A Woman in a Man’s World

By Brandon Roddey (Class of 2011)

Her Excellency Ambassador Samira Hanna-El-Daher joined AGS in spring 2010 as professor of Foreign Policy Formulation and Diplomacy.

Over the course of the Ambassador’s career in diplomacy, her education, political connections, and determination have enabled her to surmount the numerous social barriers faced by the women of her time.

Samira Hanna-El-Daher was born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon, where she attended a private French Catholic Missionary School. Her father, a well-known and widely respected man, presided as judge over one of Lebanon’s highest courts before opening his own private law practice. Her mother was a well-educated woman of aristocratic descent who stayed at home and took care of the family “as was the fashion for the women those days.”

When it came time for her to pursue higher education, Samira’s father tried to push her into a “softer” career such as medicine or education, because politics and law were considered work of men. Nonetheless she decided to follow in his footsteps, choosing to study Public Law and Political Science at the Jesuit University in Beirut and the University of Lyon in France. Afterwards, she obtained a DEA (Diplôme d’Etudes Approfondies) at Paris-Dauphine, specializing in Constitutional and International Law.

Due to her father’s profession and political connections, in the time of her youth it was not uncommon for her family to host foreign dignitaries and diplomats in their home for dinner. During these discussion-filled evenings Samira began to take a particular interest in the pressing issues and political challenges faced by people outside of her country. These experiences in part explain how her youth led her into career diplomacy.

In 1970, after graduation, she made a bold decision and chose to sit for the competitive examinations to enter the Lebanese Diplomatic Corps. When the new diplomats were selected, it was a close friend of her recently late father who would
announce the four chosen candidates. Although Samira had successfully passed the examinations, he refused to announce her acceptance during the ceremony. Crestfallen, she refused to accept that! I had to be a part of the change.”

During the years 1970-1985, she steadily built her career, giving much hard work and sacrifice to the service of her country’s interests. She served in Australia with the Lebanese Consul General in Sydney, returned to Beirut for a couple of years, and then was stationed as Counselor in London (the number two position within the mission) from 1977-1979. Afterwards, the Lebanese government appointed her to the Counsel General in New York, where she acted as Legal Advisor to the Lebanese Permanent Mission.

In 1985, Ambassador Hanna-El-Daher accomplished another outstanding feat that no woman before her had ever done. She was selected as the Head of Mission for Lebanon to Japan, making her the first female ambassador ever in Japan. Her appointment made her the highest ranking woman working with the Japanese government, a giant shock to Japanese culture and values. Her role as woman was simply incompatible with her role as ambassador in the eyes of Japanese society. Not one minister or vice-minister in Japan was a woman. Her appointment did not go unnoticed by Japanese women, who referred to the female Lebanese Ambassador to Japan during demonstrations in front of Parliament to demand equal treatment. Looking back, Ms. Hanna-El-Daher describes these four years as a “rewarding period,” although she often viewed as a “woman first, an ambassador second.”

In the period between 1987, the year she left Japan, and 2003, the year she gained appointment to the Lebanese Permanent Mission to UNESCO, she served in several distinguished positions that drew upon her expertise and years of service. In 1989, she helped to reopen the Lebanese Embassy in Switzerland following the fighting that had been taking place in Lebanon. Around this same period, she worked with UNESCO on a handbook for teaching disarmament. From 1995-2003, she served as the Lebanese Ambassador to Cyprus.

Asked about insights gained from her years of experience, she points to the value of personal relationships as tools of effective diplomacy. As a diplomat, she has always aimed to "address without ulterior motives and in all good faith the humanity of one’s counterpart.” Honest and frank, the “diplomat will put in an acceptable way what is often difficult to accept.” Diplomats must remember that they are “representative of a whole set of values, of different ways of dealing with the same problems” and that the diplomat’s role is to take those values and problem-solving mechanisms and "make them closer” to the ways of the other. Her personal style of diplomacy blends rhetorical skill, compassion, and moral integrity in order to get the job done.

Her teaching in the classroom here at AGS embodies these same values. Overall, she has tried to be a positive force for the change of which she speaks. She says that her students “have to believe that they can make a difference in the world.”

AGS News

Crimes Against Women

In December the American Graduate School in Paris’s research center saw the release of its first book: Crimes Against Women (Nova Publishers, USA), a collective work edited by AGS professor David Wingeate Pike, with a foreword by Bangladeshi author and Human Rights advocate Taslima Nasrin.

Crimes Against Women presents a survey of acts of violence, past and present, that women have endured throughout the world, and calls upon governments, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to address this issue. The book is organized around a three-fold focus: examining gender-related crimes rooted in concept and law, those deriving from religion, customs and traditions, and those perpetrated in times of conflict. The twenty-eight articles take a broad variety of approaches, ranging from the philosophical and legalistic to the narrative reporting of contributors working in the field.

Crimes Against Women is the first published project of the research center of AGS, which focuses on International Conflict/Crime and subsequent governmental action. The center is co-directed by the president of the school of International Relations at AGS Dr. Eileen Servidio who initiated this project and wrote the chapter entitled “Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Armed Conflict: Legal Aspects”, and Dr. David Pike who edited the book and wrote its preface and introduction as well as the article on “Imperial Japan and its ‘Comfort Women’.”

The author of the foreword Taslima Nasrin has fought for the past two decades against the oppression and discrimination of women in traditions, religions, customs and cultures in Bangladesh and other countries. A medical doctor by training, she has written a dozen poetry books, novels, essays and memoirs. She had to flee Bangladesh in 1994 and has lived in
AGS Expands its Premises

Work began in Summer 2010 for expansion of the AGS facility. Finally the last nail was knocked in, and all the paint brushes wiped. The new AGS premises officially came into use in September, alongside registration and resumption for the Fall semester.

The expansion brought into being five new offices, a larger conference room, reception area, carpeted hallway and a separate computer room and a large classroom on 6th floor. However, a lot of students will agree that the most striking feature is the spacious library. Every semester the AGS population grows, and the question ‘how will we all fit into this library’, was legend. Not any more though, no one will be asking that question for some time!

Student Theses

A Master’s thesis at AGS is a result of steady hard work over two years, but hard work can also be interesting. Here are some research topics chosen by the class of 2010.

- European Neighborhood Policy: A Substitute or Prelude to Membership in the European Union? Examining Parallels and Differences Between the Mediterranean and Caucasus Region.
- Conflict in Côte d’Ivoire - Cascon Analysis.
- Does Immigration to France Benefit Senegalese Women?
- Is the Emphasis on National Autonomy Evident in Putin’s Policies a Product of the Failure of Liberal Economic Reforms in the 1990’s?
- Why Does Microfinance Fail to Contribute to the Empowerment of Women in Rural Rajasthan, India?
- Environmental Degradation, Resource Scarcity, and the Malthusian Philosophy in Relationship to Civil Conflict in Africa.
- Contradictions in the Search for Harmonized Barrier Test Standards for the Automobile Industry among the Member States of the EU.
- The Role of Rhetoric in IR: How Did Rhetoric Utilized by the Bush Administration Influence Rhetoric under Tony Blair in the UK Concerning (Support for) the Iraq War?
- The Rising Use of Privatized Military Firms in International Conflicts (with Focus on the U.S. War in Iraq).
- Just and Unjust Wars: Iraq.
- How Can We Evaluate the Effectiveness of EITI in Improving Governance of Extractive Industries?
- Do Legislative, Regulatory, and Contractual Measures from the World Heritage Criteria Protect State Sovereignty?
- Do the Olympics Create Conditions for a New Kind of Terrorism: Olympic Terrorism?

All theses are available in the AGS library for review.

Student News

Student Initiatives

Students of AGS are always full of amazing ideas. This year’s students have developed their ideas into tangible projects which vary in size, purpose, scope, and membership. Each of these projects, from promoting education, to sponsoring sporting activities, to creating a forum for IR discussion, has the aim of making the world a better place.

Uche Okonkwo (Class of 2011) saw the need for a website that would serve as a forum for discussion in the IR field. At AGS, he was lucky enough to find fellow students Evan Musolino (Class of 2011) and Cullen Stewart (Class of 2012) were enthusiastic about this idea, and so the website Global Discussion Initiative (GDI) was created (www.theglobaldiscussion.org). Instead of being a sounding board for one opinion or another, GDI seeks to be a forum that contains what the IR community deems relevant information. The concept is an interactive website that includes podcasts and videos as well as written material. Another factor unique to GDI is what Uche calls the “academic personality”—a page where individuals can express his or her academic self. After a lot of grunt work, GDI has become, according to Uche, “More than a forum, it is an educational tool”. Among the projects GDI is developing are the publication of peer reviewed academic articles, getting involved in the AGS Conference, and having a publication put together by the end of this academic year; they have invited AGS professors Dr. Steve McGiffen and Patrick Clairzier (Class of 2009) to serve on their editorial board. So as to make this a more relevant forum in the IR community, GDI has created what Uche calls the GDI network, a reciprocal partnership with other organizations, to start reaching and
involving as many people as possible. The Global Discussion initiative is already partnering with another project co-founded by AGS student Rachel Brophy.

Rachel Brophy (Class of 2011) is a co-founder of Sports4Hope (www.sports4hope.org) a student led initiative born out of a Post-Conflict Development and Reconstruction course at Arcadia University, AGS’s partner institution. Sports4Hope seeks to prevent and reconcile conflicts by inspiring hope, improving the quality of life, and empowering youth in conflict-affected areas through sport and peace education throughout the world. Their first project, which will begin this year, will target three conflict-affected communities, Bogoro, Vilo, and Kagaba in the Ituri region of Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Rachel states that, “the academic foundation provided at AGS, particularly in Professor Yates’ course “Scramble for African Resources”, has been very influential in shaping the direction and scope of the work of Sports4HOPE”.

Brandon Roddey (Class of 2011) has started a student-run association, Biblion Project (BiP), (biblionproject.over-blog.com) with the mission of promoting education, learning and knowledge by organizing different types of actions. In March 2010, Biblion Project partnered with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières via “Books for Haiti” to collect university textbooks for Haitian libraries as a response to the earthquake earlier last year. BiP distributed donation boxes throughout the international student residence, Cité Universitaire, to collect as many books as possible. Bake sales, such as “Cupcakes, Coffee and Culture,” were organized in order to raise money to send the books overseas. This first major project was very successful. Biblion Project donated a total of 1000 books and 1000 euros to Bibliothèques Sans Frontières to go towards improving Haitian libraries.

Another project, still in the works, is an educational program with the aim of teaching cultural diversity to French primary school students. This project works by having international graduate students living in Paris enter in the classroom to create cultural exchanges with themes like “Latin American Day,” for example. BiP hopes to increase the children’s awareness of other cultures and to give these children an insight into their own cultural identity by bringing them face to face with the Other.

BiP’s fundraising events have mostly taken place at the Cité Universitaire, but Brandon indicates that they want to continue to grow. In this spirit Brandon has started recruiting other AGS students to support his project, like Joseph Mangarella (Class of 2011) who currently serves as BiP’s treasur-er.

Whether they are promoting education, or sponsoring sports for children in need, or just talking politics; AGS students have started projects that seem to have a bright future.

Conference Scholarship Recipient

Adriana Barillas-Batarse (Class of 2011) attended the 2010 Global Studies Association Conference which was hosted by the Journal of Critical Globalisation at Merton College, University of Oxford. The topic of the conference was “Globalisation and International Relations”. Adriana was given an AGS Conference Scholarship to assist with registration and travel expenses. This scholarship is awarded to two AGS students every year.

The conference took place in September, and Adriana presented her paper titled “The Internet as a Tool for Globalization: Iran and the Advent of New Technology” to a room full of Ph.D. candidates and established professionals in the field, not only of International Relations, but Globalisation as well. “Once there I realized that I was the only M.A. student presenting which was a little scary.” Adriana commented that the biggest contribution to her as an academic was the discussion her paper created, and the feedback she was able to get. “I was able to use this feedback as a basis for my research when it came time to deciding on whether this topic was worthy of a thesis.” Adriana is currently writing her thesis on the effects of the blogging movement in Iran.

CALL FOR PAPERS!
AGS 6th Graduate Student Conference.

The Politics of Disaster: The Mitigation, Management and International Response to Environmental Crises

May 26 & 27, 2011

Environmental disasters have been afflicting mankind for millennia. Earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, drought, and in modern times, industrial calamities number only a few of the destructive forces that have continually plagued life on Earth. In the ensuing months and years following these crises communities, governments, aid agencies and NGOs have banded together to assist in the relief and recovery process. As a result, questions arise as to the efficacy and frequency of the fiscal, environmental and social responses to these disasters.

The goal of this conference is to explore the myriad of historical responses, as well as the potential theoretical solutions to future crises. The impacts of these crises are broad, as are the disciplines that explore their consequences. The organizers seek a wide range of topics and faculties that will contribute to this discourse. Topics may include, but are not limited to legal/ arbitrative responses, environmental/ ecological impacts, state and non-state relief efforts and the development movements present during these events.

For more information about submitting papers, abstracts and deadlines please send an email to: conference@ags.edu
A Student’s Viewpoint

Conspiracy Theories

By Cullen Stewart (Class of 2012)

The terrorist attack of 9/11 was a seminal moment in world history. On that day, 19 Islamic fundamentalists hijacked jetliners and flew them into the heart of America’s commercial and military establishments. These fanatical young men were financed, armed, and trained by madmen living in Afghan caves. Coincidentally, these madmen were themselves financed, armed, and trained by the United States throughout the 1980s. Despite numerous internal and external warnings, America’s military and intelligence agencies were unable to stop or even limit the attacks as they were caught off guard and then paralyzed with shock. This is the official explanation of what happened on September 11th, all other accounts being merely conspiracy theories. Classifying something as a “conspiracy theory” allows any journalist, government official, or scholar to dismiss any non-mainstream explanation of a historical event. The general consensus on conspiracy theories is that they range from innocent to ridiculous, such as the United States faking the moon landings, to the maliciously racist; notably the denial of the Holocaust. By declaring something a conspiracy theory, it is inherently labeled as untrue. As a consequence, some legitimate historical perspectives can be unjustly cast aside and proclaimed conspiracy theories as they threaten the interests of the powerful or offend the sensibilities of the general public.

The majority of citizens living in democratic countries acknowledge that their elected officials often lie to them. However, these same citizens believe that their officials would never deliberately manipulate them into supporting unjust actions; namely unnecessary warfare. The reasoning seems to be that while lying about minor issues is endemic in democratic politics, an unspoken moral code exists that stops elites from engaging in major acts of deception. In 1964, if it were suggested that the North Vietnamese had not attacked the US Navy in the Gulf of Tonkin; that the entire incident was a fabrication by the American civilian and military leadership, this hypothesis would be found as absurd as a conspiracy theory. Today, it is common knowledge that a systemic conspiracy intended to dupe the American public and Congress into supporting direct US involvement in the Vietnam War is exactly what happened.

The majority of Americans find it impossible to believe their government and/or military would willfully allow American citizens to be killed. Nevertheless, one need only remember the 40-year long Tuskegee Syphilis Experiments, in which 339 Americans were deliberately and unknowingly infected with a deadly disease for “scientific” purposes. Furthermore, in 1997, the JFK Assassination Records Review Board uncovered Operation Norwood, a 1962 plan presented to the President by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The plan’s objective was to cultivate a public climate that would be favorable to an American-led invasion of Cuba. America’s military leadership proposed that the US government commit acts of terrorism in the United States that could be blamed on Cuban communist insurgents. The plan included bombing civilian targets in Miami and Washington, as well as downing American civilian aircrafts flying to Caribbean destinations in the vicinity of Cuba.

The most common logic arranged to dismiss conspiracy theories is that it would be impossible for a large group of people to keep a secret for any length of time. However, project Ultra disproves this belief. During World War II, the Allies were able to decipher Axis military codes. Codenamed project ULTRA, thousands of people from multiple Allied states had intimate knowledge of this decisive military advantage and its massive influence on winning the war. The public did not learn of its existence until 1973, when a French intelligence officer wrote a book on the subject. For 30 years, thousands of people willfully kept one of the most crucial aspects of World War II a secret, even though its disclosure would not have undermined the security of any Allied states.

People like to believe that their government is incapable of major acts of betrayal. It is certainly unpleasant to think your country’s leadership would intentionally kill innocent people to advance their political or personal agendas. Fortunately for our leaders, notion of “collateral damage” exists to justify, in their eyes, the killing of innocent people in service of a higher cause. The concept of collateral damage is especially useful because it doesn’t discriminate between an innocent compatriot and the innocents of other nations. Two primary concerns drive the thought process of most politicians: appeasing or rewarding the sponsors that facilitated and financed their ascension to power, and improving the strategic position of the polity they represent; in that order. Rare is the politician that will let a little collateral damage get in the way of securing power, enriching their supporters, or advancing anything they perceive to be of strategic interest to their polity.

Since the mid-1990s, the Neo-conservative elites in the United States had been arguing for regime change in Iraq. The Neo-con think tank, Project For the New American Century, believed that American global hegemony was waning and as such, the US should use its military power to reverse this trend. Regime change in Iraq, and the subsequent American domination of the world’s second largest oil reserves were, according to the Neo-cons, the only way to ensure that America remained the world’s sole superpower in the coming century. There was only one obstacle to pursuing this plan: the American public would never support such imperial adventurism unless there was, as they had put it, a “New Pearl Harbor”. Low and behold, 8 months after taking power, the neo-cons had their “New Pearl Harbor”.

The official version of what happened on 9/11 may be entirely accurate. Nevertheless, it is not unrealistic to think that what we have been told is not truth. With regard to 9/11, several odd and unanswered questions still remain. For example at 8:34am, air traffic controllers notified NORAD that American Airlines Flight 11 was being hijacked. Sadly, by 9:03am, when the second of the two WTC towers was struck, no fighter jets had been scrambled to defend America’s airspace. This is an unprecedented response to potential, let alone confirmed, hijackings. Fighter jets are routinely scrambled whenever airliners lose contact with air traffic control. On
September 11th, the response was extremely delayed. The glaring failure to defend America’s airspace on 9/11 is inconceivable. However, the official explanation for what happened on that day states an old fashioned case of everyone falling asleep on the job or getting caught with their pants down if you prefer that expression. Another lingering question surrounds the near instantaneous collapse of the Twin Towers and WTC 7 - a 47-story office building that collapsed at 5:21pm. All three towers came down at free fall speed, yet the explanation for their collapse is that of a couple key structural failures which resulted in a succession of structural failures. A building collapsing as a result of unsupported heaviness from above pushing strain on the floors below would collapse floor by floor as the weight compiled until each floors’ supports gave out in succession. There would not be the instantaneous free fall collapse we all viewed on 9/11.

In 2002, the 9/11 Commission and other government investigations, such as one conducted by FEMA and the Structural Engineering Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers, concluded that they had no idea why WTC 7 collapsed. WTC 7 remains the only high rise building in the world’s history that has collapsed as a result of fire related damage - let alone the consideration that it collapsed in a matter of seconds. The investigation into what happened on 9/11 was extremely hampered by the fact that the debris from the WTC site was immediately removed and permanently deposited within days of the tragedy. The clean up was a 24/7 effort that was deemed to be of utmost urgency because it would expedite America’s healing. The murder scene of 3,000 people was quickly dismantled before any investigation could occur. Although destroying a crime scene is unquestionably illegal, one could suppose an investigation into what happened would be redundant since the Bush administration already knew who the culprits were.

It is my belief that certain elite actors in the American military, defense, business, and intelligence communities not only had prior knowledge of the impending 9/11 attacks but also allowed them to happen, therefore participating in making the destruction as devastating as possible. The American public needed to be convinced that America should expand its military power into the broader Middle East. The elites sincerely believed that it was in both their own and America’s long-term interests to expand US military power into Central Asia and Iraq. Together, Central Asia and Iraq possess a considerable portion of the world’s fossil fuels; the lifeblood of the world economy. Prior to 9/11, the US was shutout of Iraq completely and had no means of substantially influencing events in Central Asia. Russia and France did not oppose the invasion of Iraq because they are governed by a group of more morally righteous elites; they vehemently opposed the US-led invasion because both French and Russian companies had signed deals with Saddam Hussein to extract and refine the vast majority of Iraqi oil once the UN embargo was eventually lifted. Saddam made no secret of the fact that as long as he remained in power, US and British firms would be left on the outside looking in. The fact that the Bush administration’s allies in the American business community would make billions of dollars by going to war and seizing an oil rich country was not lost on anyone. Halliburton, the company Vice-President Cheney headed before 2000, is just one example of the plethora of American multinationals with extensive links to the Bush administration that have, and continue, to profit immensely from the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan were a win-win as far as the Neo-cons were concerned. These conflicts allowed their political allies in the oil industry and the military-industrial complex to accumulate astronomical profits. In that same breath, the Neo-cons were enhancing what they believed to be America’s long-term economic, political, and military interests. The only downside to achieving their goals, in their estimation, was some collateral damage. Forging empire never has been, and never will be, a bloodless enterprise.

Disclaimer: The above article reflects the opinion of the author and does not reflect a viewpoint held by the American Graduate School in Paris.

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**Faculty News**

**Professor Joav Toker** took part in a 50-minute TV debate on the results of U.S. midterm elections (France-Télévision, November 2010). He was a member of two international panels debating World Affairs on the “Kiosque” show on TV-5 (the International Francophone TV Channel) on December 5th and October 31st, 2010. He attended a conference at the Interdisciplinary Center, Paris, on “The Comparative Aspects of the Representation of Minority-groups in the Mass-Media in U.S. and in France.”

**Dr. Steve McGiffen** gave a talk on "Genetically Modified Organisms: Unsustainable, Undesirable and Unnecessary" at New York University’s Paris campus on November 24. Professor McGiffen has done extensive research on the subject; he is the author of *Biotechnology: Corporate Power versus the Public Interest* (Pluto Press, 2005).

“`My researches demonstrated to me that the introduction of GMOs into agriculture is the latest stage of an attempt by a small number of major corporations to exert control over the global food supply at the same time that their power is making it more and more difficult for democratically elected governments, parliaments, and public institutions in general to control their activities. As a near self-sufficient food producer myself, I understand that seed-saving and cross-breeding are at the heart of successful small-scale agriculture. GMOs make this form of agriculture impossible. As a relatively prosperous citizen of a Western society, I am always aware that should my crops fail, I have alternatives. Most small farmers do not have this luxury and this transfor-
mation of agriculture which is being imposed takes their fate out of their own hands. I think this is indeed an issue which goes to the heart of the reality of modern international relations.”

Dr. Alan Kahan participated in a conference on the Revolutions of 1848 organized by Liberty Fund, which took place Sept 9-12, in Prague. On 24 January he gave a paper on “Tocqueville and Islam” at the University of Indiana – Bloomington Political Science Dept. He also led a discussion on Tocqueville at a student/faculty Wine and Cheese evening at AGS this Fall semester.

Dr. David Pike’s new book, Franco y el Eje Roma-Berlín -Tokio: una alianza no firmada, has just been published in Madrid by Editorial Alianza. It includes 16 photographs, most of them up to now unpublished, of Hitler’s and Mussolini’s inner circles; the photos were supplied by Süddeutsche Zeitung in Munich and Cinecittà Luce in Rome. The new work is not a simple translation of the 2008 Macmillan edition. Not only revisions but also reflections have been introduced, and it opens with a Prologue to the Spanish Reader that describes the experiences of the author while living in Murcia, Seville and Cordoba in the mid-1950s under the Franco regime.

Dr. Nikita Harwich attended the International Workshop “Between Local and Global: The History of Cocoa and Chocolate”, organized between November 27th and November 30th 2010 by the University of Düsseldorf, which was held at the magnificent premises of the Cologne Chocolate Museum. It brought together specialists from all over the world, from Mexico to Kazakhstan. He presented a paper: “Turmoil in the cocoa groves: slave revolts in Ocumare de la Costa (Venezuela): 1837 and 1845”.

On December 3rd 2010 he was invited by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Aosta Valley Autonomous Region (in Italy) to deliver a lecture conference: “Chocolate and its Imaginary : the American world inside a Cup, 16th - 18th centuries” in the town of Aosta.

During the academic year 2010-2011, he is co-directing a Ph.D. level seminar in the history section of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (Paris), on the topic: “The State in the Americas”. A number of guest speakers will contribute throughout the year. Ecole des Hautes Etudes, EHESS, is one of the most prestigious postgraduate French institutions in the area of History and Social Sciences.

He was invited - as panel commentator - to the closing session of the international conference “1910: Mexico between two epochs” organized by the Universities of Paris III (Sorbonne nouvelle) and Paris IV (Sorbonne) between October 20th and October 22nd 2010 at the Maison de l’Amérique Latine in Paris.

Dr. Douglas Yates has been finishing his manuscript for a new book, The Scramble for African Oil, to be published with Pluto Press in the fall of 2011. He has also completed a chapter on “France, the EU and Africa,” to be published in a book edited by Adebajo Adekeye and Kaye Whiteman by Zed Books sometime next year. He also contributed a chapter “Natural Resource Conflicts in the Postcolony” for a book on the postcolonialism in Africa edited by Kenneth Omeje to be published in 2011. Dr. Yates wrote a review of Judith Scheele's book Matters: Knowledge, Politics & Community in Kabylia, Algeria (James Currey 2010) for the African Review of Books. He was invited by the U.S. Bureau of Intelligence Research to participate in an Ambassadorial Seminar in Washington D.C. to provide a historical analysis for the new American ambassador of Gabon, Eric Benjaminson. Frequently invited on France24 television, he has participated on programs concerning the presidential elections in Guinea (Sept 16, 28, Oct 26, Nov 15), French hostage taking in Niger (Sept 21) elections in Ivory Coast (Oct 21, 29, Nov 1) and war crimes in Democratic Republic of Congo (Nov 22).

Dr. Phillip Cartwright and student Amy Jones will present their paper “Network Economics and Complexity: Insights into the Development and Implementation of Renewable Energy in the 21st Century” at the Colloque Préventions des Risques Énergétiques organized by the ESG Management School in March 2011. The paper will be considered for publication in the journal Management et Avenir (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and ESSEC Business School).

Deborah Lizak (Class of 2006) married Jared Lissauer on June 12th in Rye, NY. They met in Paris five years ago when Jared was visiting his best friend, Brad Vick (Class of 2006). Brad was groomsman at the wedding and Chrissie Graham (Class of 2006) was bridesmaid. They live in Greenwich, CT and are excited as they are expecting their first baby, a boy, in April.

Deborah works as personal assistant to John Mack, former CEO and current Chairman of the Board of Morgan Stanley, out of his private investment office. She manages properties plans trips and works for his foundation.
Prasanna Vernenkar (Class of 2005) is a Technical Manager for a USAID-contractor, backstopping a livelihoods program in Yemen. He works from Washington, DC to assist local staff in areas of health, education, and vocational training. Yemen remains one of the least developed countries in the Middle East. The prospects for employment of youth in Yemen are especially dire due to the “youth bulge,” a demographic phenomenon found in many developing countries moving from high to low rates of fertility and child mortality. Yemen faces several development challenges, including high poverty and rates of illiteracy, dwindling water reserves, high maternal and child mortality, and poor infrastructure in rural areas and a sharp rise in unemployment as a result of high population growth combined with economic decline. The project works to address many of the challenges that communities face in Yemen. Prasanna has an 18-month old baby girl (Hanna) who keeps him awake and is expecting a second child in May.

Meredith Railey (Class of 2010) married Matthieu Minnaert on September 18, 2010 in Rully, France, following an intimate civil ceremony in Paris. The wedding was held at Chateau Saint-Michel, a historic 19th century castle in the Burgundy region of France. In an evening of dinner and dancing, Matthieu and Meredith celebrated with friends and family members from the United States and France, as well as 14 other countries.

Says Meredith, “At first we were worried that the language barrier would separate the guests, but it actually added an element of humor as people thought of creative ways to communicate and made efforts to speak various languages. Plus, there was plenty of delicious Burgundy wine to help break the ice!”

Meredith and Matthieu now live in Luxembourg.

Christian Karastojanov (Class of 2001) lives and works in Toronto, Canada. In January 2010, he began working with DundeeWealth, a relatively big mutual fund and financial services company in Canada. He says, “I am their senior writer, which means I do a lot of speechwriting, financial disclosure (annual reports, etc.), internal and external communications, presentations as well as policy development.” He adds, “And now that I'm downtown on a daily basis, I’ve met with Telemaco Matrundola (Class of 1996) a few times this year as our offices are rather near each other.”

Monica Sledjeski (Class of 2005) moved to Dakar, Senegal in April 2010, where she has taken up her first post as a U.S. Foreign Service Officer (FSO). Monica, who entered the Foreign Service as a Public Diplomacy-coned officer, is currently serving as the Vice Consul at the U.S. Embassy in Dakar. She is fulfilling her consular requirement, as each FSO must serve one consular tour within his or her first five years of service in order to get tenured. She is currently the head of the American Citizen Services in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau and will be in this assignment through April 2012.

Monica noted, “Senegal, a French-speaking country located in West Africa, is the land of la terranga, or hospitality. The people are very friendly and inviting and country has a beautiful coastline with excellent beaches and great surfing. There is also a large international community here as Dakar is a regional hub for many NGOs, which makes for a diverse crowd of people and projects. My job has allowed me to travel within the region for work as well as for pleasure, having visited countries such as Morocco, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and the Gambia. I also just returned from a two week R&R in China and Indonesia where I visited embassies, as well as friends and colleagues there. Working as a diplomat has been very dynamic and rewarding. I have truly found a career and lifestyle that I love, while being able to work on foreign policy issues that are current and relative and being able to represent my country overseas. In the coming months, I will be bidding on my next assignment and I am looking forward to wherever in the world I may end up next. Having the opportunity to move every two to three years makes this job all the more exciting and fulfilling.”

Alan Seelinger (Class of 2009) works for CARE, a humanitarian organization that fights global poverty. He recruits candidates for full-time employment, as well as coordinating intern and fellows program. Alan and his wife Beth live in Atlanta, Georgia with their two daughters Eloise and Margot, who was born Feb 2010.

Chrissie Graham (Class of 2007) is in Washington, DC where she works as development associate for the Academy for Educational Development (AED) a nonprofit organization working globally to improve education, health, civil society and economic development—the foundation of thriving societies. She says that her job is at the beginning of the process as she researches potential projects on grants.gov, Federal Business Opportunities etc. She also does extensive research on business development, in terms of non-traditional donors such as DFID and AusAid.