



Mershon Memo

An e-newsletter of the Mershon Center for International Security Studies

October 20, 2008

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Coming up at the Mershon Center

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

Dick Combs

"Inside the Soviet Alternate Universe"

Noon, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.



Dick Combs was one of a core group of U.S. foreign service officers who specialized in Soviet and Eastern European affairs during the last three decades of the Cold War. He is author of [Inside the Soviet Alternate Universe: The Cold War's End and the Soviet Union's Fall Reappraised](#) (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008). His foreign service assignments included two years at the U.S. Legation in Sofia, Bulgaria, and a total of eight years at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Russia. In addition, he spent an academic year at the U.S. Army's Institute for Advanced Russian Studies and served two tours on the Soviet Desk in the State Department.

[Read more and RSVP](#)

Rescheduled

Friday, October 24, 2008

Robert Rakove

"Getting the Worst of Both Worlds': John F. Kennedy and Decolonization"

Noon, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.



Robert Rakove has a M.A. in European History from Stanford University and will receive his Ph.D. in U.S. History from the University of Virginia in December 2008. His project, "Befriending the Nonaligned: Kennedy, Johnson, and the Neutralist Powers," examines the efforts of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations to create lasting, constructive relations with leading states of the non-aligned world. Rakove will explore how U.S. policies of interaction with non-aligned powers helped define relations between the United States and its allies, many of whom had tense relations with the new post-colonial states in Africa and Asia. [Read more and RSVP](#)

Wednesday, October 29, 2008

Jeff McMahan

"Killing Civilians in War"

Noon, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.



Jeff McMahan is professor of philosophy at Rutgers University. His research is known for its combination of philosophical rigor and simultaneous accessibility to the non-specialist audience. He is author of [The Ethics of Killing: Problems at the Margins of Life](#) (Oxford University Press, 2002), described as "the first comprehensive study of the ethics of killing, where the moral status of the individual killed is uncertain." McMahan's most recent work focuses on the ethics of killing in war, as self-defense, and as a mode of punishment. A significant strand of this current work is dedicated to the re-examination of traditional just war theory. McMahan seeks to pry apart the perceived assumptions grounding this theory's arguments, using the tools of metaphysics and ethical theory. [Read more and RSVP](#)

Tuesday, November 4, 2008

Matthew Fehrs

"Are You Talkin' to Me? The Domestic Politics of Government Signaling in International Conflicts"

Noon, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.



Matthew Fehrs received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Duke University. His project explores three puzzles in international relations theory: What causes a country to have or perceive incomplete information and lead states to war? Why, despite high levels of transparency and freedom of information, are democracies likely to be attacked? What is the role of opposition groups in military crises? To answer these questions, Fehrs developed a theory that focuses on the unity and hawkishness of the government in democratic states. He hypothesizes that the more unified a government, the less likely it is to send mixed signals to potential challengers. Likewise, the more hawkish a country, the more likely it is to use military posturing and harsh rhetoric. [Read more and RSVP](#)

Friday, November 7, 2008

Carol Anderson

"Bourgeois Radicals: The NAACP and the Struggle for Colonial Liberation, 1941-1960"

Noon, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.



Carol Anderson is associate professor of history at the University of Missouri and will be joining the faculty in African American Studies at Emory University in January 2009. Anderson focuses on public policy, particularly the ways domestic and international policies intersect through the issues of race, justice, and equality in the United States. She is the author of [Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955](#), published by

Cambridge University Press and awarded both the Gustavus Myers and Myrna Bernath Book Awards. In her forthcoming book, *Bourgeois Radicals: The NAACP and the Struggle for Colonial Liberation, 1941-1960*, Anderson uncovers the long-hidden role of the nation's most powerful civil rights organization in the fight for the liberation of peoples of color in Africa and Asia. [Read more and RSVP](#)

Save the date: Richard Holbrooke to give Kruzell Lecture



Richard Holbrooke, former ambassador to the United Nations and broker of the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords, has just agreed to give the Mershon Center's 2008 Joseph J. Kruzel Memorial Lecture. Holbrooke will speak on "A Foreign Policy Agenda for the Next President" on **Thursday, November 13, at 4 p.m. in Room 1008 Evans Laboratory, 180 18th Ave.** **Please note the unusual location of 1008 Evans Laboratory for this event.**

The Joseph J. Kruzel Lecture is given each year in honor of Joseph J. Kruzel, an Ohio State faculty member in Political Science and Mershon Center associate who served in the U.S. Air Force as well as other posts in the federal government. Kruzel was killed in Sarajevo, Bosnia, while serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Affairs.

More information about this event is available on the [event web page](#). Admission is free, but seating is limited. To sign up, please visit holbrooke@eventbrite.com by Tuesday, November 11, 2008.

Other events

Friday, October 24, 2008

Air Force Brig. Gen. Charles Tucker

Ida Aghdas Mirzaie

"International Law: Iran, Iraq and the United States"

11:30 a.m., Athletic Club of Columbus, 136 E. Broad St., Columbus

Sponsored by the [Columbus Council on World Affairs](#)

On December 31, the United Nations mandate legalizing the multinational force in Iraq is set to expire. Anticipating this milestone -- and considering the history of U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf - this panel will explore the legal options of foreign policy from political, military, economic and humanitarian perspectives. **Charles Tucker** is Executive Director of the International Human Rights Law Institute at DePaul Law School in Chicago. He has held numerous posts as a humanitarian law practitioner and adviser for civil, governmental, and humanitarian groups worldwide. **Ida Aghdas Mirzaie**, senior lecturer at The Ohio State University, is an economics scholar of Iranian origin. Her work includes publications and speaking engagements for such global organizations as the International Monetary Fund and Economic Research Forum for Arab Countries. To attend this event, please [register online](#) by October 21, 2008.

Origins examines roots of Russia-Georgia conflict



[Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective](#) is pleased to announce the publication of its November 2008 issue, featuring "Clash in the Caucasus: Georgia, Russia, and the Fate of South Ossetia" by Stephen F. Jones.

The brief war in Georgia in August 2008 has ushered in a new era in international relations – although likely not the “new cold war” that so many analysts have rushed to declare. Jones, one of the world’s foremost specialists on Georgia, explores the origins of this summer’s fighting.

The war's main protagonists – Georgians, Ossetians, Abkhaz, and Russians – have had a long and tangled history, made worse by the swirling nationalism that accompanied the break-up of the Soviet Union, the promise of free-flowing petrodollars, Russia's international resurgence, and the United States's recent, active involvement in the region.

Origins is a publication from the Public History Initiative and eHistory in Ohio State University's History Department. In each feature article, an academic expert analyzes a particular current issue -- political, cultural, or social -- in a larger, deeper historical context. *Origins* also includes

podcasts, images, maps, graphics, timelines, and other material to complement the essay.

Origins can be found at <http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/origins/>. The podcast is at <http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/origins/podcasts.cfm>.

Recent topics include presidential elections in times of crisis, fishing and over-fishing in American waters, Olympic controversies, the mortgage crisis, and the 2008 Taiwan elections. Next month: "Making Sense of the 'Hermit Kingdom': North Korea in the Nuclear Age," by Mitchell Lerner.

Featured Mershon research project

Passport: Newsletter of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations

Principal Investigators: [Peter Hahn](#), [Mitchell Lerner](#), Department of History



Since 1969, the newsletter for the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) has provided a forum for the discussion of issues related to the practice of American diplomacy, while also presenting historians of U.S. foreign policy with a reliable source of professional information.

In 2003, the newsletter was renamed *Passport*, and editorship passed to Peter Hahn and Mitch Lerner, with support from the Mershon Center. Its purpose is to print essays on substantive issues related to the study of American diplomacy, particularly those focusing on newly opened archival materials; to host debates among scholars; and to offer detailed information regarding new publications, scholarly competitions and awards, calls for papers and contributions, and other relevant resources.

During the 2007-08 academic year, *Passport* included such articles as:

- "The Manufacture of Fear: U.S. Politics Before and After 9/11," by Scott Lucas of the University of Birmingham, addressing the "culture of fear" that has affected the making of U.S. foreign policy decisions, both currently and historically
- "Key Sources for Nixon's Foreign Policy," by Edward C. Keefer, general editor for the Foreign Relations of the United States
- "Researching in the Beloved Country: Archives and Adventure in South Africa," by Eric J. Morgan of the University of Colorado at Boulder, on the little-studied archival collections of South Africa that provide insight on the Cold War and global race relations in the 20th century
- "The Vietnam Oral History Project: A Corrective for Historical Analogies," by Christy Jo Snider of Berry College, on methods for effective use of historical analogies in foreign policy courses
- Roundtable reviews of books such as *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Changed the World, 1945-1965*, by Amy Staples, and *Ambassadors in Pinstripes: The Spalding World Baseball Tour and the Birth of the American Empire*, by Thomas Zeiler

In producing *Passport*, Hahn and Lerner aspire to provide historians of American diplomacy with a forum that educates them about the field, the profession, and the fundamental issues surrounding U. S. foreign policy in the international arena.

For more information, please see the [project web page](#). For current and back issues of *Passport*, please see the [Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations web site](#).

About Mershon Memo

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