



 **HARVARD Kennedy School**
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL REVIEW

ISSUE 10, 2009–2010

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EDITORS' FOREWORD

The tenth anniversary edition of the Harvard Kennedy School Review presents a collection of pieces that push policy debate forward. As a publication that is entirely student-run, our intention is to showcase fresh and engaging policy analyses and proposals by the world's future leaders. From aid to alliances and human rights to tweets, we've compiled a set of thoughtful and well-researched policy articles that advance the debate on some of the most relevant issues facing policy makers throughout the world.

Our feature section, "Unlikely Leaders," highlights individuals and institutions exercising leadership in incredible circumstances. The article on health care leadership in Haiti shines a positive light on a successful pay-for-performance model in a nation now rubble-strewn and grief-stricken. We also focus on the military's efforts and exceptionalism in "going green" and on one woman's fight to access rights for the disabled in Russia. In each of these stories, we look to extrapolate beyond what these "unlikely leaders" have accomplished and explore how their successes can be applied elsewhere.

Our section on "Health Care and Social Welfare" includes a broad assortment of policy ideas ranging from effective treatment of malaria in Africa to settlement of Iraqi refugees in the United States. Particularly timely is an investigation of how to make welfare work during a recession as well as a reflection on the rural poor who have been largely excluded from the domestic health care debate. In our "Media and Technology" articles, we examine Al Jazeera English and transparency in today's media.

And in the "Governance" and "Security Challenges" sections, we turn to national and international issues of effectiveness in politics and methods for dealing with crime and insecurity. Narcotesting in India, patronage in Latin America, and racism in Australia are just a few of the topics that make up these sections. Together, this part of the journal communicates both the promises of good government and the perils of security threats around the globe.

We hope both current and future policy makers will be inspired by stories of leadership, see new ways to tackle tough public policy problems, and get a glimpse of what the next generation of policy makers is thinking about.

We would like to acknowledge the support of the following individuals and organizations in helping us put together this year's Harvard Kennedy School Review: John F. Kennedy School of Government Dean David Ellwood, Faculty Advisor Richard Parker, Publisher Martha Foley, Dan Okrent, Bill Mitchell, and Rod Kramer. For their financial support, we would like to thank: the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy; the Kennedy School Student Government; the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education Program; the Taubman Center for State and Local Government; the Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston; the Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy; and the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government.

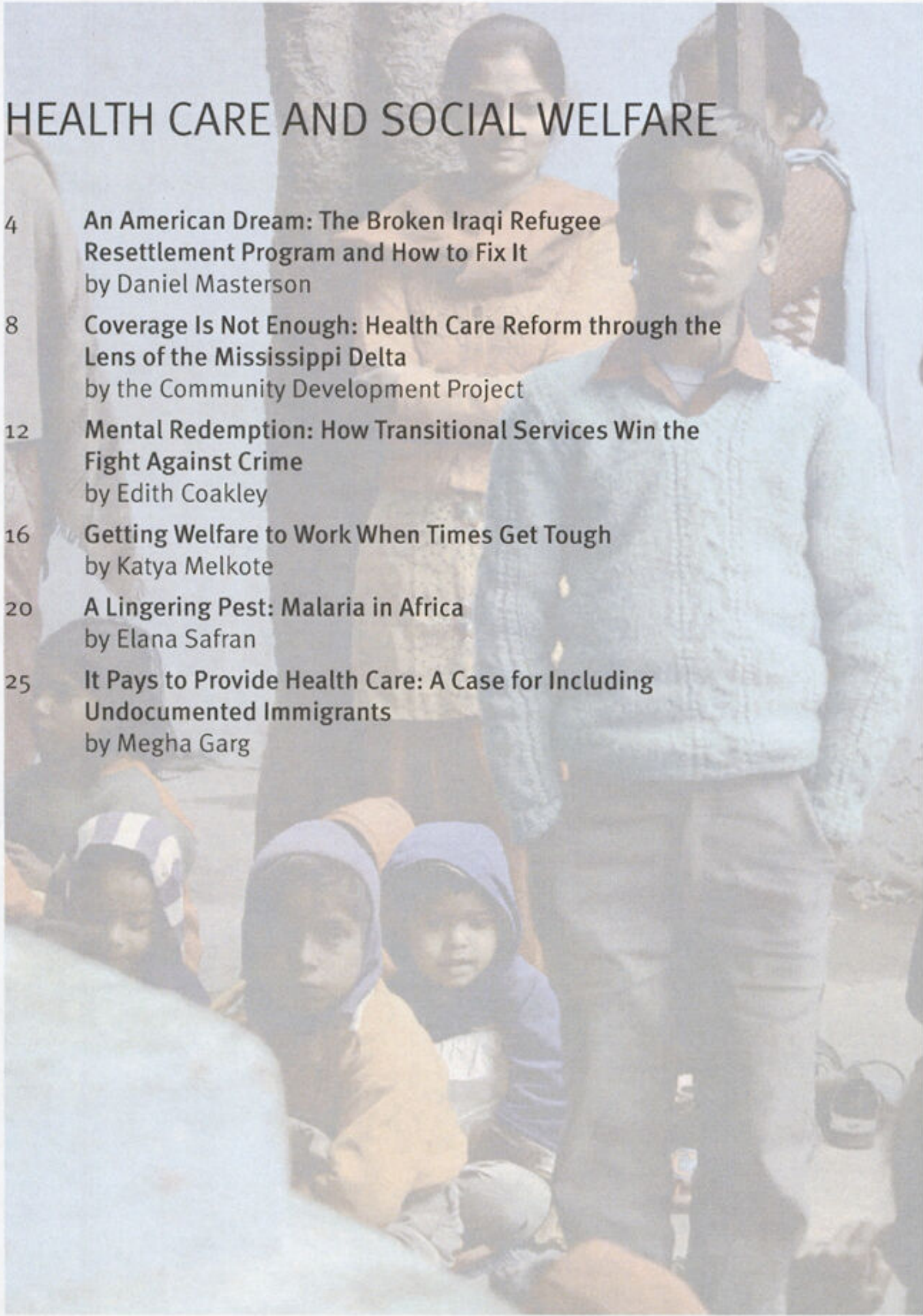
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An American Dream: The Broken Iraqi Refugee Resettlement Program and How to Fix It

by Daniel Masterson

Daniel Masterson is the founding executive director of A Plate for All, a food-aid organization working in underserved communities of Iraqi refugees in Syria. He previously worked for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in Syria and is currently completing a Master in Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

“They are no longer in their homeland, but their homeland is still in them.”

— Arabic proverb

Ali was kidnapped and tortured by a militia in Iraq. Armed men broke into his house. His son, who was only one-year-old at the time, still remembers the incident. They hung Ali from the ceiling with his arms behind his back. Once Ali was released, he fled Iraq. The family lived as refugees in Syria for two years before being resettled to Philadelphia as part of the U.S. resettlement program.

One summer morning when Ali was riding his bicycle in Philadelphia, he got lost. He soon found himself on a large road and couldn't turn around. Then the large road fed onto the interstate highway. Ali was approaching the bridge to New Jersey when the police pulled him over. They started yelling at him. Terrified and disoriented, Ali couldn't understand the policemen's questions and he was arrested. After a few hours, he was released with a court summons and driven home at 9 p.m.

For riding his bike on a U.S. interstate highway, Ali faced a fine or jail time. It took two months of court proceedings before his case was resolved and dismissed. A simple misunderstanding had translated into a deeply unsettling and frightening experience for a family of new Americans.

The refugee resettlement program in the United States is operative but in dire need of attention. Refugee advocacy groups are calling for an increase in the number of refugees that the United States accepts. These groups, however, do not fully appreciate the problems that insufficiently funded programs create for refugees resettled in America.

Policy makers have two approaches in addressing the present weaknesses of the resettlement program. The first is to increase both the funding and (possibly) the number of refugees resettled to the United States. The second, in the case of no budget increase, is to reduce the number of resettlements and thus ensure that targeted, comprehensive, and long-term resettlement support programs can be implemented.



Iraqi children crowd into the already overpopulated Syrian school system. (Bridgette Auger, 2008)

THE NEED FOR RESETTLEMENT

The majority of the public voices talking about the problems facing Iraqi refugees are calling for a larger resettlement program. Large resettlement programs, however, are not a viable policy solution. Resettlement often moves refugees from a relatively familiar cultural context to a foreign environment. Without adequate support for adjustment to their new home, Iraqi refugees may face far greater challenges when resettled in the United States as compared to Syria or Jordan or upon returning to Iraq after a number of years.

The UN Refugee Agency (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees—UNHCR) provides a prioritization of policy responses to refugee crises. The first and best solution is for refugees to eventually return to their home country. Once turmoil has calmed, the best prospects for refugees will come from widespread repatriation. Second, local integration in a nearby host country often provides refugees the opportunity to make a new home in a relatively familiar

context. Third, and least desirable, comes resettlement to what the UNHCR calls a third country—a country that provides the refugee with legal and physical protection. This option is only appropriate for a few uniquely vulnerable cases: victims of severe trauma or violence, members of oppressed religious or ethnic minorities, unaccompanied children, special medical cases, stateless persons, refugees associated with governmental or international organizations, and refugees at immediate risk of refoulement, which in refugee policy parlance means forced return to a place where their lives or freedoms may be threatened.

The Iraqi refugee crisis began in February 2006. The bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samara, one of Shiite Islam's holiest sites, initiated a deadly exchange of sectarian violence. Dozens of Sunni mosques were attacked, the death toll mounted, and millions of Iraqis fled their homes. Many traveled to Syria or Jordan, and others relocated within Iraq—the former are called refugees and the latter internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Now, more than four years later, UNHCR estimates that there are at least 1.9 million Iraqi refugees and 2.6 million IDPs in total. UNHCR data estimates that as of 2009 only 25,000 refugees had repatriated—a meager 1.25 percent return rate. UNHCR's official position is that repatriation is still unsafe, and many Iraqis feel the same.

RESETTLEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

The process of resettlement to the United States begins abroad, when refugees register with UNHCR in the country where they have sought refuge. UNHCR then refers vulnerable cases to the U.S. embassy for resettlement. Applicants go through a long process involving paperwork, interviews, and waiting before they receive final word on whether they have been successful in their attempt at resettlement. For those accepted for resettlement, hopes are high for a new life.

Upwards of 30,000 Iraqi refugees have been resettled in the United States since the war began—around 17,000 of those in

2009 alone. The needs, however, of those refugees often go unmet.

Iraqi refugees are being resettled with a level of financial assistance below the U.S. poverty line. The U.S. government purchases plane tickets for refugees to travel to America. The cost of these tickets is considered a no-interest loan owed to the government. For a large family, this can easily result in \$10,000 or \$20,000 of debt. Refugees are given an apartment or house with basic furniture and household items, food staples, a hot meal, and a one-time payment of \$450 from the federal government. They are provided eighty days of free health insurance and a thirty-to-ninety-day period of assistance with finding a job, scheduling medical appointments, and enrolling in school. Some service agencies allow temporary extensions of assistance based on conditions such as enrollment in a job-training program.

Iraqis are often shocked by the challenges they face in America. Nadia Barclay of the Nationalities Service Center in Philadelphia explains that refugees encounter many challenges after settling

This is a one-room rented apartment in Damascus, Syria, where a family of Iraqi refugees live. All they own is a TV and the mattresses that UNHCR provides them. (Bridgette Auger, 2008)



in the United States. Recent arrivals are usually “excited, happy, and hopeful,” but life quickly becomes difficult when government support runs out. The two central challenges to smooth resettlement are language and employment. Those who don’t speak English well, or at all, have a hard time finding a job. While searching for a job, refugees often do not have time to attend language classes.

The challenges of resettling in the United States transcend socioeconomic boundaries. Some Iraqi refugees are widowed mothers with little work experience. Others are well-educated, licensed professionals such as lawyers and doctors. No matter their background, many find that even entry-level positions are elusive. Especially in the economic downturn, many Iraqis cannot find work. According to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), until mid-2008 about 80 percent of refugees assisted by IRC found jobs within six months of resettlement. Now it’s less than 50 percent.

REFORMING THE SYSTEM

The failure to provide sufficient resources for the Iraqis already resettled in the United States raises doubts about the wisdom of further increasing the number of resettlements per year. Without reform, the U.S. refugee resettlement program will only strain the social services system and make life in America more challenging for the very people it is trying to assist.

The Obama administration is currently working to improve the resettlement process. Samantha Power, Anna Lindh Professor of Practice of Global Leadership and Public Policy based at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, is coordinating

the reform efforts of U.S. government agencies related to Iraqi refugees and IDPs. Based on the information presented above, these reforms should include:

1. Increasing the amount of resettlement funding per refugee. This could mean much more funding and more refugees per year, or it may mean decreasing the annual number resettled while improving the quality of programming for those refugees. Considering President Barack Obama’s proposed discretionary-spending freeze starting in FY2011, the latter option is more realistic.
2. Coordinating efforts with local resettlement agencies to identify Iraqis who are most vulnerable to hardship in the United States and focusing additional recourses on their cases.
3. Increasing orientation and educational programs for Iraqis before and after resettlement with the aim of increasing the probability that refugees integrate and succeed in America.
4. Regularizing the number of Iraqi resettlements per month per region. This allows social service agencies to adjust their staffing, programming, and funding to a regular client flow. Without sudden spikes and drops in clientele, service agencies will be more effective in achieving goals one through three.

With these reform measures, the U.S. refugee resettlement program can pursue a mandate to help refugees lead a life of dignity in their new home.

Coverage Is Not Enough: Health Care Reform through the Lens of the Mississippi Delta

*by Alice Abrokwa, Amy Chan, and
Morna Ha for the Community
Development Project*

The Community Development Project is a diverse group of graduate students that seeks to harness the academic and professional resources of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to facilitate civic engagement in economic development projects in underserved communities.

Alice Abrokwa is a second-year Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a first-year law student at Harvard Law. Amy Chan is a first-year Master in Public Policy candidate concentrating in social and urban policy. Morna Ha is a second-year Master in Public Policy candidate concentrating in democracy, politics, and institutions.

A health care professional herself, Mary'sⁱ own obesity and diabetes have prevented her from making it to work on many days.

ⁱ In order to protect the privacy of residents, Mary is a fictional name and represents the stories of several individuals in the Baptist Town neighborhood of Greenwood, Mississippi.

When she feels strong enough to leave the house, she must rely on her daughter for transportation. Healthy, fresh foods are difficult to come by, and although there have been attempts to provide food vouchers to elderly residents for purchasing food at the farmer's market, these efforts haven't reached residents like Mary, who is in her early fifties. Mary represents many of the residents of Baptist Town—a low-income, African American neighborhood of roughly one-hundred households within the city of Greenwood, Mississippi. Baptist Town residents like Mary struggle with long-term illnesses without the benefit of accessible and affordable health care.

Despite the fact that Mississippi and eight other Southern states are among the ten least healthy states in the country, the needs of residents like Mary have received little attention. From public town halls to the floors of Congress, the conversation on national health care reform has primarily centered on coverage and benefits for middle-class America, with little critical discussion of the unique issues faced by underprivileged rural communities like Baptist Town.

The mission of the Community Development Project (CDP), a group of mostly Harvard University graduate students, is to empower underserved communities to drive community and economic development initiatives. CDP has actively sought to shed light on an area of the United States that is often left out of national dialogues. CDP has worked with Greenwood residents for the past two years to improve the quality of life within Baptist Town and the city of Greenwood. Through regular visits to Greenwood and the provision of consulting services from Cambridge, Massachusetts, CDP seeks to harness the



Visitors crossing the railroad tracks into the Baptist Town community in Greenwood, Mississippi, are greeted by the "Home of the Blues" sign. Baptist Town illuminates some of the challenges faced by rural, low-income communities.

academic and professional resources of Harvard University in order to support residents, community organizations, and government leaders in Greenwood to work together toward the goal of economic development.

Through our work, CDP has identified three primary challenges in Baptist Town that must be addressed in order for national health care reforms to have meaningful impact here and in many other rural, low-income communities. These are the challenges of poverty, geographic isolation, and education.

POVERTY

Pervasive poverty in the face of high costs is the largest barrier to health care in the Delta. U.S. Census data from 2000 points to 28 percent of families in Greenwood living below the poverty level, compared to an average 9.2 percent nationally. In the wider area of the Mississippi Delta, nearly 20 percent of the residents sampled in the region-wide Delta Rural Poll were unable to make a necessary doctor's visit at least once in the previous year due to prohibitive costs. The problem of deep poverty and high costs can be cyclical; without regular checkups, poor health impacts the ability of residents to support their incomes, leaving some less able to afford the doctor's visits they need. Of fifty Baptist Town households interviewed in January 2009, nearly one out of every

five reported to CDP that they were disabled or otherwise unable to work due to health concerns. Some of the households we surveyed earn as little as \$7,000 a year and are unable to afford basic preventative health care, like shopping at the farmer's market in downtown Greenwood instead of the less-expensive Save-A-Lot from which many Baptist Town residents buy their groceries.

GEOGRAPHIC ISOLATION

In addition, Baptist Town's geographic isolation is the difference for many residents between being able to access necessary medical care and growing ill alone. The neighborhood is curtailed off from the rest of Greenwood by a set of railroad tracks and a body of water. Even for those able to finance their health care, lack of transportation is a major barrier to visiting doctors, specialized care centers, pharmacies, and grocery stores.

Due to limited financial resources, only half of the Baptist Town residents surveyed by CDP in January 2009 had immediate access to transportation. The lack of ready access to transportation for these residents is a particularly pressing problem for the immobile senior citizens who live in Baptist Town, some of whom live alone. When more than 44 percent of those surveyed in the Delta Rural Poll need to travel more than 30 miles each way to receive specialized health care, the lack of transportation may be an overwhelming barrier for low-income residents.

EDUCATION

Access to quality education is not only correlated with better health and higher incomes, but is also crucial to equipping residents with the ability to understand

and advocate for their own health needs. For Delta residents, however, information about routine and preventative health care is not widely available.

As in many small towns in the Delta, more than one in three Greenwood residents twenty-five years and older did not have a high school diploma, compared to less than one in five nationally in the 2000 U.S. Census. Access to health education can be elusive, especially since Mississippi had the lowest percentage of high school graduates of any U.S. state in the 2000 U.S. Census.

As the national debate over health care continues, Baptist Town and other neighborhoods in rural communities deserve serious attention as examples of places where poverty, geographic isolation, and education are great barriers that have contributed to their downward health trends. Resources must be allocated to address these challenges. Specifically:

- Federal funding for prevention and wellness services should be prioritized for rural communities. The city of Greenwood will be receiving a federal Healthy Communities grant to fund community gardens that can increase access to healthy foods in the region, but additional funding needs to be prioritized to Greenwood and other rural communities for programs and services that focus on prevention strategies.
- States that receive federal funding should expand school-based health care centers and mobile clinics to address the transportation barrier that rural residents face when seeking health care. School-based centers can reach the youngest residents of the

Delta, and mobile health clinics can reach the adult population. There are already some successful programs, like the University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Nursing's mobile clinic program, that could be used as a model for other schools and teaching institutions to follow.

- Both service delivery and comprehensive health education should be expanded through partnerships with nontraditional providers, including churches, local businesses, and other community institutions. These types of partnerships can fully integrate the medical expertise of traditional providers with the social network of community organizations. This is especially important for reaching youth who do not have access to school-based centers. There is already some collaboration taking place in Baptist Town. The local churches invited health experts to speak about healthy lifestyles to participants of their Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrations. There is great potential to solidify these informal collaborations into effective, ongoing partnerships.

Recently, five top medical professionals from Iran traveled to the Mississippi Delta to share lessons learned from a model credited with significantly reducing child mortality rates in rural Iran. The eagerness of citizens of a country almost nine-thousand miles away from Mississippi to help the region should be a wake-up call to policy makers in our own country.

In allocating resources for national health care reform, policy makers must recognize the importance of prioritizing our nation's most disadvantaged citizens.

We cannot afford to overlook the statistics that point to the rural South—and particularly the Mississippi Delta—as a region that is disproportionately under resourced and burdened by chronic illnesses and disabilities. Only by prioritizing these communities can we begin to reverse some of the worst health trends in the country.

Mental Redemption: How Transitional Services Win the Fight Against Crime

by Edith Coakley

Edith Coakley, a Master in Public Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, is a UK-trained lawyer with a special interest in mental health and disability policy. She is a member of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law's Leadership 21 Initiative, a national group of young leaders in the field of mental health.

When the day arrives, the papers are signed, you are given your belongings, and the gate finally swings open. This day, there is now relief from the daily drudgery of prison life, from confinement, from waiting. You sling your bag on your shoulder and take the first steps back into the world. What you do next is not so obvious. Do you find a phone (and whom do you call)? Where will you live? Do you look for a supermarket? A bank? A place to buy a car?

And there's another problem. Your blister pack of Risperidal is in your jacket pocket, and you take three milligrams twice a day. You were first diagnosed with schizophrenia long before you were convicted, but you went on and off medication as you moved around the country, in and out of stable housing.

However, in prison you had a psychiatrist and couldn't move on, so you let the doctor try different medications, willing yourself through the nausea, dry mouth, and nightmares.

Now you are fifteen pounds heavier than before—the clothes in your bag don't even fit—and the Risperidal makes you drowsy, so you sometimes need to sleep during the day. But you know the medication also means you don't hear the voices. Sometimes you don't feel like yourself—least of all today—but you have learned that you have an illness, something you can't help, but something real. You can get on, with your meds and someone to talk to from time to time, but, you think as you wait for the bus, you know you will need extra help this time if you're going to make it in the world.

MENTAL ILLNESS AND THE U.S. PRISON SYSTEM

Roughly 16 percent of the 2.4 million prisoners in the United States have a mental illness serious enough to act as a barrier to self sufficiency, according to a report from the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. According to a U.S. Department of Justice study in 2006, at least another 30 percent of prisoners display symptoms sufficient to warrant some type of clinical mental health diagnosis. And mental health problems really matter after the prison gate swings open; within eighteen months of release, no less than 64 percent of those with clinical diagnoses are re-arrested, more than double the re-arrest rate for prisoners at large.

Regardless of our attitude toward offenders, there is little question that the incarcerated mentally ill population is crippling expensive for increasingly cash-strapped local, state, and federal

governments. It now costs somewhere in the neighborhood of \$45,000 per year to keep a person in prison in the United States. According to the Department of Justice study, the average cost of psychiatric care for each prisoner is \$2,000, but it stands to reason that each of those included in the 16 percent of prisoners with serious mental health problems costs much more.

dependency, physical or sexual abuse, learning or other cognitive disabilities, physical illness or disability, and discrimination. While policy makers may ask whether being mentally ill makes a person more likely to offend, or whether incarceration makes a person mentally ill (or, at least, more mentally ill than before), the causal arrow likely points in both directions. Where then should

Mental health problems really matter after the prison gate swings open.

In addition to long-term psychiatric care within the prison system, short-term stays in crisis settings and jails add an even more expensive layer of costs. King County, Washington, and Summit County, Ohio, each recently spent more than \$1 million in a single year on just twenty people who cycled between acute mental health units, detoxification facilities, and incarceration, according to a report from the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. A 2006 New Yorker article “Million Dollar Murray” by Malcolm Gladwell discussed a variant of the same phenomenon, in this case a nonviolent homeless man who cost the city of Reno, Nevada, a million dollars in emergency room care, detoxification services, and jail stays. As one Reno police officer conceded in that article, “It cost us a million dollars to do nothing about Murray.” For both serious criminal offenders and nonviolent Murrays, the public pays dearly for this reactionary approach to mental health care for offenders.

What can be done? Digging beyond the numbers, there is a bewildering, yet familiar, range of associated factors: poverty, homelessness, drug and alcohol

policy makers try and intervene? Should they even look for a fix, or is it naïve to expect any one approach to make a difference?

There turns out to be good news and bad news. The good news is that there is a straightforward approach that can significantly reduce the problem of mentally ill in the prison system. The bad news is that it’s not happening in most places.

FEDERAL BENEFITS FOR PRISONERS

A look at the good news first; when prisons and jails pay attention to helping inmates get federal benefits, it turns out that the inmates are less sick and less likely to come back through their doors in handcuffs. A 2006 study of two counties in Washington State found that inmates with Medicaid coverage on release were almost twice as likely to use mental health services as their counterparts without Medicaid and were able to access services faster. In King County, there were 16 percent fewer detentions in a year for those with access to medical and community mental health care on release than for their counterparts lacking access.

Remarkably, federal law and policy do not need to change to improve access to federal benefits. Americans with serious disabilities—a group that includes most people with severe mental illnesses—are normally entitled to federal income benefits and to government-sponsored health insurance under Medicare (even if under 65), Medicaid, or both. These are long-established and relatively uncontroversial in principle, despite the anxiety-provoking burden on the federal deficit. Importantly, federal law does not normally require termination of benefits to incarcerated recipients, although payments may be suspended during the period of incarceration. Challenging as the paperwork might be, there is no legal reason why a person should not leave the prison gates with the full range of benefits to which he or she is entitled. Nor is there any legal barrier to an incarcerated person applying for the first time and establishing eligibility for benefits while under lock and key.



"Pills." © by Flickr user newtype2011

County jail in Washington State estimates that access to benefits for the veteran population alone produces annual savings to the county of more than half a million dollars.

A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP

The bad news is that only about a third of inmates nationally ever receive any discharge planning dealing with benefits, and the majority of prisoners leave the gates with no federal benefits in place, according to a report from the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. What is going wrong?

When prisons help inmates get federal benefits, the inmates are less sick and less likely to come back.

Best of all for states and counties, promoting released prisoners' access to benefits can substantially alleviate pressure on their budgets. The more consumers are able to support themselves using federal benefits, the fewer "Million Dollar Murrays" there will be cycling through locally funded facilities and programs (Medicaid, of course, is funded by both state and federal dollars, but community mental health funded through Medicaid still represents far more efficient spending than spending on jails and other short-term beds). The King

One possibility is bureaucratic barriers: paperwork delays, procedural denials of applications, or applicants' inability to fill out the forms correctly. No doubt all of these obstacles exist, but they are surmountable with proper attention. One Texas prison-based benefits case manager recently reported a 92 percent approval for clients' applications for Social Security benefits in a single year, against a national average of 40 percent. The process is just not difficult enough to explain the full scale of failure to provide benefits.

A second possibility is that prison authorities have moral objections to inmates' receipt of assistance with benefits. In 2006, the Department

benefits suggests that effective programs likely worked because of the leaders' personalities, cultures that made access a priority, and maybe a touch of sheer luck.

Only about a third of inmates ever receive any discharge planning.

of Justice reported, "Some staff and professionals may resist assisting inmates because they feel that offenders do not deserve this type of assistance." While these attitudinal barriers are worrisome, they should not present an insurmountable barrier for managers. Successful programs in Philadelphia and parts of Washington State, among other locations, have raised general knowledge of the federal law and have set new and clear expectations that staff members, led by coworkers with extra training, deal with the necessary paperwork before release. It simply becomes part of the job.

The third possibility, while linked to bureaucratic inefficiency and moral objection, deals with what Bob Behn, lecturer at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, calls the "tacit knowledge problem." This phenomenon explains the bad news about benefits and is worth unpacking. Policy analysts tend to believe they can read policy briefs and Web sites, find a "product" that works (the "Stat" approach from New York and Baltimore being the classic example, and the one Behn uses in his argument), and replicate it under different circumstances. But it doesn't work, Behn says, because the implementers lack the context of the knowledge held by the original group. Applying Behn's conclusions to the problem of prisoners' access to

A SOLUTION READY TO IMPLEMENT

Of course, there are other potential approaches to confronting the intersection of mental illness and criminal behavior. Jail diversion approaches—under which offenders are "diverted" from incarceration to treatment—are crucial in reducing the incarceration rate, especially for juveniles with mental illness. And more broadly, any approach that strengthens community mental health is one that will indirectly tackle the incarceration problem because (returning for a moment to the tangled web of cause and effect) lack of adequate care plays into almost every other risk factor imaginable.

Policy makers tend to look for new legislation, new funding, or new programs, but often the best organizations do none of these things. They just take existing policies, pay attention to the results they want, and bring the workforce along. The good news in this case is that improving access to mental health benefits is a proven strategy ready for expansion. We don't need to start from scratch. But we need to do a little more than just copy the operational components of the handful of programs that seem to be getting it right. Improving access to benefits is one strategy in a broader culture of equity for people with mental health problems in America, and it's one we need to aim to achieve.

Getting Welfare to Work When Times Get Tough

by *Katya Melkote*

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Laura, whose name has been changed for purposes of this article, is a current Harvard University graduate student. But not long ago she was a single mother living in Florida, struggling to support herself and her young son by working as a cashier at a grocery store. She dropped out of high school before tenth grade and gave birth to her son at the young age of eighteen. Having grappled with homelessness, at one point she was forced to send her son to live with family while she searched for a job. Laura received her general equivalency diploma (GED) at age sixteen, but with no further education struggled to find employment that paid enough to support her family and provided benefits such as health care. Her employment history was a cycle of low-wage, low-skill jobs combined with monthly cash payments provided through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the United States' national welfare program. While she hated being

labeled a "welfare mom," government assistance in the form of food stamps and welfare payments was necessary in order to meet her rent, childcare, and food expenses.

Laura's story of struggle is typical of other low-income families across the United States, but she was prepared to take a risk that many are not able or willing to do. She knew that unless she gained more education, she would not be able to escape the cycle of dead-end employment in which she was caught. But when Laura investigated enrolling in classes at the local community college, she discovered her TANF benefits would be in jeopardy if she reduced the number of hours she worked. Still determined to break out of the low-wage cycle, Laura made the risky decision to quit her job and enroll in an associate degree program at a local community college. To pay for it, she gathered her small amount of savings and applied for government loans.

Many income support programs such as TANF tend to provide disincentives for their participants to leave their low-wage employment and pursue additional educational opportunities. This is due to strict rules regarding the number of work hours recipients must maintain in order to receive benefits. Yet because the recession that began in 2007 has particularly hurt low-skilled workers, providing them opportunities to acquire the skills, training, and education necessary for escaping the low-wage job cycle has become more crucial.

To accomplish this goal TANF must provide its participants with greater educational opportunities, finding a way to combine learning with its employment requirements.

A BREAKTHROUGH IN 1990s, CAN TANF NOW BECOME EVEN BETTER?

The TANF program was created in 1996 in response to widespread criticism of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, under which there were few incentives for welfare recipients to search for employment. TANF represented a dramatic shift in welfare policy by making benefit receipt contingent upon participants meeting employment participation criteria. By making employment a requirement, government officials hoped to encourage participants to work themselves from welfare to self-sufficiency. Additionally, TANF reforms changed welfare from being a federal entitlement program to one that is administered at the state level through federal fixed block grants. This created greater flexibility and has allowed states to

The current recession, however, has revealed that TANF is not providing an adequate safety net. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national unemployment rate doubled from 5 percent to 10 percent between December 2007 and December 2009, with low-income families being hit particularly hard due to job losses in low-skill, labor-intensive sectors such as construction and manufacturing. The unemployment rate for Americans with less than a high school diploma was 15.3 percent in December 2009, compared with just 5 percent for those with a college degree. Single mothers—who make up a disproportionately large share of the TANF population—faced a substantially higher unemployment rate of 13 percent in December 2009, compared with 5.8 percent of married women.

The current recession has revealed that TANF is not providing an adequate safety net.

provide families with services like transportation and child care subsidies in addition to direct cash payments.

Welfare caseloads initially decreased substantially, falling by more than 60 percent between 1997 and 2007 according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This decline led many experts and government officials to conclude that families were exiting TANF because they had found employment and no longer required assistance. A strong economy in the late 1990s and early 2000s along with the expansion of other federal poverty programs (such as the Earned Income Tax Credit) were also likely to have contributed to declining TANF caseloads.

Despite this dramatic rise in unemployment for low-skilled workers and single mothers, the Department of Health and Human Services observed an increase of only 4.3 percent in TANF caseloads between September 2007 and December 2009. By comparison, the number of food stamp recipients increased by 27 percent during the same time period, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It seems almost certain that some TANF-eligible families have not enrolled in the program even though they are in great need of its services. Unfortunately, this is not surprising given that the Urban Institute, in a 2002 report, found that just 52 percent of eligible families participate in TANF.



“Classroom Chairs 2” © by Flickr user James Sarmiento (old account)

WHY EDUCATION MUST BE INCLUDED

While making TANF benefits contingent upon employment is a positive step in encouraging recipients to move toward economic self-sufficiency, it is a difficult requirement to meet when opportunities have significantly decreased due to an economic recession. Furthermore, the program’s single-minded focus on finding employment, no matter how low the wage, has made TANF families particularly vulnerable to job losses. Recipients generally find employment in low-skilled and minimum-wage jobs in

There is also evidence that those who leave TANF and other welfare programs are not finding improved employment opportunities. The Department of Health and Human Services provided grants to fifteen states and localities to survey families that left welfare programs between 1997 and 1999. The survey found that the majority of those who left welfare had a job, but not steady employment. And an Urban Institute survey found that in some cases, the majority of families that left welfare were still earning incomes below the federal poverty line.

States need to provide real opportunities rather than nudging participants into the nearest low-wage job.

which their incomes hover near the federal poverty line. Due to the unstable nature of these jobs, welfare recipients commonly churn in and out of TANF until they have reached their lifetime limit (five years in most states).

To encourage welfare recipients to become truly self-sufficient, states should provide opportunities to build real human capital. One way to do this is by increasing the number of educational hours participants can count

toward their work participation activities. This would enable recipients to take more educational classes such as GED courses, vocational training, and English as a second language classes. According to the Congressional Research Service, TANF already allows some nonemployment activities—such as subsidized training in the private and public sector and vocational training—to count toward minimum work requirements. These vocational and transitional jobs can

late 2009. Denver, Colorado, has also created a program in which participants can enroll in a four-month vocational certificate program that includes paid internships and classroom instruction. Participants can even earn up to eighteen college credits. The Department of Health and Human Services in 2007 found that 90 percent of the TANF participants in this program were still able to meet their work participation requirements and 76 percent completed the program.

To encourage welfare recipients to become truly become self-sufficient, states should provide opportunities to build real human capital.

provide participants with the marketable skills, work experience, and training that translate into sustainable employment opportunities. Yet, participants cannot receive credit for programs that lead to a four-year baccalaureate degree or an advanced degree, although they can take classes that lead to certification in a specific field or an associate's degree.

Given the range of activities TANF counts toward employment requirements, states need to find ways to provide real educational and work-experience opportunities rather than nudging participants into the nearest low-wage job. There are signs that some localities have begun to recognize the need to provide subsidized training opportunities to TANF recipients. For instance, Los Angeles recently announced that it would use TANF stimulus dollars to fund a subsidized employment initiative meant to create 10,000 new jobs. The program was estimated to have already provided opportunities for 3,400 participants in

The economic recession provides an opportunity to reform TANF and help those who have suffered most due to the economy's downturn. By focusing on assisting participants in building enduring skills while providing strong income support, more low-income families will have a chance to attain self-sufficiency and be less vulnerable to future economic shocks.

Although Laura was eventually able to transfer to a four-year university and is now pursuing a graduate degree, most women in similar circumstances do not have access to savings or the ability to take such a risk. As TANF is considered by Congress for reauthorization this year, legislators should craft a more creative and dynamic program that makes stories like Laura's more common.

A Lingering Pest: Malaria in Africa

by Elana Safran

Elana Safran is a 2011 Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University studying political and economic development. She has worked in Ghana, Bangladesh, and Israel, and her areas of interest include rural development, health care delivery, and evaluation.

In Akotokyir, near Cape Coast on the coast of Ghana, children do not die from malaria just because they lack access to treatment. They may die for other reasons. Perhaps a mother prefers to give her child herbal treatments until the fever gets severe. Perhaps she goes to a pharmacy to buy medicine instead of first getting her child diagnosed at the clinic. Maybe the family uses a mosquito net for sleeping, but the child still gets bitten while outside and is too young to have developed some baseline immunity. Or maybe the family is big but lives in a room so small that the heat is too much to use a mosquito net comfortably at night.

Paska, a thirty-year-old mother of two small children who met with the organization TAMTAM in central Uganda last year, understands these factors. She says of malaria, “I didn’t

think malaria was a problem. But now I have children, and I have seen them suffer so much, which proves to me that malaria is a deadly disease. I think everyone wants a net but some cannot afford. When you get used to sleeping under a net, you feel bad sleeping without.”

Compared to trying to sell someone a stove or a pair of shoes, the task of distributing mosquito nets is different. Ultimately, the goal is not only to have people at risk of malaria buying nets, but also to have the same people using them on a daily—or nightly—basis.

Mosquito net usage is particularly important in the prevention of malaria, a disease that infects 243 million and kills 863,000 people a year, 85 percent of them children, according to the World Health Organization’s most recent statistics. By eliminating a link in the chain of transmission—that is, preventing mosquitoes from biting at night—nets are a powerful way to stop the transfer of malaria between people. But what may seem like a simple technology is, in fact, one among many weapons in an evolving arsenal of ways to treat a disease that goes back centuries.

Given working interventions, the challenge is more often applying small-scale lessons learned to a larger group. TAMTAM—Together Against Malaria, Tunapenda Afya na Maisha, which is Swahili that translates to “We love health and living”—is one organization that attempts to do just that, by combining net distribution with operational research on distribution methods. By working closely with policy makers, TAMTAM can ensure that its research focuses on the most practical and effective questions in the field. And in the changing landscape

of a pressing disease, there is no shortage of questions.

WHAT IS MALARIA AND HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

The malaria parasite is carried by female anopheles mosquitoes, which transmit the parasite to humans when they bite, mostly at night. Treated bed nets—like insecticide-treated bed nets (ITNs) or long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs)—act as both a physical and chemical barrier to mosquitoes, protecting not only the user, but also those within the flying radius of a mosquito as well. UNICEF cites that net usage can reduce child mortality rates by up to 20 percent. Considering mosquito nets cost less than seven dollars and can last for five years, they are one of the most effective ways to prevent malaria.

Because the dissemination of malaria requires two parties—mosquitoes and humans—its spread is an ongoing and constant process. The disease is persistently difficult to battle; time and again, new treatments are met with the development of resistance. What the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends now—indoor residual spraying and LLINs for prevention and artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) for treatment—represents only the most recent variations in a long line of tools.

FIGHTING MALARIA: A HISTORY

Despite malaria's long history—texts from ancient Egypt, China, India, Greece, and Rome reference it—the science of prevention and treatment has proven unable to outpace this tricky disease, as it constantly co-evolves with humans. To say that the disease is a challenge, though, is not to say that malaria is impossible to

fight or that we don't have proven ways to prevent and treat it. Multiple steps in the cycle of transmission also mean there are many potential points of contact in larger eradication or prevention efforts, and global initiatives during the past sixty years have attempted to manage the disease through various methods.

The first target in malaria prevention was the mosquitoes themselves. At the beginning of the twentieth century, swamp drainage was thought to be the answer to kill the pests, until it became expensive and destructive to the environment. Soon after followed the spraying of mosquito breeding grounds with DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. DDT was later found to be toxic for animals and plants, but even if it had proven a safe method, mosquitoes had already developed resistance to it.

At the same time, scientists began developing antimalarial drugs. The chloroquine drug for prevention and treatment was introduced in the 1950s but resistant strains of the parasite appeared shortly after. By the 1970s, though malaria had been eradicated in Europe and North America, global incidence of the disease began to rise again.

And so, despite evolving coordinated efforts to reduce malaria, both mosquitoes and the malaria parasite itself have also been evolving to become resistant to these treatments. The need for global coordination remains key through all of these efforts because partial control not only leads to rising incidence of the disease, but also to the spreading of various treatment-resistant strains. Currently, a strain

of malaria that is resistant to ACT—the WHO’s current recommended treatment—has been discovered on the Thai-Cambodian border and may be spreading. That urgency translates into many governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and international institutions implementing a lot of different policies to fight malaria. In such a multifaceted environment, communication is essential. Organizations that can translate what they have learned for a wider audience are very valuable.

Most recently, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, launched in 1998 as a global coordinating body, pledged to halve the number of cases and deaths caused by malaria by 2010. The thirty-five countries (thirty in sub-Saharan Africa and five in Asia) that have 98 percent of the total global malaria-related deaths are its top

So while the global health community has seen some victories in the most recent fight against malaria, methodology varies from place to place. What reduces malaria in an island state like Sao Tome and Principe may not work the same way in Rwanda. The challenge for the global health community, then, is this: With so many potential ways to treat malaria, how should we begin to think about which is right for any one family, community, or a donor looking to give support?

USING RESEARCH TO CHANGE POLICY

The way one understands an epidemic determines how it is treated. Hidden in decisions about how to treat malaria are assumptions about the disease itself. Do we focus more on treatment or prevention? Is it more effective to target human behavior or mosquito behavior? Should we prioritize spraying to kill mosquitoes if the spraying also has toxic

By working closely with policy makers, TAMTAM can ensure that its research focuses on the most practical and effective questions in the field.

priority. Since the start of the campaign, five high-burden countries and areas have achieved that goal—Eritrea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Zambia, and the Zanzibar area in Tanzania. The WHO credits the decreases in the islands of Sao Tome and Principe and Zanzibar to three factors: indoor residual spraying to kill mosquitoes, LLINs to prevent bites at night, and ACT for treatment. Rwanda, in comparison, did not implement widespread spraying; a reduction in malaria cases and deaths resulted from just increasing usage of mosquito nets and proper treatment.

effects on plants and animals? Of course, certain interventions have more bang for the buck.

Development economists are finally doing what scientists in other fields have been doing for generations—using an old technique to battle an even older disease. Running randomized control trials (RCTs) on micro-level interventions like mosquito net distribution help to measure clearly the impact of the intervention. Because RCTs measure impact so precisely, they lend themselves easily to cost-benefit analyses, allowing



“An Orphan Recipient with his guardian grandmother just after receiving a net” © by Flickr user schacon

policy makers to base future decisions on real numbers from experiments in similar places and even compare different programs. Used this way, the questions asked are important if they can be applied to multiple contexts. Research becomes both more interesting and more useful when it is externally valid and moved beyond the comfortable home of an academic journal.

Field research can, for example, help to explain how slight differences in health interventions can lead to very different behavior outcomes. Distributing something for free versus charging a low price may have a huge impact on how individuals use the item. One RCT by economists Pascaline Dupas and Jessica Cohen in 2008 suggested that distributing nets for free, compared to charging a small fee, increased demand for the nets. These results are not completely surprising; when you reduce the price of something, demand is likely to increase. As for the question about usage—the real goal in mosquito net distribution—their

research found that giving out nets for free did not impact usage; when women received free nets, they were not less likely to use them than if they had paid. In other words, distributing nets for free can increase take-up without decreasing usage.

Anecdotal evidence persists in this debate though. Some NGOs firmly believe that distributing free nets does not increase usage because people sell the nets or use them incorrectly. Soft Power Health, a Uganda-based NGO that conducts malaria education and prevention programs, always sells its nets. As founder and director Dr. Jessie Stone says in an interview with National Public Radio, “What we’ve discovered is that if people have to pay a little something for their mosquito net, they are invested in that net. We’ve seen with nets that have been given away in some of the villages that we work in, that those nets that have been given away free are not used and are often just resold for money.” Under this reasoning, it follows that when a family pays for a mosquito net, the family will value it more and will thus use the net correctly and with care.

Another RCT by economist Vivian Hoffmann in 2008 attempted to get to the root of this question by comparing the effects of giving out nets for free to giving people money. Built into the design of the experiment was an opportunity allowing those who received nets to sell the nets for cash and those who received cash to use it to buy nets. But the research showed that very few nets were resold, so that individuals who received nets initially were more likely to use a net than individuals who received money. In particular, young children—the population most at risk of dying from malaria—were more likely to sleep under

a net when their family received a free net compared to money.

The results from the RCTs show that families can pay nothing for a good, but still “value” it (or use it) as much as they would if they paid something small for it. It is an important lesson on how to distribute good-for-you products, especially because production of them is not free. If an organization’s goal is to increase mosquito net usage among at-risk populations, then the best option may be to provide nets for free, as opposed to charging a small price.

interactions with the disease. When these individuals play a role in the research, it is easy to connect the same people to publicized results, so that fast action in implementation is guaranteed.

Last summer, TAMTAM did all of the above in Uganda. While giving out two-thousand free bed nets, the organization also found that having a community health worker join a person in that individual’s house to install the net increased usage of the net itself. As Uganda develops its nationwide malaria action plan, this kind of research is highly relevant to determine the cost of

To say that the disease is a challenge, though, is not to say that malaria is impossible to fight or that we don’t have proven ways to prevent and treat it.

TAMTAM’S ROLE IN THE FUTURE OF MALARIA POLICY

Based on the lessons learned from this new research, TAMTAM attempts to be a connector between the worlds of academia and implementation.

TAMTAM’s two aims are to give out free nets and to perform operational research on distribution methods. Net distribution is often “crowded in” with other health care goods or services, like prenatal visits or enrolling in health insurance.

Distributing nets this way has the added benefit of encouraging take-up of another service as well. In other words, if the health care service isn’t enticing enough, maybe a bed net will be.

Rather than coming from the ivory tower of behavioral economics, research questions about malaria prevention come directly from the policy makers and health care workers who think about how to improve net distribution in their daily

bed nets and the allocation of human resources needed to distribute them. The short timeline on TAMTAM’s research means that the results can be translated into action quickly. Since the research questions are determined in part by the partner organizations doing the distribution, the questions are guaranteed to be relevant and the conclusions useful.

When adding to a body of literature that is already so large, it is important to do so in a targeted way. When an organization like TAMTAM acts fast to find and answer the newest questions in the fight against malaria, we close the gap between the changing disease and treatment methods. Momentum is key in the most recent iteration of this centuries-old fight. As new questions arise—as they inevitably do—the global community needs to have the capacity to quickly get answers.

It Pays to Provide Health Care: A Case for Including Undocumented Immigrants

by *Megha Garg*

Megha Garg is a medical student and Master of Public Health candidate at the Harvard School of Public Health. She is a Zuckerman Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

When Representative Joe Wilson of South Carolina shouted “You lie!” at U.S. President Barack Obama’s September 2009 address to a joint session of Congress, he challenged the president’s assertion that undocumented immigrants would be ineligible for health care coverage offered by the government. At least on this occasion, there is reason to hope that President Obama was lying.

Undocumented immigrants have been excluded from the reform debate, largely because introducing the immigration issue into the health care debate would further polarize Congress. Conservative opponents of reform argue that people living in the United States illegally have no right to health care benefits financed by taxpayers. The latest House of Representatives legislation only allows undocumented immigrants to buy full-price insurance on government-run

exchanges, while the Senate bill bars their inclusion altogether. According to a recent analysis in the *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, the 45 million uninsured figure widely quoted by reform advocates includes everyone without insurance—American citizens, legal immigrants, and approximately 6 million undocumented immigrants. This figure therefore includes millions of people that neither the House nor Senate proposals have any intention of covering. Currently, undocumented immigrants are ineligible for government insurance programs. Even legal immigrants are not offered the same health rights as citizens, since they must wait five years before they are eligible for federal health care programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.

But what would happen if the United States did provide health insurance to undocumented immigrants? Would more people flock here to capture these benefits? Judging by the history of free public education, which has been provided to undocumented immigrants since a 1982 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, these indirect incentives seem to have little effect on immigration rates. In recent history, large influxes of immigrants have not resulted from social benefits provided by the U.S. government. Rather, immigration increases are far more impacted by changes in immigration policy or by political conflict or natural disaster in the immigrants’ home countries. And the availability of direct economic incentives—job prospects, higher wages, and the ability to send money back home—are more than enough to continue incentivizing immigration to the United States regardless of the status of health insurance.

ARGUMENTS FOR INCLUSION OF UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

While there are strong arguments in favor of including undocumented immigrants in health reform, the difficulty lies in finding the argument that resonates with lawmakers. Rather than accelerating immigration, providing coverage to the millions of undocumented immigrants

But this population health argument has thus far similarly failed to persuade Congress to include undocumented immigrants in health insurance reform.

Perhaps the most compelling argument to political leaders can be made on the basis of economic efficiency. Taxpayers already pay for the care of undocumented immigrants. Immigrants lacking coverage

Undocumented immigrants have been excluded from the reform debate, largely because introducing the immigration issue into the health care debate would further polarize Congress.

may result in a more effective and efficient health care system—a win-win situation for all involved.

For instance, the designation of health care as a human right seems to hold little appeal for Congress. If legislators believed that everyone had the right to coverage, there would already be universal health insurance. Public health also offers a convincing rationale for universal coverage. Children of immigrants are less likely to get immunized, which decreases group immunity against childhood infectious diseases. Decades after the development of effective and accessible vaccines, outbreaks of diseases like measles and pertussis continue today in immigrant-rich communities. Additionally, lack of access to primary care can result in less frequent testing for sexually transmitted diseases. Studies show that HIV/AIDS rates are higher in communities with high numbers of immigrants due to less frequent testing from lack of coverage. These situations all arise from a lack of primary care, which is most directly caused by lack of insurance.

use the emergency room (ER) for treatment, since the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act of 1985 guarantees emergency medical treatment for anyone, regardless of legal status or ability to pay. Acute care services of emergency rooms are among the most expensive ways to pay for health care. In today's system, chronic care for undocumented immigrants can translate into emergency room visits for dialysis or diuretics, treatments that are readily available in outpatient clinics at a fraction of the cost.

The situation in public hospitals, which provide the bulk of services to undocumented immigrants, clearly displays the broken interface between immigrants and the health care system. In the past six months, two large public hospitals, Grady Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, and Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Florida, closed the doors of their outpatient dialysis clinics to nonpaying patients—mainly undocumented immigrants—because of an inability to cover the costs of their

care. Ironically, many of these patients are now forced to access dialysis in the emergency rooms of those same hospitals. Although this is a far more expensive way to treat the same patients, the hospitals get federal dollars for care provided in the

medical costs average 14 percent to 20 percent less than insured citizens' costs. The study also found that fully insured recent immigrants—those who have been in the United States for less than ten years, approximately half of whom

Including undocumented immigrants in the health care system may serve to lower both hospital costs and insurance premiums for all Americans.

ER, allowing those hospitals to preserve their own overextended charity funds for care provided in outpatient clinics.

The current House and Senate health care reform bills include increased funding for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and community health centers. This, however, is not sufficient to address the health care needs of undocumented immigrants. While primary care access is a necessary component of universal health care, it does not solve the problems caused by lack of insurance. Those who have access to free primary care may still end up in the hospital with more severe health conditions, with unpaid fees covered by charity funds or taxpayer monies. FQHCs don't cover many expensive components of health care, including specialist care, many prescription medications, or diagnostic assessments such as CT scans and MRIs. Furthermore, studies thus far show that free clinics do not reduce overall health care costs.

Including undocumented immigrants in the health care system may serve to lower both hospital costs and insurance premiums for all Americans. A recent article in the *American Journal of Public Health* reported that insured immigrants'

are estimated to be undocumented—use only one-sixth to one-half of the medical expenditures of U.S. citizens. Thus, immigrant insurance premiums may contribute to lower health care costs for the rest of the country.

This reflects the “Hispanic paradox,” the epidemiological finding that first-generation Hispanic immigrants are unexpectedly healthier than the average population, despite socioeconomic indicators that would predict otherwise. The Hispanic paradox refers to both undocumented and legal immigrants, and the health profile of first-generation immigrants is most similar to that of undocumented immigrants. The potential to add millions of young, healthy immigrants to insurance risk pools can result in lower premiums for everyone, by spreading the costs of insurance across a larger number of healthy people. This is a clear economic incentive for covering undocumented immigrants. It could lead to net cost savings for health care.

The devastating earthquake in Haiti may prompt the political establishment to grapple with health care coverage for undocumented immigrants. Undocumented Haitian immigrants who were in the United States as of January 12

are able to apply for temporary protected status so that they can stay and work in the country for eighteen months while Haiti recovers from the earthquake. It remains to be seen what, if any, status will be given to the Haitian orphans and refugees arriving here after the disaster. Temporary protected status will likely come with many benefits that are afforded to legal residents, including health care benefits, and it opens a political window for pro-immigrant groups to lobby for health care rights for all undocumented immigrants.

ONE PART OF LARGER IMMIGRATION POLICY

Health reform is a small piece in the larger context of U.S. immigration policy, which lacks a foundation to enforce specific health policies like individual mandates or tax penalties. Until the political environment becomes amenable to solving immigrant issues, the scope of health care reform for undocumented immigrants will remain limited. A moral imperative and quantified public health evidence justify inclusion of undocumented immigrants in health reform, yet Congress does not seem moved by these arguments. But the potential economic benefits of lowering hospital costs and insurance premiums for everyone may be the solution. Ignoring the issues of undocumented immigrants will not make them go away. In fact, including them in health reform may improve the health and costs for everyone in this country.

The author would like to thank Dr. Lee Sanders at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine for assistance in preparing this article.

Health Care Reform for \$11:

A Review of *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual*

by Michael Pollan

(Penguin, 2009)

Reviewed by Jeb Breiding

Jeb Breiding wrote for the *Economist* and has written articles for other important publications including the *Financial Times* and the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, a leading Swiss newspaper. He is currently writing a book on the economic and political history of Switzerland. He is a mid-career Master in Public Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

U.S. President Barack Obama spent a good bit of 2009 struggling to pass health care reform, sapping considerable political capital. While the historic bill is now law, the U.S. has a long way to go before it achieves truly comprehensive health care reform.

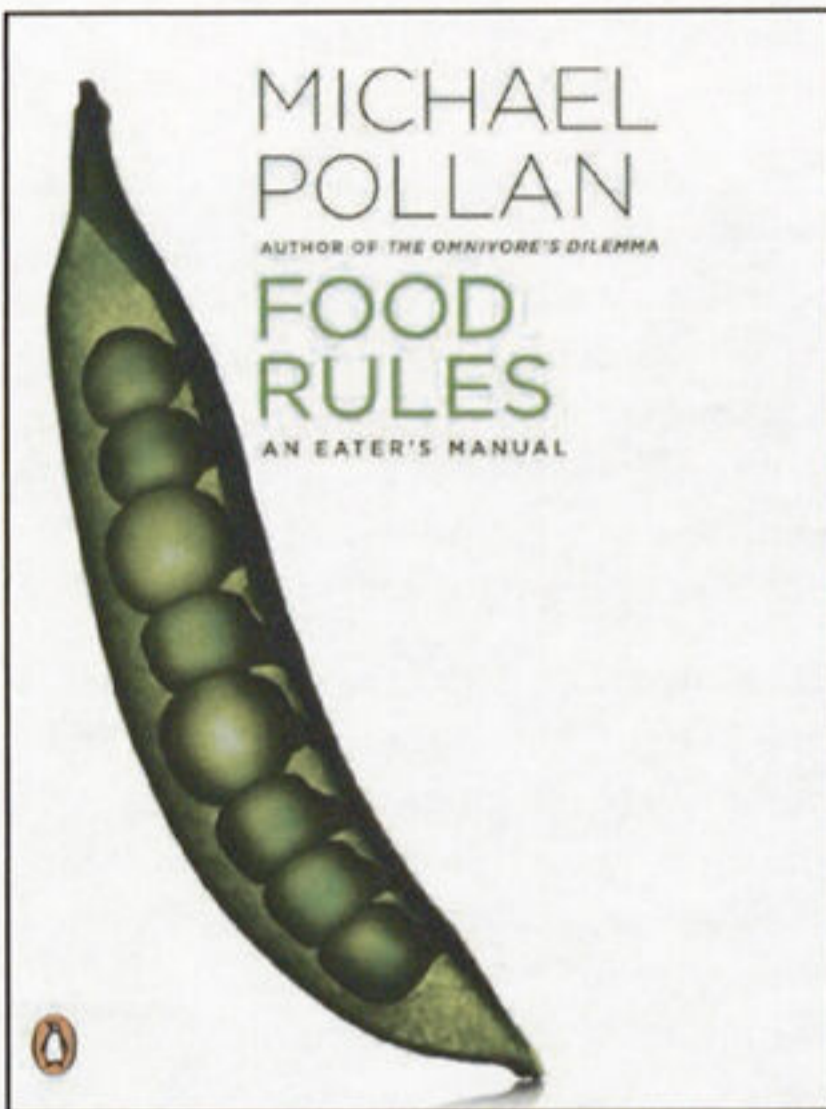
Reinhold Niebuhr, Obama's favorite theologian-philosopher, wrote that decent health care is the monopoly of the very privileged or the very poor. It is a testimony of previous administrations' remarkable underachievement that Niebuhr wrote this in 1935 and two

generations came and went without any progress until now.

The U.S. health care system remains broken. Despite the fact that more people will be covered now, many still remain without health insurance. The National Academy of Sciences reports that the United States is the "only wealthy, industrialized nation that does not ensure that all citizens have coverage."

Those with health care coverage have little reason to be exuberant. The United States ranks last in the quality of health care among the nineteen countries analyzed in a 2008 report by the Commonwealth Fund. According to the report, the premium for an average family insurance policy costs \$12,680, making it the most significant consumer outlay after housing. Costs continue to outpace wage growth, so consumers have less to spend on other necessities. Premiums have increased 78 percent since 2001, according to the report, while wages and our ability to pay for health care have hardly risen, only 2 percent after inflation.

And there appears to be little that markets can do to solve this problem. Market economies are based on the freedom of choice and function well across a wide range of products and services. But markets, so effective across so many sectors, have failed miserably when it comes to health care. This is because suppliers of health care have considerable incentives for people to become and stay sick. The more people who get sick and stay sick, the greater are the profits. There is no incentive for prevention, let alone cure, but lots of reward for excessive treatment. In addition, consumers are often in a state of duress when they need health care and lack the knowledge and risk tolerance to discern across the range



of options. These two factors coalesce to create a sort of “moral blindness” within our health care system, and it is unrealistic to expect any relief unless the model is set right.

The health care bill that just passed was two-thousand pages, longer than Leo Tolstoy’s epic *War and Peace*. During a forum at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in November 2009, a brash undergrad asked Nancy Pelosi, the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, whether she really had read the entire bill. Her response that she read it all was unconvincing.

I propose a simple and cost-effective remedy to this country’s health care troubles. Scrap the voluminous and cumbersome two thousand- page law and replace it with a straightforward 139- page book called *Food Rules* by Michael Pollan. Pollan is the Knight Professor of Journalism at the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California,

Berkeley and author of highly praised books like *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* and *In Defense of Food*.

For \$11 and one hour’s worth of time, you can breeze through the paperback edition of *Food Rules* and get a good summary of the “dos and don’ts” of eating and, ultimately, health. This compares to a lofty \$860 million that will be spent over the next ten years for the new law.

Pollan argues that some 80 percent of our health care costs can be traced to poor eating and lifestyle habits and, therefore, can be prevented. It is our bad habits that lead to chronic diseases like diabetes, stroke, heart failure, and cancer. These four ailments, which are four of the top ten killers of Americans, are proven to be linked to diet, according to *Food Rules*.

Pollan draws his insights from *Homo sapiens* who first roamed the savannahs of Africa 200,000 years ago. This was the formative period for the development of our organs, immunity system, hormones, and organs. Ironically, the surest way to good health, according to Pollan, is to mimic dietary conditions of this time. Get lots of exercise and fresh air, eat raw nuts, plants and fruits, and hunt the odd wild fish or fowl.

The problem is that our eating habits, Pollan argues, are at radical variance with our natural engineering tweaked over countless generations.

Today, 60 percent of Americans are overweight, and 20 percent are obese, Pollan claims. The average man is 17 pounds heavier and the average women 19 pounds heavier than in 1970. And the trend is getting worse with projections that obesity will reach epidemic proportion by 2025. Obesity is among the most accurate leading indicators for

Pollan's book contains sixty-four "matter of fact" rules designed to improve our dietary habits. Some of our favorites include:

- Shop the peripheries of the super market and stay away from the middle.
- Avoid pretentious food like "non fat" cream cheese, or imitation butter. Buy the real thing.
- Buy products that go bad quickly. This is a reasonably good litmus test of whether the product is not hyped and indeed good for us.
- If it came from a plant, eat it, but if it was made in a plant, don't.
- Eat foods as close to their natural state as possible – fresh not frozen vegetables, for example.
- Eat slowly and when you are hungry, not when you are bored. And stop eating when you are 80 percent full as it takes 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain that you've had enough.
- Eat with friends and family – not alone. Eat at a dining table, not a desk or in a car.
- Grow a vegetable garden.

a whole host of chronic diseases such as diabetes, kidney failure, heart attacks and cancer.

Evolution has, in some ways, betrayed us. Our appetites are remarkably elastic

portions of food, humans (and animals) will eat up to 30 percent more than they would otherwise. Smaller portions disguised on smaller plates are Pollan's remedy.

I propose a simple and cost-effective remedy to the health care debacle. Scrap the voluminous and cumbersome law and replace it with a straightforward 139-page book called Food Rules by Michael Pollan.

so we can store energy necessary to survive long periods of hunger. A genetic disposition towards obesity is, so far as survival is concerned, a heroic trait. But we live in a world of caloric abundance, rather than scarcity. So what can be done?

Pollan feels that avoiding "eye candy" is one of the key elements to maintaining good health. When presented with large

And avoid falling for the "supersizing" sales techniques, like the recent promotion from Taco Bell to try its new "full-sized" burrito – advertised as "the size of your head."

Evolution has also tilted our taste buds in favor of sugar and fats because they offer the densest form of energy and, therefore, taste much better. A normal portion of French fries has more than twice the

number of calories as a baked potato. This may be fine for those wandering the savannahs in search for food, but it doesn't bode well for those of us leading more sedentary lives.

Collectively, the US spends \$2 trillion for health care, accounting for 16 percent of our nation's GDP. This is the highest share among the OECD countries and almost double the OECD average. If President Obama thinks health care costs are too high now, just wait until we need to pay for the millions of people who will increasingly be afflicted with diet related ailments.

Michael Pollan feels that we can take matters in our own hands rather than entrusting our congressmen to take care of it for us and that the solution is far more simpler and significantly less expensive than what we've got now.

He may have a point.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

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Double Vision: Al Jazeera English at Odds with the American Media

by *Paige Austin*

Paige Austin is a first-year Master in Public Policy student at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Before coming to Harvard, she worked for two years as an associate producer for Al Jazeera English in Doha, Qatar.

During the winter 2008-2009 war in the Gaza Strip, more than a hundred members of the Samouni family spent days trapped in a single-story home, waiting without food or water for paramedics to reach them. By the time help arrived, dozens of family members had died, many slowly succumbing to wounds their relatives were helpless to treat.

International news crews were unable to enter Gaza during this twenty-two-day war, but a few news agencies were already present when the conflict began. One such network was Al Jazeera English, the international news network founded in 2006 as a cousin to its Arabic-language counterpart. Al Jazeera's reporting on the Samouni's plight gripped the Arab world, but in the United States it was barely mentioned. Al Jazeera English's online viewership shot up sixfold during this time frame, remarkably with more

than half of new viewers coming from the United States. Yet without distribution on U.S. cable, total U.S. viewership remained small.

The conflict in Gaza increased the channel's appeal, just as the Afghan and Iraq wars had for Al Jazeera Arabic and the Persian Gulf War for CNN. And in the months that followed, foreign policy experts like Robert Kaplan in an Atlantic Monthly article called Al Jazeera English, with its sixty foreign bureaus, exactly what the United States' "internationally minded elite class really yearns for."

So why has Al Jazeera English found it so difficult to gain a foothold in the United States? One reason is a perceived lack of audience; the network is not typical American television fare, and cable operators doubt many Americans would embrace the change. During the two years I worked at Al Jazeera English, I was continually amazed by the channel's inversion of conventional U.S. news values—in particular, its willingness to convey suffering in the developing world, like that of the Samouni family, in graphic detail. Far from conspiracy or manipulation, as critics charge, this use of evocative imagery is the natural result of a dynamic process meant to translate news into what Bruce Shapiro, director of the Dart Center on Journalism and Trauma, calls "the visual language of a particular culture."

"It's not about a rigid corporate agenda or a rigid imperialist agenda imposed from above," Shapiro explains in an interview with the author. "It's about a much more complex dynamic between sources, journalists, managers, and image-makers."

Unpacking that dynamic is essential to understanding the biases of American

news, as well as the difficulties channels like Al Jazeera English have attracting an audience in the United States.

Understanding this also gives reason to hope that given a broader range of media options, the media preferences of Americans—and popular sympathies—might change as well.

PREFERENCE FOR SANITIZATION, OR IS IT HYPOCRISY?

It is well documented that when it comes to war and tragedy abroad, the American media's tendency is to sanitize violence, showing none of the outrage and carnage evident in media accounts outside the United States. During the invasion of Iraq, Philip Kennicott in a 2003 article in the *Washington Post* attributed this reluctance to a mixture of "taste, ethics, professional standards and responsibility to a complex web of constituents." Yet the outcome of this equation is not always consistent.

"They're hypocrites," Marwan Kraidy, associate professor at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, says of the U.S. media in an interview with the author. "They'll say 'we are not going to show mutilated bodies.' They all showed Ceaușescu's body in Romania. Everyone showed the bodies of the two sons of Saddam Hussein when they got killed. It's an indirect way to say we are more civilized but that is not the case." The culling of images, he adds, "is used selectively depending what the prevailing mood is."

The shooting of Iranian protestor Neda Agha-Soltan is a more recent example. In its rush to show the video, CNN did not at first blur her face. The result was one of the most iconic images of the year, recalling photos from the 1970 Kent

State shootings or 1968 Vietnam's My Lai massacre with the power to shock viewers and galvanize public opinion against an old American foe.

The Samouni family, by contrast, was given no such chance. Their plight did not shock Americans; few Americans even saw it.

U.S. MEDIA PREFERENCES DO VIEWERS A DISSERVICE

The U.S. media's tendency to selectively portray violence impacts Americans' interpretation of world events. During the Lebanon War, *The Guardian's* diplomatic editor Julian Borger marveled in a 2006 article, "Britons and Americans are watching two different wars." The immense difference in public opinion of the war, he added, "must be attributable to the very different realities on British and American television screens." Confronted with alternate media depictions of events, audiences apportion their sympathy and blame differently.

When the dominant U.S. narrative conflicts with how Arab and Muslim audiences view events, Americans can easily chalk up the divergence to nefarious causes like anti-Americanism or the warlike nature of Islam. By this rendering, Americans' disagreement with Arab, Muslim, or other audiences can seem intractable and the sense of injury on their part irrational and implacable.

Yet this difference in opinion can be explained largely by the fact that Americans just aren't watching the same gruesome, heartrending imagery as many viewers elsewhere in the world. And our understanding of major events and tragedies differs profoundly as a result.

Differences in media depictions of violence cannot be explained by any

intrinsic difference in tastes among audiences. A study comparing Arab and Western newspapers has suggested Western media was much more willing to display graphic images of victims of September 11 than of the Afghan war two months later, while Arabic media displayed the opposite trend. Shahira Fahmy, the author of that study and associate professor at the University of Arizona's School of Journalism, says in an interview with the author that the difference was not in the sources of the imagery, which were largely the same, but in the choices of "gatekeepers"—the reporters and editors making the decisions about what material to use or, more cynically, whose suffering mattered more to the audience.

But these editorial decisions are far from routine or standardized. In her book *Packaging Terrorism*, Susan Moeller documents how painfully American

glued to their televisions and Peter Jennings' live run on the air stretched to seventeen hours, a shared sense of grief seemed to pervade U.S. media coverage. As would happen with Arab media in subsequent Middle Eastern wars, there was a strong feeling that these were our victims, our losses. As one *Newsday* editor explained, "It's not time to be squeamish."

Tragedies evoking emotion similar to September 11 happen in other parts of the world, but Americans do not always see the galvanizing images of these events. I remember editing footage from the Gaza conflict in 2009 for Al Jazeera English. Sitting in an editing booth in Doha, I watched images of children maimed by white phosphorous pass over the screen—images so brutal they numbed me, causing me at times to turn away and gasp involuntarily in horror. These children's wounds were real, but whether

Americans just aren't watching the same gruesome, heartrending imagery as many viewers elsewhere in the world. And our understanding of major events and tragedies differs profoundly as a result.

editors and broadcasters struggled in choosing images of September 11. And as the hours went by, many organizations changed their editorial stances. Three television networks that initially showed men and women falling from the towers later stopped. CNN first blurred the images, but later stopped broadcasting them entirely. The editorial challenge of where to draw the line between honest and gratuitous depictions of pain and suffering was constant and agonizing. But as 81 percent of Americans remained

they belonged on television was another question. The answer was neither easy nor unanimous, and throughout the day my supervisors frequently sent me back to the editing booth to adjust the balance between vividness and "viewability."

Because of Al Jazeera English's access and outlook, the children in Gaza were our victims. And if confronted with these wrenching images, Americans might come to feel the same way. "If they saw these graphic images, they would definitely have more empathy," says



Al Jazeera newsroom | "The nerve centre" © by Flickr user Laika slips the lead

Fahmy, who has researched the impact of graphic imagery on viewers. "It would have a humanizing effect on all of us and that would create a less polarized public opinion or even better public diplomacy."

A 2009 survey of Al Jazeera English viewers in six countries yielded such findings. Viewers reported that the channel's viewpoint had a "conciliatory" effect, exposing them to alternative viewpoints. But this finding is hard to test in the United States because television is still the primary way Americans get their news, and Al Jazeera English is only available via satellite or Internet. And the reason is one that viewers might not expect.

AL JAZEERA ENGLISH'S BARRIER TO ENTRY

The name Al Jazeera can make some Americans uncomfortable, even if it is followed by the word "English." The English-language channel is a distant cousin of its Arabic-language counterpart. It was established ten years later and, although supported by the same public funding in Qatar, has a very distinct outlook and staffing.

Still, a handful of groups—like the Defenders Council of Vermont, founded to "educate the citizens of Vermont about the nature, reality and threat of Islamic Jihadism"—raised concerns when Al Jazeera English was first available in Burlington, Vermont, and Toledo, Ohio. Kraidy, who discussed the channel's launch on National Public Radio (NPR), recalls receiving hate mail afterward.

Fortunately, the initial opposition seems to have faded as more people have a chance to actually tune in.

Today, Al Jazeera English's worldwide viewership is estimated at 150 million viewers in more than one hundred countries. Both of Israel's largest cable operators carry it. In November 2009, a regulatory board in Canada cleared the channel to seek distribution after receiving some 2,600 letters from citizens in favor and only forty letters opposed. And in mid-2009, it came on

CNN International reaches 4.3 million viewers. Yet ratings for both channels are abysmally low; BBC's primetime rating in 2008 was barely a tenth of CNN's domestic channel. Kimeran Daley, Al Jazeera English's head of distribution for the Americas, says these low ratings have confirmed cable operators' suspicions that Americans don't care about international news. "They just don't see the numbers," Daley says in an interview with the author, explaining cable operators' rationale.

Their plight did not shock Americans; few Americans even saw it.

the air in Washington, D.C., via MHZ, an independent network dedicated to international programming.

But the largest gatekeepers of U.S. cable are not budging. Comcast, with 24 million subscribers, and Time Warner, with 13 million, control more than half of the domestic cable market. Although they have greater broadcast capacity than ever before due to the nationwide switch to digital television, they are under pressure to devote that extra space to high-definition channels and high-speed Internet, not independent news channels like Al Jazeera English.

Given competition from the major networks for a limited broadcast spectrum, it is often difficult for independent channels to get space—and not only Al Jazeera. Cable companies insist that Americans just aren't interested in international news, and they point to existing options to prove it. More than a decade after launching, BBC America now reaches 65.3 million subscribers.

BUT WOULD AMERICANS WATCH AL JAZEERA ENGLISH?

Daley thinks cable operators are selling short Americans' appetite for news, and there is evidence she may be right. The Pew Center has found that nearly two-thirds of Americans say they lose interest in international news stories because they lack the background information to keep up. With better news available on television, these viewers might change their tune.

Philip Seib, director of the University of Southern California's Center on Public Diplomacy, points to the popularity of international news in other mediums as proof. "I would make the argument that Al Jazeera English is to television what *The Economist* is to print," Seib says in an interview with the author. And *Economist* readers "are not a fringe audience now: their numbers in the U.S. are very substantial."

Meanwhile, Americans' growing reliance on the Internet for news highlights a

related trend; online consumers can circumvent traditional gatekeepers entirely to seek out news they think is important, without reference to what cable operators think will sell. Americans who get their news online are the fastest-growing media demographic, and they are also more likely to be cynical about the quality of cable news. “I see it among my students, especially undergraduates,” Kraidy says. “The generation that no longer watches the networks, that is used to YouTube as a main source of getting news video . . . they don’t trust news that seems to be provincial.”

Whether alternative news sources online will continue to grow in popularity is another question. After all, Kraidy’s students may not represent the national norm. But the rise of online news—consistently shown to be more international than any other outlet—and enduring popularity of hard news sources like *The Economist*, NPR, the *NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer, or even *The Daily Show* should give pause to those who say Americans simply don’t care what is going on in the world.

COULD CHANNELS SUCH AS AL JEEZERA ENGLISH CHANGE POLICY PREFERENCES?

Whether greater access to international news in the United States would prompt changes in foreign policy is another question. Many scholars dispute that public opinion influences foreign policy at all. And the odds may seem long that the U.S. media will alter its long-standing hesitancy to realistically depict the horrors of war.

But with greater access to alternative viewpoints, American viewers would at least do more to probe differences in coverage for themselves. And where

broader exposure fosters greater empathy, local media might well respond with its own more humanizing and equitable portrayal of conflict. As Shapiro from the Dart Center points out, it would not be the first time American media has chucked the rule book in the face of tragedy.

After Hurricane Katrina, Shapiro says, “There was a sense [that] . . . the only way for viewers to understand what was happening here was with a more personal voice, a different set of images, pictures that would be shocking by normal American standards.”

“And it’s true, it was shocking,” he adds. “For a few minutes anyway.”

Cyberspace in Deep Water:

Protecting the Arteries of the Internet

by Michael Sechrist

Michael Sechrist is an international and global affairs concentrator in his second year of the Master in Public Policy program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is also a U.S. Department of Homeland Security fellow and previously worked at the White House, State Department, and Defense Department.

In the summer of 1858, the world became a whole lot smaller.

For the first time, a transoceanic telegraph cable was laid with successful results, connecting the United States with Great Britain. Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom swiftly transmitted an official message to U.S. President James Buchanan. What had previously taken two weeks to send by ship now took less than a day. Common citizens thought it was nothing short of magic. Within hours of receiving Queen Victoria's message, joyous celebrations broke out across major U.S. cities. In New York, the sound of cannon fire and one-hundred gun blasts awoke residents at 5:30 a.m. in a haze of jubilee. Over the course of the day, more than 100,000 people followed a

parade led by Central Park Police through the streets, while fireworks in Central Park and giant bonfires kept the city lit all through the night. Though the cable would fail shortly thereafter, additional attempts in later years were successful in linking North America and Europe.

The world's first cable message had traveled nearly two-thousand miles in a tube the size of a garden hose across seven coaxial copper strands wrapped in gutta percha insulator on the ocean floor. Since then, cables have come a long, long way; a representative from the cable company Hibernia Atlantic noted in a news program, entitled "150 Years of Trans-Atlantic Cable," that today "the whole Library of Congress can be sent in 63 milliseconds across the pond." That technological feat should have people back dancing in the streets as they did 150 years ago.

The speed of information transfer has increased so dramatically because cables today encase fiber-optic strands. The cables themselves are somewhere in between the size of the width of your thumb and the width of your wrist. They can stretch for thousands of miles. And, today, they typically lie unarmored and unprotected on the ocean floor. Their importance is unparalleled. In a 2006 CNET News article, Jim Hayes, president of the Fiber Optic Association, a California-based nonprofit, said, "99 percent of the world's long-distance communications travel through fiber links." Surprisingly, satellites only carry the remaining one percent; they are just too expensive, slow, and unreliable in comparison.

In the United States, for instance, approximately 95 percent of all international Internet and phone traffic

travels through underseas cables. Most government traffic, including diplomatic and military orders, is transmitted through these as well. Businesses use them to transfer trillions of dollars every day. Private companies, many of them not owned by U.S. firms, operate all the cables. When companies and governments lose connectivity, they lose millions of dollars and the confidence of the public. According to a study conducted by Douglas Burnett and Robert Bannon in 2005, “service interruptions of these high-bandwidth underwater fiber-optics communications systems can result in excess of \$1.5 million revenue loss per hour.”

And yet despite their critical role, effort to protect these vital arteries of the Internet remains lacking. More needs to be done on both the public and private end to ensure these cables remain secure and operational. The creation of an international partnership between cable companies and national governments is the missing link. The partnership would streamline permitting, encourage mesh networking, and perform operational exercises to practice disaster recovery.

DEFINING HISTORY

Underseas cables have defined how history has been written. For example, mention the word Krakatoa, and people generally think of the famous volcanic eruption. Yet most are unaware that less than seventy years before the 1883 Krakatoa eruption in Indonesia, the largest ever recorded volcanic eruption occurred in the same general vicinity. The 1815 eruption of Mount Tambora killed more than 100,000 Indonesians and hundreds of thousands more in Western Europe and North America through climate change. It created the worst

famine of the nineteenth century. Dr. Haraldur Sigurdsson, professor of oceanography at the University of Rhode Island, said in a 2007 interview on National Public Radio that the Tambora volcano caused the greatest “destruction on earth, the greatest death toll of any eruption on the earth, the greatest climate impact on the earth.”

But why do we know about Krakatoa and not Tambora? Three words—submarine telegraph cables. One week before Krakatoa erupted, the telegraph went operational, connecting Southeast Asia to Europe. News of the disaster was wired over the British-Australian submarine telegraph line and reached newspaper readers as far as Boston, London, Paris, and New York. At a speed impossible at the time of Tambora, news of Krakatoa traveled halfway across the world within the same day to become the talk of the town.

WHEN AN ARTERY IS CUT

More than 150 years after the celebration of the first cable message in the streets of New York City, I traveled the same parade route to meet with Doug Burnett, the International Cable Protection Committee’s (ICPC) legal adviser. The ICPC is a group of cable companies that meets in full once a year to discuss events and trends affecting cable security. Burnett is a strong proponent of cable security in the legal world and works unremittingly to ensure the safety and protection of our intercontinental links.

In his office high atop 30 Rockefeller Center, we had just sat down to speak when his phone rang. He excused himself and proceeded to speak on the phone for twenty minutes. The conversation started lightheartedly but soon turned serious. His client had called to discuss Typhoon



Figure 1 — 2009 Submarine Cable Map (Courtesy of TeleGeography, 2009. All rights reserved.)

Morakot and how it had severed three underseas cables in Southeast Asia. It was Taiwan again. The country had been struck in the same area in 2006 when the Hengchun earthquake triggered an underseas landslide that severed multiple cables. Just like that, years of engineering and technical construction was disrupted in a matter of minutes, potentially affecting millions of dollars in financial transactions. But natural disasters aren't the only thing that disrupts cable lines. Anchors, fishing trawlers, and even clam dredgers are historically notorious for interfering with underseas arteries.

Cables aren't always broken by accident either. In 2007, Vietnamese fisherman pulled up nearly 500 kilometers of operational cable with the hopes of selling it on the black market. In fact, Vietnam came within one cable line of losing more than 80 percent of its connectivity to the outside world. The situation was so serious that the prime minister needed to create a public awareness campaign to stop further cable cuts.

BLOOD LOSS FOR ENTIRE COUNTRIES

While thefts like the one attempted in Vietnam are rare, single cable breaks are more common. Every three days, a cable breaks somewhere around the world. The configuration of cable systems are designed to handle these one-off individual breaks, and cable repair ships can typically restore connection within seven to ten days. But when many go down at once, it can yield serious complications (see Figure 1). These large-scale outages are usually the result of large-scale natural disasters.

While most people worry about tsunamis following an earthquake, network operators worry about something else—underseas cables. When the sea bed moves, communications cables that lie on the sea bed floor do too. And when they break or bend beyond a certain point, Web sites fail to load and cell phones fail to connect. These multi-cable fractures are now occurring with greater frequency.

In the past decade, seven major incidents involving cable breakage took place: Algeria in 2003; Pakistan in 2005; Taiwan

in 2006; Egypt in 2008; the Mediterranean in 2008; West Africa in 2009; and Taiwan in 2009. In many of these cases, the cable breaks disrupted or stopped 50 percent to 70 percent of international data communications for at least one or more countries involved. During the cuts in the Mediterranean in 2008, at least fourteen countries lost a significant amount of

The next way to protect cables is to take collective action as an international community. The creation of a new international partnership will be essential. An excellent example of this type of agreement is the response to cable cuts resulting from the Hengchun earthquake near Taiwan in December 2006. The event spawned a private partnership known

The creation of an international partnership between cable companies and national governments is the missing link.

connectivity. In the Maldives, the entire international connectivity was lost, while in India more than 80 percent of its international service went down.

PROTECTING THE ARTERIES

Right now, there is no crisis management plan in place to protect these cables. Today, faults in communication cables in water are exacerbated by faults in communication on land. International cable operators and government officials have a poor record of working together during underseas cable crises. They have an even worse record of communicating before a crisis for mitigation or afterward for implementation of lessons learned and best practices.

Some countries have begun to rectify this record. In 2009, Australia became the first country to raise the issue of cable security in any international forum when it tabled a paper at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. Other organizations have started to follow suit, advocating for the topic to be placed on the agenda of the next G-20 summit.

as the Pacific Partners Members (PPM) Committee No. 2. This little-known partnership meets at least twice a year to prepare for events that might affect cable connectivity in Asia. The member companies have developed restoration agreements with one another to avoid single points of failure and large outages.

When Typhoon Morakot struck the same area around Taiwan as the earthquake had three years earlier, the PPM partnership's work paid off; companies quickly rerouted cable traffic over alternative terrestrial and underseas lines. The result: the Internet loaded slower for a majority of Asian users, but, unlike in 2006, no major disruption of international connectivity ensued. The partnership among the fourteen cable operators had worked.

EXPANDING THE PARTNERSHIP CONCEPT

The PPM partnership is a model that the United States needs to encourage others to follow today. Now is the time to expand it and create the world's first

international public-private partnership for underseas cables.

This partnership should team private companies with the public sector in a significant way for the first time. Governments must be active partners in this endeavor since large-scale cable problems will inevitably fall to government to fix. They also have the authority to regulate, permit, and educate public and private groups about the importance of cables. The partnership should emphasize mesh networking to create redundant communication channels and seek alternate traffic arrangements among partners in the event of a major cable outage.

This new partnership should develop a set of industry best practices, statement of principles, terms of references, reporting structures, single points of contact, disaster recovery options, and high-level operational exercises. At this time, a list of best practices does not exist, nor is there even a single agreed definition of what a cable outage is.

Furthermore, single points of contact should be identified within the U.S. government and all other governments where cables land in order to close the communication gap. Should a large cable failure occur, many companies do not have a designated person to inform within their respective governments. Moreover, cable operators do not regularly identify possible cable outage scenarios or develop up-to-date restoration plans. Instead of working on the fly in the event of a big cable break, disaster recovery plans should be developed beforehand to increase the likelihood of a successful crisis response.

Without regular meetings and issue working groups, companies and

customers will remain vulnerable to communication outages. And the governments and citizens that rely on them will too.

Author's Note

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Of Sunlight and Sausages

by *Julia Kamin*

Julia Kamin is a serial social entrepreneur and a mid-career Master in Public Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Her latest venture was citizenJoe, a multi-partisan nonprofit that—among other things—aimed to make the lawmaking process more transparent for the “average Joe.”

Few phrases are more familiar in good governance circles than U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis’s 1913 declaration that “sunlight is the said to be the best of disinfectants.” The saying has become the unofficial clarion call of today’s growing transparency movement, a collection of clean-government advocates from all political camps who share a unified mission: to capitalize on the data-processing, crowd-sourcing, and scandal-exposing strength of the Internet to clean up Congress and bring government closer to the people.

That movement has seen its star rise over recent years. The Web made the dream of peering into every campaign coffer, committee hearing, and government file-cabinet a real possibility and has fueled a surge in funding for transparency interest groups. A series of scandals helped the

cause by prompting Congress to pass lobbyist and earmark-exposing legislation in 2007. By the time a newly elected president kicked off his administration in 2009 signing a memorandum on “Transparency and Open Government,” there was little doubt the Age of Transparency had dawned.

But while transparency advocates celebrate in the sun, another once-prominent political cliché receives less play: “laws are like sausages; it’s better not seeing them made.” That Otto von Bismarck attribution suggests that total transparency may have a downside. Rather than clean up the underbelly of democracy, transparency could just end up turning us all off—or leave us with a messier sausage.

TOO MUCH TRANSPARENCY?

Lawrence Lessig, Harvard Law professor and itinerant public intellectual, pointed out one such potential downside last year. In a 9 October 2009 article in the *New Republic*, Lessig stepped out as the first high-profile critic to no-holds-barred transparency, shaking up a movement that was certain of its moral mission. Lessig, long known as a friend of open information, took aim at campaign funding transparency and made the simple point that information on its own is no cure-all. Only a savvy understanding of the raw data can separate out the good guys from the bad guys.

To illustrate, let’s say you are writing an article about transparency and, in visiting OpenSecrets.org, note that your local representative, in this case, Mike Capuano from Massachusetts, received a campaign contribution from Triumvirate Environmental, a waste disposal company. Your curiosity piqued, you then visit OpenCongress.org to



C-SPAN camera

"GOE II 5-26-07 012" © by Flickr user dalelanham

discover that Capuano sponsored a bill to limit the liability of waste transport services. These facts could lead to different conclusions. Perhaps the two events are unrelated. Or maybe Capuano has a commitment to promoting waste disposal, and Triumvirate Environmental has a natural (and legal) inclination to support a candidate with aligned interests. Or perhaps, more nefariously, Capuano and Triumvirate Environmental

of open source tech gurus and other government watchdogs will figure out how to crunch the information in the wisest ways. All the same, Lessig's cautionary note rightly reminds policy makers of the potential limitations and risks of transparency.

TRANSPARENCY HARMING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS?

Yet, for all of Lessig's warnings about transparency in campaign finance, he gives another target of transparency—the lawmaking process—a free pass. He is not alone. Most Americans would probably agree that monitoring legislators' debates and deal making is essential to holding representatives accountable. Promoters of deliberative democracy tell us that publicity nudges lawmakers to consider multiple viewpoints and articulate the reasons for their policies. If you imagine the average American as a sensible centrist, transparency should mean more

But while transparency advocates celebrate in the sun, another political cliché receives less play: "laws are like sausages; it's better not seeing them made."

had a quid pro quo understanding to benefit one other at the expense of the public interest. Only if you dig for a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the relationship between Capuano and Triumvirate can a fair reformer truly cry corruption—or not. Without smart analysis, some politicians may get unnecessarily sullied while the true scoundrels get away.

To be fair, transparency advocates have never claimed that access to information alone will clean up Capitol Hill. Once data is available, they say, the forces

sensible centrist legislation. As President Obama hoped in his 2010 State of the Union Address, opening the workings of Congress can help repair the "deficit of trust" between government and its people. Democracy and transparent lawmaking just make sense together.

But putting congressional activities on public display was far from common sense to our founders. Though the House of Representatives opened its floor to the people and press in 1789 (with the Senate following in 1795), most of the

business of Congress—the debates, deals, and votes in congressional committees—happened in private rooms. The first peep into committee hearings arrived with the Legislative Reorganization Act in 1946. Full exposure didn't come until the 1970s, though, when a series of acts and rules opened up almost all committee meetings, required the publication of committee votes, and ushered debates into America's living rooms via C-SPAN.

With the curtain to Congress opened in the 1970s, the advent of the Internet in the 1990s brought congressional proceedings into high definition. As the Library of Congress and other agencies placed official records online, independent tech wizards and nonprofits gave citizens the tools to disentangle the raw data by tracking and comparing representatives' votes, scanning and splicing floor speeches, and cross-referencing campaign contributions with bill sponsorships. Even elected officials jumped on the transparency bandwagon, making their presence known online, updating, e-mailing, and eventually tweeting their every move.

There are reasons to suspect this trend toward transparency has weakened—not strengthened—American political culture. By all accounts, policy debates on Capitol Hill have only become more shrill

Americans increasingly feel they can't trust Congress and that their voices are unheard.

Transparency is certainly not the only explanation for America's drift toward hyper-partisanship and distrust in government, but it could be one. Ronald Brownstein, political director of the National Journal, has many theories why Democrats and Republicans have inched away from a culture of compromise and camaraderie in the 1950s toward the state of trench warfare that exists today. One is C-SPAN, which, as Brownstein said in *The Second Civil War*, changed the audience of floor debates “from the members of the body itself to the public at large. And that changed the nature of the debate, from detailed arguments meant to persuade other legislators to sharper thrusts meant to move the public.”

Newsweek International editor Fareed Zakaria agrees that openness may have a negative impact on parliamentary process. In addition to C-SPAN's camera effect, Zakaria argues that the publicizing of committee and amendment votes has left legislators less room for honest debate or compromise. Real dialogue relies on participants being able to change their minds. But with every vote counted along a bill's path, flip-flop-averse lawmakers have a stronger incentive to dig in their

There are reasons to suspect this trend toward transparency has weakened—not strengthened—American political culture.

and split along partisan lines over the past four decades. And while constituents have gained ever more access and exposure to their elected officials, Gallup and University of Michigan polls show that

heels than to change their minds in response to new arguments or information.

And it's not only the public that is monitoring lawmakers' performances. While transparency is aimed at empowering Joe Citizen, it's usually Lobbyist Lou—with more at stake—who's paying the most attention. The result,

Two centuries later, that distance between the elected body and the people has closed. We the people may not be sitting in the halls of Congress voting on legislation, but our legislators know we are virtually breathing down their

While transparency is aimed at empowering Joe Citizen, it's usually Lobbyist Lou—with more at stake—who's paying the most attention.

according to Zakaria in *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, is that transparency has made Congress more “open and responsive . . . to money, lobbyists, and special interests.”

Brownstein's and Zakaria's insights should not be all that surprising. They are an echo (acknowledged by Zakaria) of James Madison's famous warning that pure democracy is susceptible to the passions of the majority and the forces of faction. A republic, on the other hand, has an in-built defense. As James Madison wrote in the *Federalist Papers*, its elected body of representatives can “refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations.” Of course, Madison recognized that legislators could also “by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people.” But on the whole, Madison and his contemporaries bargained that representatives would be better guarantors of the common good than the people themselves.

necks. The flexibility to “best discern the true interest of their country” has been squeezed out by the need to heed voters and campaign donors. In balancing legislative autonomy and public oversight, we have chosen the latter to the detriment of the former.

OR, ARE CITIZENS NOT INVOLVED ENOUGH?

Of course, any discussion of giving legislators more autonomy whiffs of elitism. The problem, it could be argued, isn't that citizens are too involved, but that they're not involved enough. If only the barriers to participation came down, Joe Citizen would get a leg up over Lobbyist Lou. John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, two political science professors at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, wondered whether people would be more politically engaged if there were fewer barriers to engagement. They decided to pose this question to average Americans, and the answer they found, published in their book *Stealth Democracy*, is that “people do not want to have to meet under Rousseau's oak tree to resolve political issues.” Instead, they want “a stealth democratic arrangement in which decisions are made by neutral decision makers who do not require sustained

input from the people in order to function.”

This desire for “stealth democracy” has two roots, according to the authors. First, citizens generally lack interest in policy details (except for one or two issues they particularly care about). Second, Americans tend to believe that they all share similar concerns and values and therefore that elected officials should be able to smooth over minor differences and find sensible solutions without too much fuss.

and a more engaged citizenry, transparency may be responsible for greater factionalism and a disenchanting populace.

This is not to say that advances toward open government should be rolled back. Transparency is too thoroughly entrenched into our political reality and democratic ethos to be wished away. And despite its drawbacks, transparency may hold more benefits than its alternative.

We may, however, want to take a cue from Lessig and consider transparency’s risks

Taking a second look at transparency should lead us to seek other methods of engaging citizens and rebuilding faith in government.

But Hibbing and Theiss-Morse have one more twist in their research. If there is anything Americans dislike more than being involved in policy discussions, it is political corruption. Next in line is the sight of political disagreement, which Americans don’t view as a sign of robust democracy but rather as petty politicking, grandstanding, and lack of leadership.

The bottom line is that Americans would like to let Congress take care of the business of governing, but citizens’ distrust compels them to keep an eye on politicians. The more they get a glimpse of the sausage factory, the more their distrust grows. Distrust and disgust combine in a regrettable feedback loop.

WHITHER TRANSPARENCY?

Madison, Hibbing, and Theiss-Morse seem to deliver a devastating two-punch blow to open government. For all its promises to inspire sounder governance

and limits when it comes to lawmaking. That may mean keeping some doors closed and giving legislators space to openly discuss differences and craft bipartisan compromises.

Taking a second look at transparency should lead us to seek other methods of engaging citizens and rebuilding faith in government. Citizens’ assemblies and participatory budgeting are two examples of efforts that successfully involve citizens in the policy-making process while instilling greater faith in government. As we better understand how we think and operate as citizens, we will likely find more. And as we all come to better appreciate the sausage-making process, we might even end up with a better kielbasa.



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A Delicate Dance: How the Arts Can Improve U.S.-Cuban Relations

by *Jeanette Cajide*

Jeanette Cajide is a Master in Public Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She has a Master of Business Administration in finance and entrepreneurship from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Cajide is focusing her studies on diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Art is a universal language. A dancer from Cuba can understand a dancer from New York City without ever speaking a word. A musical note sounds the same in New York City as it does in Russia. From dancing to music to painting, the arts unite people even in times of conflict. After nearly fifty years of isolation, cultural exchanges between the United States and Cuba continue to be a missed opportunity to close the divide. The United States has poured \$20 million a year into pro-democracy programs in Cuba, with little political movement to show for it. In addition to these programs, the United States can promote cooperation, end isolation, and improve cross-cultural communications with Cuba by increasing the frequency of people-to-

people cultural exchanges. This kind of engagement with Cuba is especially important because the Iron Curtain does not permit meaningful telecommunication exchanges with Cubans.

The late Milton C. Cummings Jr., an advocate for government funding of the arts, defined cultural diplomacy as “the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding” in a 2003 paper, “Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey.” It is a discourse or an exchange that yields compassion and an appreciation for another’s view of the world. The London-based political think tank Demos offers this perspective, “cultural exchange gives us the chance to appreciate points of commonality and, where there are differences, to understand the motivations and humanity that underlie them.” The arts stimulate creativity and compel people to consider a new perspective—the humanity of the “other”—without threat or direct confrontation. And because art requires ingenuity and initiative, it intrinsically challenges the status quo.

Cultural exchanges between the United States and the former Soviet Union accelerated the end of the Cold War. Oleg Kalugin, a former Soviet cultural exchange student with the United States, shared this perspective in an interview with Yale Richmond published in *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War: Raising The Iron Curtain*: “Exchanges were a Trojan Horse in the Soviet Union. They played a tremendous role in the erosion of the Soviet system. They opened up a closed society. They greatly influenced younger people who saw the world with more open eyes, and they kept infecting more

“Ballet Shoes” © by Flickr User Megyarsh

and more people over the years.” This testimony is a perfect example of how cultural diplomacy can disseminate the same values set by pro-democracy programs between countries.

freedom should occur more regularly. One way to accomplish this is through a formal bilateral exchange with Cuba, established by the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Treasury’s

The arts stimulate creativity and compel people to consider a new perspective without threat.

As a young woman growing up in the United States, I personally experienced the powerful impact of cultural exchange. I was invited to train and perform with La Joven Guardia, the National Ballet of Cuba’s apprentice company, during its tour in Mexico. I listened to the dancers’ stories and came to appreciate their struggles. In the end, I made lifelong friends. The palpable political undercurrent could not overshadow our common humanity.

Years later when I traveled to Cuba to see where my mother had trained as a ballerina, I realized the impact that my interactions with Cuban ballerinas had on my appreciation for Cuban culture. I was invited to a beautiful ballet performance in the Gran Teatro and received a private tour of the new National Ballet of Cuba School. Most importantly, I visited “L y 19,” the renowned ballet school where my mother trained. Cultural diplomacy and a common appreciation of art connected me to a Cuba that had proved elusive in the United States for so long. My lifelong friendship with the Cuban ballet community was more powerful than any political division between our countries.

People-to-people cultural exchanges that open the door for meaningful interaction between hostile nations and can promote American values such as democracy and

Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). The two countries could establish baseline terms such as length of stay and visa processing time. Currently, it takes several months to process a visa, which can lead to artists and students canceling planned exchanges. In addition, the United States should expand and increase licensing approval for cultural interactions. In 2009, the OFAC authorized the New York Philharmonic to travel to Cuba, yet it rejected licenses for several patrons to accompany the group. The patrons’ financial support covered the entire cost of the trip for the Philharmonic. This bureaucratic constraint not only dashed a creative fund-raising opportunity, but also spoiled an opportunity to promote appreciation for art and culture.

Cultural diplomacy can achieve greater cross-cultural understanding of Cuba here in the United States. Intelligence communities and media observations about Cuba cannot possibly capture this island nation’s culture and values. As we are learning in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States needs new and creative approaches to “winning hearts and minds.” And it can gain the trust and respect of Cubans with a ballet performance, a painting, or the harmonious sounds of an orchestra because art transcends the boundaries of politics.

UNLIKELY LEADERS

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Unlikely Leaders in Perspective

by Roderick M. Kramer

Roderick M. Kramer, visiting professor of public policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, is the William R. Kimball Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Stanford Business School. Kramer is the author or coauthor of more than one-hundred scholarly articles and essays.

When invited by the editors of the Harvard Kennedy School Review to write a brief preface to their profiles of “unlikely leaders,” I immediately accepted. The topic seemed too provocative to let go. I was also curious, frankly, to see who they had identified as unlikely leaders and why.

The category “unlikely leader” is, from a journalistic perspective, both dramatic and compelling. It seems, moreover, to nicely level the playing field, implying that almost any one of us might become such a leader, if only the right circumstances arrange themselves fortuitously on our behalf. Construed more broadly, the label also implies an optimism regarding the prospect that even ordinary people from humble walks have the potential to achieve leadership status. I therefore had no difficulty being drawn into the persuasive imagery of the “unlikely

leader,” and especially as it is beautifully exemplified in the series of outstanding profiles compiled for this issue of the Kennedy School Review.

Yet, analytically, the category is not quite as straightforward as it might seem. First, and perhaps surprisingly, one might argue that many of the great leaders we routinely celebrate—and many of whom I discuss at some length in my course on the “genius and folly” of leadership—were, at some point in their development, widely viewed as the most unlikely of leaders. One can reach almost anywhere into the historical urn and pull out a name as proof. Each of the brothers Kennedy—John, Robert, and Ted—were dismissed many times throughout their lives as lacking the essential qualities for effective political leadership. In fact, JFK’s close friend and fellow Senator George Smathers once observed in an oral history of the Kennedy years that what was truly extraordinary about Jack Kennedy was the way he had somehow personally transformed himself from a rather non-serious, somewhat awkward, almost shy scholarly individual into an effective, tough, disciplined, pragmatic, and engaging leader. Similarly, Margaret Thatcher and Winston Churchill in the United Kingdom were underestimated time and again throughout their early years, as was Ronald Reagan in America. And who could ever have imagined that Katharine Graham, who went on to lead the Washington Post with such distinction and courage, would have matured from the most unlikely of leaders to become one of the most resilient and effective in her position? Even some of our greatest thought leaders—such as Albert Einstein prior to his *annus mirabilis*—have been roundly discounted and routinely dismissed. Einstein was

told more than once by his professors that he had no future in physics—and he despaired more than once that they were entirely right.

Leaders seem likely—and sometimes even “inevitable”—only with the advantage of the historian’s hindsight or in the biographer’s artfully arranged retrospective narrative. We recognize the “true potential” of a leader, and discern the emerging imprints of his or her greatness, only after we know how it all turned out. In Katharine Graham’s case, her journey of unlikely leadership was occasioned by the tragic suicide of her brilliant but troubled husband Philip Graham. She stepped into—stumbled into, really—the role of leading the Washington Post out of perceived necessity. And it is such necessity that sometimes creates the conditions for these most unlikely of ascendancies. To be sure, there is always some mystery and magic to that process of unexpected and unlikely seeming transformation.

As a social scientist who studies individuals who attain the highest levels of power or achievement, I am often humbled by how difficult it has proven to tease out even the most modest and carefully circumscribed causal claims regarding the developmental trajectories of eventual leaders. Are unlikely leaders those who do not seem to possess—at first glance at least—the “right stuff” of leadership, yet somehow, when faced with an unexpected or unlikely set of circumstances, rise to the occasion? Or are they individuals of ordinary ilk who just happen to find themselves at the right place at the right time? In short, is it character or circumstance—or some brew of both? As leadership theorists have noted, the logical possibilities are virtually endless and the extant literature

an unsatisfying morass of competing propositions and thin conjectures. A reasoned assessment of that large, sprawling empirical literature suggests that leaders, whether likely or unlikely, seldom spring whole out of some well-woven experiential cloth or any precise set of circumstances. Leadership, I would argue, may be an inherently underdetermined process.

As an academic social scientist who takes causal claims seriously, I would want to emphasize that we do know some things regarding the (more likely) genesis and (more fruitful) paths of leadership. For example, Dean Keith Simonton’s *Greatness: Who Makes History and Why* brilliantly arranges the extant evidence and sifts meticulously and patiently through that evidence to highlight which theoretical alternatives become more credible—and which less. His methodological innovations and concerted efforts at building useful data sets have shown that we can do better than simply relying on creative historical narratives or artful psycho-biographies when trying to trace the emergence of leaders, both likely and unlikely.

The following extraordinary profiles, I hope, will both inform and inspire the reader to ponder this issue more deeply. It merits our attention.

USS Green: How the American Military Is Lighting a New Energy Frontier to Combat Costs

by Carolyn McGourty

Carolyn McGourty is a Master in Public Policy candidate for 2011 at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, focusing on energy policy and international affairs. She is a former associate producer for ABC News, where she covered energy and the environment.

Night fell in Afghanistan's Helmand province, and U.S. Marine Corps Executive Officer Michael Buonocore had decisions to make.

The Forward Operating Base was running low on fuel. Without diesel to supply generators, nearly 300 soldiers would be without power, air conditioning, and lights. And isolated as it was from other U.S. operations, Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines wasn't always on a frequent stop for supply convoys.

"Energy in the battlefield is essential," Buonocore says, who was second in command for Lima Co. from 2008 to 2009.

Fortunately, help was en route. Waiting until the cover of night to avoid enemy fire, an Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft headed toward the base to drop off fuel.

Buonocore called all other operations outside the base to a halt. Security vehicles pushed out, and a brave Marine driving an unarmored forklift collected the pods that fell from the sky.

Lima Co. was well-fueled for the time being, but Buonocore anticipated the need for constant recalculation and compromise to manage limited fuel supplies for essential operations.

"There's a fantastic amount of fuel consumed by machines that are so inefficient," Buonocore says. "I cannot understand why there's not a better strategy to move away from diesel. It blows my mind that it's not priority number one."

A BURNING APPETITE

Energy comes at a high expense for the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). The U.S. military is the largest consumer of energy in the United States, and there's a high price in the theater of war to bring fuel to the battlefield. Supply convoys in Iraq and Afghanistan are under frequent insurgent attacks, causing a high number of casualties. In 2009, \$13.4 billion was spent on fuel. The nation's 2.2 billion square feet of military facility space burns \$3 billion of that energy by itself, mostly electricity from coal that also contributes to 40 percent of the DoD's greenhouse gas emissions, as Dorothy Robyn, deputy under secretary of defense for Installations and Environment, told a Senate committee on 27 January 2010.

Concerned about costs in both lives and dollars, there is now an urgent push from the Pentagon to develop green technologies, with the Department of Defense emerging as an unlikely leader in the global energy challenge.

“In short, our fuel inefficiency endangers our troops and threatens our missions,” Robyn stated to the Senate committee.

“Unleashing war fighters from the tether of fuel and reducing [military] installations’ dependence on a costly

consume prodigious amounts of petrol. According to the Defense Department, the DoD burns about 300,000 barrels of oil daily. Generators that power operations with electricity in Iraq and Afghanistan suck up 40 percent of energy used by forces. At the height of the Iraq

“(Convoys) are a big target,” says David Crabbe, who served as a convoy commander for the Marines in Iraq during that time. “It was ironic that here we are in (oil-rich) Iraq, and one of our biggest challenges is refueling.”

and potentially fragile power grid will not simply enhance the environment, it will significantly improve our mission effectiveness,” Robyn said.

The Pentagon’s maneuver to become more energy efficient sweeps across the realms of technology, building efficiency, pricing, and inventive field tactics. In some cases, such as the new \$100-million solar field at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, the military is pioneering renewable technologies on a large scale. Innovative military pricing efforts are being undertaken to weigh the true cost of transporting fuel, providing greener options to be cost-competitive. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is pioneering renewable jet fuel. And the DoD is taking national leadership on climate change in cooperation with White House efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and boost biofuel production.

But an energy revolution won’t be an easy feat.

The aircraft, ground vehicles, and ships that drive the Air Force, Army, and Navy

war in 2003, the Air Force alone devoured 300 billion gallons of fuel, according to David King, director of energy policy for the U.S. Air Force. Given the long life cycles of weapons systems, the introduction of new energy-efficient technologies and incentives will be a major logistical and financial challenge to implement. And, according to a 2008 report of the Defense Science Board Task Force, there remains a lingering attitude at the Pentagon that carbon-based energy remains affordable and abundant.

“The shift to clean energy and reduced energy consumption will entail a fundamental change in the culture of the Defense Department, which has traditionally viewed energy as both cheap and plentiful,” Robyn told the Senate hearing.

Yet top military leadership recognizes the need for such a change. In July 2006, for example, General Richard Zilmer urgently requested that the Pentagon send solar panels, wind turbines, and other energy-efficient devices into the field after reliance on fossil fuels jeopardized American forces in Western Iraq.



Nellis Air Force Base (Courtesy of U.S. Air Force)

Supply convoys transporting fuel were frequently under fire by insurgents, putting troops' lives and U.S. operations at risk.

“(Convoys) are a big target,” says David Crabbe, who served as a convoy commander for the Marines in Iraq during that time. “It was ironic that here we are in (oil-rich) Iraq, and one of our biggest challenges is refueling.”

ARMED WITH GREENERY

To reduce its energy consumption, the Pentagon has tripled its investment in energy security technology from \$400 million to \$1.2 billion over the last four years, according to Robyn's testimony. It also set out a series of ambitious goals.

The Air Force, which consumes 70 percent of military fuel, is pioneering synthetic jet fuel and engine-efficiency technologies. DARPA has announced

an eighteen-month venture with a \$100-million price tag to find a way to make algae-based jet fuel affordable.

“We fundamentally have to change our thinking about energy in the Air Force,” King says.

As part of the plan, the Air Force is transitioning its fleet to run off of fuel generated by the Fischer-Tropsch method, which is mostly gas made from coal or biomass. King says that this will lead to enhanced energy security; Air Force planes will be able to touch down in locations around the globe and refuel without worrying about aircraft-fuel compatibility.

Some solutions are much simpler, such as changing flight patterns and cargo loads to become more energy efficient.

In 2007, Nellis Air Force Base installed the nation's largest solar field. Savings so far, according to the DoD, are up to \$1 million per year in electricity costs, with 24,000 tons of reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

In October 2009, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus announced plans to improve energy efficiency for the Navy and Marines, including ambitious plans for developing a “Great Green Fleet” by 2016, a completely sustainable carrier strike group of nuclear vessels and ships powered by biofuel. He also called for half of the Navy's installations to be powered by renewables in 2020.

Nationwide, military installations are following green building and LEED standards to reduce electricity consumption.

And starting in 2008, the military now sprays insulating foam on temporary structures in Iraq and Afghanistan

to prevent heated or cooled air from escaping, easing the energy demand from its diesel-hungry generators. This has resulted in fewer fuel convoys being sent across the battlefield.

TRUE COST OF FUEL

By the time a gallon of oil makes its way to soldiers in Iraq or Afghanistan, some estimates range the true cost will end up from anywhere between \$6.50 to \$400, after logistics and force protection costs are included.

Given both the security and financial concerns over its energy consumption, the Pentagon has the potential to be a testing ground for the next generation of energy technologies coming from universities, the Department of Energy, and the private sector.

“The DoD can play a crucial role by filling the gap between research and deployment,” Robyn testified.

Furthermore, Robyn said that testing new technologies could leverage costs and advance technologies coming from

“We fundamentally have to change our thinking about energy in the Air Force,” says David King, director of Energy Policy for the U.S. Air Force.

In an effort to shift toward clean and efficient energy, the Pentagon is instituting a set of requirements that mandates decision makers to take into account the final cost of fuel before acquiring or implementing a new weapons system. The DoD is also developing a methodology that will allow for better cost analysis when deciding on the specific types of tanks or aircraft that should be used during times of war.

These innovative pricing mechanisms, Robyn said, can incentivize decision makers to choose energy-efficient technologies.

A LASTING BOOT PRINT

Throughout history, many technologies engineered for military use have later made their way into widespread civilian usage. The DoD has also served as an early customer, creating new markets for emerging technologies such as the Internet and electronics.

the private sector, creating new markets, and in the end, helping to enhance a broader national strategy for energy independence.

“There’s a real transformation taking place with the services about energy,” King says. “Frankly, it’s really exciting. There are so many positive things that can come out of the service, DoD, and the country.”

Going for Gold: How the London Olympics Will Set the Record for Sustainability

by Benjamin Supple

Benjamin Supple is a Master in Public Policy candidate for 2010 at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Supple spent the past summer working for the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games with the Diversity and Inclusion team.

For the international community, the Olympic Games represent a rare opportunity to bring the world together in celebration of human discipline and achievement. For the cities that host them, however, the honor of staging this global spectacle often comes at a high social and environmental cost. From forced displacements to ostentatious, overbuilt stadiums, the Olympic legacy is viewed by many as more of a curse than a blessing. Departing from this unworthy tradition, the organizers of the 2012 Summer Olympics in London have decided to use the games as a model for sustainability, seizing their Olympic moment to become a most unlikely leader in social inclusion and the environment.

A NEGLECTED NEIGHBORHOOD IS REBORN

In the eastern outskirts of the world's second-largest financial capital, one comes across a very different London. The people look and speak different. The soil, polluted from years of industrial activity, permits the growth of only the harshest and most unsightly weeds. And the old canal system, a tourist attraction in the city's western boroughs, sits here in isolation, hidden beneath a carpet of moss.

Yet, it is in this neglected stretch of city, beyond the outer reaches of tourist maps and public transportation, where new business and investment will soon be abuzz and where scores of tourists from around the world will suddenly blanket the streets in anticipation.

Londoners of all locales and ethnicities will become newly united and imbued with pride; more than a million tons of soil will be dug up, treated, and replanted with more inviting foliage; and the canals—too long an emblem of neglect—will begin to glisten and grow, becoming a “blue vein” coursing throughout and restoring life to East London.

In two years' time, London will play host to the 2012 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, in the process becoming a staging ground for best practice in urban regeneration, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. While these two mega-events will come and go in the time span of just over a month, London aims to extend its leadership on these issues long after, using the games to set a new precedent for responsible and forward-looking action for the future of the planet.



Olympic Delivery Authority Unveils Olympic Stadium Plans (Courtesy of Getty Images)

THE VISION

In 2004, the International Olympic Committee voted to award the 2012 Summer Games to London, a city that had already hosted the event twice and seemingly had little to add to the Olympic movement. Yet, in spite of the odds against it, London was able to win the bid by adopting a novel approach to games planning. Instead of viewing the games as a three-week global spectacle, London bid organizers chose to highlight how the entire Olympic planning process could be used as a means to catalyze positive social and environmental change, thereby inspiring other cities around the world to follow London's lead.

Amanda Kiely, sustainability projects manager for the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG), summarized London's

ambitions in an interview with the author, "This will be the first time that an Olympic host city has adopted a fully integrated approach, bringing together the goals and planning processes for the environmental, social, and economic programs."

Realizing that 2012 would also mark the expiration of the Kyoto Protocol, the London Olympic team sought to marry its Olympic program to the global policy agenda of cutting worldwide carbon emissions and reducing energy consumption. The motto of the London Games is "One Planet Olympics," drawing attention to the fact that the resources of three planets would be needed if London's current level of energy consumption became the global norm.

In recognition of this dire forecast, the LOCOG is striving to make this

the first ever sustainable Olympics by incorporating legacy planning into each phase of the Olympic life cycle, measuring and reducing the carbon footprint of all aspects of staging the games, and using the Olympic context to generate greater public interest in environmental stewardship and social inclusion.

Through its inclusive social program, the LOCOG plans to create a volunteer workforce of approximately 70,000 people that is statistically representative of the diverse demographics of London. Food and facilities will accommodate people of all beliefs, an issue of special import given that the games will be held

“This will be the first time that an Olympic host city has adopted a fully integrated approach,” said Amanda Kiely.

THE IMPACT

By August 2012, the fruits of London’s ambitious environmental and social agenda should be clearly visible. The Olympic Stadium will be encircled by a system of rejuvenated canals, connected to the Stratford tube station by a large, arching pedestrian bridge intended to symbolize the interdependence between people and their environs.

Spectators will be transported between venues by a low-emissions vehicle fleet and presented with green travel plans to help them navigate London’s public transportation system.

Rainwater will be stored and then used during the games to flush toilets in sporting venues; buildings in the Olympic village will be 44 percent more energy efficient than buildings constructed in London in 2006ⁱ; and the Olympic torch, normally a source of unnecessary carbon emissions, will be fueled by a newly developed “low-carbon fuel solution.”

during Ramadan in 2012. And all public transportation and Olympic venues are designed to be not only accessible but comfortable for disabled people.

With an eye toward fostering a positive domestic legacy, Olympic organizers hope that Londoners will continue to benefit from the games long after they have concluded. The city of London will create a new urban park with 45 hectares of new natural habitat, which, according to Kiely, “will be the largest new urban park that Europe has seen in 150 years.” And the Olympic village, built to the highest standards of energy efficiency, will remain in place as affordable housing for East Londoners, who will, after the games, now be surrounded by new business opportunities and connected to the rest of the city through enhanced public transportation.

Finally, to further promote an international legacy of sustainability, London will attempt to make British Standard 8901—a newly created standard for sustainable event management enforced in the United Kingdom—an international standard that will become

ⁱ This is compared to the energy-efficiency standards that new buildings in London had to meet by law in 2006.

binding for all cities delivering Olympic-scale mega-events in the future.

THE WORLD IS WATCHING

The Olympics now command some of the largest global television audiences in the world. Looking back to the previous Olympic Summer Games, which were held in Beijing, Nielsen's research shows that 4.7 billion people, or approximately 70 percent of the world's population, watched some part of the Beijing Summer Games in 2008. More than two billion watched the opening ceremonies alone.

Matt Baum, a media expert and professor at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, said in an interview with the author that the 2008 Summer Games, in terms of the sheer number of viewers, was "quite possibly the largest television event in human history."

Yet, regardless of the ultimate verdict on the success or failure of London 2012, what is clear is that London's environmental and social agendas will not be hidden from view; rather, they will be placed at center stage for the world to judge as it will.

AN UNLIKELY SUCCESS STORY

The fact that the LOCOG is striving to assume a leadership role on environmental sustainability is unlikely on many levels. First, it is surprising that the Olympics, long seen as a celebration of profligacy, will now become a low-carbon event with the goal of promoting a more responsible and sustainable interaction with the environment. And it is odd that East London, long hidden from view behind the glitz and glamour of its western counterpart, will soon become the focus of global attention and

The Olympic torch, normally a source of unnecessary carbon emissions, will be fueled by a newly developed "low-carbon fuel solution."

Although China fell short on many of its Olympic promises on the environment and human rights, its Olympic moment still served to increase global scrutiny on these issues while sparking a prolonged debate on how to best address them.

If recent history is any indication, London, like Beijing, may also fall short on many of its environmental and social goals. And given the reality of modern media and its fickle television audience, it is likely that London's potential shortcomings may come to overshadow its many successes in the global spotlight.

London's best hope to rebrand itself for the twenty-first century.

However, as governments worldwide continue to balk at their responsibility to act urgently and decisively on the environment, it is from such unlikely sources as these where leadership is, by necessity, beginning to arise. And with the whole world soon to be tuned in, it is London's aspiration to deliver.

The Empire Strikes Back: Social Media Uprisings and the Future of Cyber Activism

by Ramtin Amin

Ramtin Amin is a Master in Public Policy student at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University where he concentrates in international and global affairs. He has conducted extensive research at the nexus of technology and democracy and plans to pursue doctoral work in this field upon graduating.

Neda Agha-Soltan and a few close friends headed toward the center of Tehran, Iran, in June 2009 to join thousands of others in an anti-government protest following the disputed presidential election. After becoming stuck in traffic, Agha-Soltan and her friends eventually decided to exit the car to cool off. As she stepped out and gazed at the crowd, the sound of a gunshot rang through the air. A single bullet was fired, and she fell to the ground.

Bystanders captured her last moments on a cell phone, and within hours the grainy, low-resolution footage was uploaded to the Internet and soon spread virally across the globe. With links to the video posted on YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, the amateur clip eventually harnessed the attention of the mainstream

media, grabbing headlines on CNN and in the New York Times.

Agha-Soltan's death became a symbol for the Iranian anti-government movement, and online social media amplified that symbol for the rest of the world to see.

TRADITIONAL POWER CIRCUMVENTED

The image of Agha-Soltan's death was not one that Iran's government wanted the world to see. In a country notorious for its media censorship, the emergence of online social networking sites and cell phone cameras now allows citizens to bypass state-censored media instantly and transmit a message or video clip to countless others at little or no cost. Digital media has enabled average citizens, including the two bystanders at the scene of Agha-Soltan's death, to provoke outrage and motivate millions of people to their feet at the touch of a button. Such a level of power was previously limited to just a small number of people within a governing regime or those leading an opposition group.

But this phenomenon is not unique to Iran. Around the world, social networking sites like YouTube and Facebook are becoming unlikely leaders of political power, as citizens circumvent single political or religious leaders to become champions of their own campaigns.

DIGITAL ACTIVISM IN ACTION

Digital activism, also known as cyber activism or e-activism, describes how citizens can use digital tools to effect social and political change. These digital tools range from mobile phones and digital cameras to Web 2.0 social networking sites like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.

The use of interactive online platforms has surged in recent years. YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter are now household names in much of the developed world. These Web sites provide users with a free and easy-to-use platform to post multimedia content, which is then accessible to anyone with an Internet connection or mobile phone device. This content can come in the form of a blog post, video upload, or “tweet” (a short message containing 140 characters or less). While these digital tools were originally used by many for networking and entertainment purposes, they soon became a conduit for political activity.

activism became recognized as a source of political power.

NOT WITHOUT LIMITATIONS

The Burmese and Moldovan cases also demonstrate that digital technology is not necessarily a means to an end. Rather, it is an alternative vehicle that must be used alongside traditional modes of civic activity.

Speaking of this dynamic, Patrick Meier, a scholar who studies digital activism, writes in his blog *iRevolution* that “the future of political activism in repressive environments belongs to those who mix

Digital technology is an alternative vehicle that must be used alongside traditional modes of civic activity.

“This new form of decentralized leadership encourages greater civic activism and is more resistant to shocks,” said Zephyr Teachout, former director of Internet organizing for the Howard Dean for America campaign, in an interview with the author.

Human rights abuses and public protests once masked from the world are now made visible with digital technology. For example, the brutal government crackdown on Burmese monks—who were peacefully protesting for democratic reform—was revealed through video and blog postings, shedding light on Burma’s harsh political realities. Similarly, during the 2009 Moldovan parliamentary elections, digital activists successfully used Twitter to organize street protests and demand a recount. Although the protestors failed to prompt a change of leadership or a new election, the world took notice of their efforts, and digital

and master both digital activism and civil resistance.”

Indeed, one of the most significant threats to digital activism occurs when cyber protests replace protesting in the public square. As more and more activists go online to release their energy and frustration, others may become blind to their efforts, and large-scale movements may be harder to organize as a result.

NOT SO FAST, IRAN’S GOVERNMENT RESPONDS

Iran understands the danger of social media’s power. When crowds pour out into the streets of Tehran, it is not the number of protesters that frightens the ruling regime but the handheld gadgets stuffed in their pockets.

“This is the first revolution that has been catapulted onto a global stage and transformed by social media,” said

New York University adjunct professor and Internet scholar Clay Shirky in an interview in TED Blog. “That kind of participation is really extraordinary.”

While the Iranian government was once slow to respond effectively to opposition cyber campaigns, it has now implemented a number of tactics to counter digital activism. The ruling regime has tried everything from increasing its censorship of traditional news mediums like newspapers and television to blocking or delaying access to popular social networking sites like Twitter and YouTube. But the government hasn't stopped there. In an ironic twist of fate, it has also begun to exploit the same digital interfaces that were used against it. For example, it posted erroneous information about protest meeting times and locations and unsuspecting citizens showed up to be met by baton-wielding militia forces.



“recording video (1)” © by Flickr user Paul Keller

democratic reform or if the campaign will dissolve like similar movements in Burma and Moldova. But what is certain from the 2009 election aftermath is that the utilization of digital technology

One of the most significant threats to digital activism occurs when cyber protests replace protesting in the public square.

Next, the regime established a “cyber army,” managed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. Its purpose is not only to disseminate an onslaught of party-line information, but also to sift through vast amounts of personal data available on social networking sites. This information is then used to track down, arrest, imprison, and even torture Iranian citizens.

Today, Iran is stuck in a precarious state of affairs. As the opposition movement continues to protest in cyberspace and the public square, it is difficult to predict whether it will succeed in achieving

has provided anyone with an Internet connection with the opportunity to lead and direct movements in ways that were impossible a decade ago.

The impact of the Agha-Soltan video is undeniable. The very mention of “Neda” conjures up feelings of shock and hope in all those who yearn for a more transparent and democratic Iran. In recalling her life, Agha-Soltan’s boyfriend told the Associated Press “she only ever said that she wanted one thing, she wanted democracy and freedom for the people of Iran.”

Asking the Right Questions: An Experiment in Health Care Leadership in Haiti

by Taylor Chapman

Taylor Chapman is a first-year Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Originally from Houston, Texas, before coming to Harvard, he spent four years as a teacher in Kumamoto, Japan, and Charlotte, North Carolina, where he struggled against inequity, poverty, and misallocated resources as a member of the Teach For America program.

On 10 January 2010, Haiti crumbled. An earthquake of a magnitude unmatched in the last two-hundred years struck with sudden and vicious fury—then returned again and again. The original quake measured 7.0, but more than fifty aftershocks surpassing 4.5 rocked the impact zone in the days and weeks that followed, causing further damage and ripples of fear. The true death toll may never be known, but many estimates place the figure around 200,000, with a further 1.2 million of the 9 million pre-quake population remaining homeless.

The damage is most concentrated in the capital of Port-au-Prince, but the devastation made no distinction among

classes. It laid low the relatively wealthy enclave of Petionville and wreaked havoc on the shacks and hovels of Cite Soleil, a teeming slum of 500,000. “This catastrophe didn’t target the poor and illiterate,” points out Paul Auxila, a native-born Haitian and project chief of a revolutionary health project in Haiti. “Just like the poor died in their slums, the VIPs died in their mansions—this affected every level.”

Auxila is the father of a health care experiment based right in Haiti and an unlikely leader in a place that’s become a global stage for tragedy and despair. Since 1999, Auxila has led the world’s longest ongoing experiment in pay-for-performance (P4P) financing in health service delivery in sites across Haiti. The project’s remarkable successes hold crucial lessons as the nation struggles to heal and rebuild. If adopted, these strategies could vastly improve the results of reconstruction efforts and the long-term health of Haiti and its people.

FROM POOL MAN TO HEALTH CARE ENTREPRENEUR

Paul Auxila exudes a mixture of technocratic competence and quiet, strong leadership. His caramel skin, impish eyes, and bon vivant’s few extra pounds make him instantly approachable, but his focus and boundless energy tell you that this is a man who gets things done. As Auxila himself puts it, “I have no tolerance for mediocrity or procrastination. In what we do, nothing is just a piece of paper; every line on that page represents a person’s health.”

Auxila’s parents divorced while he was still a child growing up outside of Port-au-Prince, and he soon found himself adrift among his four siblings. When he traveled to Puerto Rico to

visit his sister at graduate school, he simply decided to stay. Despite his lack of Spanish, he enrolled at the local high school, graduated on time, and then earned a degree from Puerto Rico's most distinguished technical university. Immigration restrictions prevented him from accepting the job IBM offered him in New York, and so he ended up back in Port-au-Prince, helping his mother run a hotel and idly passing the time. A chance encounter at this hotel's poolside would set the course of Auxila's next twenty-seven years and ultimately change the way health services are financed in Haiti.

Auxila was determined to earn a place in the organization. When then-MSH Vice President Peter Rusel came for a site visit, Auxila urgently pressed a manila envelope into Rusel's hands as he left. The VP opened the envelope on his flight back to America to find Auxila's handwritten letter explaining the work he had done and his passion for MSH's vision. The next day, Auxila received a call from Rusel. "Congratulations," said the executive. "You are now MSH's youngest-ever international staff member."

Today, Auxila has been with MSH for more than twenty-seven years, serving

Surrounded by such stark failings, MSH faced a critical question: What was preventing these organizations from achieving real results in Haiti?

A consultant with a company called Management Sciences for Health (MSH) happened to be staying in the hotel where Auxila's was working, and when the two struck up a conversation by the pool, they found themselves mutually fascinated. The consultant was surprised to find such educated, multilingual pool staff (Auxila now spoke both Spanish and English in addition to his native French and Creole) and invited Auxila to come to MSH's meeting with the Haitian health ministry to act as interpreter. Auxila had never heard of an organization like MSH, which focuses not on providing health services but on helping health care providers in the disadvantaged world do their jobs more efficiently.

The meeting went swimmingly, and MSH offered Auxila a small, temporary contractor's job to design personnel software. Inspired by MSH's mission,

on projects in more than thirty countries. A key part of the success that propelled him to his current position as VP/COO is the experiment in pay-for-performance health financing in Haiti that he has led since 1999.

IMPROVED RESULTS FROM NEW INCENTIVES

Even before the earthquake, Haiti was a public health disaster. Despite sharing the same island as the Dominican Republic, Haiti's average life expectancy is ten years shorter and its infant mortality rate is more than double that of its next-door neighbor. Many of the problems leading to these ghastly disparities could be prevented through vaccination (an epidemic of measles infected more than a thousand victims in 2000) or proper treatment (common diarrhea and gastroenteritis constitute the second



Child is treated by nurse after Haitian earthquake | “barn får behandling” © by Flickr user UNICEF Sverige

leading causes of death). Entities ranging from the U.S. government to the Red Cross to Paul Farmer’s Partners in Health have struggled for decades to make Haiti a safer, healthier place, but real progress has proven elusive. Surrounded by such stark failings, even with international efforts and resources, MSH faced a critical question: What was preventing these organizations from achieving real results in Haiti?

In 1999, MSH served as the conduit, manager, and consultant to USAID as it disbursed funds for providing key health services to the Haitian population. Dealing with contractors spread across

152 service delivery points, it was essential that MSH get the most out of the funds at its disposal; however, results were “extremely uneven.” Some contracting nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) achieved vaccination rates of 70 percent of their targeted populations, but others with the same resources reached only 7 percent. Clearly, improvement was not only possible but critical. Auxila’s key insight was to imagine that these NGO contractors could respond to economic incentives.

P4P is a financing model well established in the private sector but rarely used in contexts like the one Auxila faced

in Haiti. In brief, the idea is to reward certain results (good performance) with increased economic incentives. These incentives can take different forms: a fee per positive result (salesmen who work on commission), bonuses above and beyond base salary (Wall Street firms and other major corporations), or a portion of the next year's budget added or withheld (the model adopted by MSH).

In Auxila's P4P scheme, MSH chose three service providers with whom to implement a performance-based financing model. Rather than continue reimbursing the providers with a fixed fee for outputs (e.g., the raw number of individual inoculations given), MSH negotiated to "wager" 5 percent to 10 percent of each service provider's yearly budget contingent on the provider reaching certain outcomes, or results (e.g., a target percentage of local children who have received the full range of vaccinations).

The results are stunning. From the three organizations in the pilot program in 1999, the P4P finance model has grown to include more than twenty-five different providers today in regions covering 45

The Haiti experiment shows that this combination—redefined objectives and stronger incentives—has vast potential to improve capacity and results. Most importantly, it proves that P4P can be effective not only in private industry, but also in many varieties of large-scale projects and partnerships. Christine Letts, management expert and senior associate dean for executive education at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, agrees that "the principles of the Haiti project are applicable for almost anything in which you can envision what you want your results to look like and establish measurable targets." The potential applications range from education to health care to community organizing, but most crucially, these lessons must be brought to bear in the rebuilding of Haiti.

HOW P4P CAN HELP REBUILD HAITI

The challenge of rebuilding Haiti is unusual because the nation was already a colony of well-meaning humanitarian organizations before disaster struck. According to the New York Times, there were "at least 10,000" humanitarian entities. Yet Haitians have seen little real

Auxila's key insight was to imagine that these NGO contractors could respond to economic incentives.

percent of Haiti's population. Statistical evidence all along the way indicates that the organizations under the P4P model outperformed those under traditional models and improved their own performance relative to prior years. In some instances, vaccination coverage among a population doubled within a year.

improvement in their lives in years past; for most, life has gotten worse. Thus, the lessons of MSH's P4P model—about how to design a system in which objectives are accomplished more reliably and efficiently—are vital as the nation struggles to recover.

"As we go forward, we must move away from business as usual," Auxila affirms.

“There has been a lot of investment in Haiti, but results are not corresponding.” Above all, the recovery must “really emphasize results, endpoints, and accountability; that’s what the pay-for-performance model is all about.” The clarity and alignment of the objectives are key. Auxila says, “We should rebuild the health system? Great. What does that

Auxila adds, “Not that it would make the tragedy worth it—nothing could—but this is an opportunity to wake up and question ourselves. What lessons can we learn from this as we move forward? More resources are flowing into our country now than we’ve ever seen in the past—how can we make sure we use them right this time?”

These lessons must be brought to bear in the rebuilding of Haiti.

mean? What will it look like? When an NGO talks about ‘cleaning an area,’ what does that look like? Will they fumigate for mosquitoes? Clear away all houses and rubble? It’s not about what are we going to do with this money, but what will it look like when we’re finished?”

As the world watches to see if Haiti can rise from the rubble stronger than before, we would do well to look to the insights of Auxila’s unlikely leadership and the lessons it provides for achieving real results.

Auxila, echoing New York Times’ David Brooks’s view that in Haiti “responsibility is often not internalized,” admits that “accountability has not been a part of our culture.” But the lessons offered by MSH’s Haitian experiment in performance-based financing could help to germinate a culture of accountability in the cracks left by this latest disaster. “In any catastrophe or chaos, there is always an opportunity,” he says. “This is—I don’t know if it’s the last—but a major opportunity for our collective consciousness to wake up and reevaluate.”

Auxila’s P4P experiment holds a valuable lesson for a beleaguered Haiti and all stakeholders in its recovery: we must ask better questions. Instead of “What are we doing?” we must ask “What should we see as an end result?” and “What incentives will drive people to achieve exactly that?”

Leading Cities: An Interview with Mayors Greg Nickels and Manny Diaz

*Interviewed by Jeb Breiding and
Torren J. Blair*

Jeb Breiding wrote for the Economist and has written articles for other important publications including the Financial Times and the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, a leading Swiss newspaper. He is currently writing a book on the economic and political history of Switzerland. He is a mid-career Master in Public Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Torren J. Blair is a mid-career Master in Public Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University with a background in social services, higher education, and communications.

Jeb Breiding and Torren J. Blair interviewed Mayors Greg Nickels and Manny Diaz on 8 February 2010 at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Greg Nickels held two terms as mayor of Seattle, Washington, from 2002 to 2010. He developed a reputation as one of the country's "greenest" mayors by advancing robust environmental goals and breaking ground on the light rail, a rapid transit project in the greater Seattle region.

Manny Diaz held two terms as mayor of Miami, Florida, from 2001 to 2009. Never having held public office before becoming mayor, Diaz used his private-sector background to help turn the finances of the city around and to introduce "Miami 21," a forward-thinking land use and urban planning blueprint for the city.

Both Nickels and Diaz championed the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement in which U.S. city mayors representing more than 81 million Americans have pledged to reduce carbon emissions below 1990 levels by 2012.

KSR

Which current U.S. city mayors do you admire?

NICKELS

Rich Daley in Chicago. He's faced big challenges but has made progress and has implemented an effective green agenda.

DIAZ

Michael Bloomberg in New York City. He personifies the type of mayor who hails from the private sector and brought some of the lessons from that work to his governing style. He's willing to do what needs to be done to run the city.

KSR

**What do you mean by a "green agenda?"
What are the pitfalls and opportunities presented by a green agenda?**

NICKELS

Well, there are pitfalls and opportunities in any agenda item. In my tenure in Seattle, we endorsed the Kyoto protocol and more than 1,000 mayors around the country did so as well. We tried to tackle small enough chunks of the problem in our green agenda so that we could achieve

initial progress and then try to build on this momentum.

DIAZ

Part of the challenge with a green agenda is educational, to ensure that everyone recognizes the problem. I think Seattle and other West Coast cities are well educated on the realities of climate change, but education remains one of the major challenges in Miami. We focused a lot of effort in Miami on education—the foundation of a truly green agenda.

KSR

What were the obstacles for the city of Seattle as you tried to implement a large-scale project like the light rail project?

NICKELS

In Western cities in the United States, we tend to “hate sprawl and despise density.” Despite this, the people of Seattle agreed that they wanted a city that was vibrant and diverse. Urban density is a tool to achieve these goals over time.

“In cities, people see the results of the government’s work. It’s not theory. You can touch and see the progress.”

KSR

What kind of practical policies have you implemented as part of your green agenda?

DIAZ

In Miami, we focused on land use regulations and urban planning through our Miami 21 initiative. We tried to take a long-term view in our green agenda. While some might advocate policies that subsidize the purchase of hybrid cars, we instead focused on creating an area in the city where cars are not needed because you have sufficient density, enhanced public transportation, new bike lanes, etc.

Similarly, when I was conference president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, we launched a \$3 billion Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program to support local efforts to reduce energy consumption and to create renewable energy resources.

Public transportation has been debated in Seattle since the 1920s, but we decided we wanted to be action-oriented. When you have an initiative as large as our light rail project, building political will is the biggest issue. The timing of the project is also very important. You have to be willing to “take the hits” and keep moving forward.

KSR

In these large-scale projects, did you get any significant support from the federal government?

NICKELS

Beyond homeland security, we got very little from the federal government during our terms.

DIAZ

We heard nothing from them with one exception. During the Bush era, homelessness was one issue where we got some additional support from the federal government. Philip Mangano from here

in Boston was heading up the federal efforts to address homelessness. We did see some coordinated support on this front from Washington.

KSR
President Barack Obama recently completed his first year in office. What do you wish he had done differently?

DIAZ
From outside, it's easy to criticize Obama. But he came into office and was asked to confront incredibly tough circumstances. I think he's done a good job. One of the things we did in Miami when the ARRA [the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009] was passed was push for more direct funding to the cities. Cities are structured to have "shovel-ready" projects. Cities like Miami can host immediate building projects and be accountable.

While some might say Obama rolled the dice on health care reform, I would argue that's what a leader is supposed to do.

NICKELS
I'm proud of Obama. If I had any advice for him, it would be to ask less of Congress, to do even more via executive order. If something happens to go wrong, ask for forgiveness later. With Obama in office, I feel that U.S. cities have a real partner in Washington, D.C. With Obama, we're starting to see more movement on important initiatives like broadband smart grids.

Like Mayor Diaz, I like the accountability that is built into city politics. As mayor, you never felt like you'd wasted a day. You have direct contact every day with the people you care most about. I don't think this happens as frequently at the state and federal level. In cities, people see the

results of the government's work. It's not theory. You can touch and see the progress.

KSR
If you were asked to take over a "failing" U.S. city like Detroit for a five-year period, how would you approach this challenge?

NICKELS
In a city like Detroit, you have to ask yourself what are your assets and how do you build around them? In Detroit, I would set a vision for the city to build the greenest cars in the nation. I'd try to partner with the federal government in this effort, try to attract the best engineers and manufacturing talent back to Detroit. As mayor, you set a vision that people can rally around, that people can draw hope from. You try to create a long-term goal that makes people want to move into the downtown of the city again because they believe there is a future there.

Ramping Up Rights for the Disabled in Russia

by Maria Snegovaya

Maria Snegovaya is a visiting fellow at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University. Her research interests also include political economics, development economics, economic history, and environmental economics.

Irina Yasina belonged to the Russian elite for most of her young life. Daughter of a government minister, she was a respected economist and successful politician. She transcended the thick Russian glass ceiling to become head of the department of public communications in the Russian Central Bank and played an active role in formulating Russia's macroeconomic policy. Just a few short years later, however, she lost everything.

After the 1998 financial crisis, Yasina was dismissed from the Central Bank. Vladimir Putin's arrival to power and the shifting elite structure led to the arrest of Michael Khodorkovsky, founder of a philanthropic organization and Yasina's boss. Her association with Khodorkovsky turned from asset to liability overnight. In the midst of these misfortunes, she was diagnosed with an incurable, fast-evolving neurological disease that robbed her of the use of her legs. This young, attractive woman—who had soared to

great heights in chauvinistic Russia—was now an outsider grounded in a wheelchair.

Yet despite this tragedy, Yasina has spent the latter part of the past decade staging a comeback. And she's doing it by fighting for the disabled.

“DEATH-LITE”

In modern Russia, virtually no facilities exist for wheelchair users. Indeed, Russian society scarcely understands the lack of such amenities to be a problem. The disabled consequently face a tough existence, without the support that they might have taken for granted if they were born in America or Europe. Traditionally, disability in Russia means “death-lite”—ostracism, belittlement, and isolation in one's home because public spaces and attitudes block access and empowerment. Yasina has spearheaded a national movement to change this sad state of affairs.

Her successful public campaigns have included “wheelchair strolls,” in which prominent, able-bodied Russians sit in wheelchairs and attempt to visit museums, cafes, stores, and movie theaters. The participants are often arrested by the Russian police for “traffic disturbance.” These innovative “sit-ins” have succeeded in attracting media and political attention to the problem of wheelchair accessibility.

Yasina's tenacity and conviction earned her an appointment to the Russian President's Council on Human Rights and the Development of a Free Society in 2008. She is presently attempting to introduce Russian legislation that would improve the conditions of the disabled by, for example, overturning a prohibition

In contemporary Russia, Yasina represents a new kind of personality—actively engaged in real civil work, wielding a measurable impact on public policy.

on unaccompanied wheelchair users boarding airplanes.

In 2009, Yasina's work helped to convince Moscow authorities to invest in a high school wheelchair-accessible elevator—a modest accomplishment by Western standards but a veritable breakthrough for civil rights advocacy in Russia. She has also fostered a volunteer student movement for the accessibility of public places in Moscow, conducting outreach and organizing numerous charity events across the region.

RAMPING UP THE FIGHT

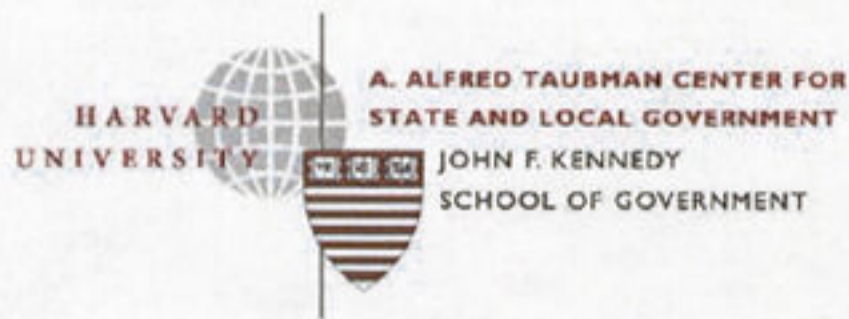
Still, a lot of heavy lifting on this issue remains. The Moscow government building, where the medical examination of disabled people takes place, has an entrance with lots of staircases and no ramps. Yasina has chosen, on principle, not to receive her medical checkup there until access to the building improves, and she is therefore still not officially registered as a disabled person. Yasina's peaceful protests have rendered vivid the problem of wheelchair accessibility, laying the groundwork for future advances.

In contemporary Russia, Yasina represents a new kind of personality—actively engaged in real civil work, wielding a measurable impact on public policy. Thanks to her unlikely leadership, the attitudes of Russian society toward disabled people are gradually starting to change.

In today's Russia, many people perceive that they have little control over access to their civil rights. Yasina's campaigns and tremendous personal drive to improve the conditions of the disabled in Russia will serve a powerful lesson for future Russian reformers.



"Wheelchair sign under a fresh coat of paint" © by Flickr user man pikin



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OP-ED: Why Women, Why Now?

by Heather Milkiewicz

Heather Milkiewicz is a first-year Master in Public Administration in international development candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University with a particular interest in gender issues.

The landmark women's right to vote victory is nearly a century behind us. Since then we have witnessed the 1960s feminist movement, *Roe v. Wade*, Title IX, and finally, a serious female contender for a U.S. presidential bid. It is easy to think that the struggle and strife of the past have paid off. American women can rest easy knowing our job to push the so-called feminist agenda is obsolete. Welcome to the "post-feminist" era.

Not so fast. . .

There is no denying that women have made substantial progress on many fronts. Thirty years ago, the ratio of men to women at undergraduate college campuses was three-to-two, and today the situation is reversed, according to an October 2009 article in *TIME* magazine. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, women working full time throughout the year now make 77 percent of what men make annually, compared to 59 percent forty years ago.

In 2008, we had two women running for the highest elected offices in the United States in the same election year—something unimaginable fifty years ago. Furthermore, a recent survey by *TIME* magazine revealed that 89 percent of both men and women are comfortable with a woman earning more than her male counterpart.

While these relative gains should not be dismissed, there is still a long way to go. Stark statistics reveal areas where women continue to lag behind men. Women still lack equal work for equal pay, and American women make up only two percent of CEOs among Fortune 500 companies, according to a December 2009 article in the *Economist*. Despite the fact that more women have entered the workforce, the amount of time women spend on housework is still much higher than that of men, on average two times as much, according to sociologists Constance Gager and Scott T. Yabiku in a recent *Journal of Family Issues* study. Women also pay disproportionately more for health care than men. A recent Service Employees International Union report estimates that, all else equal, a twenty-two-year-old woman will pay up to one-and-a-half times more than her male counterpart for health insurance. Rates of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and harassment as well as legal impediments for proper resolution are still high. According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 232,960 women in the United States were raped or sexually assaulted in 2006, averaging to more than 600 women every day.

Treatment of women in the media is disheartening, at best. We are immersed in a society where sexist jokes are commonplace, where the word "bitch" is used without flinching, where radio is rife

with lyrics derogatory toward women, and where many television shows and advertisements still portray women as sex objects. Furthermore, images of women in the media can be very misleading,

in American politics, Susan Carroll describes the similarities of Hillary Rodham Clinton and Sarah Palin, not on issues, but on the treatment both received during the 2008 election on the basis of

An all-inclusive contemporary feminist movement could reconnect women with the aspiration of equality.

often displaying unattainable standards of beauty. Twenty-five years ago, the average model weighed 8 percent less than the average woman, while models today weigh 23 percent less, according to a February 2008 Newsweek article. According to psychologists Helga Dittmar and Sarah Howard, actors and models in the popular media are approximately 20 percent below the ideal body weight, a level that meets the diagnostic criteria for anorexia nervosa.

The effects of exposure to such images may also be reflected in the changing trends and rising profits within the beauty industry. In her essay in the *New Atlantis*, Christine Rosen warns of the “age dropping” phenomenon in America—the obsession with youth and its increasing association with beauty, which most negatively impacts women. In particular, she discusses the dangers of the rising prevalence and acceptance of cosmetic surgery. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2006 around 11.5 million cosmetic surgical and nonsurgical procedures were performed, with women accounting for almost 92 percent of these procedures.

The negative treatment of women in the media was evident in the 2008 U.S. presidential election. In her new book *Gender and Elections*, a collection of essays outlining the role of gender

their gender. The striking observation that Carroll points out is that the personality and demeanor of each woman was caricatured in terms of a particular gender stereotype. Hillary Clinton was embodied by pantsuits, short hair, and a tendency to emote stiffly—a generally masculine characterization. Conversely, Sarah Palin was pegged as the hypersexualized female with her more stylish attire, designer glasses, and high heels, as evidenced by the infamous photoshopped image of her standing in front of the American flag clutching a rifle in a bikini.

And, to make things worse, six major studies of happiness revealed that over the past three decades women have become increasingly unhappy. This is in contrast



Photo by Emily Goodstein

to men's happiness levels, which are found to have increased over time and age.

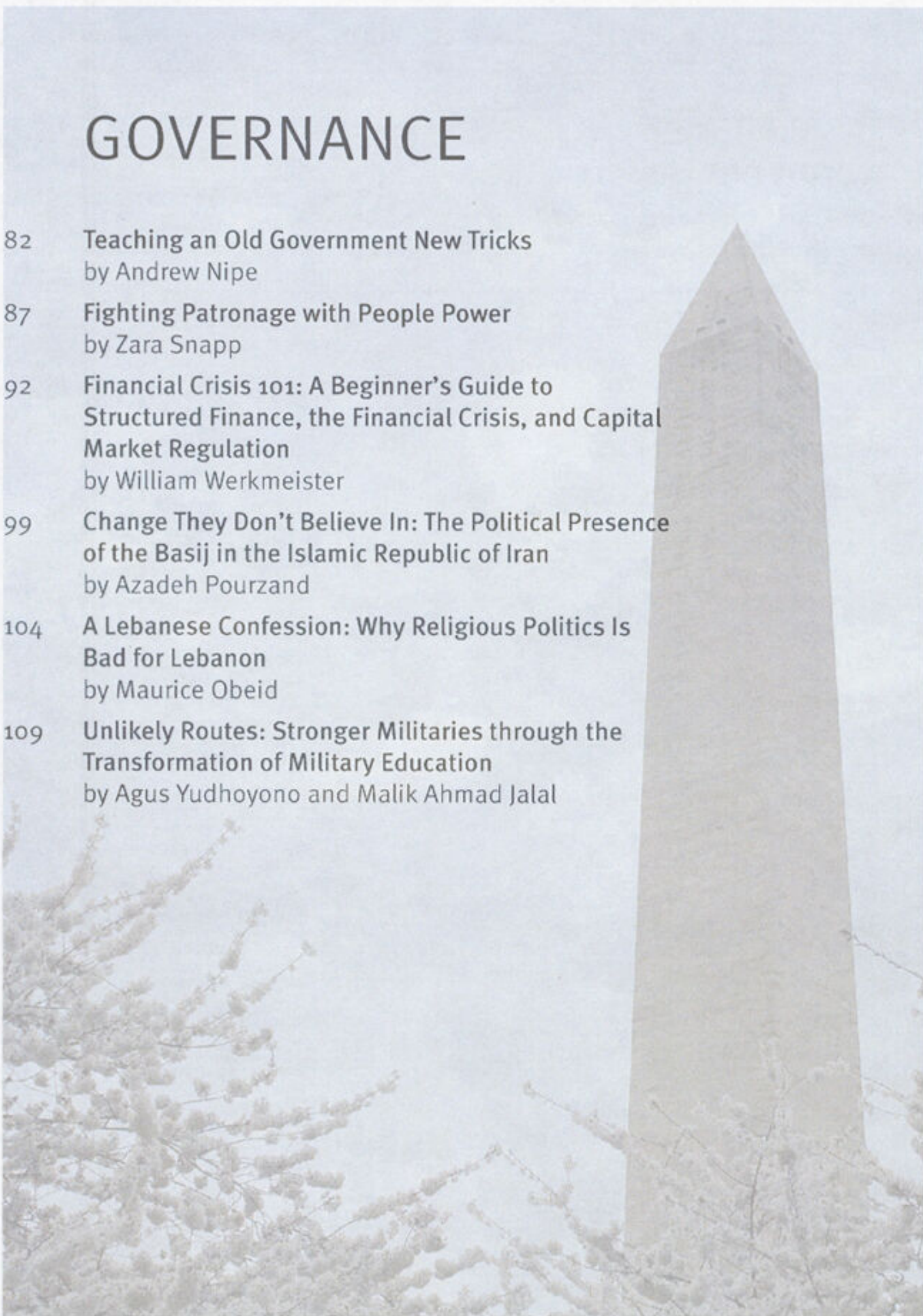
These disturbing trends should not be acceptable to anyone—man or woman. And, sadly, they will continue unless there is acknowledgement by society at large that they exist and need to be addressed. A widespread feminist movement aimed at achieving equality could be the key to achieving mutual respect within and amongst the sexes. This is in contrast to the recent “feminist backlash” in which women seek to disassociate with a feminist movement and the “girls gone wild feminism” that causes women to grotesquely exploit their sexuality under the guise of empowerment. Instead, an all-inclusive contemporary feminist movement could reconnect women with the aspiration of equality that previous generations have worked so hard to achieve.

In a November 2009 op-ed in the *New York Times*, journalist Judith Warner observed that the inclusion of the Stupak-Pitts amendment in the U.S. House of Representatives version of the health care bill “passed not just because a group of Catholic bishops bore down on Democratic lawmakers. It passed because it could”—because it could. The realities that women are facing today—unequal pay for equal work, disparaging treatment in the media, discrimination in society at large, and increasing unhappiness—all exist because they can.

Women, let's not forget all our achievements, for we should be proud of what we along with our sisters, mothers, aunts, and grandmothers before us did to get us here. But let's not disappoint them and let's not stop there. We are in need of a resurgence of the feminist movement, led by women but joined by men. An

open dialogue between and within the two sexes is necessary to create not only an understanding of the problem but a solution devised by men and women together. In the words of singer Helen Reddy, “I'm still an embryo with a long, long way to go until I make my brother understand.” Women, be strong and invincible—you are women, let's hear you roar!

GOVERNANCE

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Teaching an Old Government New Tricks: (How) Can the Public Sector Take Advantage of the Biggest Change in Economic Thinking of our Generation?

by Andrew Nipe

Andrew Nipe is a second-year Master in Public Policy student at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University concentrating in business and government policy. He has worked in central agency strategic policy units in the Department of Premier and Cabinet in Victoria, Australia, and Her Majesty's Treasury, London, as well as in private-sector management consulting.

More than ten years ago, Sweden, a country known for its comprehensive social welfare policy, privatized part of its social security system. This new, private system developed by economists allowed participants to design their own social security portfolio from the 456 different options offered. Recognizing that many citizens would accept the status quo portfolio, the Swedish economists carefully created a well-designed and diversified default option. They also attempted to overcome this "status quo" bias by encouraging citizens to choose their own policies through extensive television, billboard, and radio advertising.

The Swedish economists' goal of crafting a balanced default option while encouraging citizens to attempt to choose for themselves backfired. The advertising campaign framed social security as a way for citizens who hadn't saved enough to "catch up." Two-thirds of the 4.4 million eligible adults were sufficiently motivated to design their own portfolio in the first year of the program¹. However, despite mailed educational material, they chose in a predictably irrational way. Primed with a view that this was a way to move from behind the pack to out in front, citizens inadvertently became risk seeking and selected funds with a high three-year historical average return, low international diversification, and high hidden fees. The lack of diversification resulted in significant losses when the "tech bubble" burst shortly after. This policy illustrates the power—and the peril—of implementing what could be the most influential addition to our economic policy arsenal in over a generation: behavioral economics.

WHAT IS BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS?

Economics is the analysis of individual and collective decision making. Economists aim to maximize overall utility by looking at incremental decisions (by reviewing marginal costs and benefits) and by assessing any impacts outside the parties involved (externalities). Policy makers use economics to adjust the costs and benefits to maximize overall utility in almost every realm of society. Economics informs policies on issues as diverse as corporate regulation, environmental policy, health care, and education reform.

¹ This was significantly more than in later years. When no campaign was in place, opt outs dropped dramatically (to 8.4 percent).

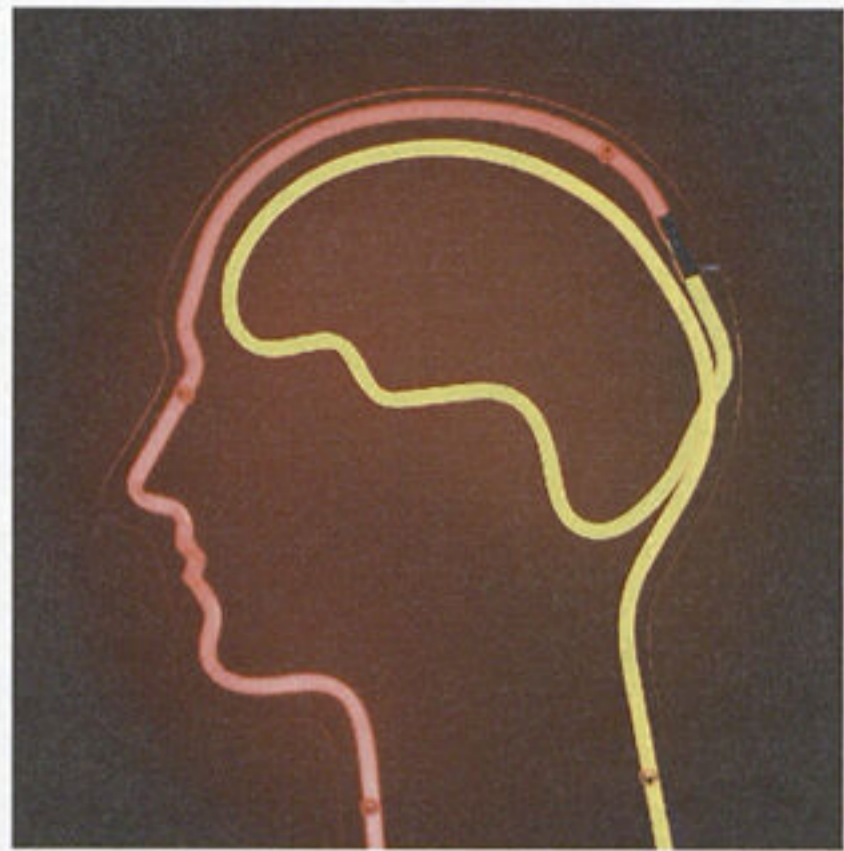
Classical economists view people as rational, utility-maximizing actors. Individuals know what they want and are consistent, methodical, and emotionless in pursuing it. Behavioral economists, on the other hand, tend to see people as swimmers of varying ability, being pulled in certain directions by tidal currents. These currents can be societal norms, personal emotions, or decision-making rules of thumb, known as “heuristics.”

Behavioral economics combines the insights from lab experiments on decision making and the findings of psychological field research into real-life behavior. The existence of these “cognitive biases” is a profound challenge to the “rational actor” model of orthodox economics. It suggests that many of the assumptions used by policy makers in structuring their incentives may not be true in practice.

HOW BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS CAN CREATE PUBLIC VALUE

Understanding when and why people deviate from the “all people always act rationally” assumption can highlight cost-effective ways of changing individual decisions to promote public value. It can also help avoid policy that is inadvertently exaggerating decision-making biases that unchanged could result in large economic costs. Behavioral economics can therefore help design better policy, achieve better outcomes, and cut wasteful incentives.

One example of how using behavioral economics can create public value is through an “opt-out” scenario. In the case of choosing whether to enroll in a 401(k) plan when starting a new job, classical economists may argue that individuals will make the rational decision to enroll, since there is a very small cost to ticking a box; the selection an individual makes should be the same whether the default



© by Flickr user dierk schaefer

on the form is to opt in or to opt out. However, behavioral economics shows that many people assume the default is the right option and do not change it. Therefore, simply changing the default on a form to be opt in rather than opt out in this scenario could allow an individual to save thousands of dollars over a lifetime and prevent the burden of providing for our retirement from falling on the government.

However, the reverse is also true; failing to appropriately account for biases can mean getting the design wrong, which can make things worse. Behavioral economics is rising in popularity and usage, but governments lack the skills and, more importantly, the culture to use it properly. This is why the U.S. government needs to significantly redesign the way it creates policy to focus on four design strategies: (1) simple; (2) implementation-focused; (3) personalized; and (4) tested.

The Swedish economists in designing their social security system acknowledged the benefits that a well-crafted default option could afford the country. That’s why they designed a default that

was indexed to keep costs low and internationally diversified to cut systemic risk. However, the Swedish example also shows how even policy makers sensitive to cognitive biases can fail to understand how biases may interact (and how strong they can be). Swedish economists tried to overcome the default bias with advertising that exaggerated other biases, ultimately leading to a suboptimal outcome.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAKING GOOD POLICY

Good policies based on behavioral economics are made by carefully structuring decisions to take into account cognitive biases in how people decide. This may include design of the default option (because of the status quo bias), thoughtfully structuring options (given aversion to losses), and using information campaigns that improve awareness of the importance of decision making. Many of the changes may sound subtle, but their impact on decision making can be enormous. As introduced above, this section looks at the four strategies of simple, implementation-focused, personalized, and tested.

Simple policies will work better because they avoid the overlapping of biases that led to the failure in Sweden. Behavioral economics frequently utilizes lab experiments to establish and isolate causation rather than testing the relationship between multiple biases. Fewer moving parts make for more predictable outcomes, while policies that evoke multiple biases can produce complex, varied, and unpredictable responses across a target population.

Greater attention to implementation details is also critical in behavioral economics. Decision scientist Robert

Cialdini recently analyzed the wording of the common plea for guests to reuse towels in hotel bathrooms. The wording on a sign in the bathroom read, "HELP SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. You can show your respect for nature and help save the environment by reusing your towels during your stay." Researchers then adjusted the wording with alternative statements that appealed to a well-known bias to abide by social norms. The most effective read, "JOIN YOUR FELLOW GUESTS IN HELPING TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. In a study conducted in fall 2003, 75 percent of the guests who stayed in this room participated in our new resource savings program by using their towels more than once. You can join your fellow guests in this program to help save the environment by reusing your towels during your stay." This sign increased reuse by 12 percentage points. But details matter; the other signs appealed to the same bias but used a different characteristic and were much less successful at increasing towel reuse. For example, the sign using a gender appeal read, "JOIN THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE HELPING TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. In a study conducted in fall 2003, 76 percent of the women and 74 percent of the men participated in our new resource savings program by using their towels more than once. You can join the other men and women in this program to help save the environment by reusing your towels during your stay." This sign increased reuse by less than 4 percent. Small details in implementation can have dramatic consequences for outcomes.

Decisions are individual, and therefore, policy also needs to be personalized. Although we may be "predictably irrational," behavioral economics

highlights that our individual responses are varied. In 2009, Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan undertook a study of direct marketing for credit cards and found that minor details such as a photo on the letterhead matching the recipient's gender and race increased demand to the same extent that a five-percentage point reduction in the advertised interest rate would.

incentives (for those who didn't need it) or fraud (excluding those who shouldn't receive it) further increase complexity. A prime example is the U.S. tax code, which is filled with complex clauses, exemptions, and thresholds.

It might be possible to circumvent the simplicity deficiency if the public sector were better at policy trials. But

The U.S. government needs to focus on four design strategies: (1) simple; (2) implementation-focused; (3) personalized; and (4) tested.

Simple, implementation-focused, and personalized aren't mutually exclusive, but they may be difficult to achieve simultaneously. Continuous policy testing is the fourth recommendation that can help maximize the benefit-cost analysis of each policy by testing different options to determine which is best. Behavioral economics is a fundamentally pragmatic discipline. Vernon L. Smith was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2002 for having established lab experiments as a tool in empirical economic analysis. The field of behavioral economics has gained its insights from testing, trials, and simulations; the *raison d'être* of the field is understanding how and why real people make decisions. Thus, continuous assessment is imperative.

IMPEDIMENTS TO MAKING GOOD BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS POLICY

Policy makers tend toward complexity, and this makes simple policy difficult in practice. Contemporary policy is the art of the compromise, or combining parts of what both sides want. It almost always results in more complex policy. Attempts at targeting policy to avoid wasted

fearful of public failure, policy trials are less common than they should be. Although the public is comfortable with randomized pharmaceutical trials, they are individually less comfortable with, say, their child being a guinea pig in education trials. And the long lag between policy changes and potential impacts also makes trials difficult to justify. The political criticism that results from "failed" policy makes trials more difficult to support. In order for behavioral policies to work effectively, the public sector needs to first increase its risk threshold by providing mechanisms or incentives that would allow more policy trials. One step toward this could be the Social Innovation Fund recently launched by the White House. Additional funds for innovative, results-oriented, nonprofit programs could help prove to the public that the possible benefits of government-funded experimentation is worth the risk.

Another impediment to good behavioral economics policy is simply the skills deficit in government. Behavioral economics relies on decision science, a technical capability that very few individual policy makers sufficiently

understand, as the Swedish economists quickly learned. As a result, even if behavioral economics has public value and legitimacy, policy makers may still be left with a tremendous capability deficit. Building up the skills within the bureaucracy to understand, design, and implement behavioral economics is an

impending public-sector skills crisis as a generation retires. That the two are occurring at the same time could provide the opportunity and motivation to solve both problems at once. The authors argue that if the government invested the right resources, the productivity gains could be immense—\$300 to \$600 billion.

Leaders in the public service need to make significant changes to their policy-making process.

enormous task. The aging of the public sector (and looming retirement) may provide an opportunity to recruit and train the next generation of policy makers in this new and powerful discipline.

Jack Donahue is skeptical of attempts to introduce technical skills into government. His book, *The Warping of Government Work*, outlines how the process of recruiting, choosing, and retaining skilled persons differs significantly between the private and public sectors. The public sector finds it difficult to attract the best and the brightest, and the job security the public sector offers attracts a risk- and change-averse worker. Donahue numbers the behavioral economists in government at no more than a dozen, and the ability to attract top talent is hard—even in a struggling economy.

Overcoming the skills deficit is an enormous challenge. It might be tempting to augment a skills deficit with outside consultants, but a true solution would be to build the long-term capability through better training of policy advisers. This call is directly in line with Linda J. Bilmes and W. Scott Gould's most recent book, *The People Factor*, which argues for a \$10 billion investment to overcome an

CONCLUSION

Behavioral economics has the potential to achieve better outcomes at lower costs. It can also inform policy makers about when the rational-actor approach would produce ineffective or even perverse incentives. It therefore has tremendous potential public value, not to mention growing support.

But without a concerted training and recruitment drive, policy makers are unlikely to have the skills to design and enact policy properly. At least as important as the technical skills is the policy-making process. Even if government can find the skills, leaders in the public service need to make significant changes to their policy-making process to enable the key elements of good behavioral economics policy to come through. Policy needs to be simple, personalized, details-focused, and continuously tested. Public-service leaders need to make sure their teams approach behavioral economics with a fresh take on policy making. Without changing the status quo of policy making, behavioral economics could itself prove to be a bigger bias than the very problems it seeks to overcome.

Fighting Patronage with People Power

by Zara Snapp

Zara Snapp is a 2010 Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She has worked in community-based organizations in Latin America and the United States for the past nine years, most recently with the Kellogg Foundation.

I had only been in Colombia for two days, but it was time to start researching local citizens' motivations for political involvement as part of the research for my master's thesis. As I approached a street vendor sitting on a bench, he continued calmly polishing watches with a black velvet cloth. This man was my first target. When I asked if he would answer a few questions, he readily agreed.

I soon learned that Wilson, the watch seller, had never voted in any elections, and he identified himself as not being politically active. However, as we spoke further, he told me about his role as the president of a union of street vendors and the vendors' attempts to organize themselves to attain more rights. Even though he may have felt a sense of powerlessness at the electoral level, he still was trying to affect change on a local level. This left me to wonder: What does it take to engage someone like Wilson in

formal political activities and to restore his hope in electoral mechanisms of change?

THE LEGACY OF PARTY PATRONAGE IN LATIN AMERICA

Throughout Latin American history, political candidates have bought votes using money, food, or land. In fact, during election seasons, it is not uncommon to see candidates handing out titles for plots of land to their voter base. Yet, surprisingly, payment for votes does not seem to be the primary reason for why people choose to support candidates and political parties. Despite the fact that one in five voters in Colombia has been offered money or other compensation for his or her vote, according to the 2008 Latinobarometer survey, as I talked to folks in the streets no one mentioned that as a motivation for voting or not voting. This could partly be attributed to shame regarding payment or to a voter having received an amount he or she perceives as too insignificant to mention. Regardless, the absence of payment in discussions with voters signals the potential for more effective means of engaging citizens.

However, these unscrupulous practices have resulted in a majority of citizens feeling disenfranchised with political systems. When political participation is driven by a promise of payment, political demonstrations lose legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Instead, cynicism and distrust in the political system breed apathy in the greater public regarding its ability to play an active, meaningful role in the policy process. Additionally, when insecurity infiltrates every aspect of public and private life, people are more likely to avoid risk taking in politics. Some individuals tended to cite long hours on the job as a reason for not



The author interviewing Senate candidate Juan Carlos Florez, whose campaign is run solely by volunteers.

getting involved in politics, and others simply did not believe the political class has the capacity to bring change.

So, the question remains: What inspires participation beyond patronage, and how can campaigns tap into that motivation to transform the conception of citizenship, encourage democracy, and, ultimately, win elections?

In order to inspire participation and begin to answer this question, campaigns should focus on strategies that involve building social capital amongst their supporters. Decentralizing both campaign roles and the development of a candidate's political platform so that participation is not overly reliant on one person and instead builds capacity within communities to take action can be an effective way to build this social capital.

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME PARTY PATRONAGE

Bottom-up approaches focusing on building social capital in the community appear to be more sustainable over the long term than relying on top-down

instruments such as the promotion of charismatic leaders.

The Difficulties with a Top-Down Approach

Charismatic leadership can serve as an impetus to overcome patronage by motivating greater participation among citizens to bring change. In the case of Colombia and many other Latin American countries, charismatic leadership is necessary for most any politician to succeed. However, the decision to harness the momentum of a charismatic leader in a positive direction does not always occur. While the populist rhetoric of many political leaders increases citizen participation in an election context, it often fails to create a sustained political dialogue between communities and policy makers.

In Colombia, charismatic leadership has been a significant factor in promoting increased political participation. Colombian President Alvaro Uribe and others in his political coalition have taken on the role of the ultimate authorities with responsibility for the country's internal security conflict as a means of maintaining a hold on the voting majority. Despite slight declines in voter participation since Uribe's first election, citizens are hesitant to support regime change during crises, and if Uribe can sustain levels of heightened tension, there is a greater probability he will maintain electoral power. The trend of great leaders inspiring increased political participation is mirrored in countries such as Venezuela with President Hugo Chavez and Bolivia with President Evo Morales. However, the question of how sustainable or organic this participation truly is remains unclear.

Charismatic leadership can also be deployed to perpetuate patronage when leaders move to stifle opposition. After the region's transition to democracy in the late twentieth century, constitutional term limits were placed throughout Latin America in an attempt to eliminate the tradition of patronage politics and dictatorships. It would appear that this rationale has faded from the memory of many who continue to favor a strongman style of leadership. Presidents in Bolivia,

Harvard University, describes social capital as social networks, norms, and trust that encourage citizens to act in concert and successfully pursue shared values and goals. Greater social capital can motivate participation, since citizens with a sense of community are more likely to raise their voices and influence policy makers.

Mitchell Seligson, a professor at Vanderbilt University and director of the

What inspires participation beyond patronage, and how can campaigns tap into that motivation to transform the conception of citizenship, encourage democracy, and, ultimately, win elections?

Venezuela, and Ecuador have changed their constitutions to allow themselves to lift or extend their own term limits. While this could be interpreted as an indication of citizens' greater trust for those in power, it also signals an increased dependence on one person's leadership. The only president in the region who has gracefully exited and transferred power while maintaining consistently high levels of popularity has been Chilean President Michelle Bachelet.

Building Social Capital from the Bottom Up

Demonstrating tangible change through engagement in the political process and offering meaningful roles in campaigns can also have the potential to stimulate participation, but this rests greatly on the ability of campaign organizers to build social capital by including diverse communities. Academic and author Robert Putnam, the Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy at

Latin American Public Opinion Project, conducted a 2005 study linking social capital and political participation in Latin America. He found that weakened intermediary organizations—such as community-based groups, interest groups, or other associations—currently create an environment suited to “neo-populist” presidents who are only held accountable in electoral terms and can manipulate public policy and institutions to permit themselves free exercise of power.

In the campaigns I interviewed, the common motivation for all volunteers was feeling like they were part of a movement of “like-minded” people, which created a social network that also existed beyond the work they were doing together. Engaging, maintaining, and sustaining political participation is thus transformed into engaging, maintaining, and sustaining group identity.

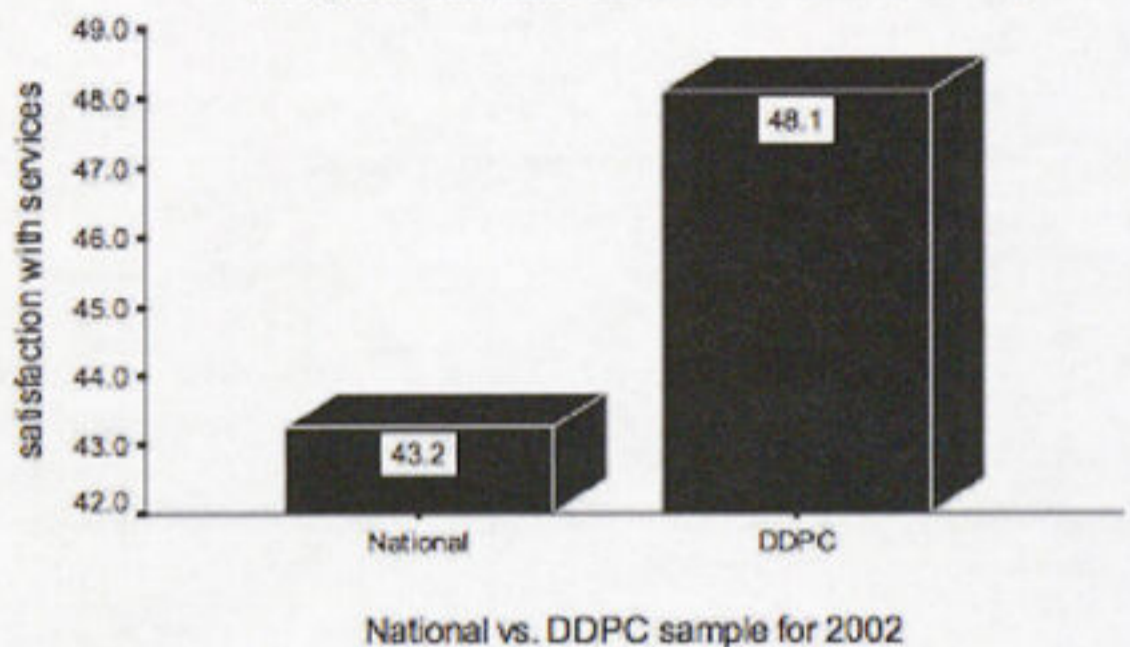
From neoliberal economic reforms in the region to a prevalence of dictatorships, civil society has only recently begun to take on a larger role within the public policy discourse, with the suggestion that a campaign must strive to increase social capital and thus tap into participation networks. The question remains, however, how does one build and spread common norms, trust, and shared goals?

DECENTRALIZATION: A STRUCTURAL WAY TO INCREASE SOCIAL CAPITAL

Seligson asserts that the decentralization of government functions can encourage greater participation, more meaningful roles, and increased trust among constituents and institutions. Referring to a case study of Bolivia, Seligson found that decentralization led to more local decision making, which in turn contributed to the building of stronger social capital. In Seligson's study, when communities felt closer to decision makers they were more likely to make demands on them, leading to greater accountability and ultimately increased satisfaction with government policy and services. He noted in the study, "an important dynamic developed around this interaction between civil society and local government, one that helped strengthen them both and build social capital."

Figure 1 demonstrates an increase in satisfaction with the services and

National vs. DDPC: Satisfaction with services
controlled for urbanization, education and income
(among those who made a demand within the last 12 months)



Sig. = .02

Figure 1 — Satisfaction with services after decentralization (controlled for urbanization, education, and income). Note: in the figure "DDPC" refers to the municipalities in Bolivia that decentralized services. (Source: Mitchell Seligson's "Can Social Capital be Constructed?" 2005.)

treatment provided by municipal officials in Seligson's Bolivian study when controlling for urbanization, education, and income. Decentralization was also found to create greater participation in rural areas, thus decreasing the urban bias common in other realms of politics. As many folks in Colombia expressed to me, "son los campesinos que sufren," which translates to "it is the peasants that suffer." Within national politics, creating opportunities for decentralization might once again engage rural communities in the public policy process and create incentives for long-term vision over short-term monetary gains.

However, decentralization doesn't fully answer the question of how to induce greater political participation. Rather, it is a tool that may prove useful over the long term. This illustrates an important difficulty with the question of motivating participation—mechanisms to measure

it take a long time and need sustained involvement of various stakeholders. Better education, role modeling positive participation, and even strengthening networks are all long-term goals with few visible, short-term solutions.

THE CHALLENGE OF DECENTRALIZING POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Shifting the paradigm from an all-encompassing charismatic leader is difficult, but moving campaigns into a more decentralized organizing model might provide the means to motivate and stimulate participation. Greater accountability could make it hard if not impossible for these politicians to promise but not follow through.

Decentralizing campaigns could take many forms and might include:

- Building regional teams to run local events
- Designing and implementing a road map for any volunteer that enters the organization
- Creating mechanisms for each volunteer to reach a specific goal that then moves that individual to the “next level” and provides greater responsibility
- Identifying “uncontaminated” political networks that can be tapped for new supporters and volunteers

Ultimately, this will flatten the hierarchy of a political organization, which, according to academic discourse, results in higher participation since greater responsibility lies with each participant. However, this can be difficult for those running a national campaign because it implies a loss of control. On the upside, decentralization will mean there is greater cultural relevance to every campaign



Sergio Fajardo, presidential candidate, campaigning on the streets of Bogota. His platform is based on eliminating corruption and generating opportunities throughout Colombia.

activity and the talents of the community are more likely to be fully utilized.

Imagine if campaigns could tap into the natural organizing ability of someone like Wilson and combine tangible change and grassroots organizing while building social capital across socioeconomic lines. Perhaps then at the age of thirty-eight, he would vote for the first time.

Financial Crisis 101: A Beginner's Guide to Structured Finance, the Financial Crisis, and Capital Market Regulation

by William Werkmeister

William Werkmeister is a concurrent graduate student at both the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the Yale School of Management, where he focuses on financial crisis, economic development, and economic development policy. Prior to coming to Harvard, he was an investment banker with the Structured Finance Division of Citigroup and a founding partner of two venture capital funds.

“Securitization,” “special purpose entities,” “leverage,” “subprime,” and “collateralized mortgage-backed securities” are all terms commonly used by financial market experts to describe the mortgage crisis. Yet, these terms mean very little to the average American.

This article seeks to demystify the financial crisis—to explain the mortgage origination and securitization process, the causes of the financial crisis, and finally, some potential ramifications of the crisis and the monetary policy used to target it. We also suggest a new potential contributing factor for the crisis resulting

from a disconnect between policy makers and Wall Street.

THE MORTGAGE ORIGINATION AND SECURITIZATION PROCESS

Securitization is the process whereby mortgage, auto, credit card, student, and other types of loans are pooled and used as backing, much in the same way houses back mortgage loans, for the issuance of bonds. The mortgage payments are used to fund future bond interest and payment obligations. The securitization process is vital to helping banks issue new mortgage and business loans by allowing lenders to convert existing loans to cash. The lenders can then use that cash to finance new loans, which will also eventually be securitized and resold.

Just as a wealthy family safeguards its assets using legally separate trusts, a lender's loans are transferred to a trust, which securitizes the loans and issues bonds through an investment bank. The cash from the sale of the securities is used to compensate the lender. This “asset transfer” reduces risk by eliminating the asset's exposure to the general corporate liability of the lender and, therefore, increases the value of the loans.

During the mortgage securitization process, investment banks create classes of bonds, varying in their maturity length and risk levels, called mortgage-backed securities (MBS) (see Figure 1). For other assets—car loans, student loans, and business loans—the securities are known as asset-backed securities (ABS). The payments from underlying mortgages are used to fund the mortgage-backed security payments; typically, the mortgaged-backed bonds are paid in a sequential order, with one being completely paid off before the next bond makes any payment. The MBS that

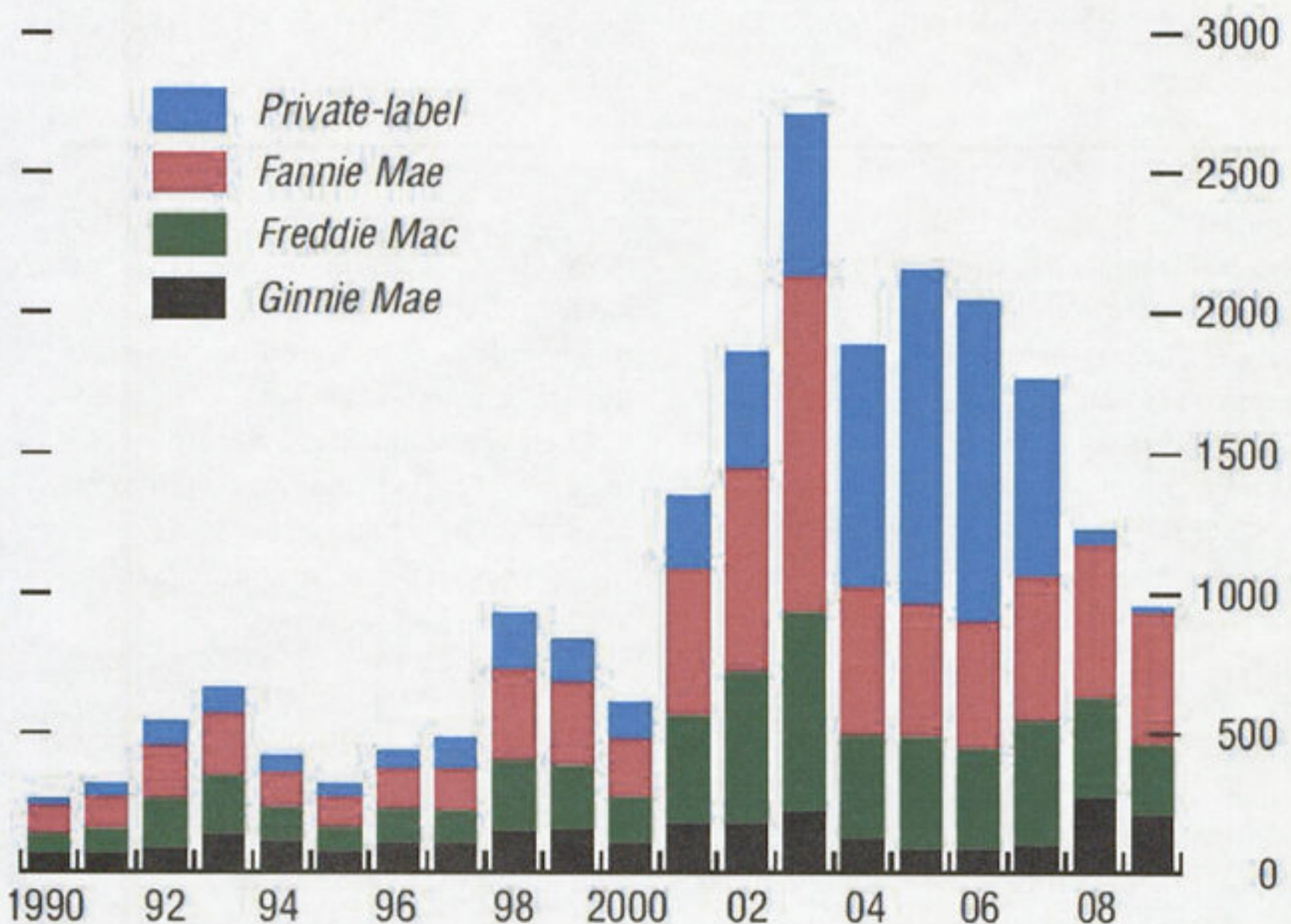
are paid first are considered safer and, generally, carry a lower interest rate than those that pay off later. Much in the way that individuals vary in the degree of risk they take on when making investments, so do investors. As a result, MBS tend to be more appealing to investors than actually buying the underlying mortgage loans because the MBS allow investors to select bonds matching their particular risk preferences. Pension funds and insurance companies typically prefer lower-returning, lower-risk investments, whereas hedge funds seek higher returns and are willing to invest in riskier assets to achieve these returns. In almost all cases, however, most institutional investors would not purchase thirty-year mortgages. Investment bankers also attempt to structure MBS so that they are less risky than the underlying mortgage collateral; the securitization

process actually reduces investor risk. For example, the payments made from MBS to investors are typically less than the total interest and principal payments made on the underlying mortgages, a feature termed “excess spread.” This excess spread creates a cash cushion if some mortgages end up defaulting.

DISCONNECT BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND WALL STREET

The mortgage market, which includes brokers, lenders, borrowers, investment bankers, special servicers, and institutional investors, is a complex system. The years preceding the mortgage crisis saw the introduction of mortgage issuance and capital market regulations, with legislators not fully understanding the effects of their new laws, which would later “set the stage” for the mortgage crisis.

Figure 1 — MBS Issuances by Year (in billions of U.S. dollars) (Source: IMF)



One example of these unintended consequences is the Clinton administration's National Homeownership Strategy. An attempt to help people purchase homes, this policy introduced bank quotas for high-risk, subprime loans and loans based on race rather than credit analysis, leading to an overall increase in mortgage risk levels. Subprime loans are loans provided to borrowers with very poor credit whom lenders believe are more likely to default on their debts. The National Homeownership Strategy also introduced "no-doc" loans, mortgage loans for which the borrower is not required to prove his or her income. On top of these policy concerns, appraisers, often hired by mortgage brokers, and in the backdrop of a skyrocketing mortgage market, began vastly inflating estimated housing prices.

from the higher risk. Not only did the mortgage loans begin failing more regularly, but when default occurred, losses were more extreme, as lenders began offering higher-levered 90 percent and even 100 percent or more loan-to-value mortgages. As was typical in a mortgage cycle, mortgage losses increased and some higher-risk MBS failed.

The severity of the current mortgage failures was exacerbated by mortgage fraud resulting from falsified, inflated appraisals and the "no-doc" loans policy. These "no-doc" loans had an unintended consequence at the securitization level—far down the mortgage chain from the borrowers the policy was intended to help. Investment bankers, relying on the information provided by borrowers and mortgage brokers, underestimated mortgage risk levels, as borrowers

The securitization process is vital to helping banks issue new mortgage and business loans by allowing lenders to convert existing loans to cash.

Quotas for subprime lending lowered the credit quality of mortgages issued over the past decade. Investment bankers began securitizing lower-quality subprime loans in large scale by the early 2000s. Banking data began to show, on average, deteriorating FICO scores (a measure of borrower credit quality) and loan-to-value ratios. Even though the increasing risk and mortgage default rates led to the failure of riskier bond classes, the effect was largely muted by structured finance bankers who, in securitizing the increasingly riskier mortgage loans, added more "credit enhancement" to deals to protect mortgage-backed bonds

misrepresented their incomes and, therefore, their ability to make mortgage payments. Investment bankers failed to add sufficient credit enhancement to the MBS, due to the misrepresentations. Inflated appraisals and inaccurate data meant that MBS were often rated as far safer than, in actuality, they were, and MBS began to fail at rates higher than predicted by the models.

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL CAUSES

While the financial crisis has its roots in the mortgage and structured finance markets, its severity is a result of many regulatory, industry, and structural

factors, including a lax regulatory environment, a lending boom, mortgage fraud, increased leverage and interconnectedness within the financial sector, maturity mismatches at financial institutions, and concentrations of mortgage risk within the banking sector.

Banks had traditionally securitized loans not only to generate liquidity, but also to reduce their exposure to loans and, sometimes, particular classes of loans (e.g., mortgage, auto, etc.). Yet, in the past decade, banks increasingly bought MBS backed by subprime mortgage pools. International banking agreements mandated “risk-weighted” capital adequacy ratios that required a greater ratio of equity capital to be held against riskier asset classes. Many lenders, noting that highly rated MBS required them to hold less than half the capital required for unsecuritized mortgages, began swapping long-term mortgage holdings for mortgaged-backed bonds. While many of the MBS were AAA-rated (a rating shared with safe U.S. Treasury bonds), they were still far riskier than Treasuries yet they had the very same capital requirements as Treasuries. Banks also benefitted, as AAA-rated MBS usually offered much higher investment returns than similarly rated treasuries and corporate bonds. Investment banks also began investing heavily in mortgage-backed securities in 2004, after the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission allowed them to manage their own credit risk and decide for themselves how much cash to keep against the MBS, as Viral V. Acharya and Matthew Richardson wrote in “Causes of the Financial Crisis” in a 2009 issue of *Critical Review*.

Investment banks also placed many mortgages, either pre- or post-securitization, onto off balance sheet

entities called conduits and structured investment vehicles (SIVs). SIVs bought MBS that could not be placed with other investors, and conduits were used to store mortgages until enough were available for a securitization deal (typically, \$2 billion to \$3 billion in mortgages were needed to complete a bond offering). The entities issued short-term—less than one year—notes securitized by the conduit’s assets, termed asset-backed commercial paper (ABCP). The banks often guaranteed the ABCP, yet, because the guarantees were less than one year in term, the banks were not required under international banking rules to hold capital against the guarantees. Thus, the banks were still essentially exposed to the risk of the mortgages and collateralized mortgage-backed obligations and yet did not hold equity capital against the risk.

In addition to bank guarantees of conduits, financial insurers guaranteed MBS and other securities, and many banks engaged in “interbank” lending. This created the risk that the large-scale failure of MBS, or the failure of a large bank, could cause adverse effects or failures at other institutions. AIG was driven to reorganization by the rapid failure of many bonds it guaranteed. At the time of its bankruptcy, Lehman Brothers was in default on more than \$8 billion in debt to Citigroup. Interconnected guarantees for MBS helped to spread the financial crisis from one institution to the next.

MORAL HAZARD AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

While the National Homeownership Strategy increased home ownership levels in the United States, particularly among the poor and minority classes, it also had the unintended effect of fostering

mortgage fraud and reducing the reliability of credit data used by the capital markets. Many argue that the crisis was further perpetuated by moral hazard and perverse incentive structures throughout the credit markets—hazards that need to be addressed to reduce the risk of future crises. The most prominent issues of moral hazard include the following:

- **Mortgage broker compensation and regulation.** Mortgage brokers are compensated on a fee basis relative to the value of mortgages originated and, therefore, are incentivized to work with appraisers to inflate values and borrowers to inflate reported incomes.
- **Appraisers.** Until recently, banks often allowed mortgage brokers to choose appraisers versus using independent ones.
- **Bank securitization.** The securitization process allows banks to “sell off” loans on a regular basis, eliminating their long-term exposure, except perhaps reputational, to the loans they originate. A structure, similar to Small Business Administration loans, where lenders hold a small portion of the loans in the long term would still facilitate liquidity in credit markets while at the same time forcing banks to take a long-term interest in the loans they originate.
- **Rating agencies.** Rating agencies, which grade the bond tranches investment bankers structure, are compensated on a per-rating basis, not by investors, but, rather, by the investment banks. Some argue the compensation structure incentivizes rating agencies, which wish to maintain long-term relationships

with the banks for future deals, to compromise on ratings.

BANKRUPTCIES, BAILOUTS, AND THE AFTERMATH

The effects of the U.S. mortgage crisis were far-reaching, affecting not only credit market participants, but also spreading to the U.S. real markets and, eventually, sparking a global economic recession. Insurance companies and pension funds, while not suffering significant investment losses, were affected by ratings downgrades on the bonds they purchased. Such downgrades lowered the credit quality of their investment portfolios. Insurance companies were forced to cut back on issuance of new policies, attempt to raise more capital, and swap out lower-rated assets for higher-rated ones.

By 2007, the ABCP market had dried up, and banks were unable to refinance the one-year commercial paper backing the longer-term assets in their conduits and SIVs. Some banks attempted to take the SIVs back onto their balance sheets, and at one point, the federal government proposed the funding of a master SIV to purchase the toxic assets. The master SIV never came to fruition. Bear Stearns, one of the originators of the structured finance markets, had associated SIVs leveraged between five and fifteen times. Other investors in high-risk tranches sold directly into the market, such as hedge funds, suffered significant losses. With hedge funds, insurance companies, and SIVs unable or unwilling to buy MBS, banks no longer had an outlet to sell their MBS and, therefore, convert existing mortgages to cash; mortgage issuance by banks slowed, and by 2008 mortgages were issued to only the very best borrowers.

Some market participants received federal aid, others did not. The U.S. federal government invested hundreds of billions of dollars to shore up Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, quasi-governmental agencies (with private investors) that guarantee loan pools—and also buy, pool, and issue mortgage-backed securities and pass-through certificates. While helping to sustain liquidity in the mortgage

obligations to numerous other banks, may have caused interbank failures. But neither Bear Stearns, one of the originators of the MBS markets, nor Lehman Brothers were large commercial banks; the Treasury supported JP Morgan's purchase of Bear Stearns, while not intervening to help save Lehman. Both accumulated significant exposure to MBS throughout the 1990s and 2000s.

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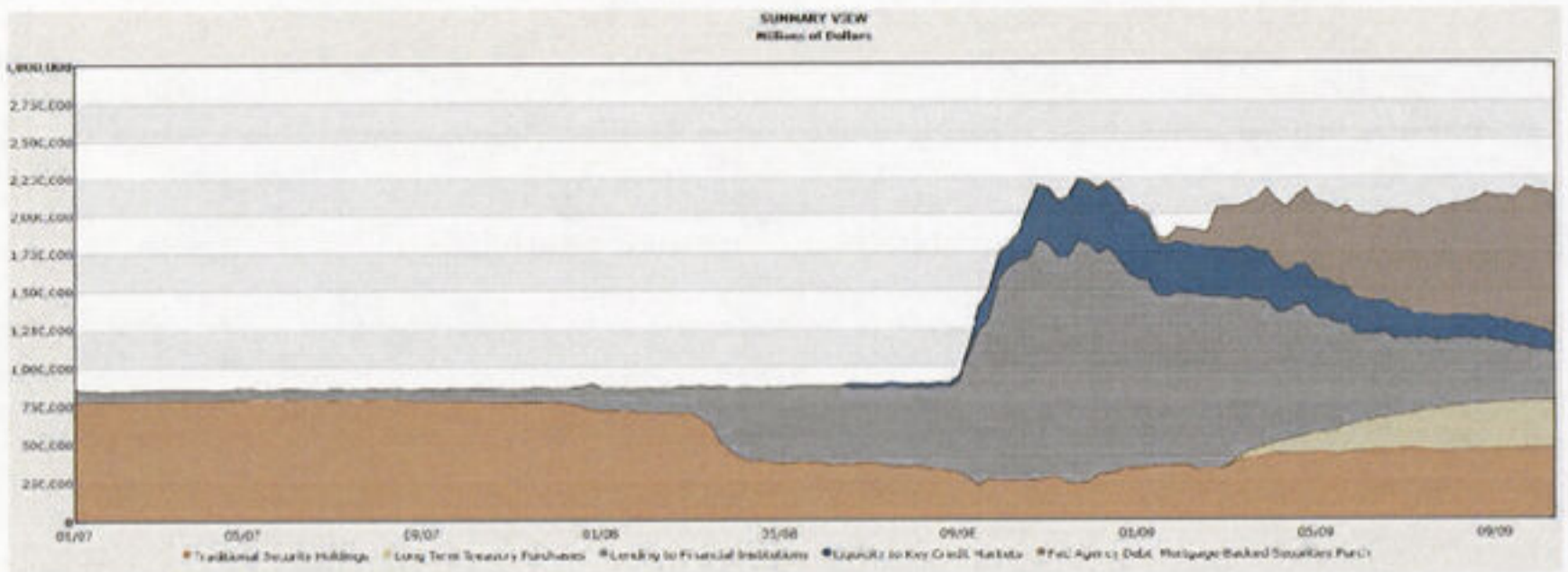
markets, perhaps the biggest beneficiaries of the Freddie and Fannie bailout were insurance companies and other institutional investors holding Freddie and Fannie securities, or securities benefitting from Freddie and/or Fannie guarantees on underlying collateral. Some have argued that rather than supporting old Freddie and Fannie guarantees, it would have been cheaper to create new institutions with stricter credit policies—a move that would still have maintained liquidity in the credit markets. However, pension funds, insurance companies, and other MBS and pass-through investors of Freddie and Fannie would have suffered significant losses, with potential contagion spreading effects resulting from financial institution “interconnectedness.”

Similarly, while AIG (the world's largest insurer), Bear Stearns, Citigroup, and Goldman Sachs all received government support, Lehman Brothers did not. Understandably, a failure of AIG, with hundreds of billions in insurance policies outstanding, or Citigroup, with its large

Some theorize former U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson's decision to save Goldman Sachs and Bear but not Lehman Brothers was politically motivated. Paulson was, in fact, the ex-CEO of Goldman and a bitter enemy of Lehman CEO Dick Fuld.

With insurance companies and other key institutional investors suffering from capital shortfalls, and unwilling and unable to purchase new MBS, liquidity in the credit markets vanished. As a result, banks were unable to clear mortgages off their balance sheets and, with increased credit standards, were reluctant to issue loans to all but the very highest-quality borrowers. The financial crisis, then, through the channels of tight credit markets (business as well as real estate credit) and investor losses became a real crisis, resulting in falling output in the U.S. goods and services markets and, eventually, spreading to the rest of the world.

In addition to declining real output and tightening credit markets, the financial



Federal Reserve Bank Assets Versus Time (Source: Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland)

crisis caused significant monetary policy ramifications. Between September 2008 and September 2009, the Federal Reserve Bank tripled the money supply in an attempt to stimulate the economy and fight liquidity issues; many individuals and organizations began hoarding money, and the “velocity” (or turnover rate) for cash declined. The composition of the Fed’s asset base (see Figure 2), which had historically consisted of safe U.S. government bonds, loans to banks, and foreign reserves, changed dramatically. By September 2009, with the Fed buying up toxic structured debt, nearly half of the Fed’s assets were asset and mortgage backed bonds. In essence, the U.S. money supply was backed in large part by the toxic structured debt. As SIVs discovered during the financial crisis, MBS weren’t exactly the best collateral!

As the U.S. real economy begins to improve, and the velocity of money increases, the Fed is now tasked with developing a strategy to shrink its balance sheet and rein back in the money supply, or risk significant inflationary pressures. However, this undertaking is complicated by the fact that the Fed must find buyers for its large asset- and mortgaged-back investment portfolio in order to reduce the money supply.

CONCLUSION

The current financial crisis resulted from a combination of origination fraud, a credit boom, easing capital market regulations and origination standards, perverse incentive structures, financial innovation, and increased leverage/debt ratios. Many of these issues, in turn, occurred as a result of the unintended effect of legislation introduced in the two decades preceding the financial crisis. As we enter a new decade, the Obama administration is now working to establish a new regulatory framework to prevent another financial market crisis while, at the same time, struggling to stimulate real economic growth within the tight confines of a burgeoning budget deficit and expanded money supply. The economic challenges we face are greater than any since the Depression, but eighty years later we are fortunate to have more advanced fiscal and monetary policy tools at our disposal to stimulate growth and curtail inflationary pressures.

Change They Don't Believe In:

The Political Presence of the Basij in the Islamic Republic of Iran

by *Azadeh Pourzand*

Azadeh Pourzand is a Master in Public Policy candidate with a concentration in international and global affairs at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. An Iranian-American, she was born and raised in Tehran, Iran. Her work and writings on Iran are mostly focused on human rights and freedom of expression.

In the aftermath of Iran's contentious and divisive June 2009 presidential election, the world witnessed the death of Neda Agha-Soltan—a young, modern, female university student and demonstrator who was shot and killed in the chaos of Tehran's postelection protests. Since the demonstrations and the death of Agha-Soltan, many have become fascinated with understanding the youth and university students' opposition "green" movement in Iran. Stories about the young Iranians who protest and often pay a high price for a more democratic society have been abundant in the Western media. But there is another side to the contemporary story of Iran. A portion of the youth population still supports the hard-liner authorities of the Islamic

Republic, and those individuals are willing to fight to protect their Islamic nation against the "demons" of the West.

Some of these other youth make up the Basij, who stand in the streets in the name of Allah as agents of the Islamic Republic. In fact, Agha-Soltan herself may have been a victim of a Basiji militiaman. And though her death has been portrayed as a symbol of the young Iranian movement arising in opposition to the allegedly fraudulent presidential election of June 2009, her death also symbolizes the will and capacities of the Basij in shutting down demonstrations of this nature.

This article explores the complex political, social, and religious presence of the Basij and its student volunteers in the universities of Iran. The United States, among other nations and international actors, must understand this split within the rivaling Iranian youth factions to make informed decisions with respect to a future Iran. The Basij is a key factor in the implementation of the coercive reactions of the Iranian government against the recent demonstrations, and without a careful study of its concepts and tactics, U.S. policy will fail to capture the complete portrait of the political and social dynamics in Iran.

THE FORMATION AND ROLE OF THE BASIJ

The Basij, which means "mobilization" in Persian, was established by the order of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini—the founder of the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Under the charge of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard, the original function of this volunteer paramilitary group was to defend the Islamic Republic against foreign threats and enemies. During the 1980 to 1988 Iran-Iraq War, thousands of its members fought at the

front lines without sufficient arms or proper training. For the many who never returned, death was equated to martyrdom.

The number of Basiji volunteers quickly increased during and after the war. The new volunteers began to take on the responsibility of protecting the Islamic nation and values from threats within. They became one of the major enforcers

Student Basij, the University Basij, the Public Service Basij, and the Tribal Basij.

According to the University Basij bylaws, volunteers are defined by their loyalty to the Supreme Leader Khomeini, and it is their responsibility to recruit, educate, and mobilize volunteer students to their cause. Their primary goal is to maintain and strengthen the desire to fight against *estekbar e jahani*, which literally translates

Beyond its political visibility during the reform movements of the past decade, the University Basij has started to gain an institutional presence in the government.

of the hijab for women, detained women who violated the Islamic dress code, broke up mixed-gender parties, and arrested those who would secretly drink alcohol. The Basij aggressively monitored and removed any sign of “Westernization” from Iranian society. Meanwhile, it served the poor in towns and suburban communities by providing them with economic, religious, educational, and sociopolitical rewards to encourage recruitment.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY BASIJ

The presence of the Basij members became particularly critical in institutions of higher education. In his final days, Imam Khomeini invited and called the youth to take part in the jihad of knowledge in schools, universities, and society. Following his speech in 1989, the university chapter of the Basij was officially formed. Today, the Basij consists of five chapters: the Pupil Basij, the

to “global arrogance” and refers to perceptions of Westernization from the United States, Europe, and others.

Despite the norm that evolved during and after the Iran-Iraq War, nowhere in the general bylaws of the University Basij is there an explicit order for student volunteers to secretly or openly monitor other students as the agents of the Islamic Republic. However, the general perception among many university students is that the Basij volunteers are accepted into universities for the purposes of ascertaining whether other students or professors are abiding by Islamic principles and the ideology of the Islamic Republic. Consequently, tension exists between the University Basij student volunteers and other university students without governmental affiliations.



“Protests at Karim Khan Street, Tehran, Iran” © by Flickr user 27389271

THE POLITICAL VISIBILITY OF THE UNIVERSITY BASIJ DURING THE REFORM MOVEMENT

In the past decade, the Basij has evolved into a fiercely political paramilitary entity. Despite Khomeini’s public statement that “the military and Revolutionary Guards would include the Basij [as a group that] should stay away from politics,” the Basij and its university wing have become violent agents of the current government’s oppression. This increased political role emerged after the election and reelection of the reformist former President Mohammad Khatami in 1997 and 2001, during which time tensions between the reformists and conservatives intensified.

These tensions became most visible during the dueling student protests of 13 July 1999. During this demonstration, some students called for reforms

while others fought against the closure of the reformist newspaper, *Salam*. Paramilitaries, allegedly mostly Basij volunteers dressed as ordinary students, responded with violent physical attacks on the protesters. The violence continued as the demonstrations carried on for five days in Tehran and other cities. One person was reportedly killed during these demonstrations and many other student protestors were arrested. Meanwhile, there was largely impunity for the Basij as the Supreme Leader and the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution praised their hard work to put an end to the riots.

It is important to note that “students against students” is not a new phenomenon in Iran; in fact, it has been practiced since the early years of the Islamic Revolution. In the beginning

years of the Islamic Revolution, for instance, the universities were shut down for three years in the name of the Islamic Cultural Revolution. During this time, students and professors who were affiliates of the government helped do background checks and prepare reports of fellow students and professors to purge oppositional forces. Because of this process, many were denied access to universities once they reopened and those that were accepted found a new strictly Islamic and ideological agenda in place.

familiarize themselves with the cultural and political aspects of this battlefield, use their judgment, and act determinedly when necessary, wherever that may be.”

In the face of the government empowerment of the Basij, the opposing students continued to make their voices heard. On 7 December 2009, Iran’s National Student Day, university students throughout Iran gathered to express their dissatisfaction, chanting slogans and demanding a recount of votes from the June election. As journalist and activist

If the West excludes from its discourse those who are sympathetic toward the policies of the hard-liner government, it will fail to offer a framework that captures the complexities and key factors of the recent developments in Iran.

THE UNIVERSITY BASIJ IN THE GREEN MOVEMENT

Beyond its political visibility during the reform movements of the past decade, the University Basij has started to gain an institutional presence in the government. During the protests in June 2009, the security forces asked the Basij volunteers to provide assistance in operations against the protestors. On 2 October 2009, the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard went a step further and ordered the University Basij student volunteers to act against the potential unrests in universities without waiting for the approval of higher authorities. In an article by BBC Persian, Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari explained, “the University Basij has the independence to act timely and appropriately in the battlefield of the ‘soft war.’” He added, “The young fighters of this war must

Termeh Mandegar writes in an article on insideIRAN.org, “Despite plans by the government to hold an official Student Day ceremony and include only the pro-(President Mahmoud) Ahmadinejad students, other students . . . managed to hold their own demonstrations. These demonstrations were followed by another wave of popular uprisings.”

AFTERMATH OF THE 2009 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION FOR THE BASIJ

Despite Iran’s inevitable reliance on the Basij for oppression of uprisings, it is important to recognize the Basij’s failings in the eyes of the leadership of the Islamic Republic. The Basij has disappointed the leadership of the Islamic Republic in its ability to fatally restrict political opposition and demonstrations. As

scholar Ali Alfoneh states in a PolicyWatch article for the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, “There are signs that the regime leadership has not been particularly happy with the Basij’s performance.” Alfoneh continues, “A weak Basij will be a serious problem if the Iranian regime becomes embattled. The regular military would not be able to pick up the slack: besides being politically noninterventionist, it is based in garrisons along the country’s international borders, far from major urban centers.” As such, the recent momentous demonstrations and the expectations of the hard-liner government from the Basij have overwhelmed this paramilitary entity.

If the West excludes from its discourse those who are sympathetic toward the policies of the hard-liner government, it will fail to offer a framework that captures the complexities and key factors of the recent developments in Iran.

IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY MAKERS

The Islamic Republic might be at one of its most defensive moments, and the conservatives are determined to do all it takes to retain its power. Thus, they will use all of their forces—including the Basij despite its “poor” performance—in order to oppress, win, and forcefully survive. There is little hope that the agenda of the Basij will become any less political and violent. Given the repressive methods and violence that the hard-liner leaders and their affiliates have utilized in the streets and in prisons, American policy makers must not justify or legitimize their motivations and actions.

Simultaneously, however, American and Western policy makers should study, understand, and consider the aspirations and functions of the other side of the recent unrest in Iran; groups such as the Basij are considered the core symbols of the government’s repressive forces. The world must continue to discuss human rights violations that have escalated against peaceful demonstrators in Iran.

A Lebanese Confession: Why Religious Politics Is Bad for Lebanon

by Maurice Obeid

Maurice Obeid is a Master in Public Policy and Master in Business Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the Harvard Business School. He serves on the Student Advisory Board for the Center for Public Leadership at the Kennedy School.

In Lebanon, you are never simply Lebanese. You are Sunni from Beirut, Maronite Catholic from Jounieh, or Shia from the South. Whether seeking to marry or applying for a job, the first question is always what “confession,” or religious sect, you belong to. That is the reality of Lebanese society, a reality reinforced by confessionalism—the political framework that is tearing the country apart.

Rarely cited beyond the Lebanese context, confessionalism is a democratic system that distributes positions in the government, legislature, and civil service proportionally among religious communities. For instance, if a certain confession is said to make up 20 percent of the population, its political leaders are guaranteed 20 percent of legislative seats. That’s the theory, anyway. And though this framework was originally

devised to promote peaceful coexistence among disparate communities, it really does just the opposite; it deepens sectarian differences and weakens the state by encouraging allegiance to one’s confessional group over the nation.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

For a country of only four million people, Lebanon is intensely diverse religiously, culturally, and politically. The country is a mosaic of seventeen confessions of various Christian and Muslim stripes, none of which comprises a majority (see Figure 1)¹. Rivalries—Christian versus Muslim, Christian versus Christian, and Muslim versus Muslim—date back to the first millennium and have long hindered the development of a unified national identity.

Confessionalism is the political embodiment of this fractured reality. An offshoot of consociationalism, it is a form of government involving guaranteed group representation. Other consociational states include Belgium, Switzerland, and Nigeria—all of which are divided along ethnic, religious, or linguistic lines, with no group large enough to govern alone. To remain stable, these countries rely on consultations among the political elite of each major group to conduct the messy work of governance. When consociationalism is organized along religious lines, it is called confessionalism.

¹ There are twelve Christian sects (in numeric order): Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syriac Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Chaldean Catholic, Assyrian, Copts, and Protestant. There are five Muslim sects (in numeric order): Shia, Sunni, Druze, Isma’ili, and Alawite. And there is a shrunken Jewish community.

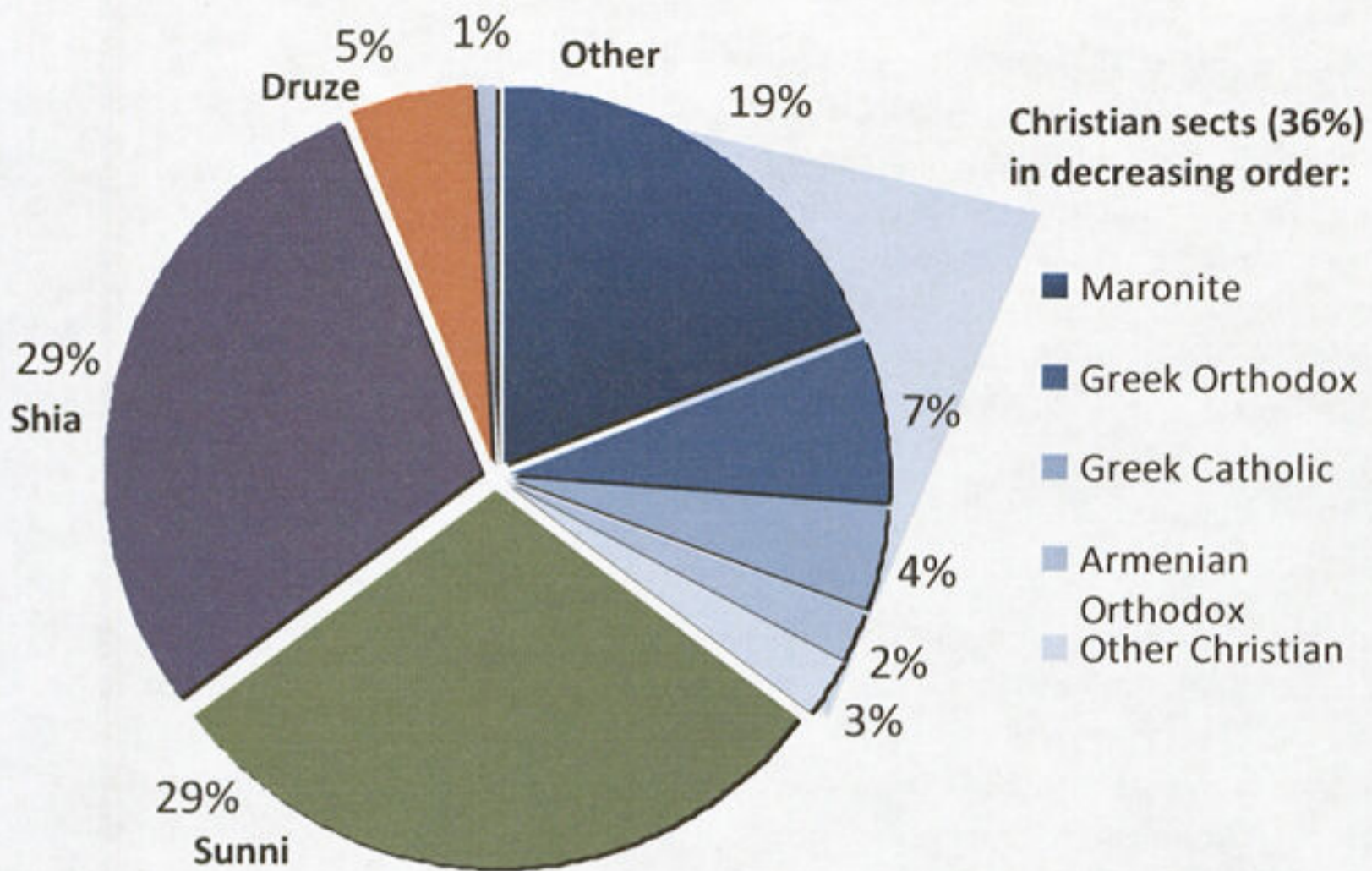


Figure 1 — Current Demographic Estimates for Key Confessions

Source: An Nahar Newspaper (2006)

As early as the thirteenth century, Lebanon adopted various forms of confessionalism to protect the identity of its diverse communities and ensure a balance of power. The system in its modern form was established under the 1926 constitution. When a census in 1932 identified Christians as the majority, the ratio of Christians to Muslims in parliament was set at six to five, with subgroups within each faith receiving their own guaranteed number of seats. Intense wrangling ultimately led to a compromise stating that the Lebanese presidency would always go to Maronite Catholics (the largest among the Christian sects), the prime ministry to Sunnis, and the presidency of parliament to Shiites.

The state functioned, barely, until its collapse in 1975 with the outbreak of a civil war. While the war was precipitated by myriad internal and external forces, a central factor was the inter-

communal tension institutionalized by the confessional framework. A growing Muslim population—fueled by lower emigration and higher birth rates—felt neglected and demanded a greater share of the political power. Sectarian rifts exploded. In all, the war claimed more than 200,000 lives.

The war ended in 1989 with the Taif Accord, which diminished Christians' relative power. Muslims and Christians were now to have equal representation, and the Christian president was stripped of some executive authority. A bright spot for Lebanon at large, however, was that the accord identified the elimination of confessionalism as a national priority. The divisive framework that helped lead thousands to their deaths and many more to emigrate was supposed to be consigned to the dustbin of Lebanese history. But twenty years later, still no progress has been made in this direction.

THE CASE AGAINST CONFESSIONALISM

Proponents of confessionism insist that with no group constituting a majority of the Lebanese population, representation of every confession must be guaranteed to ensure that each group has a political voice. Coexistence, we're told, is crucial. And indeed it is. The problem is that confessionism has bred perverse incentives that undermine the very possibility of harmonious coexistence.

Almost by definition, a nation depends on the development of overarching economic, social, and cultural structures of cooperation that transcend intra-national factionalism. Confessionism, however, promotes the primacy of religious identity. In Lebanon, religious institutions exercise direct control over many facets of daily life, such as marriage and inheritance. Confessionism has also institutionalized patronage in the political system. Indirect controls and clannish clientelism are plentiful, as jobs, housing, and education are often obtained through appeals to confessional political leaders. These *zouama* provide favors and protection to their constituents in return for unquestioned electoral loyalty. This

anemic levels of integration across its communities.

Another source of division is that in a confessional state, the proportional power of each religion must (in theory) be perpetually recalibrated to account for changing demographics over time. But because the matter of religious balance is a sensitive political issue, a national census has not been conducted in Lebanon since 1932 (see Figure 2). A Christian majority in that census gave Christians the highest number of representatives, but as the century progressed and the Sunni and Shiite populations increased, Christians were wielding a disproportionate amount of power. The Taif Accord adjusted the shares of representation, primarily in favor of Sunnis, but today, Christians (who make up the majority of the diaspora) and Shiites feel disenfranchised. This bitterness is further aggravated by the widening Sunni-Shiite divide across the Middle East—a divide that, according to a 2010 Pew Research Center survey, is particularly acute in Lebanon. How long before the eruption of a new calibrating war?

The more entrenched the Lebanese are in a confessional society, the more solidified their prejudices become and the harder it is to cultivate national unity.

encourages close vertical assimilation within confessional communities and obstructs horizontal integration across them, incubating religious-based “states” within the state. As a result, the country suffers from a weak national identity and

A perpetually delicate confessional balance makes the state extremely sensitive to internal and external stressors. Minor changes in the political environment can trigger instability, and there have been several attempts at artificially bloating population numbers of specific communities to gain greater

political clout. In the 1950s, for instance, Lebanese President Camille Chamoun naturalized Christian Palestinians in an effort to boost the number of Lebanese Christians. Similarly, in 1994, the naturalization of Syrian workers and Sunni Palestinians aimed to bolster the Sunni population. Although no census

took place to recalibrate power based on these demographic changes, inflating the number of a confession's members provides more votes for that demographic and strengthens its leaders' political power in negotiations.

Externally, foreign actors have further contributed to Lebanon's instability by applying pressure to the confessional structure. Israel collaborated with the Christians in 1982, seeking to empower them as it invaded the country. Western countries have long favored the Christians, the Arab world has backed the Sunnis, and today Iran supports the Shiites. Amidst this playfield of foreign interference, the loser is the Lebanese state.

THE PATH FORWARD

Many contend that a secular solution can be found only once the Lebanese are "mature" enough to more fully separate religion from the state. In a December 2009 article in the Lebanese Daily Star, the patriarch of Lebanon's Maronite Church asked, "What is the advantage of abolishing political confessionalism in

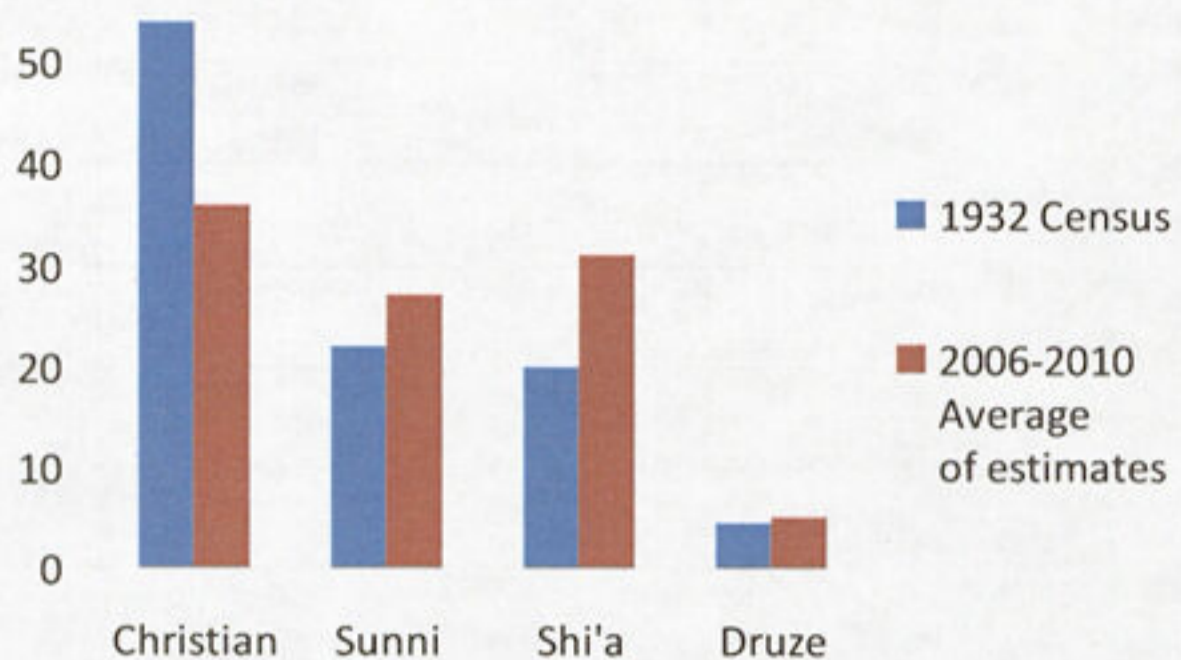


Figure 2 — Demographic Changes by Religion, 1932-2010 by Percentage
Source: 1932 Census; Central Intelligence Agency (2006); Statistics Lebanon (2008); An Nahar Newspaper (2006); CIA World Factbook (2010); U.S. Department of State International Religious Freedom Report (2008)

[national] texts before doing so in [people's] minds?" But the maturity argument is self-fulfilling. The more entrenched the Lebanese are in a confessional society, the more solidified their prejudices become and the harder it is to cultivate national unity that transcends religious lines. A sustainable nation depends on the development of common interests across communities. Confessionalism should therefore be abandoned.

Still, the secularization process needs to be gradual and inclusive. As required by the Taif Accord, parliament should put forth a transition plan. Under parliament's oversight, a task force of leading political, intellectual, and religious figures would present proposals for a secular framework. A bicameral transition government would be formed—one chamber based on the current confessional framework and the other elected without confessional quotas. The chambers would work jointly on a strategy for national reconciliation to reaffirm the Lebanese identity through

substantial reforms in governance, electoral law, and civic education.

Of course, this proposal assumes widespread political will, which thus far has been lacking. Public opinion is (predictably) divided along confessional lines. With changing demographics, former critics of confessionalism have become its strongest enthusiasts, while its former advocates are now its opponents¹. Shiite Muslims, with their plurality of the population, lament their current level of power compared to what they would exercise under a majority rule. Previously secularized Christians, on the other hand, are now fearful of the rising power of Muslims and are more willing to accept the confessionalized status quo.

In fact, a recent survey by the Lebanese Opinion Advisory Committee found that more than 50 percent of Lebanese agree that political confessionalism is rooted in Lebanese culture and cannot be removed. This political landscape is reflected in Lebanon's parliamentary maneuvering. When the debate about abrogating confessionalism surfaced in January 2010, as it often does, the Shia speaker of parliament called for the formation of a national committee to oversee the process of ending this framework. Threatened by what they perceive would be the Islamization of the country, Christian leaders were quick to veto such a move.

Change will require a revitalized political and civic culture. If the

champions of reform remain confessional leaders demanding a bigger piece of the pie, the result will be more knee-jerk defensiveness that exacerbates inter-communal hostilities. Perhaps, as Nawaf Salam, a Lebanese academic and diplomat, has written in "Deconfessionalizing the Call for Deconfessionalization" for the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, "Deconfessionalization is too serious an issue in Lebanon to be left to traditional politicians. Instead, it is a challenge for civil society and new social forces." According to Salam, deconfessionalization will depend on the emergence of strong nongovernmental organizations that cut across sectarian barriers, collectively acting both as pressure groups and as a successful model for what a nonconfessional state would look like.

This path to a secular and sustainable Lebanon would be long and tortuous but, one hopes, possible. After all, when confessionalism was embedded in the country's constitution, it was regarded as an interim political arrangement whose architects emphasized the need for its swift riddance. That was eight decades ago.

Michel Chiha, a Lebanese thinker, once wrote in *Politique Intérieure*, "A nation is a guarantee for confessions, but confessions are not a guarantee to the nation." Indeed, without reform, they just might be the nation's undoing.

¹ Current demographic estimates for key confessions; the figures in parenthesis are the 1932 census figures: Christians ~35 percent to 40 percent (down from 54 percent); Sunnis ~25 percent to 30 percent (up from 22 percent); Shiites ~30 percent to 35 percent (up from 20 percent). No official figures exist (see Figure 2).

Unlikely Routes: Stronger Militaries through the Transformation of Military Education

by Agus Yudhoyono and
Malik Ahmad Jalal

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Malik Ahmad Jalal is a 2011 Master in Public Administration in International Development candidate specializing in development and security at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He has worked as an investment banker in London and has founded a think tank specializing in Turkey, Pakistan, and Indonesia.

“I hope our wisdom will grow with our power and teach us that the less we use our power, the greater it will be.”

— Thomas Jefferson

The words of U.S. philosopher-president Thomas Jefferson adorn the walls of Jefferson Hall at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. They reflect the ethos that mastering warfare will not be sufficient to guarantee the preeminence of an army. Rather, it is the wisdom acquired by mastering all forms of knowledge that enables a country to project power through nonmilitary means, which will ultimately determine supremacy. This article explores the key factors that have led the U.S. Army to develop leadership that takes into consideration the political, social, and economic aspects of a conflict in order to devise a nuanced military strategy.

There have been instances when the U.S. military did not live up to Jeffersonian ideals, but in the past two-hundred years there have also been outstanding U.S. generals who have exemplified the tradition of utilizing force judiciously. U.S. General George Marshall, who was hailed by Winston Churchill as the organizer of Allied victory in World War II, was an equally great statesman as he was a diplomat. He foresaw that a broken and wounded Europe could not be healed by another Treaty of Versailles forced upon the defeated powers, but that instead what was required was the forging of a common vision for a prosperous future. As architect of the European Recovery Plan, General George Marshall set the foundation for peace in Europe that has led to the European Union.

Most recently, when sectarian violence spiraled out of control in Iraq, General David Petraeus turned conventional military thought upside down in devising a counterinsurgency doctrine. Instead of a search-and-destroy mission, the U.S. military protected the local population to create pockets of security and used

diplomacy and patronage to wean support away from al Qaeda. In addition to an extra 24,000 troops, the judicious use of the local tribal system and collaboration with community leaders resulted in the success of the surge.

We believe the three factors that created the leadership that led to this success are the following:

1. The exposure of cadets and officers to other cultures throughout their military career
2. A widening of the breadth of cadet and officer knowledge and encouragement of continuous education
3. An open and discursive educational system that encourages debate and critical thinking

THE WORLD IS WEST POINT'S TRAINING GROUND

Every year an estimated sixty non-U.S. students join West Point to train with American cadets. The academy also requires each class to have students from all fifty U.S. states, making for tremendous diversity of opinion. Success at the academy thus requires collaboration across cultural and ideological divides.

This cross-cultural training continues after West Point as the U.S. Army sends officers to work with the leadership of a diverse set of countries. As a result, individuals have a unique opportunity to understand new cultural and political contexts and develop strong relationships that last long into their careers. One such example came when General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan conducted a coup in October 1999. His first call was not to the U.S. State Department but to U.S. General Anthony Zinni. This shows

that studying with a diverse group of cadets and working with the military and political leadership of countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa gives U.S. officers an unparalleled education in diplomacy and cross-cultural leadership.

EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE AND NURTURING CONTINUOUS LEARNING

The U.S. government dedicates a significant portion of its annual defense expenditure to the training and development of its military. Evidence of this is the fact that the U.S. Military Academy is one of the country's leading liberal arts colleges, with a student-faculty ratio of no more than six-to-one, resulting in extensive interaction between students and instructors.

A well-funded U.S. military offers comprehensive and well-rounded four-year training at West Point. The duration of training is longer than that of developing country armies and therefore allows every cadet to study military science, two years of a foreign language, and subjects as diverse as engineering and liberal arts (including recitation of poetry!). This equips cadets with a broad set of tools to deal with challenges in their military careers.

General Ehsan ul Haq, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee of the Pakistan Army, who worked closely with former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and the U.S. military during Operation Enduring Freedom, has pointed out that the ethos of research and development is deeply engrained within U.S. society and also in the culture of the U.S. Army. This emphasis on research and development means that there is a lifelong commitment to acquire a wide range of skills and knowledge.

Post-West Point, U.S. military officers have extensive learning opportunities such as the advanced degree program to achieve a master's or doctorate degree, shorter-duration executive education programs, and the elite one-year National Security Fellowship Program. General Tad Oelstrom, director of the National Security Program at the John F. Kennedy

methodology has the benefit of generating diverse ideas and also internalizing these ideas and values in the cadets for the long term.

Today's information and globalized age have transformed the challenges faced by modern armies. New technologies are empowering nonstate actors to pose

West Point allows its cadets to develop the independent and critical thinking that is necessary to avoid the mistakes of the past and ensure that an institution is adaptive to a changing environment.

School of Government at Harvard University, points out that the National Security Fellows gain exposure to the wealth of experience at institutions such as Harvard University and the Council on Foreign Relations and then take this knowledge back to their operational and policy-making roles. These opportunities as well as a formal framework that encourages officers to advance their educational qualifications help sustain the quest for further knowledge.

unpredictable dangers. In addition, the rapid flow of information has now enabled new forms of dynamic social, political, and economic interactions that have increased instability. All of these factors lead to a dynamic and complicated security environment that places enormous intellectual demand upon military officers. It is important that all armies, specifically those from developing countries, learn key lessons from the way the United States conducts its professional military education to prepare for the challenges of a transformed security environment.

INFUSING CRITICAL THINKING

The system of education at West Point nurtures a critical mind where acceptance of ideas is won through the analytical discourse of facts and reasoning of argument. For example, a second-year cadet is currently writing an essay on the lessons of My Lai. By openly discussing one of the darkest events of U.S. military history, West Point allows its cadets to develop the independent and critical thinking that is necessary to avoid the mistakes of the past and ensure that an institution is adaptive to a changing environment. The intellectual discourse

HOW CAN OTHER COUNTRIES LEARN FROM THE U.S. EXPERIENCE?

We offer three recommendations in this section.

Recommendation 1: The United States should increase cross-country participation for cadets and officers from developing countries through intensive joint exercises and greater opportunities to train and study with U.S. and other militaries.



West Point Cadets listen to President Barack Obama | "P120109PS-0957" © by Flickr user The White House

Why: Such programs improve understanding between militaries, demonstrate positive American values to foreign officers, and give foreign officers access to world-class education that they might not otherwise have.

How: This can be accomplished by expanding the International Military Education and Training and Professional Military Exchange programs to include a greater number of foreign military officers. Executive programs should be introduced for the top-ranking officers from developing countries to study with the U.S. National Security Fellows in top U.S. universities. One challenge to this initiative is that it would have to be led by the U.S. government, which is susceptible to domestic political conditions that could interrupt the program. For example, the exchange program between the United States and Pakistani and Indonesian militaries in the 1990s was interrupted due in part to the work of lobbyists, resulting in a generation of military officers who were not exposed to the U.S. educational system and networks.

Recommendation 2: Countries should build a solid intellectual foundation by reforming current military training curriculums to expose officers to a

wider range of subjects, including social sciences. The duration of cadet training should be increased and officers incentivized to seek educational opportunities and broaden their intellectual horizon throughout their careers.

Why: Increasing long-term educational opportunities is important because two years of training may not be sufficient to infuse a new set of values (appreciation of intellectual discourse and continuous learning) or achieve in-depth knowledge of a wide range of subjects that are considered important to understanding the social and political context of conflicts. In addition, if officers believe their professional military careers will suffer by pursuing educational training this will prevent them from participating in continuous education opportunities.

How: Countries should increase the duration of training at the military academies from the current one or two years to four years. They should also reframe the curriculum to increase emphasis on the social and political aspects of security, not just concentrating on tactical military strategy. A formal framework should be instituted with authorized periods of leave for officers

to update their education without penalizing their military careers. The challenge of initiating such a policy is that armies of developing countries are resource-constrained and their priorities lie in modernizing weaponry rather than increasing training. Therefore these initiatives might not receive support from

How: The profile of the selection process should be raised and made prestigious, with only the most competent officers being selected. A greater portion of teaching should be conducted through analysis of case studies with cadets and officers taking different positions and arguing from those vantage points. Two

Learning should be encouraged through debate and discourse methodology rather than a rote learning method.

ministries of finance or even within the army itself.

Recommendation 3: Countries should develop a long-term commitment to educational growth by providing opportunities in a meritocratic system. Learning should be encouraged through debate and discourse methodology rather than a rote learning method.

Why: Having a meritocratic system of selection and promotion of officers would ensure that the more competent and academic officers rise, thus providing incentives for other officers to also upgrade their skills, knowledge, and experience. Similar to the justification for Recommendation 2, if officers feel that their professional military careers suffer when perusing educational training programs, they will be prevented from participating in continuous education, especially abroad. Methods of learning through classroom discussions and debate allow students to deepen and internalize their understanding of the subject being taught much more effectively than through rote learning. This will further equip the cadets with values of critical thinking and teamwork.

challenges are that developing countries do not have sufficient human and financial resources and that this method will challenge the existing norms of not questioning higher authorities, hence eliciting resistance from some senior officers.

CONCLUSION

Wars are no longer about defeating an enemy army and subjugating a local population. They are increasingly about eliminating threats from nonstate actors, which cannot be achieved without the support of the local population. If developing countries fashion the training and development of their officer cadre on the U.S. model, they will find their military leadership more capable of meeting the complex and multidimensional security challenges. More importantly, such an education would instill in their officers the limitations of military power, and this might just deter future military internal interventions and indirectly contribute to the stability and growth of democracy in developing countries.

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Beyond Charlie Wilson's War:

The Evolution of Jihad in South Asia—A Review of *Partisans of Allah*

by Ayesha Jalal

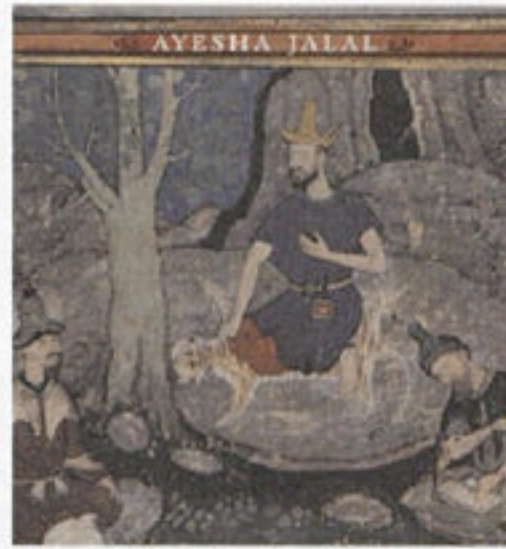
(Harvard University Press, 2008)

Reviewed by Nadia Naviwala

Nadia Naviwala, who is pursuing a Master in Public Policy, came to the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University from the U.S. Senate, where she served as a legislative aide on national security for a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee. She has lived in Pakistan and travels there frequently.

When Charlie Wilson passed away this year, his name was associated with the end of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the Taliban. These associations would not have surprised the former congressman—the book-turned-Hollywood-hit *Charlie Wilson's War* popularized the notion that the United States inadvertently created the Taliban by arming the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union in the 1980s. But the Hollywood-based history leaves out hundreds of years of prelude.

Ayesha Jalal's *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* is a fascinating and timely



PARTISANS
OF ALLAH
JIHAD IN SOUTH ASIA

account of how jihad has played out as a violent, political tool—in a way unique to South Asia. Jalal writes about jihad's departure from its oft-

cited Koranic roots as an “inner spiritual struggle” in the earliest years of Islam. She then traces the evolution of jihad through the rise of Muslim power in South Asia, British colonialism, and finally American intervention after September 11. In discussing jihad, Jalal rises above the strained political correctness that often shrouds discussion of Islam in the West by accepting the link between jihad and violence and explaining how it emerged in practice.

Jalal's history of jihad in South Asia illuminates several recurring themes. First, northwestern Pakistan is not just a current hot spot; it has been the center of activity since the first jihad in South Asia. Second, two factions within Islam have clashed throughout history: those who stress internal spirituality, like many modern Muslims, versus those who demand external compliance, such as the Taliban. Third, attempts to defeat external threats tend to end in internecine warfare. Finally, jihad has long been used as a justification for political violence against meddling, outside powers: British colonialism, Russian communism, and now America's freedom agenda.

This may sound like the stuff of historians, rather than policy makers, but

it is remarkably relevant. The centerpiece of *Partisans of Allah* is Jalal's exposé on the first jihad in South Asia, which took place in 1821 but bears an uncanny resemblance to the conflicts we face now. It was centered in northwestern Pakistan, the same location as al Qaeda's base today. And although it was initiated against an external enemy, it quickly deteriorated into Muslim-on-Muslim violence, looting, popular demands for Islamic shariah law, and tribal treachery.

The most valuable aspect of Jalal's narrative, however, is not her explanation of the heavily studied Afghan Taliban but her layered account of the emergence of the "Pakistani Taliban"—one of the most troubling and least understood phenomena of recent years. Jalal deflates the notion that the Pakistani Taliban is simply a by-product of the Afghan version by outlining the indigenous political and religious trends that led to its rise. It is here that Ayesha Jalal most

Jalal rises above the strained political correctness that often shrouds discussion of Islam in the West by accepting the link between jihad and violence and explaining how it emerged in practice.

Similarly, British colonialism first marked the response of modern Muslims to future perceived external threats. Following the failed "Sepoy Mutiny" revolt of 1857 in India, some resorted to the "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" philosophy and set up a modern university modeled after Cambridge University in England in order to catch up and compete with the West. But others had an opposite reaction. They withdrew toward religion and established a large madrasa in Deoband, northern India.

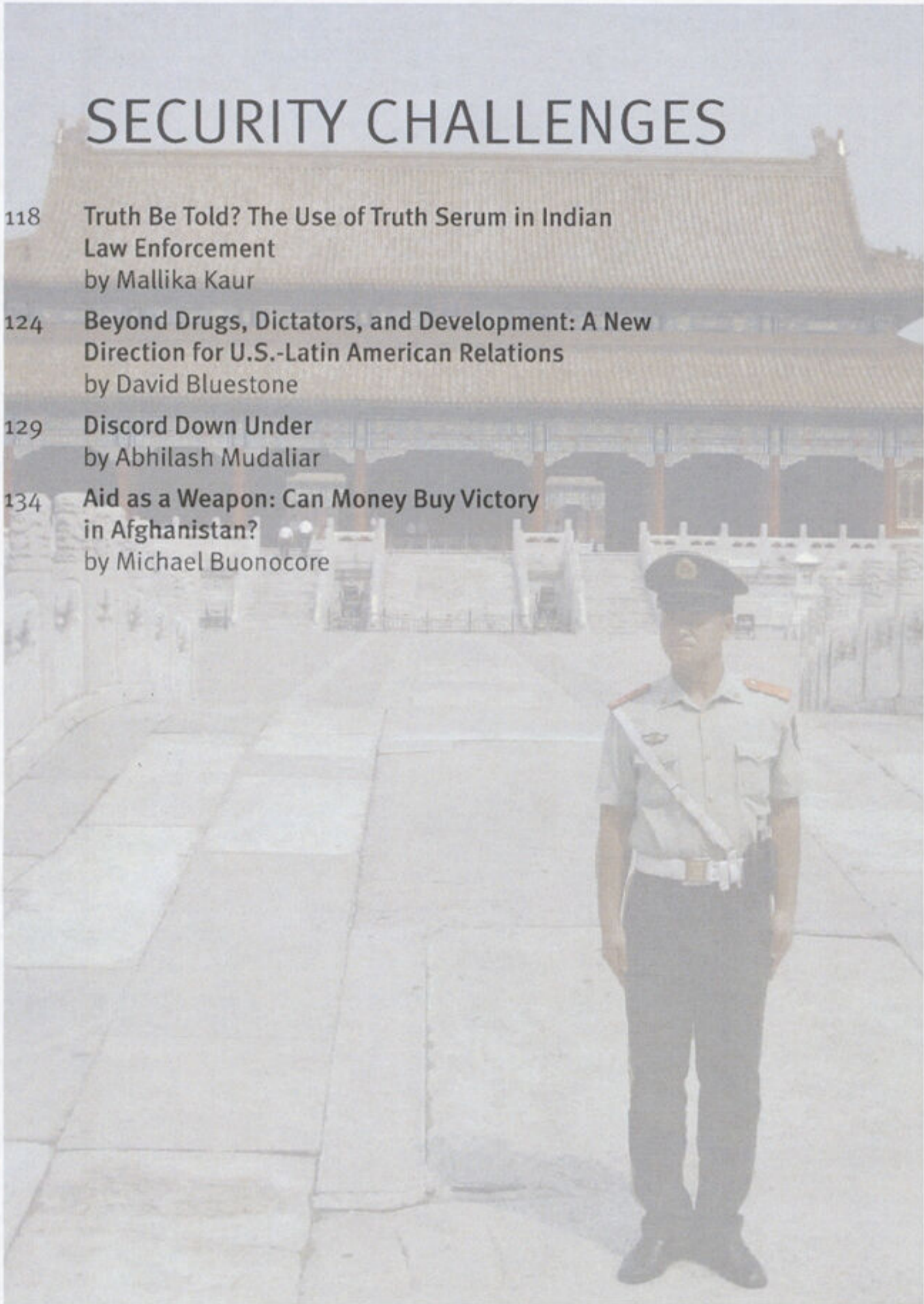
Since September 11, journalists have flocked to this original "Deobandi" madrasa and dubbed it "the birthplace of the Taliban." It was Deobandis who set up thousands of madrasas in Pakistan, with U.S. backing, to produce fighters for the 1980s jihad against the Soviet Union. Between 1971 and 1988, the number of madrasas in Pakistan grew from 900 to 33,000. The Afghan Taliban was a direct product of the Deobandi madrasas.

skillfully links a discussion of religious ideology with the messy politics of the region, illustrating the value of her book as a two-in-one guide to both Islam and South Asia.

The most important lesson of *Charlie Wilson's War* is not in the story itself, but in its demonstration of how easily good policy can go bad when nations get involved in places they do not fully understand. Jalal writes, "The martyrdom of those who fell . . . continues to weave its spell, making it imperative to investigate the myth in its making." Thanks to Ayesha Jalal, aspiring security experts finally have a fluent narrative that discusses jihad unapologetically, while explaining its practical evolution from the first jihad to terrorism today. Most importantly, Jalal demonstrates that it is not enough to study the Middle East and transfer that understanding to Afghanistan—jihad has its own history in South Asia.

SECURITY CHALLENGES

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Truth Be Told?

The Use of Truth Serum in Indian Law Enforcement

by *Mallika Kaur*

Mallika Kaur is a dual-degree student at the University of California Berkeley School of Law (J.D., 2010) and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University (M.P.P., 2010). She focuses on South Asian security and human rights issues. Her perspectives have been informed by growing up in Punjab (on the Indian side) and having worked on advocacy efforts in the United States since 2001. For introducing her to the prevalence of narcotesting, for many discussions on this issue, and for constant encouragement to question the normative value of the present state of affairs, she thanks her father, Dr. Karanbir Singh Sarkaria.

On 27 March 1992, the body of a young nun, Sister Abhaya, was found in the well of her convent in the Indian state of Kerala. The initial police investigation dismissed the case as suicide, but a subsequent investigation by the national Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) declared that it was murder.

Unfortunately, the CBI tried and failed for more than a decade to finger a culprit. The trail ran cold.

Then, in 2008, during its thirteenth probe into the case, the CBI arrested two

priests and one nun, Sister Sefi, who was a resident of the convent when Abhaya died. Those arrested were subjected to narcoanalysis tests—interviews done by injecting barbiturates into the accused before they are questioned. Soon, video clips of these tests appeared on news channels in India. The media was abuzz over the apparent confessions contained in the clips, which suggested that Abhaya had witnessed sexual impropriety in the convent, leading Sefi to beat her with an axe and work with the priests to dispose of the body.

Meanwhile, the veracity of the tapes was being questioned. The victim's father, suspecting the tapes had been altered, accused the CBI of not ensuring noninterference with the originals. Adding to this, the Assistant Director of the Bangalore Forensic Science Laboratory, Dr. S. Malini, who supervised the narcoanalysis and was widely hailed as the pioneering narcoanalysis expert in India, was fired (among other things, she had forged her educational information).

Several commentators, including some prominent law enforcement experts, have assailed the use of narcoanalysis, questioning both the effectiveness of the practice and the ethical and legal implications of employing it. And though the Indian police is making increasing use of it—not just in sensational cases like that of Sister Abhaya, but also in burglaries, molestations, and white-collar crimes—its utility is far from certain.

DOES NARCOANALYSIS WORK?

The chemicals used in narcoanalysis, including Sodium Pentothal—the drug of choice for this interrogation method in India—have long been referred to as “truth serum” since they inhibit the control of the nervous system and are

alleged to make the subject less able (and motivated) to lie. The leading proponent of this view, Dr. B.M. Mohan of the Bangalore Forensic Science Laboratory, has repeatedly asserted that narcoanalysis has a 96 percent to 97 percent success rate in aiding in the discovery of information that forwards investigations. Many police officers are also enthusiastic. "With this 'narco' I can get anyone to confess anything," said one senior police officer in India in an interview with the author, on condition of anonymity.

Critics allege that this is precisely the problem. The technique leaves the subject vulnerable to suggestion and confabulation. The effects of these drugs have been described as anesthetic, hypnotic, and resulting in a state of virtual drunkenness. Dr. Amar Jesani, a public health advocate and managing trustee with the Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes, wrote in the *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics* that "there is enough scientific evidence to show that a person under the effect of a drug often plays along with the suggestions made by the interrogator."

Similarly, Dr. Lawrence Farwell, the inventor of the noninvasive forensic technique of "brain fingerprinting," which is similar to narcoanalysis and also used in India today, explained in an interview with the author that "it is safe to say that Sodium Pentothal can make the subject more likely to talk freely and more likely to be suggestible and cooperative . . . [but] this does not necessarily mean more likely to tell the truth." He explained that "when the subject is innocent, anything that produces more cooperation, more suggestibility, and less inhibition makes a false confession more likely."

The evidence against narcoanalysis has led Koshy Koshy, the former director general of the Bureau of Police Research and Development in India, to declare the method "completely unreliable." Nevertheless, the practice continues. Dr. S.L. Vaya, director of the Institute of Behavioral Sciences at the Gujarat Forensic Sciences University and additional director of the Directorate of Forensic Science in Gandhinagar, said in an interview with the author that her Gujarat lab conducts narcoanalysis "once a week."

NARCOANALYSIS: A PROTECTION AGAINST TORTURE? OR ITSELF A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION?

The increased use of narcoanalysis also raises larger questions about the rule of law and human rights in India. Dr. Vaya argues that it is legal because each case "has to be monitored by [a] legal body, [and] check and cross-check is important. We require informed consent of person[s] undergoing [the] procedure."

Moreover, many proponents contend that narcoanalysis actually protects human rights instead of violating them. Dr. Sudhir Gupta of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences stated in a press interview that narcoanalysis "has been developed to protect human rights and is a humanitarian approach to interrogation. It is safe and absolutely harmless." One superintendent of police in North India agreed, claiming in an interview with the author, on the condition of anonymity, that "the technique is basically invoked in cases which are high profile and the option of hard custodial interrogation is not available." He further explained that the technique "is very much akin to age-old interrogation procedures of keeping [the] accused awake for long



Police officer in India | "A UP Policeman" © by Flickr user lkikon_18

hours or being given intoxicants to lower the defenses. It should be encouraged to save innocents from being put through the indignity of 'tough' interrogation procedures." The open admittance by law enforcement personnel that the police system often employs "hard interrogation techniques"—a euphemism for a range of treatments including torture—invites a separate discussion.

Yet some would argue that narcoanalysis is, in fact, a type of torture. In *Shri D.K. Basu v. State of West Bengal*, the Supreme Court of India held in 1996 that "torture" of a human being by another human being is essentially an instrument to impose the will of the 'strong' over the 'weak' by suffering." Narcoanalysis may be precisely that, given the mental anguish it can cause for subjects threatened with it who may not be aware of the consent requirement or not be confident that it will be fairly fulfilled.

If narcoanalysis is indeed torture, national and international standards forbid its usage. The Indian Supreme Court has held torture unconstitutional citing the Constitutional guarantee to "life and personal liberty." Internationally, torture is prohibited by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the United Nations (UN) Convention Against Torture (CAT), which India has signed but not ratified. According to CAT, threatening a subject with narcoanalysis would meet the requirement of intending to cause mental suffering for the purpose of retrieving information. Jesani has stated in press interviews that narcoanalysis "meets all components of the UN's definition of torture . . . it produces physical/mental suffering, it is intentionally inflicted, it is intended for purposes such as getting information, confessions, etc. and is inflicted by an official." And the Law Commission of India, an advisory group to the Ministry of Law and Justice, recently drafted (but

has yet to release) a report insisting that narcoanalysis be banned immediately since it violates basic human rights.

Beyond torture, narcoanalysis can lead to a violation of the right against self-incrimination, protected by Article 20(3) of the Indian Constitution. Koshy, in an interview with the author, stated that even just a few years ago the police “considered

The idea was first developed by rural Texas physician Robert House in the 1920s. House discovered that scopolamine, the drug he used as an anesthetic in his obstetrics practice, could also result in patients revealing truthful information while in the drug-induced “twilight sleep.” When some high-profile prisoners who were administered the

Several commentators have assailed the use of narcoanalysis, questioning both the effectiveness of the practice and the ethical and legal implications.

[narcoanalysis] unethical if not outright illegal, as it amounted to compelling an accused [person] to give evidence against himself against the Constitutional guarantee. It was only in the recent past that courts have started giving permission for narcoanalysis.” A case on this issue is now pending before the Indian Supreme Court, which reserved its verdict on this case in 2008. Senior counsel Dushyant Dave has stated in an amicus curiae brief to the court that “There does not appear to be any legal system in the world which has either allowed or considered admissible the evidence collected with the help of any one or all of the tests.”

COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING

If narcoanalysis is indeed as useful in crime solving as its Indian proponents contend, then why do we not hear reports of the use of truth serums by the New York Police Department or the Los Angeles Police Department, which surely face intractable crime problems? Part of the answer perhaps lies in the fact that the United States conducted its truth serum experiment some decades before India.

drug agreed that it made lying difficult, House’s method received regional and national attention. A Los Angeles newspaper reportedly coined the term “truth serum” in 1922.

Questions soon arose about the validity of information extracted under the influence of such drugs. “The difficulty with ‘truth drugs’ is that the suspected person will confess to almost anything that is suggested to them,” offered an article in *Literary Digest* magazine in 1930. This is criticism that Indian opponents echo today. However, in the United States, the drugs continued to be employed by local U.S. police departments well through the 1950s.

Alison Winter, University of Chicago associate professor of history, points out in her paper “The Making of ‘Truth Serum’” that truth serums have, in fact, been revived on various occasions, including in treatment of battle trauma in World War II, in forensic hypnosis used by police in the late 1970s, and by psychotherapists in the “recovery” of memories of childhood abuse in the 1980s and 1990s. Despite its periodic

use, however, the U.S. National Defense Intelligence College concluded in a 2006 report that although “truth serums . . . typically cause the subject to become more talkative . . . there is no guarantee that any of the information elicited will be accurate.”

The abandonment of narcoanalysis in the United States might suggest that India should escape the remaining evolutionary cycle and simply learn from the U.S. experience. But Dr. Vaya is unconvinced. “If nine people out of ten try a science and fail, [it] doesn’t mean the tenth has to fail too,” she said in an interview with the author.

In fact, the North Indian superintendent of police who wanted to remain anonymous hopes more facilities are established to conduct narcoanalysis. “Aping the developed countries in rejecting the narco,” he said in an interview with the author, “would be counterproductive in a country facing high rates of custodial deaths on account of nonprofessional interrogation.” His argument then is that international standards and lessons learned are well and good, but the fact remains that “third degree” practices are common in India and “truth serum” narcoanalysis is an attractive alternative. However, policies that reinforce this unfortunate reality will be just as, if not more, problematic as those that ignore it.

SPEAKING OF THE FUTURE

In India, the complication for the police, and to a lesser extent the media, is that since they have been praising this practice for years, they are now vested in maintaining its legitimacy—even if they no longer believe in its usefulness. Nevertheless, there is now some debate in India about narcoanalysis, and that is a

positive first step. However, without some agreement on larger principles and objectives, the debate over utility could continue endlessly. Dr. Farwell explains in an interview with the author:

Like beauty, utility is in the eye of the beholder. For some, utility means eliciting confessions. For others, utility means eliciting the truth—which for an innocent subject means not eliciting a confession. From a narrow-minded law enforcement perspective that fails to consider the human rights issues, anything that elicits more confessions is useful, even if it has little or no utility in eliciting the truth. From a human rights perspective, anything that produces increased compliance, decreased inhibition, and decreased higher brain function in a subject under interrogation is abusive and likely to produce false confessions, and thus in many cases is counterproductive for the purpose of eliciting the truth. [M]y personal view is that the only legitimate role for science is to elicit the truth.

Indian law and policy makers should agree on and publicize the desired objectives of investigatory methods, including ones like narcoanalysis that have broad repercussions and implications. Such an exercise could help India think of solutions that can gradually alter the culture around law enforcement. There are no silver bullets, but some suggestions include:

1. **Human rights education.** Public awareness and sensitivity to torture must be raised. Whether the Bollywood hero playing a dedicated but hotheaded, suspect-beating cop or the inspector in the local police station, the use of the “third degree”

must eventually be seen as extrajudicial and outside the mores of society. While the middle and upper classes are less vulnerable to such abuses, a change in their attitudes is essential, precisely given the gravely class-based nature of

could provide useful examples. Such warnings do not in themselves end abuse, but the mantra-like regular incantation might gradually influence reality. They may also remind arrested persons that they have basic rights as per the law.

Indian law and policy makers should agree on and publicize the desired objectives of investigatory methods.

Indian sensitivities; making the upper-middle class relate to the common burglar hung upside down in the police station is indeed an uphill task. Offering human rights courses in schools and colleges, even limited to rights reflected in the Indian Constitution, could be a first step. Articles 21 and 20(3) will perhaps then enter some level of consciousness of media producers and consumers alike. It will also prompt young citizens to question things such the nonratification of CAT by India, which otherwise aspires to be treated as a rising democratic power.

2. Requirement for police to inform arrested persons of basic rights.

While there shall likely be strong resistance, a requirement to inform every arrested person of their basic rights should be considered by Indian law enforcement. The exact wording need not mimic the Hollywood version of the U.S.'s Miranda warnings—"you have the right to remain silent . . . to an attorney . . . if you can't afford one, one will be provided for you." But U.S. Miranda rights or the quite different Judges' Rules in Britain

3. Public release of assessment by Law Commission of India.

The commission should immediately release its report. The report is not only cited by the Indian Supreme Court (to support its decisions), but it would also bring media attention and can prompt a more nuanced discussion around narcoanalysis.

4. Legal clarity. The Indian Supreme Court must rule on the case pending since 2008. Without such a ruling the laws around narcoanalysis in different states will not be standardized and the public will, at best, receive the message that the legal norms around narco are inconclusive and, at worst, believe that the courts are irrelevant in matters of narcoanalysis and police procedures.

Besides the scientific arguments questioning the efficacy of narcoanalysis, its usage is shrouded with concerns about legality and morality. Insofar as narcoanalysis is a reflection of the rule of law in India, a holistic approach must not only tackle the practice in isolation but also attempt to evolve societal mores around policing, safety, and rights.

Beyond Drugs, Dictators, and Development: A New Direction for U.S.-Latin American Relations

by David Bluestone

David Bluestone is a 2010 Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He has recently worked on public security policy in mayor's offices in Medellin, Colombia, and Sucre, Venezuela, and from 2007 to 2008 he lived in Bolivia as a Fulbright Scholar conducting research on political development.

Since the 1980s, U.S. engagement in Latin America has been characterized by Washington's fixation on the region's three "D"s: drugs, dictatorships, and development. This limited focus is no longer appropriate to meet the challenges and opportunities in today's Latin America. Despite public promises to change the tone of hemispheric relations, during his first year U.S. President Barack Obama's policies have been business as usual.

If the Obama administration wants to live up to its rhetoric and open a new chapter in U.S.-Latin American relations, there must be a paradigm shift away from the traditional top-down approach to the region and a new regional commitment

supporting local solutions. A prime way in which this shift in thinking can benefit the region is through a new comprehensive policy to confront the challenge of public security. This new strategy would support the capacity-building of Latin American governments in a way that strengthens the rule of law in their societies. With more cooperation, the entire Western hemisphere will benefit from increased safety, decreased transnational crime networks, and a foundation of security that is necessary for social and economic development throughout the region.

INTERTWINED NATURE OF U.S.-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP

Among all the international challenges facing the Obama administration, Latin America is unique because its state actors do not represent a serious military threat to the United States. The region's rising power, Brazil, is positioned to challenge the United States economically in the region, but has not shown an equal desire to build its military power. Furthermore, despite being the United States' loudest critic, Venezuela continues to be one of its top five providers of oil.

Nevertheless, as lawlessness and levels of crime continue to soar, Latin America's insecurity represents a new kind of threat to the United States as this insecurity is increasingly spreading north. Portions of the U.S.-Mexican border are conflict zones and, all too often, sites of mass killings. This insecurity has also penetrated some U.S. metropolitan areas. Phoenix, the capital of Arizona, for example, has been called the "kidnapping capital of the United States" by many in the media due to extremely high rates of illegal immigration and human smuggling. This insecurity has also

become transnational, as exemplified by gangs such as the Maras, which originated in Los Angeles and now has an estimated network of more than 100,000 members stretching from Canada to Central America.

federal budget proposal raises doubt over whether the Obama administration's policies reflect this rhetoric. According to the administration's budget proposal, the National Drug Control Budget will increase by 3.5 percent and maintains a

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Ultimately, these insecurity challenges cannot be viewed as something to be contained, but rather as something that must be proactively confronted.

NOT CHANGE, BUT MORE OF THE SAME

The perception within much of Latin America is that President Obama's policies regarding security during his first year have been too reminiscent of those of his predecessor. Obama prompted public outcry and diplomatic condemnations across the region, including from Brazil and Chile, when he chose to continue the Bush administration's plans to open seven new U.S. military bases in Colombia.

Furthermore, the Obama administration's approach to narco-trafficking has been inconsistent. As one of her first acts on the job in March 2009, Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton acknowledged, for the first time, the United States' responsibility to control domestic drug consumption. In May 2009, the administration's drug czar Gil Kerlikowske declared that the "War on Drugs" was over. However, the 2011

two-to-one edge in spending on domestic and international law enforcement over treatment and prevention.

The failure of the Obama administration to abandon the status quo and present a new comprehensive strategy toward Latin America has limited its ability to fully engage the region in the way that candidate Obama envisioned. In order to change its course, the Obama administration must make an earnest shift away from military support and counter-narcotics to building the capacity of its southern neighbors to manage their own internal security problems.

LATIN AMERICA'S INSECURITY ISSUE

After an entire career of working in marginalized barrios throughout Venezuela, José Luis López Noriega, the president of FUNDASUCRE, a nonprofit community service organization in Caracas, has figured out why his hometown suffers from such astronomically high rates of crime and insecurity. "Do you know the single reason why the people say that they love living here?" he asks. "People say:

‘Because we can do whatever we want!’” Leaning his freckled, bald head across the desk, he continues, “And you know why people say they hate living here?” Suddenly sitting up straight in his chair with a clap of his hands, he explains, “They say: ‘Because other people can do whatever they want!’”

After emerging from decades of authoritarian dictatorships, Latin America’s new democracies have consciously shifted their policies toward individual liberty. Unfortunately, this transition has been accompanied by a new crisis of insecurity and disorder. With ballooning homicide rates, evening curfews, and public fear, Latin America’s major cities from Caracas to Mexico City to Rio de Janeiro have been paralyzed by social disorder and insecurity.

There is much that Latin American cities can learn from the way major U.S. cities confronted problems of security and disorder in the 1960s and 1970s. According to academics George L. Kelling and Mark H. Moore, in their 1988 *Perspectives on Policing* article “The Evolving Strategy

decentralized problem solving, and technological advances. Programs such as community policing, local problem-oriented investigation, and statistical data collection through improved information technology have emerged as a result. And they have led to significant urban recoveries throughout the United States, the most famous of which was the regeneration of New York City as a result of Mayor Rudy Giuliani’s crackdown on crime.

Still a work in progress, and by no means a silver bullet, the policing, crime prevention, and security strategies of the United States represent a balance between individual liberty and crime control that could be very well suited to help address the security crises faced by many Latin American nations. Additionally, Latin American governments can adopt these civilian strategies without succumbing to strict military controls that hearken back to the region’s past dictatorships. Instead of widespread government repression, Latin American cities can engage the community in diagnosing their crime problems. In particular, using better technology, resources, and expertise, a

Latin America’s insecurity represents a new kind of threat to the United States.

of Policing,” as police effectiveness stagnated, major metropolitan centers became unmanageable with increases in public fear, crimes rates, domestic consumption of drugs, and suburban flight. In response to this crisis, American scholars formulated, and police chiefs adopted, new strategies in the 1980s and early 1990s. They relied upon increased community involvement,

professionalized local police officer can collect quantitative data from computer statistics (or COMPSTAT) programs and qualitative information from community policing programs to help control crime and guarantee the rule of law without abusing human rights. Furthermore, as a by-product of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the United States has cutting-



Police in Ecuador respond to a riot | "Rio in Ecuador" © by Flickr user Rupert Taylor-Price

edge security technology and highly trained experts in community building, which could greatly benefit conflict-zone neighborhoods of Colombia and Brazil.

A NEW STRATEGY OF ENGAGEMENT

Social disorder problems debilitate many Latin American countries, but they also have a profound impact on the United States. Unrest in places like the Mexican border and the cocaine-producing regions of Colombia create conditions that boost some of the greatest existential threats facing the United States, such as border insecurity and the consumption of drugs in U.S. communities. If the United States adopts a policy that focuses on helping these societies take control and better institute rule of law as a way to increase local public security, they will not only tackle the root of the regional security challenges but will also help provide a

foundation of safety that is critical to future social and economic development.

Many communities in the United States have experience with innovative, citizen-based policing techniques. The National Institute of Justice and police officials from America's leading cities should share their experience with the United States' Latin American neighbors as they grapple with their own problems of crime. This means helping provide the means, knowledge, and technology necessary to train and equip these officials to adopt proven techniques oriented to problem solving and crime control in the community.

There are three key recommendations for the United States moving forward:

1. Invest resources in Latin America. The United States has invested significant resources into a drug war

that has not proven effective. The emphasis in U.S. funding should shift from military assistance to measures that enhance public and citizen security at the city level, and assistance should be linked to respect for democratic institutions and respect for human rights. By helping countries manage their own internal security issues, the United States will also help create stability that is a necessary condition for social, political, and economic development throughout the entire hemisphere.

2. Increase transfers of expertise and intellectual exchanges. The United States has experience both at home and abroad in tackling security challenges. It should therefore expand the U.S. State Department's Merida Initiative to include local governments in Central America and both local and federal governments in South America. The Merida Initiative provides assistance in best practices and emphasizes more professional civilian police forces, more effective prosecutorial and judicial institutions, and support of the rule of law. Rather than focusing only on military support, the United States should also assist in training a civilian-based police force and instituting independent law enforcement and criminal justice institutions. This will deepen and consolidate Latin America's democracies by ensuring that human rights and due process are respected while order is established. Lastly, there must be more local-level exchanges between U.S. and Latin American police departments, such as pilot programs between Caracas and New York City and Rio de Janeiro and Boston, as well as

information sharing about criminal records of deportees between the United States and receiving countries.

3. Provide updated technology. Latin American governments are particularly underequipped to face their local insecurity challenges in the realm of technology. With special provisions in bilateral trade agreements, the U.S. private sector could provide the latest technology and data collection tools, such as COMPSTAT, that are essential for local law enforcement to penetrate gang activity, drug money laundering, and criminal networks. The United States can also consult on best practices to ensure that this technology is not abused.

MOVING FORWARD

On 23 May 2008, Obama the presidential candidate declared that his "policy toward the Americas will be guided by the simple principle that what's good for the people of the Americas is good for the United States." Focusing on assisting the Americas in improving their security as a necessary condition to guarantee security for the United States and the hemisphere is ideologically consistent with one of his stated foreign policy goals for the region—freedom from fear. It also represents a diplomatic change for the United States, which has an unforgiving legacy of training some of Latin America's most ruthless military leaders. A shift away from exclusive military support and toward civilian police forces and away from drug eradication and toward the eradication of fear will go far to help the United States reengage Latin America and help increase security throughout the entire hemisphere.

Discord Down Under

by *Abhilash Mudaliar*

Abhilash Mudaliar is a second-year student in the Master in Public Administration/International Development program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Born in India, Mudaliar migrated with his family to Australia when he was eight years old. He returned to India when he was twenty-five to work in grassroots development. He considers both countries “home.”

For as long as I can remember, revealing that I’m from Australia has been to invite some harmless comment along the lines of “oh, you’re so far away from the rest of the world.” In recent months, however, the first reaction has been something different: “Is it really very racist down there?”

Starting in early 2009, dozens of violent attacks—bashings, robberies, and murders—against Indian students in Australia have made headlines worldwide. The attacks have applied severe strain on Indo-Australian bilateral relations and have started to cost the Australian education market lucrative revenue. Most notably, the attacks have raised questions about the prevalence of racism in Australian society.

LEADING EXPORT MARKET

After coal and iron ore, education is Australia’s third-largest export market, according to a 2009 Lowy Institute for International Policy report by Michael Wesley on the costs of international education in Australia. Wesley states that, driven by deregulation and the marketization of the tertiary education sector, education export revenues have nearly doubled from AUD \$8.6 billion (U.S. \$7.6 billion) in 2004 to AUD \$15 billion (U.S. \$13.3 billion) in 2008. At the same time, reductions in public funding for higher education have made international students—to whom Australian universities are permitted to charge full fees—an increasingly important source of funding for tertiary institutions.

Changes to the structure of the Australian higher education market have also led to increased competition, with many small, vocational institutions setting up shop in recent years. Offering courses that include accounting, management, culinary arts, motor maintenance, and hairdressing, these vocational schools have aggressively targeted foreign students.

THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM

Australia’s international tertiary education ecosystem is fairly sophisticated. Agents located in major towns and cities across India aggressively market unrealistic dreams. Thousands of Indian youth—unqualified for admission to reputable tertiary institutions in India itself—suddenly find they can enroll in fancy-sounding schools such as “Cambridge International College” or “MIT” (Melbourne Institute of Technology!) in Australia. They’re also told they will be able to find a job and acquire permanent residency without much difficulty.

Naturally seized with temptation, they are soon on a flight headed down under.

As a result, there has been rapid growth in the Indian student population in Australia, from 2,700 students in 2002 to 91,400 (out of a total international student population of 415,000) in 2009, according to *Washington Post* reporter Rod McGuirk. Not surprisingly, given the open arms with which the new vocational institutes welcome foreign applicants, 70 percent of Indian students attend one of these vocational schools rather than a university, according to a 2009 Lowy Institute report by Janaki Bahadur.

Unlike the larger, established universities, which have the appropriate infrastructure to orient and support their international students, many of these vocational colleges provide little to no support at all. For students from India—most of whom hail from small towns or villages and who would be lost in Delhi or Mumbai—the transition is hard-hitting. Financial survival means living in rougher parts of town and having to hold down tough jobs, such as driving taxis and managing night shifts at service stations. It is common to work multiple jobs, often illegally. And any sort of meaningful interaction with anyone apart from other students from the same region in India is rare.

The hardships would, perhaps, ultimately be worth it, of course, if the education provided was actually valued by industry. However, the quality of education at these vocational institutions mostly ranges from the mediocre to the abysmal. Bahadur remarks, “Frequently, it is mutton dressed up as lamb. Outright fraud involving phony diplomas is not unknown.” Not surprisingly, students coming out of vocational colleges struggle



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to find the jobs they had expected; instead, they continue to drive taxis and man 7-Elevens for months, sometime years, after being declared “qualified.”

Bogus diplomas, however, are not the only questionable practice. Applying for permanent residency requires a student to pass an English-language test and to present a work experience certificate (for those with qualifications from vocational courses). An investigation in 2009 by a leading Australian television network found that unscrupulous immigration and education agents were selling English-language tests for up to AUD \$5,000 and procuring fake work experience certificates for \$3,000-\$4,000.

VIOLENT ATTACKS

A surge in violent attacks against Indian students in Melbourne, Australia, during early 2009 led to a series of large-scale protests in the city center. Coupled with headline and round-the-clock coverage in the Indian media, this compelled the highest members of India’s cabinet—the prime minister and foreign minister—to

raise the issue with their counterparts in Australia. The Australian government, to its credit, responded quickly and constructively. A coordinated inquiry and response was launched headed by the national security adviser, and the deputy prime minister held a forum with student representatives.

they were, in the words of local police, “soft targets.” In late summer 2009, Australian Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard visited India and assured Indians that students coming to Australia would be safe and would receive a good, quality education.

The quality of education at these vocational institutions mostly ranges from the mediocre to the abysmal.

While Indian media outlets were quick to brand the entire Australian nation as “racist,” cooler heads in both countries took a more considered view. It was widely concluded that any racial element in these attacks was purely incidental. Many experts felt that the attacks were largely opportunistic and financially motivated crimes that victimized those who were already in positions of vulnerability, that is, Indian students living in unsafe neighborhoods and holding dangerous jobs. A former Australian diplomat to India attested that most of the culprits were typical “garden-variety criminals”—drug addicts, muggers, and the like—that exist in all big cities around the world. Moreover, reports suggested that the perpetrators were people of multiple ethnicities, including White Australians and youth of Middle Eastern and East Asian descent, rather than members of organized racist gangs.

The investigations did, however, shed light on some serious deficiencies in Australia’s education sector, specifically the mushrooming vocational sector. Promises were made to clean up the industry, and Indian students were advised to exercise greater caution given

Over the next six months, it seemed that the issue had been laid to rest; no further attacks on Indian students were reported. The real problem, it seemed, lay with the unscrupulous vocational school industry, which led to the conditions that made Indian students more likely to fall victim to violent crime—something that itself was on the rise in Australia.

However, a new spate of attacks in early 2010 has brought the issue back to the fore. Eight attacks in less than a month’s time frame included the fatal stabbing of twenty-two-year-old Nitin Garg as he walked through a park on the way to start his shift at a fast-food restaurant. Unlike previous attacks, this attack (and others of recent months) did not involve robbery, largely ruling out economic motives. Local police, however, quickly ruled out racism, prompting an Indian newspaper to publish a cartoon portraying Australian police in the white robes of the Ku Klux Klan.

POLICY RESPONSES

These attacks on Indian students raise important questions for policy makers and Australian society more broadly.

From a purely economic perspective, the attacks and their fallout are already causing significant damage. As of the time of this writing in early 2010, the Indian government had issued two travel advisories to students going to Australia. And, according to the most recent figures from Australia's immigration department, the number of Indians applying for student visas to Australia has dropped by almost 50 percent. Total international student visa applications, meanwhile, are down by a quarter, which no doubt is at least partly a reflection of the damage that Australia's reputation has suffered.

spend each year. The latest advice to Indian students from Victoria's Police Chief Commissioner Simon Overland to "look as poor as you can" to avoid being assaulted falls somewhat short of the mark.

Victoria doesn't need to look far to learn. Just across the border in South Australia, the state government has in place comprehensive support systems for its international students. In addition to a formal orientation process for all new incoming students, the government provides individually tailored support

The latest advice to Indian students from Victoria's Police Chief Commissioner Simon Overland to "look as poor as you can" to avoid being assaulted falls somewhat short of the mark.

Certainly, the attacks highlight serious issues in Australia's education apparatus. The focus areas for policy makers are fairly obvious. There needs to be stricter regulation of educational quality, particularly at vocational schools. Public funding for tertiary education should be reviewed to lessen the strong incentives institutions have to enroll international students. Regardless of the number enrolled, international students need to be provided with access to adequate support systems during their time in Australia. Last, but certainly not least, the role of agents in overseas student recruitment merits strong oversight. Students, often coming from more vulnerable populations in India, need to have realistic expectations before boarding a plane. They deserve a better product and service for the billions they

and advice on employment, housing, and visa requirements. There is even a process whereby students can complain about the quality or content of the course in which they are enrolled. Little wonder we've heard virtually none of the same problems being experienced by the 32,000 Indian students in Adelaide, Australia.

But while the need for a direct regulatory response in the education sector is increasingly acknowledged in Australia, the need for Australian society to introspect on racism appears less so.

There is now enough evidence to suggest that there is an element of racism involved in at least some of the attacks that have taken place. Attacks have started to occur with increasing frequency and, moreover, without a corresponding economic motive. Some of the attackers

are reported to have shouted racist invectives and articulated xenophobic fears. Statistics show that Indians in Australia are two and a half times more likely to be attacked than any other ethnic group, according to a 2010 BBC News report. Jim Saleam, head of the far right Australia First Party, has said that “not only are these Indian students taking away the seats in colleges and universities . . . by staying back . . . they are becoming a serious threat to white Australians in the job market.”

I lived in Melbourne for seventeen years, and it is, by and large, a peaceful place where people are proud of their multicultural society. Sure, I ran into the odd bigot every now and then, but not any more often than in other parts of the world, including India, where I’ve lived for eleven years. In fact, thanks to their naturally outgoing nature and propensity to travel, I’ve always found Australians to be amongst the more tolerant and aware of different cultures.

However, it’s been nearly five years since I last lived in Melbourne. And by all reports the city is certainly a much more dangerous place. Whether it’s also become a more racist place is an open question. A 2008 study, which interviewed 12,500 people over almost a decade, found that one in ten people in Australia believe some races to be superior to others.

More than anything else what is needed is more open public debate on race and racism in Australian society. Parallels with other societies suggest that such introspection is often slow moving. In England, a series of major riots across multiple cities during 2001 reflected interracial tensions, particularly between White and South Asian Muslim communities. A report commissioned

by the government, and released a few months after the riots, blamed deep-rooted segregation for the tensions. Yet, despite efforts to foster integration, a follow-up government report in 2006 noted that segregation was still entrenched in some areas. In France, episodes of civil unrest in 2005 and 2007, as well as riots in mid-2009, highlighted the disaffection felt by youth of North African descent. Of late there is strong debate on the push by French lawmakers for a partial ban on the *burqa*.

No doubt the issues in England and France are far from “solved,” but at least there is a degree of open public debate and, more importantly, acknowledgement from leaders that race is an issue. In Australia, after months of denying that racism was playing a role in attacks on Indian students, at least some in power have also started to open up to the possibility. Overland recently acknowledged “some of what we are seeing is racist. There is no denying that.” And Foreign Minister Stephen Smith has said “it seems clear” that some of the attacks “have been racist in nature.” However, amongst leaders in the state of Victoria, where the majority of attacks have taken place, there continues to be reluctance. When Victorian opposition leader, Ted Baillieu recently accused the government of being in denial over “racist violence,” state government members reacted with hyperbole, suggesting Baillieu had branded Victorian “mums and dads” racist.

Perhaps the sooner Australian society can start wrestling with these issues rationally and openly, the sooner I can go back to explaining to my American and European friends that it’s really they who are very far away from the rest of the world.

Aid as a Weapon: Can Money Buy Victory in Afghanistan?

by Michael Buonocore

Michael Buonocore spent the last four years as an infantry officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and returned from a seven-month tour in the Helmand province in Afghanistan in June 2009. He is currently pursuing a Master in Public Policy degree at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

“Clear, hold, build” has become the primary component of the U.S. counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan. It refers to the idea that the military needs to forcibly remove the enemy from population centers, remain in place to prevent the enemy from regaining a foothold, and build civil structures and institutions so that the local population becomes strong enough to protect itself from the insurgency. It seeks to neutralize the enemy by denying access to the civilian population, whose support, or at least passive consent, is required to continue operating.

For fiscal year 2010, the U.S. Department of Defense has allocated \$1.5 billion of its annual budget toward humanitarian and reconstruction projects. This year’s allocation is almost 50 percent greater than humanitarian and reconstruction

funding designated in the 2009 budget and comes in addition to monies allocated for other activities many would consider sufficient for the “build” phase of the counterinsurgency strategy. The money has gone to the Commander’s Emergency Response Program, which is intended to allow military commanders to quickly and easily spend money on humanitarian and reconstruction projects.

There has been an increasing expectation amongst policy makers and the general public that money allocated for humanitarian and reconstruction purposes will achieve joint security gains for both the United States and Afghanistan, in addition to improving indigenous quality of life. Though aid has always been seen as having some kind of return for the United States, the explicit use of aid as a fundamental component of military strategy for defeating an enemy and stabilizing a community is unique in the context of post-September 11 conflicts and untested.

At first blush, this strategy seems to make intuitive sense and is seen as a fundamental element of the larger strategy that has recently been credited with many of the security gains in Iraq. But the conflict in Afghanistan is very different from the situation in Iraq for many reasons, and the applicability of the “clear, hold, build” strategy is being called into question by some prominent researchers. There have been several attempts to evaluate the efficacy of aid, but they tend to narrowly focus on how individual Afghans’ perceptions of government institutions and actors are affected by this aid. However, the true value of aid should not be measured in terms of the perceptions of those to whom aid is targeted, but rather by its ability

to achieve objectives set by the military commander on the ground.

Andrew Wilder, a researcher from Tufts University, is one of those questioning the assumption that “clear, hold, build” can work in Afghanistan. Wilder has spent the past two years studying the impact of aid on Afghans’ perceptions of local government. He has used informal interviews with Afghans to assess whether the average person has a positive or negative attitude toward aid in general, specific aid projects, those who distribute aid, and the new Afghan government. Though the study has yet to be finalized, Wilder’s initial findings overwhelmingly suggest that Afghans do not view aid as positive, and in fact, many see it as a wasteful or even corrupting force.

Wilder further argues that aid is actually having a destabilizing effect throughout the country by creating tension between the perceived beneficiaries of aid and those who are seemingly excluded. This aid may also exacerbate local corruption, which Afghans have identified as a central reason for not accepting local government institutions. Wilder’s conclusion is that aid needs to once again be thought of in strictly humanitarian and developmental terms and divorced from the idea that aid is a weapon in the fight against the enemy. Given the amount of money the military is now spending on aid and the centrality of it in the military’s counterinsurgency strategy, these findings are significant and clearly call many of the assumptions driving military strategy in Afghanistan into question.

Many who have spent time in Afghanistan will agree with Wilder’s observations and testify to the validity of his approach. Increasing the legitimacy of U.S.-supported local institutions and

government leaders is essential to success in Afghanistan, and it makes sense that this is measured by how those who are governed perceive them. However, it is shortsighted to also measure the contribution of military aid to security in only these terms.

The value of military aid should not be assessed strictly on the immediate impacts it has on the average Afghan but rather on the extent to which it contributes to objectives established by commanders on the ground. Aid is simply another instrument available to commanders that allows them to achieve short- and long-term objectives. The end objective remains the development of a credible, self-sustaining government uncorrupted by the enemy, but there are many incremental objectives along the way that military aid can actively help achieve that are not adequately measured in terms of citizen’s perceptions.

Aid is a “soft power” instrument that commanders can use when the tenability of using weapons or other explicitly coercive measures to achieve military objectives decreases. The most relevant criteria for evaluating the efficacy of this aid, therefore, must be based on the objective for the intervention and to what extent this objective was achieved. Because every commander-sponsored humanitarian or reconstruction project does not have the immediate goal of improving perceptions, it is of limited utility to measure its effectiveness in only those terms, as Wilder does.

Instead, the efficacy of aid intervention should be evaluated based on the objective that the specific context requires. As security situations improve to the point where the effectiveness of “hard power” instruments begins to decrease,

soft power instruments that can be used to both influence and negotiate with Afghan leaders fill the void. Commanders can exchange aid for action, which can be an effective way to incentivize actors' change in behavior. In this sense, it is a remarkably adaptable tool; for example, aid can target projects specifically for Afghan leaders, it can be designated for outcomes a commander wants to pursue

shoot rockets, or throw hand grenades at will, commanders should not be free to implement humanitarian or reconstruction projects without doing the equivalent analysis that goes into utilizing any other weapon system.

Part of this analysis involves anticipating collateral damage and taking mitigating actions to minimize its effect.

Without discretionary aid, the military could still execute the clear and hold but would no longer be capable of supporting the “build” phase.

without recognition, or it can be used to coerce an actor by threatening to award aid to a rival local actor.

Of course, the gains from using aid in this way must be weighed against potential negative outcomes that could result, and Wilder's observations illustrate how potent the negatives can be. But that does not mean aid should never be used in this manner. In some circumstances, negative outcomes can be mitigated. In others, anticipated negative outcomes may be judged an acceptable consequence in the pursuit of greater strategic gains.

Wilder's observations are undeniably useful because they may demonstrate that aid is not being used like the weapon it is intended to be. Every time a Marine or soldier discharges a rifle and every time a commander decides to neutralize a target with a 1,000-pound bomb, there is a process in place to ensure that the action chosen is, in fact, appropriate. To be effective, aid must be understood in the same way—as a weapon. Just as no commander is free to have his subordinates fire their rifles,

Commanders must identify the negative consequences of a project from its conception to the time it is completed. Every project carries risk, and after those risks and the mitigating actions are identified, a commander must decide if the risk level is acceptable or not. The commander must gauge whether the reasonably expected positives from initiating and completing the project outweigh the reasonably expected negative outcomes, and if they do, if it is a project worth pursuing.

Moreover, just as a commander would be reprimanded if he discharged a \$10,000 piece of weaponry without a clear understanding of the outcome of his action, a commander should also be held accountable if an initiated \$10,000 aid project had no reasonable expectation of achieving a particular military goal. This not only necessarily means that there must be clearly articulated objectives for every project, but it also means that commanders must be committed to achieving these objectives.

The rules of engagement governing the use of other weapons should be applied to the use of aid. This would require that before a project is initiated and funds spent, a commander must be able to observe a problem in the community and specifically identify the source of it. Commanders must also ensure that the aid project is proportional and appropriate to the identified problem. If access to water is an issue, digging a well may be appropriate, but contracting the district governor's brother to truck in bottled water from Kabul may not. If a commander is trying to influence a district official, initiating a project that disproportionately benefits the official may be appropriate, but expending \$50,000 to do so without communal benefits is probably not proportional.

In the end, perhaps the strongest argument in support of the value of military aid is to simply imagine a situation in which commanders do not have access to such funds. Without discretionary aid, the military could still execute the clear and hold but would no longer be capable of supporting the "build" phase. Without this capacity to build, it is hard to understand what exactly the military would do to advance the mission—it would simply become an occupying force, influencing those it could by almost exclusively coercive means. The military would still be able to provide a community some level of security, but only that, and it has become clear that in these conflicts the military needs to do so much more:

It has long been our military's responsibility to fight and win wars, but in counterinsurgency campaigns where what it means to win is less clear, the military needs access to both hard and soft power instruments to accomplish

the mission. It is easy to say that the United States and Afghanistan would be better served if these humanitarian and reconstruction projects were undertaken by another federal agency with more experience and specific training, but the reality is that this responsibility has been delegated to the military. Aid has been extremely valuable to commanders on the deck, and it has achieved results. The true metric for gauging military aid is implicit in what these investments accomplish for the commander, not necessarily the effect they have on government officials or the individual Afghan. At its most effective all three parties derive mutual benefits, but as long as the commander is reaching the desired result of a particular project and the negative outcomes do not exceed the gains, aid projects are worth pursuing.

Kenbe Espwa: Keeping Hope for Haiti — A Photo Journal Essay of Public Service

by *Wendy L. Flick*

Wendy L. Flick is currently a mid-career Master in Public Administration candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Prior to her work with the Pond Foundation, Flick was the founder and coordinator of a volunteer services program for Sangre de Cristo Hospice in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and before that she worked as a carpenter for Chestnut Ridge Construction Company building log homes in Pennsylvania.

As director of international programs for the Pond Foundation from 2000 to 2009, some of my most satisfying work was partnering with Haitian organizations. From 2003 to 2007, we created sustainable development programs in permaculture, renewable energies, food security, and potable water. When the Haitian earthquake hit on 12 January 2010, I was engrossed in a January intensive course at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Immediately my attention was split—trying to ascertain the safety and survival of my Haitian friends and colleagues while attempting to engage in my course work. I was itching to find a way to help.

I received a phone call only two days after the quake from a program director, Martha Thompson, at the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) asking if I might be available as a part-time consultant for the organization in its Haiti relief efforts. I jumped at the chance. I agreed to escort Thompson to Haiti in February on an assessment mission to identify where UUSC's support might be of greatest benefit to people falling through the cracks.

Roughly half of our time was spent in rural areas of the Central Plateau assessing the situation of refugees who fled from Port-au-Prince and the other half in and around the capital city of Port-au-Prince. Food, water, and shelter topped the list of needs everywhere, but not far behind were the desires for employment, education for the children, and rebuilding of the country.

Though the overall devastation is unbelievable and overwhelming, it is the individual stories that stick with me most. Here are just a few:

- Poly, a teenage girl staying at the Mouvman Peyizan Papaye peasant-training center in Papaye, was one of only two children to survive the collapse of her school in Port-au-Prince. She has a huge lump on the side of her head and is deeply traumatized at the loss of her friends.
- Josette Farme is a woman we met at the St. Terese Hospital in Hinche. She is in her late thirties and has eight children between the ages of one and twenty. Her husband died, and she lost both of her legs and her home in the earthquake. Now that her wounds are healing there is pressure for her to leave the hospital due to a shortage of beds. But she has nowhere to go



A tent camp about 20 kilometers east of Port au Prince. Very few of the makeshift shelters are rain-proof, and the rainy season begins in April.

and no prosthetics to assist with mobility. We also discovered that there is no regular provision of meals at the hospital, so her children spend their days scrounging for food to feed her and themselves.

- My good friend Agathe Jean-Baptiste survived the earthquake physically unscathed with her eleven-month-old baby girl Agla. But like many Haitians, she carries a lot of invisible trauma from the experience. A medical doctor, Agathe went to volunteer at one of the hospitals in Port-au-Prince and says she saw something she wishes she had never seen—the miscellaneous body parts of nursing students mixed in with the

Signs like this one on the fence of a tent camp were everywhere, in every language; “Ed nou, ayudanos, please help us.”





Women receiving bags of rice from a USAID distribution point. Their next hurdles will be to make it safely back to their tent camps, then scrounge for pots, water and firewood to cook the rice. These basic necessities are not easy to come by.

rubble as bulldozers cleared away the debris from the collapsed nursing school adjacent to the hospital.

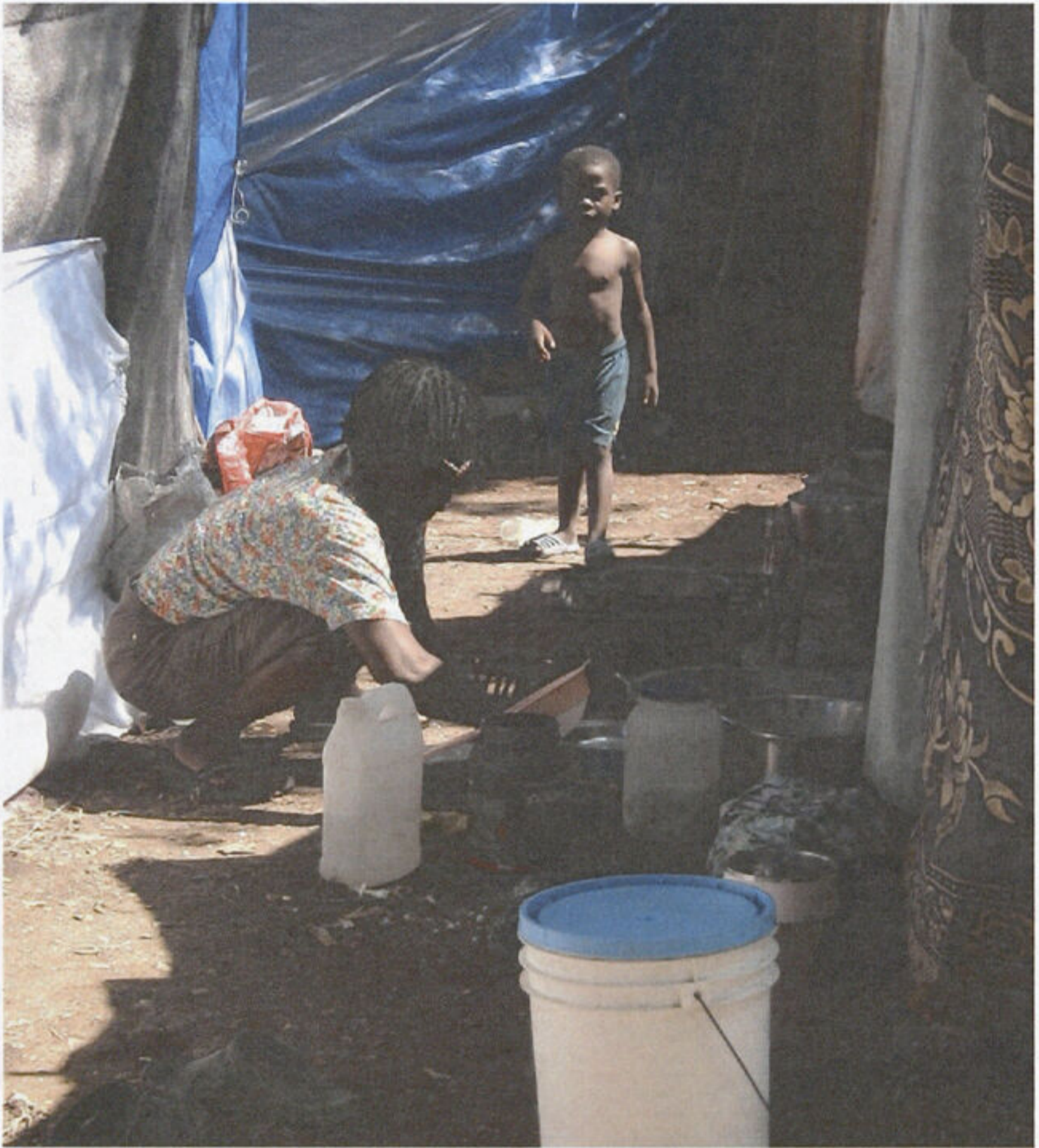
Every person I met had stories like these, some of horror and trauma, others of miraculous escapes and hope. Nearly everyone offered ideas for what is needed to move forward. After eight days of listening to Haitians' ideas, I am convinced of the following priorities:

1. Haitian voices must be actively engaged in meetings with international humanitarian organizations and in all major planning meetings for both short-term relief and long-term recovery plans. Haitians need to be the ones to decide how Haiti should be rebuilt.
2. Aid distribution must be focused not only on Port-au-Prince but also on

the rural areas to which hundreds of thousands of people have fled, overwhelming the already limited local resources in those areas.

3. Job creation must be a high priority in the immediate cleanup, as well as in the long-term reconstruction plans. People are eager to get back to work and do not want to retain dependence on food aid.
4. Better solutions for shelter need to be found. Many people are living under bedsheets that provide some shade from the sun but will be useless for protection from the rains.

Despite the current enormous strain on local resources from the influx of refugees, some pockets of hope were evident in the countryside. For example, the programs I helped implement in my



Woman cooking for her family in a makeshift kitchen in a tent camp in Mariani.

earlier partnerships in the Central Plateau region, such as the development of family gardens and microdrip irrigation, are still going strong. These methods, scaled up for more extensive sustainable farming, can offer hope and viable solutions to the local residents and to the thousands of internally displaced persons flooding into the countryside. Most of the food production techniques also are transferable for urban use.



Tent camp in Mariani. Shelters here are made from bedsheets that offer some privacy and sunshade, but not much rain protection. Rainy season begins in April.

Refugee mother and baby in Papaye, Central Plateau.





Remains of a maternity clinic in Port au Prince.

Distribution of bags of USAID rice with UN "blue hat" protection.





New arrivals for refugee registration at MPP in Papaye. This woman arrived on crutches because she lost her left leg in the earthquake.

Remains of a church in Port au Prince.



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