

Political Science Seminar

Fall 2009



The Department of Political Science congratulates all students who participated in the fall 2009 seminar and completed the requirements of the Seminar Thesis.

**Political Science Seminar
PS 401**

**Dr. Rekha Datta
Fall 2009**



Dr. Rekha Datta
Professor and Chair
Department of Political Science
Monmouth University

Teaching PS 401, the Political Science seminar is a privilege and an honor. This course serves as an ideal instrument for assessing the outcomes of student learning. Students use concepts and theories they learned throughout their undergraduate courses in the subject, identify a research question pertaining to politics and public policy which they can study in depth with the help of such theories and concepts, examine the pertinent literature, and develop the method of analyzing the question. All of this is done in a group setting where peer feedback and learning form important components of this seminar. The dialectic process culminates into a thesis that is revised several times to explore the research question and present the analysis as identified. Students work closely with the instructor, engage in debate and discussion, and realize that the writing process, though rigorous and sometimes frustrating, is always ultimately enjoyable. It is one of the most challenging as well as the most satisfying classes.

As the instructor this semester, I got to work with our finest students as they identify a topic of interest pertaining to politics and public policy and write their seminar theses. This year, we started with the overall topic of *Individuals, Groups, and Public Policy*. Students explored different aspects of politics and public policy that affect us as individuals and groups in the domestic and international contexts. Presented here are abstracts of the seminar theses of students in the PS 401 class in the fall of 2009. The topics cover application of concepts and theories from Political Theory on national and international politics, nation building, foreign policy, global development, nuclear policies, health policies, global political economy, terrorism, the role of media, and many other areas of concern to students of politics. I am very proud of our students who worked hard, struggled through conceptualizing their research questions, identifying the relevant literature and methods of analysis, patiently revising and writing the theses in a timely manner. Congratulations to all!



Culture Wars: Conflict in the Post-Cold War Era

Mathew Ahern

Hometown: Audubon, NJ

Future Plans: For my last semester of college I will be apart of the Washington Center internship program in DC as a part of Monmouth University's selected students for the program. After I graduate from Monmouth in May of 2010, I intend to obtain a job in the field of government agencies.

Abstract

This thesis examines the nature of conflict and warfare in the post-Cold War era and how the balance of power of states is affected by the fall of the Soviet Union. In order to analyze this question, I use Samuel P. Huntington's thesis in his *Clash of Civilization*. Huntington's thesis is that cultural and regional identities will be the driving force behind future conflicts in the world. While during the Cold War the world was divided between the ideologies of communism and capitalism, today there is no such ideological division, which drives the nations of the world to conflict. Instead, conflicts arise on the bases of cultural differences. I illustrate the differences in international issues between the Cold War and the post-Cold War era. In order to further illustrate the legitimacy of Huntington's thesis, I use the Chechen conflict between the Russian Federation and Chechnya, which has occurred within the last ten years. The conflict incorporates issues and tensions of opposing cultures, the influence of nationalism and debate of national sovereignty. I argue that the Chechen War is a war of opposing cultures and that it is a prime example of the kind of clash of civilizations that Huntington refers to in his thesis. The comparison between a conflict such as the Chechen War and a historical event from the Cold War proves the viability of Huntington's thesis. Culture is the driving force behind the wars and international disputes of the modern era, and the peoples and the nations of the world will embrace their native cultures in order to define their place in the future.



Born to be Free: How to Engage Citizens in Democracy Through Political Participation

Dante Barry

Abstract

Aristotle's philosophy on citizenship can be defined as active participation in political life; to participate in ruling and be ruled in turn. After a review of ancient and modern political theories of citizenship, this paper examines citizenship in contemporary America. It identifies certain problems within American society in regards to citizens and the need for citizens to be engaged and participate in government. Citizenship should be considered as a privilege that warrants such rights as voting, jury duty, and running for office. This paper proposes that freedom and citizenship in the United States be learned and earned, and not granted by natural-birth right or status. Focusing on the requirements for becoming a naturalized citizen in the United States, the paper finds that as a part of their naturalization process, immigrants must take the U.S.C.I.S. (United States Citizenship & Immigration Services) Naturalization exam, which includes English, and Civics portions. There is an unequal treatment of natural-born citizens and naturalized citizens when those who become naturalized participate in and are required to understand the United States government more than those who gained their citizenship through birth. The paper explores this issue by looking at the ways in which the premises of citizenship can be strengthened through active participation in the democratic process.



Democratic Nation Building: Comparing Germany and Russia

Kevin Bradstreet
Ringoos, NJ

Abstract

Since the end of the Second World War, the world has witnessed several efforts at democratic nation building. To understand how a country can rebuild from the ground up after a major political system change, I researched two countries that have gone in two different directions. Russia and Germany have been the worst of enemies with each other as well as with the United States. Both nations have also at one time been strongly against democracy. Germany was forced into a split state after World War II and then later developed into a democratic nation. Russia was faced with strong economic problems stemming from their failure to trade with democratic nations. When the Soviet Union collapsed Russia found itself divided not unlike Germany. The purpose of this paper was to observe and report on how each country went about its democratic rebuilding process. Then I wanted to find out if each nation was actually democratic. To do this I looked at each nation's ability to have free elections, a free party system, and freedom of the press. These are three main ideals associated with democracy and if these freedoms are not met then the state is not truly democratic. What my research pointed out was that Germany has become rather successful democratically and economically where Russia at first was on its way to becoming successful democratically has now found itself only succeeding economically.



“Yes We Can”: Lessons Learned from the 2008 Presidential Elections

Andrew Beuschel

Toms River, NJ

Major: Political Science

Minor: Criminal Justice

Career Goals: Work for the Federal Government

Abstract

Barack Obama swept last November’s historic Presidential election along with Democrats acquiring majority in both the House and the Senate. The outcome of the election proved to be disastrous for the Republican Party. This piece aims to explain the intricacies of the election. Initially, one must analyze the history in order to understand the current problems addressed in this essay. It provides in-depth explanations to questions surrounding the candidates, the parties involved, and voting populations. It also illustrates the problems the Republican Party encountered such as leadership and unpopular ideologies. Throughout the work, the research examines the contributions of influential political thinkers in understanding the dynamics of successful electioneering, policy analyses, and comparing strategies. The study is important because this election created enough buzz to electrify the population to come out and vote. It explains why people came out and voted the way they did and what general issues voters were concerned about. An election synopsis is a vital tool because it can be referenced many years from now to show trends in political cycles and demonstrate the transformation of political culture. This thesis has yielded valuable information in the study of political trends in relations to elections.



The U.S. Constitution: The Democrats New Doormat

Bryce P Jacobs
Middletown

Abstract

The media and press are supposed to be the political watchdogs and remain unbiased. Recently it has become more obvious that the majority of reporters, anchors, and journalists have been losing their objectivity, which may affect election outcomes and public opinion. This is all the more concerning when the press and media may be championing certain politicians and proposed legislation. Lately, concerns of media bias in elections, media smear campaigns on citizens and news organizations who ask questions or report negative coverage of their leaders, and political appointments who may have influence of what is required to go across the airwaves have emerged. The resources used for analysis are newspapers and articles used statistical data while others were more qualitative when discussing matters surrounding Obama and his fellow Democrats. As the polls in the articles and in Rasmussen and Gallup indicate, there is less confidence in the media's objectivity than there once was. Such findings would indicate that the political watchdog is no longer playing its proper role. The Democratic Party and Liberals once thought to be the advocates of free expression and free speech appear to have turned their back on such ideals and adopted the mentality of "say as I do or shut up." The collusion of the media and the Obama Administration especially is and should continue to be a growing concern to Americans of every political affiliation.

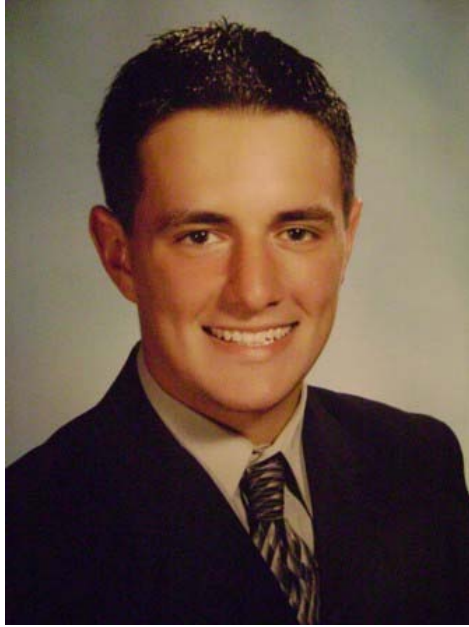


Good Fences And Good Neighbors: The United States-Mexico Relations

Thomas Kilgannon

Abstract

The United States and Mexico have long interacted with each other on issues of land, borders, immigration, drugs, violence, and crime. This paper analyzes the context of the United States and Mexico inter-dependence from a historical perspective. For years, the United States has fought wars and skirmishes—battling numerous nations over highly coveted land, including Mexico. Although historically the two nations have battled, they have also cohabitated so much so as to now base their relationship on inter-reliance. The United States needs Mexico just as Mexico needs the United States. The problem, however, is that the United States has prospered into a world leader while Mexico has struggled to keep itself together within, let alone without. Focusing on the period of 1994-2005, this paper, through qualitative research, highlighting Mexico prominently as well as the United States, will discuss the positive and negative reciprocal relationship of the two neighboring nations as well as problems within both countries and legislation in which both regimes have crafted in order to attempt to maintain a healthy neighborly relationship.



**“Whatever, I’ll Do What I Want”: The Rise in Defense Spending
and the Imperial President**

Torre Liebchen

Abstract

After World War II, there has been a steady rise in the amount of defense spending, as well as a rise in the roles each President has taken on, on their own. This thesis set out to explore whether or not there was a correlation in the rise in defense spending to the rise of the ‘Imperial President’ from Truman to George W. Bush. The modern definition of the Imperial President is a presidency that exceeds the constitutional limits of power. The research conducted explored different journal articles and books that attempted to show a connection between the money each president spent and the actions each President took in international relations. At the conclusion of the study, it was determined that an increase in the amount of defense spending does correlate with a rise in the role of the “Imperial President” after World War II. The more money a President spent on defense, the more likely they were to take on an imperial executive role and act unconstitutionally as the leader of the free world.



Searching for Monsters in the Closet: Realigning the U.S. Governments Counter-terrorism Strategies after 9/11

Kendis Lembo

I live in Sea Girt, New Jersey with my husband and three children. I am a Political Science major, returning to college after a six-year absence and aiming to graduate in May of 2011.

Abstract

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, what has the U.S. done to realign its counter-terrorism strategies with the ever-changing threat of present day terrorism? The Patriot Act, which has many critics as well as supporters, was the most significant and tangible change in the U.S. policy making sector. This paper discusses the impact of this act, how it helped law enforcement agencies to better find, track, dismantle and restrict terrorism. It also gives a perspective from two sides of the coin: are we doing enough or too much? Are we winning the war on terror or is the ideology too vast or the hatred too deep?



Is More Really Better? The American Dream Still Exists Today

Vanessa Leon

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyze the values originally associated with the American Dream as proposed by James Truslow and compare them to modern sentiments. This paper draws comparisons from dramatic effects of the Great Depression and World War I during the 1920's and 1930's, economic growth until the 1970's, and today's current recession. The concepts addressed in this paper include arguments offered by scholars in various peer-reviewed journals. One argument presented in this text is that the American Dream is a promise "to every man, regardless of his birth, his shining, golden opportunity...the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him." With this, although there has been a shift in values associated with the American Dream, this dream still survives today. Another concept addressed in this work is that Americans have become lazy and sedentary; spending much of their time wishing for success but are unwilling to pay their dues with the kind of personal commitment required to make something out of our lives. Considering all of the responses, this paper draws the conclusion that despite the undeniable "sluggishness" that has swept the nation, Americans are still optimistic that the American Dream can be attained. Americans are aware that the values of the nation have shifted to focus on material prosperity; however they demand that more is not better. For an overwhelming majority, 86% of Americans, it is more important to get more out of what really matters in life.



**“When Pigs Fly”
The Effectiveness of Government in Responding to Pandemic Influenza; Predominantly in
Latin American States**

Richard Jameson Moriarty

Abstract

As the global community confronts the “Swine Flu” (Novel Influenza A H1N1) pandemic, serious questions must be raised to evaluate the effectiveness of states in responding to this event. The World Health Organization (WHO) has proposed several benchmarks to determine the role government plays in countering pandemics. The question remains: how are governments performing in terms of protecting its citizens? Were governments prepared for this significant health issue? In this thesis the political and social ramifications of the event will be highlighted through a case study of several Latin American states. Latin America has been chosen for analysis, as it was the first region to report contact with the virus. What can be expected of these states in addressing the issue of pandemics? Why are some states performing better than other states? Is it the responsibility of better-performing (often the more affluent) states to lend aid to neighboring states? Finally, a comparison will be drawn between American response and the previously discussed responses seen in Latin America. There can be no concise solution proposed at the end of this piece because the event is an ongoing one. This is a unique and desperate time for the global public policy community to act together, and this thesis intends to shed light on government preparedness of the 2009 Influenza Pandemic.



The Lion and the Fox: Using Machiavelli to Understand United States-China Relationship

Niles B. Murphy

My name is Niles Murphy. The Political Science Department has been quintessential to my success here as a student at Monmouth. The academic support and commitment of faculty members exceeds far beyond standard expectations. Monmouth's Political Science faculty has not only helped to cultivate my academic success, but better prepare me for the obstacles and challenges I will face in the next phase of my life. For this level of preparation is eternally gratifying.

Abstract

This work analyzes the distribution of power between the US and PRC. Machiavellian theory has had a profound impact on international relations specifically during the Cold War era. Now that there is a recent rise in globalization and interdependence among states, is Machiavellian theory still relevant? This work will critique Machiavelli's theory of power and security, and apply it to power politics between the US and China. The lion and the fox are two different political beasts that operate in quite opposite ways. While the lion (US) is quick to use massive amounts of force and might to obtain its objectives; the fox's (China) greatest power is in its cunning and persuasive nature. The US has been a military powerhouse for decades, and that has solidified its influence on the international arena. However, with the world becoming bi-polar or even multi-polar in its power distribution, does military might still matter? This work aims at exploring what influence Machiavellian power theories have had on US-China relations.

What is interesting is that such tactics are not as apparent when studying Sino-American relations. For the Soviets engaged themselves in an arms race with the US and eventually lost. However, China does not appear to be fighting the lion with sheer strength, rather it appears as though its influence and economic prowess gives China its edge. This work aims at not only critiquing past relations, but based on global polarity, predict who will *have* leverage in future relations.



Growing Pains and Band-Aids: A Comparative Case Study of Development and Aid in Botswana and the Democratic Republic of Congo

Christian Ries, Brielle NJ

Abstract

The region of sub-Saharan Africa is an area plagued by a host of social, economic, and governmental issues. Sub-Saharan Africa receives a large chunk of the world's development aid yet most of the region has shown little development in quality of life as defined by the Human Development Index. The region's success story, Botswana, has lifted itself out of abject poverty and is starting to cement itself in the global political economy. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the exact opposite of Botswana, and despite continued funding through development aid, the country has had negative growth and the quality of life is ranked the 6th worst on Earth. Through looking at raw data on quality of life from the Human Development Reports and scholarly journals on Political Science a comparative study of the events and policies that lead to human development in Botswana and the Democratic Republic of Congo can be made. Moreover, the study has shined light on why Botswana is a success despite having many similar challenges to success as the DRC. In reading this study, one can find that Botswana reached stability and economic success through a series of internal programs that applied development aid to infrastructure and looked to private investors to spark industry within its borders. With this momentum it was able to lift itself into the global economy and overcome problems such as political strife and HIV/AIDS. While on the other hand, the DRC applied little resources to build political institutions to aid its citizens and offered little to outside private

investors to lift itself into the global political economy. By reading this case study one may find that there is no one model that guarantees success for a nation, but by through the application of aid to long term economic and social programs, success can be achieved for even the nations with the least possible chance.



Adam Smith Meets Karl Marx: Capitalism, Socialism, and the Great Recession

Jessica Roumel

Abstract

Today we are in the midst of the greatest financial crisis since the Great Depression. Wall Street and Main Street have intersected and the collision has become disastrous. The crisis was caused by fast-and-loose mortgage lending, as well as by risky investments on Wall Street, and now has blown into a perilous global crisis of confidence. Fear has replaced confidence. Depositors are fearful, banks are fearful to lend, and citizens are afraid that politicians, bankers, and regulators do not have the adequate tools to fix the problem. Capitalism is being questioned worldwide. This thesis seeks to explore the causes of the current financial crisis, and more importantly the consequences. The outcome can lead to the complete destruction or restructuring of capitalism. This thesis concludes that Capitalism can never be replaced, however the nature of capitalism will change. The new reforms and alternative approach is increasingly being called the “new capitalism”.



The Endless Waltz: An Examination of the United States Towards Iran and its Nuclear Program

Shawn Sabo Oakland, NJ

Abstract

Since the Iranian Revolution of 1979 the United States relationship with Iran has been filled with apprehension and tension. In recent years there has been an even more exacerbated tension in the United States with regards to Iran because of its nuclear program and the United States perception that it is solely to create nuclear weapons. Now more than ever, with the instability of Iran's neighbors, the United States seeks to prevent Iran's desires for nuclear weapons. As the United States is standing at a crossroads with a nuclear Iran becoming a reality, with states in the region such as Israel and Saudi Arabia, it is becoming increasingly concerned with what will happen in the Middle East with a nuclear Iran. Now in the fall out from Iranian elections the United States has to seriously look at policy options that can be affective in dealing with the forgotten country in the eyes of the United States. This paper evaluates the US policy toward Iran from the administration of President Bill Clinton to President Barack Obama. This study will highlight the complexities in creating effective policy for Iran and the possible strategies that the United States can employ through unilateral action and multilateral actions with the international community.



“Tough on Reform; The Case for Educational Programs for Crime Prevention”

John Sneddon

Abstract

Statistics shows that the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. Most of the other industrialized countries are at about one seventh of the incarceration percentage of the United States. Furthermore, these incarceration rates are symptomatic of the issues of inequality in the enforcement of law that is taking place in low-income areas of the United States. This paper looks at crime rates in low-income areas and examines the role of alternative crime prevention methods and programs in crime prevention. Reform on law enforcement policies and the education of the United States youth must change in order to prevent these incarceration rates from continuing or becoming worse as statistics show that these rates are on the rise. This paper presents several alternatives for the incarceration of offenders, which include educational programs for crime prevention.



Black, White, & ‘Read’ All Over – How the White House Uses Media to Promote Policies

**Alex Spruch
Senior
Colts Neck**

Abstract

Almost all information we receive about our government comes from the media. Thoroughly looking at the media and White House’s relationship throughout certain events in history allow us to see whether or not the White House promotes its policies by using the media. The events that were studied to answer the question included the Vietnam War, Watergate, Clinton – Lewinsky Scandal, George W. Bush administration on 9/11 and Iraq War, and the Obama administration. By looking at books and articles written by journalists and Political Scientists the topic is explored on a case-by-case basis seeing how the government worked together with the media. Each of the events that were studied proved that the government did use the media to promote its policies but in different ways. In the Vietnam War the media was used to lower the tension between the leaders of Vietnam and the United States. In Watergate the press was responsible for keeping the Nixon administration’s scandal a hot topic and not letting it slip through the cracks of history. In the scenario of the Lewinsky scandal the media was truly used as a tool of the enemies of President Clinton in an attempt to get him impeached. With the Bush administration the media was finely tuned to the specifications and standards set by the administration in which they only allowed them to report on what they wanted reported under the pretense of national security. The Obama administration sets the precedent for the future in which the White House becomes directly involved in the news instead of having to rely on the media on relaying it to the public. The findings and the research done provide excellent insights on how the media is used by the White House in different ways to promote their policy.



Extreme Makeover: The Aging United States Nuclear Posture and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

Bryan Tiscia, Marlboro

Abstract

When Fat Man and Little Boy were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it marked the beginning of the Atomic Age. This age created weapons that could destroy the planet in the blink of an eye. With the Cold War the world came dangerously close to the first full scale nuclear war. Weapons were created in the thousands, and policies such as Launch on Warning, where nuclear weapons are launched on the perception of an attack were created. Other nuclear policies like High Alert and Second Strike were all created out of this era. Today the world is twenty years out of the Cold War yet these policies are still in place. With nations such as North Korea and Iran becoming dangerous players in this nuclear game, a change is needed. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is a viable option to promote this change. Through careful analysis of the CTBT it can be seen that this policy could promote positive change in regions like North Korea, Iran, India and Pakistan, while yielding very little loss to the United States. In addition to easing tensions in these regions, ratification of the CTBT would bring redemption to the United States in a time where many foreign nations look poorly at the US for not taking part in the International Courts and other major treaties. The positive effects of the CTBT can be seen when it is compared to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. In study it becomes clear that the CTBT is a key policy that could launch the NPT to new heights and allow for the possibility of a world that one day may have no nuclear weapons. It is clear that most of the global community is searching for this nuclear free world. President Obama has taken a strong stance to make this

world a reality. The window to make this change is opened now, and could close at any time, making it an imperative to change now.



Human Development and the World Bank: A New Bid to Alleviate World Poverty

Jeffery Zubak

Abstract

Created in the throes of post-World War II Europe, the World Bank has since shifted its role toward alleviating global poverty in a much broader sense. This paper discusses the shifting role of World Bank economic policies since the Bretton Woods delegation in 1944. The *Human Development Approach*, authored by Pakistani economist Mahbub al Haq, brought a series of swift changes in World Bank economic policies during the 1980's. Human development theorists assess poverty in much broader terms as a measure of the level of *political security, economic freedom, political empowerment, and freedom of choice*. The *Human Development Approach* has since been employed in the works of Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative researcher Sabina Alkire. Sen's and Alkire's *Human Capability Methods* address the pillars of *freedom to expand, freedom to afford living costs, freedom for a healthy environment, and freedom to participate and to maintain social networks*. However, researchers disagree upon the saliency of the *Human Development Method* as an effective indicator of *real* economic conditions within developing nations. The first portion of this paper will focus on the historical role of the World Bank in Latin America. Next, it will present a current analysis of World Bank practices in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil and discuss the relevancy of the *Human Development Method*: its shortcomings and benefits. The paper concludes with an assessment of the Salvador da Bahia programme, revealing inherent strengths and weaknesses in the application of the *human development model*.



**American Monopoly, Made in China: Wal-Mart and the Middle Class
In the USA and the PRC**

John Joseph Zunin

Abstract

When President William J. “Bill” Clinton proposed that The Peoples Republic of China be admitted into the World Trade Organization in October of 2000, a modern revolution in trade occurred. Despite many members of the United States Senate being skeptical of the potential for mass American job loss, they voted to accept China into the WTO shortly thereafter. “Trade with China will not only extend our nation's unprecedented economic growth, it offers us a chance to help shape the future of the world's most prosperous nation and to reaffirm our own global leadership for peace and prosperity,” claimed Clinton. Unfortunately, many large American retailers, specifically the more country than company Wal-Mart, have continued to trade with the nation of China in ways that have permanently affected the social order and job availability in both nations. The aim of this paper is to prove that the monopolistic nature of the Wal-Mart Corporation and their trade with the Communist Nation of the Peoples Republic of China will diminish the working Middle Class of America and China, alike. The extinction of production within the borders of the United States of America, due to the continued exploitation of the peasant and working classes of China, ultimately will lead to America’s dependence on unethical Chinese production.