

US Transportation System Found Structurally Violent

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

For the past few years, debate has been raging among Virginia officials on how to solve the state's transportation crisis. The governor offers plans to build more roads and improve public transit. Some legislators and community activists object that the plans are too expensive and would require large tax increases. Others believe that they do not go far enough towards



Above: Drivers trapped in a traffic jam creep along slowly. Photo: Wikimedia.

establishing a long-term transportation policy. There are crucial issues missing in this discussion—issues that conflict analysis and resolution may help to illuminate.

To most in Richmond, the problem can be summed up quickly: too many automobiles on too few roads. The policies that public officials suggest reflect pressures brought to bear by a number of influential groups, including commuters who spend too much time and

money getting to work, community residents who find shopping or visiting friends a traffic-ridden ordeal, businesses trying to attract choosy employees to "gridlock city," developers seeking to extend urban and suburban settlement, environmentalists attempting to slow the pace of development, and taxpayers struggling to keep taxes down. Defined as a struggle among interest groups, the conflict seems to present a limited range of solutions: build more roads, get cars off the road via improved mass transit, ride-sharing, etc., and either raise taxes or find some other way to pay for these changes (such as "privatizing" HOV lanes and charging fees

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Army Chaplaincy Comes to ICAR

By Sara Cobb, Ph.D., ICAR Director, scobb@gmu.edu

This fall inaugurates the launch of the *US Army War College Senior Service Chaplain Fellowship Program* at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR). This fellowship is intended to expand Army Chaplaincy advisory capabilities, supporting both the field commanders in their need to understand and intervene non-violently in religious conflict, but also supporting the Army's Chaplaincy in their effort to develop curriculum and case research toward enhancing the education of Army chaplains. These twinned and layered goals, serving the needs of commanders in the field of operation, as well as serving the needs of the chaplains, who in turn serve the needs of service men and women, are the foundation of the research program for the fellowship.

This year, Chaplain Ira Houck is recipient of the *US Army War College Senior Service Chaplain Fellowship* at ICAR. Chaplain (LTC) Ira Houck is an active duty Army Chaplain; he is also an Episcopal priest, ordained in 1980, entering active duty in 1992. He is a veteran of Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, and served in Special Operations and Military Intelligence commands with duty in the Caribbean region and South America. Chaplain Houck is the author of "Developing Ministries to and with People



Above: Ira Houck is the recipient of the US Army War College Senior Service College Chaplain Fellowship. Photo courtesy of Ira Houck.

with Disabilities," (Pittsburgh Theological Seminary Doctoral dissertation, 1991).

The Army Chief of Chaplains selected Chaplain Houck to expand Chaplaincy advisory capabilities. While at ICAR, Chaplain Houck will be completing coursework to obtain a certificate in World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution. In fulfillment of one of his requirements for his fellowship, he will also be conducting research on the nature of religious conflict, towards the development of an analytic framework that could be used to support decision making in the field and geared toward reconciliation and conflict resolution. As Chaplain Houck notes, "The Chaplaincy, through application of new discoveries in behavioral science, conflict analy-

sis and resolution, human needs theory, and gestures of reconciliation and atonement, can amplify and improve the command's ability to deal with dimensions of the U.S. mission impacted by religion."

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—SARA COBB

As Director, I am delighted with the creation of this Fellowship; it opens a door for ICAR to provide frameworks for understanding the complex relationship between religion and conflict, frameworks that can positively impact the decisions of military leaders in the field, reducing violence and promoting conflict prevention. We certainly want to do all that we can to ensure that leaders, military and political alike, will have the analytic tools to be able to interrupt cycles of violence and avoid becoming, themselves, agents in conflict escalation. ■



Faculty Development Initiatives

Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings: West Bank and Liberia

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

What is the role of higher education in the midst and the aftermath of civil wars? When a majority of the most talented leave the country or are killed, or are denied access by closing borders, what is the impact on the next generation? With limited resources, is it possible to make long-term changes? These are some questions that guided my involvement, with Gene Rice, in two initiatives that focused on the role of higher education and specifically faculty development (also known as capacity building) as a sustainable intervention strategy. They took place in the West Bank and in Monrovia, Liberia.

With no doctorate-level and only a few masters-level programs in any of the dozen Palestinian universities throughout the territories, and with the closure of the borders in Gaza last year, options for access to higher education is in crisis. The leadership of Amideast, funded by USAID and the Open Society Institute, is trying to address some of this by a multi-year investment in a Palestinian Faculty Development Program. This summer they convened faculty from eleven Palestinian universities for an academic colloquia on *A Vision of Teaching Excellence*, followed the



Above: ICAR professor Sandra Cheldelin with Gene Rice in Liberia. Photo courtesy of Sandra Cheldelin.



Above: ICAR professor Sandra Cheldelin poses with Gene Rice and participants in the Palestinian West Bank. Photo courtesy of Sandra Cheldelin.

next week by our workshop on *Cultivating a Collaborative Culture*.

The second and more elaborate project was created by a partnership between the Association of American State Colleges and Universities and the University of Liberia, funded by the "Friends of Liberia." Our primary task is to help the education and government leaders develop a viable higher education system for Liberia, post-civil war. This would include the creation of three "middle colleges" to be located in rural areas of the country.

We also conducted a pilot faculty development program that, if successful, will become the foundation of a National Faculty Development Institute. The Institute is likely to be housed on the University of Liberia campus but open to faculty of all colleges, public and private.

There are a number of similar challenges facing these two countries. The growth of the student bodies is staggering. In Palestine, for example, there are approximately 130,000 students with a projection of 225,000 in

2018. The challenge of access and quality places faculty responsible for coping with these often competing tensions. With few economic resources, they are investing in human capital. This will require faculty to become and stay current with research and scholarship in their respective disciplines. Few faculty, currently, have advanced degrees. Both countries need technological infrastructures to provide access within and outside their countries.

While the evidence of trauma is palpable, the stories in Palestine are filled with themes of humiliation, sadness and anger, and a majority of the faculty, staff and students in Liberia are survivors who have witnessed atrocities. We were surprised at the resiliency present in both groups and the level of hope and optimism they maintain.

The faculty response was consistent: continue providing faculty development programs and help create structures for faculty to obtain advanced degrees and access to scholars in their fields. ■

initiatives

ICAR's Fall Welcome Dinner Chronicles 25-Year History

By Erica Soren, ICAR Events Coordinator and M.S. Student, esoren@gmu.edu

EVENTS

The Welcome Dinner this year was a huge success with 137 new students, faculty, staff, alumni, advisory board members and donors in attendance. Guests were officially welcomed by the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) Director Sara Cobb after a social session of



Above: ICAR professor Dennis Sandole shares insights on the Institute's founding. Photo: Amanda Martin.

light hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Sadly, this is Sara's last year here at ICAR. She eloquently and appropriately used the dinner as a forum to reflect on her time here as the director of the Institute. Her comments were heartfelt and spot on for the occasion. She incorporated the faculty in her address to provide an overview of the evolution of the Institute, from its inception to the present. Comments were made by Professors Dennis Sandole, Kevin Avruch, Rich Rubenstein, Sandra Cheldelin, and Terrence Lyons.

Dr. Chris Shoemaker, Vice President of Strategy at MPRI and a proud member of our Advisory Board, was our featured speaker this year. His speech, entitled "Conflict Resolution: Up Close and Personal," focused primarily on the meaning and importance of institutions to analyze conflict. "Conflict Resolution at the most basic level is about relationships with people," Shoemaker said. He deftly illustrated how important humor can be in resolving conflict with a personal story from his experience as a mediator in Bosnia. He proceeded with five major points. First, it is essential to understand the nature of conflict. Second, direct personal contact is key in resolving conflict. Third, find common ground and expect the unexpected. Fourth, build institutions that mitigate and subdue conflict. Fifth, conflict can be analyzed, it can be resolved, but it takes patience, persistence and professionalism to do it.

The evening closed with the awarding of several scholarships presented by Dennis Sandole, Julie Shedd and Michael Shank. The award recipients included M.S. student Terra Tolley for the



Above: ICAR Ph.D. candidates Saira Yamin and Martha Mutisi. Photo: Amanda Martin.

Adrian St. John Scholarship, Ph.D. student Yves-Renee Jennings for the *Alumni Scholarship*, Ph.D. student Tetsushi Ogata for the *Truk Family Scholarship*, Ph.D. student Mohammed Cherkaoui for the *James H. Laue Memorial Scholarship*, M.S. student Monica Flores for the *Brenda Rubenstein Award*, Ph.D. student Samuel Rizk for the *Faculty Scholarship*, Ph.D. student Ekaterina Romanova for the *John Burton Scholarship*, Ph.D. students Gina M. Cerasani and Jana El Horr for the *Mary Lynn Boland Award*, and Ph.D. student Saira Yamin for the *Eleanor Roosevelt Student Scholarship*. Congratulations to all of the award recipients. ■



Above: [From left to right] ICAR visiting scholar Dean Pruitt, ICAR professor Dennis Sandole, France J. Pruitt, and ICAR director Sara Cobb. Photo: Amanda Martin.

Upcoming ICAR Community Events

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

October 18: AmenPeace Concert and Film Screening

Sponsored by the Center for World Religions,
Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at ICAR

7:00-10:00 pm, Original Building, Room 329

October 28: Discussion with ICAR's Visiting Scholar

Noelle McAfee on New Research Projects

4:30-6:00 pm, Truland Building, Room 555

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

Gazette Article on ICAR

CAR Boasts Two Fulbright Scholars

By Nick Walker, Mason Gazette Writer

Published 08/25/08, Mason Gazette

The number of Mason scholars winning the Fulbright award continues to increase. One Mason scholar was selected in 2006 and three in 2007. One Fulbright winner is Nicole Goodrich, a current Ph.D. student in Mason's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR). She will travel to Sierra Leone to perform field research for her dissertation and volunteer work for two NGOs. Leaving in September, she expects to be there through next June.

"I'll be looking at gender violence during the civil war there and trying to determine predictors of the use of sexual violence in a civil-political war context. I hope to interview male and female survivors of the war—both perpetrators and survivors of sexual violence—and listen to their commonalities."

Goodrich will also be volunteering for NGOs in the cities of Freetown and Bo, where there is a lack of medical care for women who have genital injuries resulting from childbirth or sexual violence. "I'll also travel around the community; try to build relationships and trust. I know there will be days that will be challenging, but I'm looking forward to it." Goodrich has master's degrees in international peace and conflict resolution and in social science education. She previously taught public school in Atlanta's inner city.

In January, Idil Izmirlı will be traveling to Crimea, Ukraine, on her Fulbright scholarship. In addition to winning the scholarship, which she applied for independently, Izmirlı is also the recipient of the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Award for 2008-09.

Izmirlı, M.A. Sociology '99, is currently working on a Ph.D. through ICAR. In Ukraine, she will be closely watching the ongoing Russian conflict with Georgia in addition to attending to her regional research on the peninsula. "With the recent Russian attack, the Ukraine is in danger too," Izmirlı says. "I'll be investigating the dynamics of the conflict, especially in Crimea, which differs from the overall Ukraine." Over the past five years, Izmirlı has conducted research and taught courses in Crimea. In 2005-06, Izmirlı was awarded the International Research and Exchange Board Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Grant.

In addition to teaching, Izmirlı has collaborated with Crimean local and regional NGOs to lead workshops on media, culture, and immigration in the Ukraine. Some of her work is featured in the book *Migration, Homeland and Belonging in Eurasia* by Cynthia J. Buckley and Blair Ruble. ■

Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds and Letters

A Whole, Different View

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate, and U.S.

Representative Danny Davis (D-III.)

The Hill, 09/30/08

Cyprus Could Learn from Malta

By Alfred Farrugia, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate

Famagusta Gazette, 09/19/08

Energy Is at the Heart of Many Recent Conflicts

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate

Richmond Times-Dispatch, 09/16/08

The Omar El-Bashir Indictment: A Precedent for Global Accountability?

By Danny Kaysi, CAR Undergraduate Student

Daily Star Egypt, 09/14/08

Obama, McCain Don't Grasp Roots of Pakistan's Instability

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate

The Hill, 09/12/08

US Airstrike in Pakistan

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate

New York Times, 09/10/08

Congress Must Extend Tax Credits for Renewable and Efficient Sources

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate, and U.S.

Representative Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)

The Hill, 09/10/08

Crime and the Economy are Directly Related

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate

Financial Times, 09/05/08

Drill Here, Drill Now? No: Sustainability Lies Elsewhere

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate, and U.S.

Representative Jim Moran (D-VA)

Richmond Times-Dispatch, 08/30/08

Khadidiatou Lusby

By Lisa Shaw, CAR Undergraduate Student Services Coordinator, lshaw2@gmu.edu

As a native of Senegal, Khadidiatou (Khady) Lusby was drawn to the CAR Undergraduate Program by a combination of factors. As a student and



young adult working in rural Senegal, Khady was exposed to conflicts revolving around ethnicity, language, religion and gender. Prior to entering Mason in 2006, Khady conducted fieldwork with the National Census Bureau in Senegal teaching couples about family planning in rural areas. During her fieldwork, Khady developed strategies to conduct dialogues between men and women regarding the use of family planning as an acceptable practice in their culture. She also had similar experiences working with the World Bank and USAID.

Another factor in her decision to join the CAR Program was Khady's admiration of her father, a respected community leader who had the gift of transforming spiraling and intractable conflicts between individuals or families into works of progress leading to reconciliation. When she came across the CAR program during her transfer orientation, she found the program to be a perfect fit for her academic and personal interests.

In addition to her coursework, Khady is also involved in leading and organizing a variety of development projects in her hometown of Nioro du Rip. In response to the lack of economic opportunities and the recognition that youth from the region are leaving the area, Khady and her family have created the Nioro Agribusiness Development Project to enable women of the community to grow watermelons and other crops and to use the proceeds to support their children and families. To make the project sustainable, Khady and her husband are reaching out to community organizations in the U.S. to help provide funding to build a wall around the land and an irrigation system and also to provide some basic agricultural tools and new seed varieties.

Khady's unique experience, maturity, and leadership abilities were instrumental in her being chosen as one of twenty undergraduate students selected to participate in the Mason Fall 2008. ■

Sarah Herschler

By Zoe Rose, ICAR Graduate Admissions Assistant and M.S. Student, zrose@gmu.edu

First-year ICAR M.S. student Sarah Herschler is eager to understand what it is about our society that makes people so stressed. Her interest in



human behavior stems from her father's study of psychology. Following his footsteps, Sarah started as a psychology major at George Mason, but quickly changed it when she discovered sociology.

Sarah began to connect the dots between personal problems of the individual and collective problems of the society and was able to use this "systems thinking" to tackle societal issues. As an undergraduate minoring in conflict analysis and resolution, Sarah soon realized the usefulness of conflict theories when the tragedy at Virginia Tech struck.

During discussions in Dr. Wallace Warfield's CONF 300 class, Sarah was concerned about the media's focus solely on Cho's psychology. Instead of separating Cho from the rest of society, Sarah wanted to explore whether the community at large

was responsible. She had little doubt that Cho's horrible and tragic decisions were a cornered response to stress, noting that the campus culture and community could have been more inclusive. Taking the college step can be overwhelming to some students, and feeling connected to the student body is crucial in establishing a peaceful environment. Sarah believes this can be achieved through dialogue, reaching out to fellow students to work

through tough issues. In order to be what her peers needed, Sarah understood the importance of having confidence and skills to facilitate group conversation. That's when she found ICAR's program. Sarah realized that conflict analysis was a way of thinking and a toolset she wanted in her life and career. Avid to facilitate in the future, Sarah believes our society needs people who will use dialogue to move toward facing conflict instead of avoiding it. ■

“Taking the college step can be overwhelming to some students and feeling connected to the student body is crucial in establishing a peaceful environment.”
—SARAH HERSCHLER

icar spotlight

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for their use). The assumption common to all proposed policies is that our transportation system will rely primarily on private automobiles operated and paid for by their owners.



Richard E. Rubenstein is an ICAR and University Professor.

But take a look at the true dimensions of the transportation crisis. For starters, consider the commuting problem. Washington D.C. is tied with Los Angeles and Chicago for longest average time spent getting to and from work. It is not unusual for commuters to spend two hours or more each day inching through traffic. This is no mere inconvenience for workers in our region and other metropolitan areas; it represents a substantial and increasing decline in their standard of living.

When U.S. employers and the Bureau of Labor Statistics announce average worker wages, they count only the hours spent at the job site. Once, U.S. labor unions demanded "portal to portal" pay on the theory that their members were actually working for the employer's benefit from the time they left for work until they returned home. After World War II, they were forced to abandon the fight. The result: as commuting time increases, which it continues to do, the income of working people (per unit of real time worked) decreases substantially. How people would scream if their employers suddenly announced a five percent cut in income. But a mere increase of 15 minutes per trip, to and from the job, has exactly the same effect. And this does not factor in skyrocketing fuel prices and auto repairs, or the fact that policing, maintenance, and construction of new highways comes out of the same worker's pocket—as a taxpayer.

Now let us add another element rarely discussed in debates about commuting: the incredible carnage on our highways. Each year, 40,000-50,000 Americans—almost as many killed in the Vietnam War—die in traffic accidents. Each year, the number of those seriously maimed or injured exceeds 300,000. The neurology wards of our hospitals are filled with brain-damaged victims of auto accidents. "Motor

vehicle injuries are the leading cause of death and acquired disability for children after age one," says the Center for Injury Research and Prevention. They are the leading cause of death and disability for young adults. The National Transportation Safety Administration estimates the total costs of this legalized butchery at \$150 billion per year—and this says nothing about the price paid in

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Palestinian, Israeli Peacemakers at ICAR

By Natalie Baum, ICAR M.S. Student and CRDC Intern, nbaum@gmu.edu

With wisdom beyond their physical years, Eliyahu and Ghassan, arm-in-arm, rocked in unison. Their self-made music, preserved in the depths of their soul, tapped and floated about the room elucidating the experience for us all. It seemed only at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR), protected within the walls of academia, could this free flow of heart-to-heart disclosure be witnessed. But no, Eliyahu McLean and Ghassan Manasra, Jew and Arab respectively, effect change through human connection throughout Israel, Palestine, and the world. Their repertoires of successful peacebuilding accomplishments confirm that not only within the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution does this magic unfold.

Eliyahu McClean is the director of Jerusalem Peacemakers, a network of religious leaders and grassroots peacebuilders in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Ghassan Manasra is the director of the Islamic Cultural Center in Nazareth, a center promoting tolerance and interfaith dialogue. Eliyahu is a leader in such bridge-building projects as the Abrahamic Reunion, the annual "On the Way to Sulha" initiative (the most recent gathering on August 26-28 brought together over 3,000 people) and monthly inter-religious, Israeli-Palestinian peace gatherings in East and West Jerusalem. Ghassan is an M.A. student in Islamic Studies from the Hebrew University and a Fulbright scholar who will be teaching at the Catholic University in Washington D.C. this fall. Eliyahu McClean and Ghassan Manasra spoke about the grassroots peace processes between Israel and Palestine at ICAR on September 10th. The event was hosted by the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution. ■



Above: [From left to right] ICAR Professor Marc Gopin speaks with Ghassan Manasra and Eliyahu McClean. Photo courtesy of Natalie Baum.

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human suffering and destroyed families.

Conflict theorists describe systems like these as structurally violent. Johan Galtung, who coined the phrase, described it as the result of social structures which empower a few groups and disempower most others. The transportation system based on the private automobile is essentially irrational: private cars promise freedom, efficiency, comfort, mobility, and a higher standard of living, but when used in the world of commuting, business travel, necessary shopping, and getting to school, they deliver death and destruction, a lower standard of living, decreasing mobility, and a mind-numbing enslavement to the traffic jam.

How do we solve this deeply destructive form of social life? Some might say that the problem is insoluble, given the enormous private investments committed to automobile manufacturing, sales and repairs, petroleum companies and gas stations, highway construction, and related industries. But the sense that there is no possible alternative to the way our economy and social lives are currently organized is what keeps us trapped in an irrational, increasingly destructive system. It is also what leads us to misconceive social conflict and the possibilities of conflict resolution.

The "transportation-industrial complex" does not appear directly as a party to the debate in Richmond, but it is a party to the real social conflict over transportation, which (like

intense current conflicts over energy production, financial institutions, and the military-industrial complex) pits powerful, entrenched private interests against emerging public needs and demands. This conflict cannot be resolved by building new roads or by improving the public transit system. Its solution may well require reconceptualizing and converting our privatized transportation system to one in which transportation for public purposes (including shopping and getting to work) is provided primarily by public facilities, while private cars are used for recreation and pleasure.

Whatever shape the ultimate solution may take, it seems that building more roads, while private automobile use increases, and creating new public transit facilities, while Metro ticket prices soar, won't solve the real transportation crisis. What is needed are regional and national discussions, including all stakeholders, of what the alternatives to the current system are, what they would cost, and how to distribute those costs. Such dialogues could be facilitated by conflict resolution experts who are increasingly interested in helping people deal with structural conflicts. To convince political leaders to take a deeper and more inclusive view of the conflict when they are accustomed to dealing with more visible and (apparently) manageable interest group disputes is not an easy task. But the ultimate health of our society, on and off the highways, depends upon it. ■



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