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Department of Political Science
Celebrating 100 Years of Political Science in Wisconsin

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A Welcome letter from the Chair
by Graham Wilson

It is an extraordinary privilege to serve as chair of Wisconsin’s Department of Political Science during its centennial year. Throughout its history, the department has been one of the premier departments in the United States, and, indeed, in the world. One of my central concerns as chair is to maintain the department’s standing. At the same time, I wish to preserve and cherish some of the features of the department that make it not only outstanding academically but famous in the profession as one of the best places in the world to be a professor and even more importantly, to be a student.

I first set foot in North Hall in August 1978, a young professor on an academic exchange from the British university. I had visited the United States several times before as I studied American politics but had always been in places such as Washington, DC. I had never previously been in an American university. I was not sure what to expect; for some bizarre reason I thought that American academics might dress smartly and therefore came to work in a sharp white linen suit so as not to let the side down. I soon discovered I had miscalculated the sartorial elegance of my new colleagues!

I speedily learned a number of more important lessons about Wisconsin’s Department of Political Science. First, the department contained stars, people such as Leon Epstein, John Armstrong and Charles Anderson renowned throughout the world for their contributions to the discipline. Second, the Department cared deeply about teaching. My first office was next to Booth Fowler who was visited by a never ending stream of students eager to talk with him. Third, I was impressed by the consideration and respect that people in the department – including the stars I have mentioned – showed each other in spite of their considerable and obvious differences on both the appropriate approach to use in scholarship and the issues of the day. Fourth and perhaps related to this intellectual tolerance was the real kindness that staff such as Elizabeth Pringle displayed to faculty, visitors, and students alike. Finally, I was amazed by breadth of expertise the department with experts on everywhere from the US Senate to Indonesia.

We continue these great traditions. For example, we truly achieve the combination of great research and great teaching that some top ranked departments have abandoned.

An undergraduate told me recently that when he was a parliamentary intern in London this year, he was delighted to see the top British newspaper, *The Guardian*, quoting Ken Goldstein as the leading expert on campaign commercials; he thought to himself “That’s the guy who did such a good job when I took Intro to American Government from him!” Contrary to the popular image of universities such ours, in UW Political Science our top professors continue to teach introductory undergraduate classes. We also remain celebrated as one of the most intellectually diverse, collegial and friendly of the world’s top political science departments. And we still provide students, the state, the country, and the world with expertise on everywhere from Washington, DC to south East Asia.

Centennials are moments that tempt us to linger over a glorious past. But for strong institutions such as ours, centennials are also occasions to look forward to a glorious future. I am particularly pleased, therefore that this year we had a number of truly outstanding faculty join us. This newsletter describes elsewhere Helen Kinsella in International Relations and Scott Straus in Comparative and International Relations whom we attracted to Madison in the face of strong competition from the very most prestigious schools. Our future as a department depends on our continuing ability to attract such outstanding scholars to Madison.

One other feature of the summer has been the extraordinary success of our faculty in winning prizes. Scott Gehlbach, Tamir Moustafa, Charles Franklin, Ken Goldstein, Helen Kinsella and Ben Marquez were all awarded prizes at the American Political Science Association convention in Chicago this summer while Virginia Sapiro was elected President of the Association’s Organized Section on Elections, Voting Behavior and Public Opinion.

Yet the Department also faces major challenges. The departures of Don Kettl and Michael Barnett to richly endowed positions and of Mark Pollack to an institution that could better meet the needs of his family points to the number one issue that confronts me as chair; retaining the wonderful bright and productive faculty that we currently have. Winning the retention battle as less fortunate departments seek to lure away our outstanding faculty requires resources. That is one reason why we are so grateful to the many alumni and friends who have made gifts to the department in this its centennial year.

A great department needs resources not only for faculty but for its students. We need to be able to fund graduate students adequately in order to continue to attract the best. Other
The national party conventions of 2004 have gone now, consigned to history. The traditional thing to say next would be ‘and the campaign has begun’. What makes 2004 different—or what makes it feel different even if it is not—is that the general election campaign has been up and running for months. For the Democrats, it began within days of Super Tuesday, March 2, when John Kerry became the unavoidable Democratic challenger to Republican President George W. Bush. For the Republicans, it was already under way.

This has created a strategic context for both parties that looks additionally different from the usual. From one side, both national party conventions had to be fitted into this context. From the other, both were consciously mobilized to take advantage of it. Which made the national party conventions of 2004 seem more consequential, prospectively, than they often do.

I attended my first conventions in 1980, the Republican Convention that nominated Ronald Reagan and the Democratic Convention that re-nominated Jimmy Carter. I have attended all of them since. By the time I began attending, the nomination had long since departed: conventions only ratified a result that had been determined during the delegate selection contest. Over time, I have watched the rest of their potential conflict disappear as well.

Rules conflicts no longer occur; credentials conflicts are marginal and trivial; even platform fights have largely dissipated. For a while, what replaced them were struggles over the use of the podium: who got to talk, when they got to talk, and what they got to talk about. That too has been suppressed in our day, so that the only question is whether various major speakers, those who can command a prime-time slot, will stay ‘on message’. In 2004, all, even former President Clinton, actually behaved.

As a result, the one thing that has remained constant is a chorus of complaints from the press, most especially the major television networks, to the effect that ‘nothing happens here anymore’. I do, of course, differ. Some major things always happen, and if they do not fit the news definition of contemporary reporters, that tells us as much about these definitions as it does about conventions.

Much of the future of national politics actually shows up at national party conventions well in advance. Partisan stars are born: the obvious candidate this time was Barrack Obama, senatorial candidate from Illinois, for the Democrats. Presidential candidacies are launched: a noteworthy minority of the activity surrounding the Republican Convention, and much of the press speculation associated with it, involved testing the waters for the Republican nomination of 2008. Brownback, Frist, Giuliani, Hagel, McCain, Haitco, Hagel, McCain, Owens, Pataki, Romney, Santorum—even, albeit inappropriately, Schwarzenegger—all enjoyed serious ‘mention’, and no doubt a host of others thought of themselves this way, even if the analysts did not.

For the observer, the art in this is to separate the wheat from the chaff, the individuals, groups, and issues that will be around for a while versus those that are one-convention wonders. I remember spotting the Conservative Opportunity Society at the Republican Convention of 1984—Newt Gingrich, Vin Weber, Bob Walker, et al.—and thinking, ‘these guys have hold of something; they have tremendous energy and commitment; they will surely be around’. Alas, I also remember thinking ‘the one to watch is Weber, who is disciplined and harnesses ideas to organization. His buddy (Gingrich) is more fun, but you can’t build a movement around a personal style like that’.

But what is also going on at conventions, really by definition, is the restatement of partisan values and partisan positions for the contemporary context. Conventions are our last unabashedly partisan institution, certainly at the national level: if you want
to see what the active party looks like at a point in time, they are the best you can do.

On television, this view can be masked by a reliable need to reach out toward the center and away from the active party. The Democratic Convention of 2004 was devoted to demonstrating that its nominee was every bit as tough as the incumbent on national security, something that most definitely could not be said of the vast majority of delegates gathered in the hall. The Republican Convention of 2004 showcased the leading party moderates, whose moderation was likewise defined by issues not shared by the bulk of their immediate audience.

In person, however, one can see not only what a major slice of the active party looks like—away from the 43-NEA-buttons-on-one-vest or the felted-elephant-hat which are always sought out by network cameras. More importantly, one can see what really moves these partisans. One can see Democratic delegates for whom the ‘middle-class squeeze’ trumps national security, who really want to cheer a grocery list of new programs and to which the ‘middle-class squeeze’ trumps national security the war on terror far outruns ‘compassionate conservatism’, and who would rather cheer tax cuts and Christian values than volunteer activity and educational reform.

Conventions are also charged with taking established partisan positions and applying them to the world as we find it this time. Many viewers join newsmen in dismissing convention rhetoric as ‘boilerplate’. Yet that rhetoric is always an ‘update’, taking established positions and recasting them to mesh with the leading concerns of the day.

For 2004, the central concern at both conventions was national security. Accordingly, a number of Democratic speakers dusted off a reliable party standard, health care, where the Democrats always have an edge, and argued that we needed national health insurance because we owed it to the troops in the Middle East when they returned home. Because national security was already a Republican asset, a number of Republican speakers were assigned to link the war on terrorism, where the Republican edge is at its largest, with the war in Iraq, an applied reality. Which ends up reminding us of one other fact about the modern national party convention: this is an institution where what is seen live and in person, in its entirety, may be less ‘real’—that is, less directly related to its ultimate impact—than the mediated version passed along to the public. I flew out of Boston on Friday morning thinking “This was the best-produced Democratic Convention I have seen since 1988, and possibly ever.” And then thinking, “Wait a minute. How many other people even saw what I saw?” Which is to say: there is a sense in which if I saw the ‘band of brothers’ at the Democratic Convention and you did not, and if I saw ‘the three survivors’ at the Republican Convention and you did not, then you saw the reality.

Byron E. Shafer is Hawkins Chair of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His most recent book is The Two Majorities and the Puzzle of Modern American Politics.

Tracking the Advertising Air War from Madison by Kenneth Goldstein

Voters and potential voters get the majority of their political information from television. During an election campaign, candidates for major political office in the United States focus most of their money and efforts on delivering compelling arguments via paid media (chiefly 30-second advertising spots) and on attracting favorable coverage from free media (chiefly local news broadcasts). At the University of Wisconsin Department of Political Science’s new Center for the Study of Politics (CSP), we are tracking both of these sorts of
When the system does not recognize the digital fingerprints of specific advertisements, the electronic seams between programming and advertising and media markets across the U.S. The systems' software recognizes based tracking system to collect broadcast data with detectors in the advertising air war. The two companies use a market-extensively by both journalists and scholars to cover and study the advertising war. The two companies use a market-based tracking system to collect broadcast data with detectors in media markets across the U.S. The systems’ software recognizes the electronic seams between programming and advertising and identifies the “digital fingerprints” of specific advertisements. When the system does not recognize the fingerprints of a particular spot, the advertisement is captured and downloaded. Thereafter, the system automatically recognizes and logs that particular commercial wherever and whenever it airs.

In addition to the information on the exact date and time of the airing, the market, the station, the affiliate, the show on which the ad aired, and an estimate of the cost of a spot, we also receive storyboards of each ad aired. Storyboards consist of each creative’s full transcript and screen captures of every fourth second of visuals. As of this writing, in late September, we have already tracked close to one million ads and have coded over 2,500 storyboards.

In the presidential race alone, thus far, we have tracked close to 600,000 political advertisements costing over $300,000,000. These advertisements have been carefully targeted with only 94 of the nation’s 210 media markets in 21 states seeing ads in the presidential race. In fact, almost 6 in 10 United States voters have not been and will in all likelihood never be exposed to advertisements in this year’s presidential race. This includes voters or potential voters in the country’s three largest states – New York, California, and Texas.

Tracking advertising activity can be our ticket into the war rooms of the various campaigns as advertising decisions tell us which states and voters are in play and which issues the candidates are stressing. As of this writing, the number of states seeing advertising is narrowing. The campaigns have pulled their advertising from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Virginia and only have token buys on the air in Arizona, Colorado, Missouri, and North Carolina. While these targeting developments suggest that these states have swung towards President Bush and are not good news for the Kerry campaign, both campaigns are still heavily engaged in a smaller group of states that will ultimately decide the presidency.

John Kerry must still close the national gap, but if he does, the election will be decided by which candidate is able to capture two out of the “big three” states of Florida, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Both campaigns and their party and interest group allies are heavily engaged in these states with voters in places like Toledo, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Miami, Tampa, and Orlando being barraged with literally thousands of ads each week.

Furthermore, both campaigns are very heavily engaged in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Nevada.

In fact, Wisconsin is one of the most heavily targeted states and Madison is one of the five most intensely targeted media markets in the country. Although Madison itself will surely give the lion’s share of her votes to John Kerry, there are pockets of swing voters and Republicans in the smaller cities and towns that surround Madison.

The Democratic party and allied interest groups such as the Media Fund and Moveon have been more active on behalf of John Kerry than the Republican party and conservative groups have been for George Bush. Although the Bush campaign has a slight advantage in the number of ads aired when compared to the Kerry campaign, the Democrats have the advantage when all sources of ads are factored into the equation.

Still, even though their buys have been fairly modest (only 700 airings of its first ad attacking Kerry’s war record), the anti-Kerry ad paid for by Swift Boat Veterans has probably been the most influential ad to data. Furthermore, the Republican party and conservative groups have raised large sums of money – much of it which will be spent on advertising during the last month of the campaign. That is just one of the many things that the ad project will be tracking as we the 2004 election finally comes to a close.

To receive our latest reports, please e-mail wiscads@polisci.wisc.edu with the words “Add to WiscAds mailing list” in the subject line.

Casual Talk and Political Polarization
by Katherine Cramer Walsh

Have you talked about the election with anyone lately? Chances are about one in two that you have, according to recent studies (and slightly higher since you have ties to a political science department!)

These conversations matter, and they matter, in particular, for claims about our polarized political life. Some of the many claims about the divided nature of our nation may be overstated. For example, the red and blue map actually looks quite purple if you paint each county with a mix of hues in proportion to each party’s balance of votes. Also, the American public does show widespread agreement on valuing democracy, family, and capitalism, and a majority of Republicans and Democrats agree on a variety of major issues.

However, current polls show broad divides in opinion between Democrats and Republicans on many issues, including the war in Iraq, gay marriage, the death penalty, and the environment.
Much of these differences are the product of messages we get from mass media and politicians. But our casual conversations with each other make up a substantial part of our current climate of polarization.

During the last presidential election, I was spending time with a group of retired men who met every morning in a neighborhood coffee shop. I was conducting research for a book on political understanding and was observing this group and several others for what turned out to be a 3-year adventure. These folks — about 20 of them on a typical morning — would meet at a store in an old residential neighborhood in Ann Arbor to visit with each other, “get out of the way of my wife,” and keep up with the local gossip.

Many of these folks had known each other their entire lives. Most of them grew up in Ann Arbor, went to school together, played sports together, married into each other’s families, and went to church together. Many of them had fought in World War II and Korea. They called themselves the Old Timers, and labeled themselves conservatives, Republicans, and “middle Americans.”

When I asked if I could join their group after I had spent about a month in the store at a table across the room, they kindly let me do so. I listened as they talked about a range of topics. About every other day, they would talk about political issues, typically spurred on by that morning’s or the previous night’s news.

This may sound familiar. When people chat casually about politics with coworkers, families, and friends, the topics come up in the course of talk about common things like sports and weather. For example, we don’t become different people when we turn to the topic of presidential elections. We make sense of the choice of national leader with the tools we use to make sense of many other issues.

Spending time with the Old Timers taught me that one of the main tools we use to make sense of politics are our ideas about the kind of people that we are. The Old Timers talked about themselves as typical Ann Arborites and typical Americans. These were folks who claimed that they were the repositories of a more preferable past way of life. Some of them remarked that they doubted younger generations would show up if our country went to war. They contrasted themselves against the “crazy liberals” at the University of Michigan and on the city council and against African Americans in nearby Detroit.

It was through the lens of these identities that they talked about issues and candidates. For example, they discounted Al Gore as too “silver spoon,” but admired Bill Bradley’s “All-American-ness.” If candidates were perceived as something other than “someone like us,” they were ignored or discussed only long enough to ridicule. Their conversations played the valuable role of helping them interpret the relevance of politics to their own lives, but at the same time perpetuated divides between themselves and people they contrasted themselves against. During this presidential campaign, I have been reminded of the Old Timers’ conversations when hearing about Two Americas and our divided nation. The conversations I was privy to are evidence of the profound influence our conceptions of who “we” are can have for our perception of politics. They also suggest that overcoming divides—or merely the debate over whether there are divides—takes a fair amount of effort.

Our perspectives or world views affect whom we listen to, what we believe, and the people we choose to talk about politics with in the first place. Party leaders give us some guidance in this, but we also teach these things to each other. One of the powerful facts of a presidential election is that it gives us an opportunity to rethink our attachments and ask ourselves with whom do we wish to stand. Whether or not we take the risks involved in reconsidering our notions of who “we” are is partly up to the encouragement we get from our leaders, but it is, ultimately, up to us.

(Endnotes)

China Transformed?
by Edward Friedman

China is wide open to visitors. It is very tourist-friendly. You can fly into Shanghai’s international airport and zoom into the city in a super-modern monorail and gape in awe at Shanghai’s skyline, which makes even pre-9/11 New York City look like a village.

China today seems to have nothing in common with the China of Mao Zedong. He terrorized the people toward what Mao considered a communist utopia. In fact, millions died in Mao-made famines and millions more rotted in Mao’s slave labor camps.

Today, many millions of Chinese are free to go abroad as tourists or to study or to do business. They are increasingly wired to the internet. They see Hollywood movies on pirated DVDs before Americans see the films at their neighborhood theaters. The places tourists of China stay have the feel of freedom, as hotels and shops seem to carry every important international brand.

China’s economic growth since Mao died and Deng Xiaoping initiated reforms has been the most rapid, sustained growth the planet has ever seen. Most of the world’s people lifted out of poverty in the last quarter century are Chinese. Car ownership is rising spectacularly. From apparel to Christmas ornaments, American department stores seem to be outlets for globally competitive Chinese factories employing workers fleeing from the countryside where Mao locked them up as serfs, refusing to pay them cash for work.

China’s military build-up is also impressive. It threatens democratic Taiwan. One hopes and prays that China does not attack Taiwan, an event which could spark a much larger war, as with Sarajevo and World War I.

While the eye of a visitor can behold the material artifacts of a seemingly transformed China, much that is invisible, as with the nasty, vengeful chauvinism pressing for military action against democratic Taiwan, embodies continuities with the pre-reform era. A Leninist party still rules dictatorially. As with the nasty side of China’s transformation is in novels by Chinese authors. Try Qiu Xiaolong, Death of a Red Heroine, or Chen Fang, The Wrath of Heaven, or Wang Shuo, Please Don’t Call Me Human, or Mo Yan, The Republic of Wing.

To accurately assess the complexities of China’s transformation, the material and the invisible need to be weighed together.

You can see and use the numerous, convenient internet cafes. However, internet usage is strictly controlled by 300,000 Chinese security agents; the violators who are imprisoned are invisible. You also cannot see the half million in the new security force (PAP) who crack down on rural protests, religion, labor organizing, or non-violent efforts toward democracy. You cannot even see the popular anxiety of parents buying medicine for sick children and not knowing if the product is actually poison in a totally unregulated Dickensian world of getting rich at any price.

You can visit numerous impressive construction sites, which almost seem infinite in number, as the economy leaps ahead, misallocating huge sums in so doing. You can see the builders, who are rural migrants, often illegal. However, you cannot see the people whose homes are arbitrarily bulldozed out of the way, the sweetheart contracts which corruptly join the party-state and the new tycoons, and the children of illegals who can’t go to school and who beg or run riot. Locals will complain about the resulting theft, disorder and dirt and welcome the execution of petty criminals, which makes the victims of capital punishment in China five times more numerous than those in all the other nations of the world combined. Yes, five times!

You can see women dressed to the nines in the highest international fashion. You can’t see woman locked up behind courtyard walls in the patriarchal countryside living out hideous existences with no place to turn (church or self-help groups are frowned upon by the authoritarian regime which seeks to monopolize power) who then commit suicide in numbers greater than all the rest of the world combined. China is also the world leader in imprisoned journalists.

Still, China is transformed. It is open to the world as no prior dictatorship ever was. Its fantastic growth has led the editorial writers of The New York Times to rank China with America as the two dynamos of the world economy. Chinese demand raises our oil prices. China’s rise is mind-boggling.

So go to China and enjoy a transformed nation. Travel and hotels are efficient and comfortable. The food is world-class and reasonably priced. China’s ancient glories are accessible as is its fabulous natural beauty, especially in the west, away from the polluted cities (six of the ten most polluted cities in the world are located in China), up in the Himalayas, down in lush tropical valleys. A visitor can have a once-in-a-lifetime experience in China.

But not everything has changed. And the worst things are invisible to a visitor’s eyes. Although anxious transnational corporations increasingly also look to India, firms around the globe find they cannot be world-class unless they compete in China. Nokia and Motorola compete in China. While Mao lionized Eldridge Cleaver, Bill Gates is a hero to today’s Chinese. Some nasty things are unchanged and some have gone from bad to worse, but China has been transformed.
Wisconsin Political Science Marks Centennial Celebration by Mark Beissinger

On March 26-27, 2004 the Department of Political Science celebrated its 100th anniversary with a two-day conference devoted to the past, present, and future of Wisconsin Political Science. The weekend’s events were attended by several hundred alumni, faculty, former faculty, and guests and marked Wisconsin’s Department of Political Science as one of the oldest political science departments at a public university. Some of those present flew to Madison from Europe and even from Afghanistan in order to attend.

Though a course on “civil polity” was offered from the 1849 creation of the University (initially taught by University’s first Chancellor, John Lathrop), and though one finds various archival references to a “department of political science” as early as 1888, it was not until January 1904, when the Board of Regents approved a proposal from President Charles Van Hise to create a Department of Political Science, that the Department formally came into existence. Now with over 11 thousand living alumni (many of them well-known figures within their respective fields) and 1100 current majors (the largest major within the College of Letters & Science), the Department has trained multiple generations of citizens and has served as a source of innovative ideas and analyses concerning the philosophy and practice of government.

The Centennial Celebration began with the honoring of Professor Emerita Clara Penniman (B.A., 1950, M.A. 1951) on the occasion of her ninetieth birthday. Clara played a special role in the history of the Department; for many years she was the sole woman on its faculty, and from 1963-66 was the first woman ever to serve as Department Chair. Since retirement, Penniman has generously endowed a graduate fellowship and funded a project to write a history of the Department that will soon see publication. In her honor the Department has arranged to have a commemorative rose bush planted at the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum.

Professor Emeritus Crawford Young then gave an address overviewing the history of the Department, drawn from the forthcoming volume on the history of Wisconsin political science that Young is editing. A series of panels and speakers detailed the distinctive character of the Department and its contributions to various fields and endeavors within political science: Chuck Jones (M.S., 1956, Ph.D., 1960) on the study of American politics; Crawford Young on comparative politics; David Tarr on international relations; Booth Fowler on political theory; Joel Grossman on public law; John Witte (B.A., 1968) on public policy; Jack Dennis on Wisconsin and the behavioral revolution; and Dick Merelman on Wisconsin’s larger intellectual role within the political science discipline. The day finished with a cocktail reception for faculty, alumni, and friends of the Department.

The conference continued the following day with a breakfast tour of NewsLab, an exciting new research center in the Department and home to the Wisconsin Advertising Project, widely cited in the media as the source of record on issues of campaign advertising and finance. This was following by a series of dialogues between prominent alumni, faculty, and friends of the Department on major issues of domestic and international politics. Eloise Anderson (Member of the Board of Visitors), Robert Barnett (Member of the Board of Visitors and B.A. in English, 1968), William McCoshen (B.A., 1987), Mike Wittenwyler (B.A., 1995), and Professors Byron Shafer and John Coleman discussed the forthcoming 2004 elections. Doug Kiel (B.A., 1971), Chris Bury (M.A., 1977), Rita Braver (B.A., 1970), and Professors Gina Sapiro and Ken Goldstein exchanged ideas concerning the changing role of the media in American politics. Tom Loftus (Member of Board of Visitors and M.A. in Public Policy, 1972), Stephen Morrison (Ph.D., 1987), Bob Trice (Member of Board of Visitors and M.A., 1971, Ph.D., 1974), and Professors Ed Friedman and Michael Barnett analyzed American foreign policy in the wake of the 9/11 attack. Dave Cieslewicz (B.A., 1981), John Norquist (B.A., 1971), and Professors Peter Eisinger and Dennis Dresang focused attention on the future of American cities. Another panel highlighted some of the exciting directions of research being pursued by new faculty.

One of the highlights of the Centennial Celebration was the keynote address given by Congressman David Obey (B.A. 1960, M.A. 1968) at a luncheon for students and alumni sponsored by the Department’s Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honor Society. Obey highlighted the La Follette progressive tradition that lay at the basis of the education he received in the Department—a spirit which, he said, sparked his passion for his own distinguished career of public service. As Obey noted, “It’s amazing to me how much of what they taught me has had direct relevance in my later life. I treasure what I learned here—in and out of class—and I treasure the memories.”

The culmination of the celebrations was a Gala Dinner at the Concourse Hotel on the evening of March 27th, where Senator Russ Feingold (B.A. 1975) gave the keynote address. Feingold thanked a number of his former teachers, and then delivered a penetrating analysis of the current state of American politics. In addition, Bob Milbourne, Chair of the Board of Visitors, addressed the audience, the Department presented its first Lloyd Gladfelter awards (bestowed for meritorious suggestions for improving public services in the state of Wisconsin), and Department Chair Mark Beissinger spoke about the next hundred years of Wisconsin Political Science.

In all, it was a celebration worthy of its object. For those who would like to learn more about the Centennial Celebration, or read Congressman Obey’s speech, please check out the Centennial Celebration website at the following URL: http://polisci.wisc.edu/centennialpage/.
New Faculty Address Critical Issues

Almost every week, it seems, we see or read stories about horrendous mass killings or war crimes. We all are faced with questions about why these events happen and what our moral responsibilities are in the face of them. The Department has had the great good fortune to attract two outstanding young scholars who address these issues. Please join us in welcoming them to the Department.

Scott Straus

The Department warmly welcomes Scott Straus, an expert on the Rwandan genocide and political violence, as a new assistant professor this fall. After receiving his BA from Dartmouth, Straus worked for several years as a foreign correspondent in Africa, reporting on a range of issues and conflicts, and being nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the Congo War in 1996. He then went to graduate school in Political Science at the University of California-Berkeley, where he studied African politics and human rights. The fruits of his studies are his magisterial dissertation on the Rwandan genocide, which is likely to be received as one of the best studies on the causes and organization of the Rwandan genocide and a major contribution to the study of genocide and political violence more generally. Straus provides an analytically-precise and historically rich understanding of how 800,000 people were slaughtered over a period of 100 days. He argues that the leaders of the genocide were able to draw from local institutions and selective incentives to compel individuals to participate in the massacres. But, he forcefully argues that this sort of collective action was difficult to sustain and was very much dependent on which factions of local elites won the competition for individuals’ loyalties. In order to determine what causes the variation in the rate of killing across Rwanda, he developed an extraordinarily ambitious and sophisticated research design. Specifically, he undertook a rigorous survey of those who confessed to having participated in the killings, interviewing hundreds of convicted criminals in Rwandan prisons over a period of nine months. Most studies of genocide and political violence focus on evidence gathered from victims. Straus’ work is one of the few studies that draws evidence directly from perpetrators, placing this information into the broader context of evidence about these acts. The results of Straus’ study have already received national and international attention. In addition to his work on the Rwandan genocide, Straus has published a co-authored and well-received book with David Leonard entitled Africa’s Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures (Lynn Reiner, 2003). Scott will be teaching courses in political science and in international studies on genocide, political violence, human rights, and African politics.

Helen Kinsella

The Department also warmly welcomes Helen Kinsella, a recent Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, as a new assistant professor, specializing in international security and international human rights. Kinsella will take up her position in the Department in Fall 2005. Kinsella’s work focuses on international humanitarian law and the laws of war. Her outstanding dissertation, which was recently awarded the Helen Dwight Reid Award by the American Political Science Association for the best doctoral dissertation in the field of international relations, law, and politics, concerns the central concepts of combatant and civilian in international humanitarian law. These concepts did not emerge in international law until after World War Two, and at the time of their construction and ever since, there has been an open and highly political debate of what constitutes “the civilian.” The stakes involved are enormous, defining to a large extent the nature of non-combatant casualties during wartime. The attempt to arrive at a fixed position has been illusive, and such temporary moments are contingent on the interplay of material and discursive forces propelled by states and nonstate actors as they react to events on the ground. Kinsella argues that international humanitarian law has a gendered nature. Categories of civilian and combatant are almost always defined, both legally and in practice, to include women and other “vulnerable” populations in the former and able-bodied men in the latter (even though men might be civilians). This is important not only for our understanding of the construction of law, but also for the lives and fates of those on the ground. Using her skills of political theory, her study of international law, and her knowledge of discourse and genealogical analysis, Kinsella demonstrates these debates and their consequences historically, both in the international conferences in Geneva and in the field in places like Sri Lanka and Guatemala. Kinsella has been working at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and Carr Center for Human Rights, where she has been in residence to help on various projects related to the laws of war. At Wisconsin, Helen will teach courses on international human rights, war, and political theory.

Do you have a favorite faculty member from your years in North Hall? Please write and tell us about it!
Odd Episodes and Historical Memories
by M. Crawford Young

The centennial history of the Department moves toward the finish line. The volume will be published in 2005. Draft chapters of most of the book were presented at the 100th birthday celebration of the Department 26–27 March 2004. By way of preview for those unable to attend, we extract a few odd episodes from our storied past.

An early discovery in our archival inquiry was an unsuspected antiquity to Political Science in Madison. The first President of the fledgling University, upon its 1849 foundation, was John Lathrop, who taught “civil polity” as part of the prescribed curriculum for all students (in reality, a handful). As a consolation when he was forced out as President in 1858, he was given the title of “Professor of Ethical and Political Science,” only a year after what discipline historians cite as he was given the title of “Professor of Ethical and Political Science.”

The next pioneer of Political Science was John B. Parkinson, appointed as professor of “civil polity, international law and political economy” in 1876, remaining on active duty until 1908. When Richard T. Ely was recruited to create a School of Economics, Political Science and History in 1892, and promised an assistant professor to come with him from Johns Hopkins, Parkinson demanded that he too have an assistant, proposing his son, John M. Parkinson. When Ely and President Thomas Chamberlain pointed to the limited academic qualifications for the young Parkinson, the elder Parkinson went directly to the Regents to secure an assistant professor post for his son. The younger Parkinson was only briefly on the scene.

A theme which ran through departmental annals until the 1960s was the relative penury of the professoriate. Ely, Parkinson, and our first Chair, Paul Reinsch, found it necessary to dabble in Madison real estate, undertake lecture tours, and write for popular magazines to sustain middle-class respectability. The recipient of the first doctorate, Samuel Sparling (1896), who then received a faculty appointment, resigned his professorship in 1907 to take up farming in his native Indiana. A few years later, he was able to purchase a cotton plantation in Alabama with 85 field hands. Entreaties from Ely to return to teaching met a deaf ear, though Sparling had been a successful faculty member, serving as one of the founders of the Wisconsin League of Municipalities. His academic specialization – ironic for a cotton planter – was urban administration.

When Llewellyn Pfankuchen joined the faculty in 1932, the first official communication he received from the University after his arrival in Madison was a letter from the President thanking him for volunteering to have his salary reduced by 10%. These clawbacks remained in force through much of the depression.

Some key figures contributing to the prewar eminence of the department – Walter Sharp, Grayson Kirk, Pitman Potter – were lost in important part because of salary constraints. University historian Lawrence Veyset shows that the average salary of professors nationally, which in 1893 was $1,470, in real terms remained the same in 1953.

We may close this glimpse into the historical chronicles with a peek at one last landmark event: the air conditioning of North Hall circa 1970. Those with long memories may recall in earlier years that the thick sandstone walls, which only slowly absorbed the summer heat; by July had become a storage bin for superheating which made the top floors unbearable during heat waves. As then Chair, I recollect feeling a sense of triumph in announcing to a Department meeting the good news of imminent air conditioning, only to be stunned to encounter a wave of criticism from some colleagues, strenuously objecting on environmental grounds. The meeting was swiftly adjourned before any motion refusing air conditioning could be proposed. Happily, cooler heads prevailed, and (usually) North Hall becomes a refuge from the occasional sultry masses of Gulf air which reach Madison.

Recent Publications by Alumni

Letters to Political Science

Irving J. Sloan BA 1946

With my BA from UW (American Institutions) and a JD from Harvard Law School and MA from Teachers College, Columbia University I became a Social Studies teacher first in NYC (7 years) and then from 1961-2004 I taught in Scarsdale (NY) Middle School and retire at the end of the present (2003) school year after 50 years of teaching.

John Davis was my mentor and inspiration for teaching. Davis went to Harvard’s Littauer School and Public Administration the same year I went to HLSC (1946) and we remained friends there all the years until his death.

Mordecai Lee BA 1970

After graduating in Political Science from Madison in 1970, I went on to get a Ph.D. in Public Administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University, wrote my dissertation as a Guest Scholar at the Brookings Institution, served as Legislative Assistant to (the late) Congressman Henry Reuss (D-WI), was elected to three terms in the Wisconsin State Assembly and two in the State Senate and was executive director of a non-profit agency in Milwaukee. In 1997, I was appointed assistant professor at the UW-Milwaukee and received tenure in 2002. I write mostly about the topic that Professor McCamy had been interested in: Government Public Relations. SUNY Press has just accepted for publication my book The First Presidential Communications Agency: Roosevelt’s Office of Government Reports. Just another porsaic career of one of the Departments outputs. Or maybe I’m an outcome?

John Barkdull, Ph.D. 1993

Hello. I earned a Ph.D in Political Science from UW in 1993. My dissertation advisor was Neil Richardson. I am pleased to inform the department that I have received a Fulbright Scholar Award. I will be teaching international relations at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh during the spring 2003 semester.

Thanks and best wishes to everyone. John Barkdull, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

Some Political Science Faculty Doings.....

Mark Beissinger will be a member of the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton for the 2004-2005 Academic year.

Donald Downs was elected Director of Legal Studies

Dennis Dresang worked with Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawson directing the policy research associated with her initiative to improve the status of women and is conducting a human resource analysis for the Wisconsin State Supreme Court and helping it improve its personnel management system.

Ed Friedman was invited by the School of Oriental and African Studies in London to be an honored speaker in a once a year lecture series on Taiwan. In October-November of 2003 he traveled to Tibetan areas of China as part of a joint US-China project on poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

Tamir Moustafa received the American Political Science Association’s 2004 Edward S. Corwin Award for best dissertation in the field of public law. He also won the Western Political Science Association 2004 best Doctoral Dissertation Award. Additionally, received an honorable mention from the Middle East Studies association 2003, Malcom Kerr Dissertation Award.

Virgina Sapiro was a 2003 fellow in the CIC Academic Leadership Program.

Michael Schatzberg was elected director of the African Studies Program.

Katherine Cramer Walsh published a book that was chosen to be assigned to all incoming honors students at UW-Madison as part of their common book program. She is in her final year of a two-year term as a member of the APSA task force on Civic Engagement and Civic Education.

Graham Wilson was elected Chair of the Department and will serve a three year term.

The 2004 APSA Convention brought many honors to the UW Political Science Faculty:

Scott Gehlbach: Mancur Olson Dissertation Award for best dissertation in the field of political economy
Helen Kinsella: Helen Dwight Reid Award
Charles Franklin and Ken Goldstein: Political Communication: Paul Lazarsfeld Best Paper Award
Ben Marquez: 2004 Book Award Presented by the Race, Ethnicity and Politics Section of APSA for his book: Constructing Identities in Mexican American Political Organizations
Virginia Sapiro: Elected President, Organized section on Elections, Public Opinion and Voting Behavior; Named first chair of the newly created APSA committee on Teaching and Learning
Aili Tripp: Elected to APSA Council
Graham Wilson: Appointed Chair of the Editorial Board of PS: Political Science and Politics
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