Suzanne Devlin at Fairfax County Police Department. Thanks also to Michael Shank, ICAR's Government Relations Advisor who teamed up to develop and present these events. Dates for the Spring 2008 Intensives will be available shortly. If you are interested in attending or presenting at these intensives, please send an e-mail to icarjob@gmu.edu. ■

ICAR, Friedrich Ebert Foundation Host Transatlantic Workshop

By Richard Rubenstein, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, rrubenst@gmu.edu

EVENTS

This fall, ICAR and Germany's Friedrich Ebert Foundation co-hosted a historic meeting, the first-ever conference of European and North American experts discussing how the concepts and processes of conflict analysis and resolution (CAR) can be used to transform foreign policy.

The three-day workshop, "Partnering for Peace: Transatlantic Concepts for Conflict Resolution in Public Policy," assembled 35 conflict resolution specialists and policymakers to make recommendations on how to make CAR practices central to foreign policy formation, international diplomacy, military-civil cooperation, and international development.



Above: Friedrich Ebert Foundation's Almut Wieland-Karimi and ICAR's Richard Rubenstein. Photo: FES.

Policymakers present included Ambassador Friedrich Däuble, who is tasked with promoting conflict resolution at the German Foreign Office, Elizabeth Kvitashvili, director of USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation, and ICAR alumna Cynthia Irmer of the U.S. State Department. Ambassador Howard Wolpe, director of Woodrow Wilson Center's Africa program was as an active participant, as were Andrew Carl, director of London's Conciliation Resources, Heinz Krummenacher of Swisspeace, and Martina Fischer of Berlin's Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, to name a few. These experts engaged in intense discussions on topics ranging from the main principles of conflict transformation to the lessons of "third party" interventions, current obstacles to integrating CAR approaches into foreign policy, and best methods for overcoming those obstacles.

There was general agreement that opportunities for influencing policy are multiplying as a result of the growing recognition that military force cannot solve the problems that have generated

massive violence in areas like the Middle East and Africa, and that new problem-solving approaches are needed. It was also apparent that despite recognition of some conflict resolution techniques by U.S. federal agencies, the Europeans had moved further in this direction.

The conferees were encouraged in their efforts by Anthony Smallwood, head of public diplomacy at the Delegation of the European Commission to the U.S., who spoke at the welcoming dinner, and by Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL), who addressed the final luncheon at Hotel Washington. Workshop organizers are now discussing follow-up activities, which will likely include establishing a transatlantic network of conflict specialists and expanding discussions to include experts from Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Principal organizers of the workshop were ICAR's Richard Rubenstein and Ebert Foundation's Almut Wieland-Karimi, while logistics were handled by the Foundation's Knut Panknin and ICAR Public Policy Working Group's Kate Romanova and Gina Cerasani. ■

Upcoming ICAR Community Events

For more info on events, email jlock1@gmu.edu.

November 30: Doctoral Dissertation Defense
Robin Ericson: "Bridging Solutions to the Religious and Science Conflict Over Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research"

10:00 am-12:00 pm, Truland Bldg, Room 555

December 4: Shriver Seminar Lecture
Featured Speaker: Dr. Andrea Bartoli, Drucie French Cumbie Chair of Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Topic: International Conflict: Diplomacy and the NGO
4:30-6:00 pm, Truland Bldg, Room 555

December 6: Propsective Students Information Session
6:00-7:30 pm, Truland Bldg, Room 555
To RSVP, contact: Erin Ogilvie at eogilvie@gmu.edu or 703.993.9683

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

The Missing Two-Way Street

ICAR News Network
By Marci Moberg and Jay Moon, ICAR M.S. Students

In an effort to win hearts and minds, the Bush administration's public diplomacy initiatives in the Muslim World have failed to do either. It squandered opportunities to gain valuable insight into anti-U.S. sentiment, opting instead for a psychological operations-style campaign aimed at explaining the benefits of U.S. foreign policy to the Middle East. As Muslim opinion of the U.S. continues to plummet in the wake of Karen Hughes' resignation, the public diplomacy shop faces an uphill battle.

First, most initiatives are ethnocentric and fail to address serious issues. One disastrous example was *Hi!* magazine, which targeted teenagers in the Muslim World with articles on sand-boarding, yoga, and online dating. This assimilation approach flopped because it demonstrated a lack of connection with Muslim youth. It put the cart before the horse, attempting to win them over before understanding their interests and concerns.

Second, public diplomacy must be a two-way street. The Bush administration appears to want Muslims abroad to listen while not making an effort to listen in return. As a start, officials should poll Muslim communities abroad to gain insight into general Muslim priorities and concerns about U.S. foreign policy. These results may give officials a starting point, a sobering idea of opinion on

the ground. The administration should also send a real listening tour to the Muslim world.

This tour would not consist of apologist speeches, like Hughes' visits to the Arab world in 2006, or of prepared sound bites for Al Jazeera, but rather of serious inquiries and frank discussions conducted at the grassroots and business levels with the goal of understanding concerns. Such initiatives could reveal where policies have been misguided.



Marci Moberg is an ICAR M.S. Student.



Jay Moon is an ICAR M.S. Student.

Third, and most importantly, public diplomacy will not fix what foreign policy has broken. The Bush administration should spend less time concerned about image and wake up to the impact that unilateral U.S. foreign policy decisions had on the Muslim World in the past six years. In a 2006 interview with the Council on Foreign Relations, Hughes admitted, "policy must match public diplomacy." In Pakistan, Turkey, and Indonesia, and other Muslim countries, opinions of the U.S. are at an all-time low. Information campaigns to rally support for policies will not turn the tide. The U.S. will improve its image only by changing its policies.

The Bush administration faces a formidable but not impossible task. It should shift its focus from selling U.S. policy to the Muslim World to learning, understanding, and developing sincere dialogue with Muslims abroad. Public diplomacy efforts will not reverse anti-U.S. sentiment while foreign policies in the Middle East remain unchanged. However, if undertaken in good faith, measures such as those outlined above could alter our current disastrous course and pave the way for a new road ahead. ■

Recent ICAR Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

Bold Way Out of Kosovo Impasse

By Dennis Sandole, ICAR Professor
Financial Times, 11/21/07

A New Model for American Foreign Policy

By Richard Rubenstein, ICAR Professor, and U.S. Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL)
The Hill, 11/13/07

Pakistan Isn't Iran

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Student
USA Today, 11/13/07

Don't Thank Israel - Demand an Explanation

By Marci Moberg, ICAR M.S. Student
Richmond Times-Dispatch, 11/09/07

Tough Stand on Musharraf Critical for U.S.'s Credibility

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Student
The Hill, 11/07/07

If You Give Separatists an Inch...

By David Young, ICAR M.S. Student
Christian Science Monitor, 11/05/07

Words and Consequences

By Dennis Sandole, ICAR Professor
Washington Post, 11/04/07

Steer Concerned Celebrities Rather than Stifle Them

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Student
Financial Times, 11/01/07

When Will Darfur Mediators Learn

By Suliman Giddo, ICAR Ph.D. Student
Sudan Tribune, 10/30/07

The District's Economic Divide

By Gabriel Rojo, ICAR Ph.D. Student
Washington Post, 10/29/07

America's Push for War

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Student
International Herald Tribune, 10/28/07 ■

Silvia Susnjic

By Erin Ogilvie, Assistant Director, Student Services, Graduate Admissions, eogilvie@gmu.edu

Silvia Susnjic, an ICAR Ph.D. student, is spotlighted this month for her research on peace psychology. Susnjic first became interested in the field of conflict resolution while studying psychology at Lewis-Clark State College. Susnjic credits her advisor, who specialized in nonviolence and peace psychology, for influencing her interest. After completing her degree in psychology, she moved on to Columbia University to research conflict resolution. Now at ICAR, Susnjic says that the Institute "seemed a normal part of the sequence, a perfect program with my interests in peace and conflict resolution and the emphasis on combining research and practice."



Susnjic is currently writing her dissertation at Point of View in Mason Neck as one of three fellows residing there. Her dissertation is on historical memory of the Bosnians, Serbians and Croats and how it influences the perception of the other. Additionally, as chair of the Student and Early Career Working Group, part of the Peace Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association, Susnjic promotes a collaborative research project involving students and faculty interested in conducting multidisciplinary research in the field. "There is not enough research on historical memory as well as the relationship between psychology and conflict resolution," says Susnjic.

Reflecting on her time at ICAR, Susnjic states, "I am grateful to the entire faculty to have received a successful and inspiring education at ICAR, particularly professor Dennis Sandole. Professor Sandole gave me the strength to overcome all of the difficulties I faced in the past two years. He is a tireless mentor always encouraging me to 'shoot for the stars'. His guidance, encouragement and persistence have served to inspire these principles both in my academic and personal life."

After completing her dissertation, Susnjic would like to research and teach at a university in interdisciplinary studies or psychology. ■

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—SILVIA SUSNJIC

Min Zaw Oo

By Erin Ogilvie, Assistant Director, Student Services, Graduate Admissions, eogilvie@gmu.edu

This month, ICAR recognizes Ph.D. student Min Zaw Oo. Coming to ICAR in 2001, he first completed a M.S. degree in conflict analysis and risk-assessments of political transitions in Burma. Oo is now residing at ICAR's Point of View site in Mason Neck, Virginia, one of three Point of View Fellows completing dissertations there. He is writing his dissertation on modeling instability in political transitions and looking at various variables that influence political transitions between 1955-2006.



At the age of 14, Oo was active in Burma's pro-democracy uprising and became a dissident because of his participation. From 1998-2005, Oo served as the Director of Outreach and Strategy for the Free Burma Coalition in Washington DC where he trained over 80 Burmese activists in public relations and conflict resolution skills.

Today, Oo is an independent analyst and occasionally participates in Burma-related conferences and meetings. He has also lobbied the U.S. Congress in an effort to increase pressure on the regime and organized grass-roots activism to support the Free Burma movement.

Oo is now involved with track-two citizen diplomacy initiatives to foster reconciliation in Burma. Since 2005, Oo has been working at George Mason University as a Research and Teaching Assistant where he researched for the Political Instability Task Force, an initiative funded by the U.S. government.

Reflecting on his experience as a POV Fellow, Oo says that "Point of View is a dreamy place to mix outdoor frenzy and academic life. You have to love outdoors while writing your dissertation in order to truly appreciate the Point of View." ■

Campus Wars: Reclaiming the Socratic Legacy

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campus wars are not immediately clear to an observer. Among the complaints from vocal proponents on the right: lack of commitment to the principles of truth and objectivity, illiberalism, opposition to the canons of the western intellectual tradition, left-tilted political imbalance, excess sensitivity to the demands of minorities and women, lockstep secularism, valorization of sexual deviance, socialism, globalism, and even anti-semitism.



Solon Simmons, above, is an ICAR Professor.

In a land of big-tent politics, this breaks out as a Democratic-Republican cleavage in which victorious parties claim their spoils after hostilities have ended. This lumping leads to the admixture of odd elements and surprising coalitions. A recent meeting of right reformists at the American Enterprise Institute brought together leaders of movements with radically disparate agendas, from the abolition of campus speech codes in the spirit of the first amendment, to a project of revolutionary transformation led by a vanguard of university trustees unapologetically framed in Leninist terminology. This last feature may help make sense of campus wars activism, which derives its ends from the right, but takes its means from the playbook of the left. This is most clear in the one-man movement of David Horowitz, whose academic bill of rights is becoming familiar to lawmakers at all levels.

Reactions from within the university to these challenges are either muted or shrill. Most professors have heard little about the range of activities that may threaten their workplace, and those that have, like Stanley Katz, are tempted to avoid engagement for fear of giving the opposition attention and granting undue recognition. Others, like Michael Berube, have made mini-careers out of broadside defenses that, whatever their merits, tend to reinforce the opponents' stereotypes. While it is not clear how citizens of the university

should react to these challenges, the idea that they are of little significance and will fall under their own weight seems untenable. In a study of a random sample of 1,417 college and university professors in spring 2006, my colleague Neil Gross and I found that perceptions of threat to academic freedom among professors appear to be higher than they were among social scientists surveyed by Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens in the McCarthy era fifty years before. The sources of such threats are not entirely clear, but the finding is arresting.

Of course, in a world economy

hungry for human capital and wedded to the model of scientific knowing, there is little that could permanently derail so central an institution as American higher education, but academic skeptics should recognize the scale, depth and scope of the current wave of criticism. The fronts of the wars range from website black lists, to accreditation panels, to courtrooms, to state budget committees, to quads and classrooms, to say nothing of the airwaves and therefore the dinner tables around the nation. Some of these fronts appear to be turning against the status quo under the leadership of a cadre of cavaliers of whom Horowitz is most visible, but perhaps, least legitimate.

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Eleanor Roosevelt Student Scholarship

Known as one of the 20th Century's most influential women, Eleanor Roosevelt was an American political leader who used her influence as First Lady from 1933 to 1945 to promote the New Deal policies of her husband, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and take a prominent role as a civil rights advocate. Eleanor founded the United Nations Association of the United States in 1943 to advance support for the formation of the U.N. and was a delegate to the U.N. General Assembly in 1945, chairing the committee that drafted and approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Public service did not stop there, as Eleanor maintained a daily "My Day" column, a nationally syndicated column published from 1935 to 1962. During those years, Eleanor wrote consistently six days a week, interrupted only when her husband died, missing four days. The column appeared in ninety papers in all parts of the nation, providing Eleanor with a reading audience of 4,034,552. The column allowed Eleanor to reach millions of Americans with her views on social and political issues, current and historical events, and her private and public life.

As Eleanor debated how to continue a public role after FDR's death, the central issue was which arena would give her the stage from which she would have the most impact. "Of one thing I am sure," she wrote, "in order to be useful we must stand for the things we feel are right, and we must work for those things wherever we find ourselves. It does very little good to believe in something unless you tell your friends and associates of your beliefs."



Above: Eleanor Roosevelt. Photo: Wikipedia.

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Campus Wars: Reclaiming the Socratic Legacy

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This brings us to the heart of the matter. Today's reformers are far from benighted Luddites. They are well informed carp-ers, mobilized by concerns about the future of American higher education. Among these warriors, a deep-seated generative need manifests as defiance. They see radicals, Marxists, Islamists and feminists and even New Dealers and progressives as opponents of free inquiry and tolerance who must be opposed by all honest scholars. One critic, John Agresto, suggested that these supposed extremists are nothing more than enemies of humanism who lack the Socratic humility that looks for truth from the position of wonder. However faculty members react to this conflict, they should contest this last perspective in whatever ways they can.

The Socratic legacy is ours to claim. We are the gadflies who question authorities and take them to task in public. We are the outsiders who flaunt the orthodoxy of our own oikos system and live less than traditional lives in pursuit of truth. We are also those who stand accused by authorities as corrupters of the young and may be put to metaphorical trials on that account. We do so because, in our best moments, we love the truth and seek its beauty. We should be the modern day Socratics, but we must be sure we deserve the title. The challenge we face is to follow the model in its Delphic spirit. We must vigorously seek to know ourselves and to overthrow our excesses, so that from our position of enlightened ignorance, we can question the critics when they accuse us of intellectual despotism and play the gadfly. ■

Eleanor Roosevelt Student Scholarship

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The purpose of the Eleanor Roosevelt Student Scholarship is to inspire ICAR students to be diligent in translating and making relevant their knowledge—vis-à-vis conflict analysis and resolution—for the broader community, as Eleanor so admirably did with her column. The scholarship provides an annual monetary award to the ICAR undergraduate, certificate, M.S. or Ph.D.-level student who exemplifies best Eleanor's unstoppable commitment to public awareness-raising on issues of social, cultural and political import. The award is given to the student actively publishing articles, columns, letters or op-eds in local, regional, national or international print media. Award eligibility criteria requires that the student is analyzing local, regional, national or international conflicts from a conflict resolution perspective and publishes under their ICAR affiliation. The 2007/2008 GMU school year heralds the first issuance of the award, to be granted in May 2008. The award total is \$2000. To be eligible for consideration, students will need to submit their published pieces, printed between September 2007 and April 2008 to a select advisory committee by the end of April 2008. Notices will be sent out prior with specific submission guidelines. For further questions please contact Michael Shank at mshank@gmu.edu. ■



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