



Mershon Memo

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

November 17, 2008

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Coming up at the Mershon Center

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Allan Millett

"They Came From the North: The War for Korea, 1950-51"

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



Allan Millett is director of the Eisenhower Center for American Studies and Stephen E. Ambrose Professor of History at the University of New Orleans since 2006, and the Raymond E. Mason Jr. Professor Emeritus of Military History at The Ohio State University. He specializes in the history of American military policy and 20th century wars and military institutions. In the past decade, Millett has become a specialist of international stature on the history of the Korean War. He began his work on the war as a Fulbright Distinguished Professor at Korean National Defense University in 1991, and a fellow of the Korea Foundation in 1996. The first volume of *The War for Korea*, entitled *A House Burning: The War for Korea 1945-1950*, was published by the University Press of Kansas in 2005. He will speak about the second volume, forthcoming from University Press of Kansas, which covers 1950-51. [Read more and RSVP](#)

Friday, November 21, 2008

Caroline Elkins

"British Colonial Violence and the End of Empire"

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



Caroline Elkins is Hugo K. Foster Associate Professor of African Studies in the Department of History at Harvard University. Her research interests include colonial violence and post-conflict reconciliation in Africa, and violence and the decline of the British Empire. Elkins's book, [Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya](#) (Henry Holt, 2004), was awarded the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction. It was also selected as one of *The Economist's* best history books for 2005, was a *New York Times* editor's choice, and was a finalist for the Lionel Gelber Award. *Imperial Reckoning* draws on a variety of sources -- including extensive oral testimonies, archival evidence, and personal accounts -- to construct an understanding of the Mau Mau uprising and Britain's policy of interning 1.5 million people of the Kikuyu tribe in detention camps from 1952 to 1960. [Read more and RSVP](#)

Other events

Friday, November 21, 2008

Kurt Tong

"U.S. Non-Proliferation Diplomacy with North Korea"

3 p.m., 10 Page Hall, 1810 College Road

Sponsored by [Students for Nuclear Non-Proliferation](#)

Kurt Tong is Director for Korean Affairs at the Department of State, where he is responsible for coordinating U.S. relations with both the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Previously, he served as Director for Asian Economic Affairs at the National Security Council and as Minister-Counselor for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul. In that capacity, he promoted U.S.-Korea relations in economic and trade policy, and was involved in the launch of Free Trade Agreement negotiations between the United States and South Korea. Tong holds a B. A., magna cum laude, from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, and studied graduate-level economics at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute in Washington, D.C. He will be speaking on U.S. nuclear non-proliferation efforts with an emphasis on the diplomatic processes involved especially as they relate to the current situation with North Korea.

Undergraduate Research Forum to take place November 20

Undergraduates are invited to join a panel of Mershon Center affiliated faculty for pizza and an interdisciplinary discussion on the basic ingredients of a good undergraduate research project.

Recipe for Success: Basic Ingredients for Undergraduate Research will take place at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2008, in 130 Page Hall, 1810 College Ave.

Panel members will cite examples of good undergraduate research projects and address such questions as:

- How do you develop good research questions?
- What types of methodologies should you use in your research?
- What foundation do you need to have before undertaking a research project?
- How can undergraduates make connections with faculty members?

Panelists include:

- [Edward Crenshaw](#), Associate Professor of Sociology
- [Randy Schweller](#), Professor of Political Science
- [Barbara Hanawalt](#), King George III Professor of British History

This was one of the most successful undergraduate events sponsored by the Mershon Center last year, with more than 69 percent of respondents rating it as extremely valuable.

Co-sponsored by the [Undergraduate Research Office](#). To attend, students should respond to uro@osu.edu by Monday, November 17, and enter "RSVP 11/20/08" in the subject line of the e-mail. For more information, contact Helene Cweren at cweren.1@osu.edu or 688-4910.

Mershon Center opens annual grant competition

Each year the Mershon Center for International Security Studies holds a competition for Ohio State faculty and graduate students to apply for research grant funds.

Grants may be used for a variety of research purposes including travel, seminars, conferences, interviews, experiments, workshops and more. Applications must be for projects that relate to one or more of the Mershon Center's three areas of focus: the use of force and diplomacy; the ideas, identities and decisional processes that affect security; and the institutions that manage violent conflict.

For more information, including application forms and instructions, please see the [Grants](#) section of the Mershon Center web site. The deadline is **January 30, 2009**.

Featured Mershon research project

Change in Personnel and Policy and the Legitimacy of the Supreme Court

Gregory Caldeira, Political Science and Moritz College of Law



Do ordinary Americans regard the Supreme Court as a political institution like Congress, in which decisions are subject to the ideology of its members? Or do they see the court as different, with judges who rule on the basis of impartial principles? And are people's views changed by events like a controversial nomination?

Gregory Caldeira set out to answer these questions in research that has been supported by the Mershon Center since 2005. That year saw two Supreme Court nominations -- John Roberts as chief justice and the controversial nomination of Samuel Alito. These events provided an opportunity for Caldeira and his research partner James Gibson, Sidney W. Souers Professor of Government at Washington University in St. Louis, to assess American knowledge about and attitudes toward the Supreme Court.

Previous researchers theorized that the more citizens learn about the Supreme Court, and courts in general, the more legitimacy they attribute to the institution. This is because citizens are exposed to powerful judicial symbols that proclaim the court is different from other political institutions, and therefore more worthy of respect, deference, and obedience.

But what happens when people's exposure to the Supreme Court takes place in a highly charged context such as a controversial nomination? Does their notion of the court as special and different change? Do they see the court as less legitimate?

To answer these questions, Caldeira drew upon a survey conducted by Gibson in 2005 before Senate hearings for Roberts and Alito took place. The survey, which included 90-minute face-to-face interviews with 1,000 people, asked about support for the rule of law, knowledge of the Supreme Court, and its legitimacy.

Using this survey as a baseline, Caldeira and Gibson re-interviewed 335 respondents in 2006 after Alito had been confirmed, asking specifically about the nomination process. A third wave of interviews asked many of the same questions as the first survey to see if perceptions of the court had changed.

Caldeira and Gibson's research yielded two important results. First, they found that people exposed to television ads about the Supreme Court nominees came to see the court as more ideological and more like other branches of government. Those who watched the Senate hearings, however, continued to see the court as more impartial and different from other types of politics. This may be because the ads were inflammatory while the hearings were decorous, with senators who asked even

challenging questions in a dignified manner, and nominees who couched answers in non-ideological terms.

Second, Caldeira and Gibson found that ordinary Americans know much more about the Supreme Court than previously documented. This is important because many states including Ohio elect rather than appoint the top justices. Some people argue that average citizens do not know enough to cast these votes, but Caldeira's research counters this idea.

These results came in part because Caldeira and Gibson asked closed rather than open-ended questions, and accepted a larger percentage of answers as correct. Conducting the surveys this way provided a more accurate reflection of the knowledge needed to judge the legitimacy of the court. It also eliminated bias common against women who might not give the correct answer even if they know it.

For more information, please see the [project web page](#).

About Mershon Memo

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