

## US National Intelligence Estimate Lacks Evidence

By Ivan Sascha Sheehan, Ph.D., ICAR Visiting Professor, [isheehan@gmu.edu](mailto:isheehan@gmu.edu)

**U**SA Today's article on April 6, "Intel report shows security in Iraq improving," cites senior military officials suggesting that a "new classified intelligence assessment on Iraq says there has been significant progress in security since the last assessment was delivered in August." Regretfully, a more accurate analysis based on the evidence indicates



Above: General David Petraeus at Pentagon Briefing. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

otherwise. A recent surge in Shiite violence in southern Iraq by militias loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr, a rise in insurgent attacks on coalition forces and supply convoy lines in the strategic Khyber Pass in Afghanistan, and daily reports of soldiers whose lives have been taken with little political progress to justify their sacrifice is enough to remind us that the improvements noted in this

recent assessment are not good enough.

Senators Ted Kennedy and Carl Levin have called for an unclassified summary of key findings from the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE). The Senators are certainly justified in their request. I think they should go further. An immediate investigation into the data that underpins the report's findings is also warranted and the results of the investigation should be supplied in an unclassified format to the American public.

It is troubling that National Intelligence Director Michael McConnell has chosen to withhold unclassified NIE reports from the American people since

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Commentary

# Landing Careers as Consultants

By Samantha Levine, ICAR Development Assistant, slevine2@gmu.edu

ICAR does not offer a language program, but students who graduate with a degree from the Institute still need to know how to translate their skills and knowledge for potential employers. That task was a primary focus of the third ICAR Career Intensive, which was held on March 28 and explored the fields of organizational conflict and consulting.

"The translating of the skills we learn at ICAR into the real world is often a gap between theory and practice," said Patricia Maulden, who earned her M.S. degree and Ph.D. from ICAR and is now an adjunct faculty member. She attended the all-day session to learn about consulting and sharpen her interviewing skills. "I am not partial to interviews and never know quite what to say," Patricia explained. "But not only did I get to practice, I got feedback, which was particularly valuable."

Students from every corner of the ICAR program attended the session, which is part of the new series of intensives that began in October 2007. The initiatives are designed to improve students' preparation for job searching and provide industry-specific information, said Julie Shedd, ICAR's director of student services and graduate admissions. Julie worked with Erin Ogilvie, assistant director of student services and graduate admissions, and Michael Shank, ICAR's government relations adviser, to design and implement the program. In addition to organizational conflict, the intensives have covered careers in development, security and intelligence. ICAR plans to hold at least four intensives next year.

Each intensive includes a discussion on transferring conflict analysis and resolution skills into the



Above: [Left to right] Stan Bradley (US Department of Defense), Rachel Barbour (National Mediation Board) and Alma Abdul-Hadi Jadallah (Kommon Denominator) talk with ICAR students during Career Intensive on Organizational Consulting. Photo: Michael Shank.

given field, as well as resume reviews, mock interviews, and conversations with professionals from that field. The latter proved especially enlightening for first-year M.S. student Karen Cotter. "They encouraged us to be authentic in our pursuits, and that kind of surprised me, as opposed to being more calculated," she said. "That was really encouraging."

"Part of my message was to go ahead and step out, do what you want to do," said Lou Kerestesy,

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network



Chris Shoemaker, above, is ICAR's newest Advisory Board member.

## Dr. Chris Shoemaker: Question and Answer with ICAR's Newest Advisory Board Member

By Samantha Levine, ICAR Development Assistant, slevine2@gmu.edu

**D**r. Chris Shoemaker is the newest member of the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) Advisory Board. Since 1997, he has served as the Senior Vice President for Strategy at L-3 Communications Services Group and one of its companies, MPRI. Dr. Shoemaker has led MPRI's efforts in developing stable governmental institutions in post-conflict nations. Before entering the private sector, Dr. Shoemaker spent more than 20 years in the US Army, including four years in the White House on the National Security Council staff. Recently, Samantha Levine interviewed Dr. Shoemaker on behalf of *ICAR News*.

*Samantha Levine: What unique perspective do you bring to the ICAR Advisory Board?*

*Chris Shoemaker:* The combination of a lifetime of military experience and a decade of experience in the private sector gives me a perspective on the practical side of conflict resolution and how ICAR might make a contribution. Right after the Dayton Accords in 1995, I spent a year in Bosnia to try to bring together, in a working Ministry of Defense, the implacable enemies: the Bosniacs and the Croats. On a daily basis, I had to attempt to adjudicate matters that were

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# ICAR Students Study Zapatistas

## Applied Practice and Theory Team Visits Mexico

By Amanda Tyson, ICAR M.S. Student, atyson1@gmu.edu

This year there is one international Applied Practice and Theory (APT) team, studying the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico. The Zapatista movement is a group of mainly indigenous Mexicans who have been actively struggling to exercise their right to work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace since the start of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. After dialogue with the Mexican government came to a standstill, the Zapatistas formed autonomous communities, which they still rule independent of the official government.

The international APT team is a group of four M. S. students, Elizabeth Clawson, Crystal Ruple, Sofey Saidi and Amanda Tyson, advised by Dr. Karina Korostelina. An important element in selecting this particular conflict as the subject of their APT was the desire to visit a conflict zone to gain a true understanding of the issues. Prior to the trip, the group developed a research design including interview and survey questions.

The team was able to visit Chiapas, Mexico, over spring break to interview local experts. The team conducted 15 interviews of experts in Mexico and in the Metro region. The majority of the interviews were with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in San Cristobal, the town where most of the NGOs that focus on the Zapatistas are based. In addition to NGOs, the team interviewed academics



Above: The ICAR APT Team in Chiapas, featuring [Left to right] Amanda Tyson, Elizabeth Clawson, Sofey Saidi and Crystal Ruple. Photo: Karina Korostelina.

and was in communication with government officials. Despite the sensitive subject matter, the NGO members were willing to help the students and provided not only extremely interesting answers to the interview questions, but aided in everything from scheduling interviews to locating the next interview site and contacting other groups. Currently, the group is working on transcribing the interviews and analyzing the results to produce a final paper.

The highlight of the trip was the visit to the Zapatista community. Through the help of one of Sofey's friends, the team was able to visit a Zapatista community and



interview representatives of the Oventik Good Government Council, one of the five ruling bodies of the Zapatista territory. Upon leaving Oventik, the group stopped at San Andrés, where the accords between the Zapatistas and the Mexican government were signed in 1996. San Andrés is now a community that is part Zapatista and part non-Zapatista

and an interesting picture of how Zapatistas continue to live in their own communities amid the oppression they still feel from the government.

The group had previously visited two non-Zapatista indigenous communities, San Juan Chamula and Zinacantan. The most poignant difference between them and the Zapatista community at Oventik was the different roles of women and children. Throughout Chiapas, street vendors, mainly women and girls, were selling artisan products. In the Zapatista community, however, these vendors were conspicuously absent. It was obvious that women were on more equal footing with men. In fact, the Zapatista representative who talked with the team was a woman. It was also apparent that the children were not expected to sacrifice their education to sell products.

Overall, the trip was an amazing experience and will contribute greatly to the research of the APT team. Visiting the area gave insights into the conflict that could not be gained in the US. To learn more about the conflict and the trip to Chiapas, contact Amanda at atyson1@gmu.edu. ■

initiatives

# ICAR Hosts Consciousness and Conflict Resolution Symposium

By Susan Allan Nan, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, [snan@gmu.edu](mailto:snan@gmu.edu)

## EVENTS

The Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) held a one day symposium at Point of View on April 7, 2008, on "Consciousness and Conflict Resolution".

The event featured presentations by ICAR Faculty Andrea Bartoli, Susan Allen Nan, Jamie Price and Solon Simmons.

The presentations stimulated lively discussion amongst participating additional ICAR Faculty, ICAR Advisory Board Members, ICAR doctoral students, the ICAR Director, faculty from other universities, and leading conflict resolution practitioners. A generous grant from the One Foundation made



Above: ICAR Professor Jamie Price presents on the concept of consciousness with other ICAR professors, including (pictured here) Susan Allen Nan, Solon Simmons and Advisory Board member Ambassador John McDonald. Photo: Tetsushi Ogata.

the symposium, and the research that informed it, possible.

Susan Allen Nan presented a research paper arguing that at its core, conflict resolution is about increasing consciousness. Consciousness can be seen as the base of conflict resolution theory and practice. Conflict resolution practices are effective to the extent that they support shifts in consciousness. Consciousness-raising spreads awareness of the existence of oppression, exploitation, or other lack of respect for the human dignity of an individual or group, and then conflict becomes visible.

Through conflict resolution, participants in conflicts can develop increasing awareness of their own needs, the needs of others, and ways of meeting everyone's needs. In conflict resolution processes, we can shift our understanding of self and other so that we shift from dehumanization to rehumanization, from hatred to compassion, and from a focus on self-in-isolation to self-in-relationship within an interrelated whole.

Discussion at the symposium was wide ranging. Many comments focused on conflict resolution practices that support shifts in consciousness, as well as the ways shifts in consciousness can shape concrete changes in the material suffering of those involved in conflicts. Solon Simmons highlighted four aspects of consciousness at work in conflict contexts: theoretical, evaluative, narrative, and associative consciousness.

The symposium conclusions outlined many areas for practical research aimed at improving our abilities to resolve conflicts and increase consciousness. Next steps include publishing papers presented at the symposium and planning a broader symposium to engage more diverse perspectives in a deepening of this emerging conversation.

Interested friends of ICAR are invited to join the Consciousness and Conflict Resolution working group to participate in future related activities. Email Susan at [snan@gmu.edu](mailto:snan@gmu.edu) for more information. ■

### Upcoming ICAR Community Events

For more info on events, email [eogilvie@gmu.edu](mailto:eogilvie@gmu.edu).

#### May 8: ICAR Information Session for Prospective Graduate Students

6:00-7:30 pm, Truland Building, Room 555

RSVP: [eogilvie@gmu.edu](mailto:eogilvie@gmu.edu), 703.993.9683

#### May 17: GMU Commencement

10:00 am, Patriot Center, GMU Fairfax Campus

#### May 17: ICAR Convocation

2:30 pm, Dewberry Hall, GMU Fairfax Campus

#### May 18: ICAR Hosts Mason Forum on Climate Change

#### Workshop at Point of View

10:00-4:00 pm, Point of View

Entire events listing available at <http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm>

## News Network: Opinion

### Public Health's Voice in Climate Change Debate

By Erin Ogilvie, GMU M.S. Student

World Health Day, April 7, marked the 60th Anniversary of the World Health Organization (WHO). This year focused on the need to protect health from the adverse effects of climate change. WHO chose this topic in recognition that climate change will continue to be a threat to global public health. As a global health M.S. student at George Mason University, this position speaks volumes for me. It is time for those in public health to have a voice in the climate change conversation.

According to Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General, "The warming of the planet will be gradual, but the effects of extreme weather events—more storms, floods, droughts and heat waves—will be abrupt and acutely felt. Both trends can affect some of the most fundamental determinants of health: air, water, food, shelter and freedom from disease." The short- and long-term effects of weather-related disasters can lead to population displacement, compromising health and destroying lives. Displacement is associated with a range of health issues, including social isolation and mental disorders and, in many cases, reduced socioeconomic status. In the world's most vulnerable nations, public health crises such as HIV/AIDS or chronic malnutrition, combined with the disastrous effects of climate change, will have catastrophic outcomes.

The WHO reports that stresses on natural resources such as water or fertile land for agriculture, lead to competition between populations. Along with factors such as poor governance and ethnic rivalries, competition can inflame tensions. The need for public health experts to develop conflict analysis and resolution skills is long overdue. Currently, there are food riots around the world in response to the growing food costs.

The WHO recognizes that developing nations will be hardest hit. It is estimated that approximately 600,000 deaths occurred worldwide as a result of weather-related natural disasters in the 1990s, some 95 percent of which took place in developing countries. While developing nations may be hardest hit, this should not deter from the fact that the issue is *global* climate change with corresponding effects on *global* health. Countries such as the United States and China are two of the world's biggest environmental polluters and it is unfortunate that the developing nations will be the ones who suffer the most.

As people pay more attention to climate change, experts from multiple disciplines should collaborate in seeking solutions. The 2008 message has encouraged my interest in public health, conflict and climate change. Analyzing the relationships and dynamics of these three areas will support effective and integrated approaches to prevent, prepare for, and act in, future public health and natural disasters. ■

## New Book

### Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis

SAGE Publications  
Ho-Won Jeong, ICAR  
Professor



#### Book Description

This book provides students with a framework for studying conflict diagnosis, analysis and transformation. It introduces the concepts needed to develop conflict analysis tools as well as the social and psychological features central to understanding conflict behavior. The second part of the book comprises comparative case studies that illustrate different patterns of conflict processes and examine the efficacy of conflict transformation and intervention strategies.

## Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds and Letters

### When Peace Agreements Create Spoilers: The Russo-Chechen Agreement of 1996

By Julie Shedd, ICAR  
Ph.D. Student  
*Civil Wars, June 2008*

### This Earth Day is Different

By Michael Shank, ICAR  
Ph.D. Student, and Rep.  
Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)  
*The Hill, 04/22/08*

### Poppy Destruction Drives Farmers Towards Taliban

By Michael Shank, ICAR  
Ph.D. Student  
*Financial Times, 04/12/08*

### Ethiopia's Convergence of Crises

By Terrence Lyons, ICAR  
Professor  
*Current History, April 2008*

### Approaching Tibet

By Ross Gearllach, ICAR  
M.S. Student  
*Foreign Policy in Focus, 04/09/08*

### US and Israel Should Talk to Hamas (1)

By Marc Gopin, ICAR  
Professor  
*CS Monitor, 04/04/08*

### US and Israel Should Talk to Hamas (2)

By Scott Cooper, ICAR  
M.S. Student  
*CS Monitor, 04/04/08*

### Jewish Arabs and a New Middle East

By Marc Gopin, ICAR  
Professor  
*ME Online, 03/29/08*

### Holocaust Memories

By Carlos Sluzki, ICAR  
Professor  
*Washington Post, 03/29/08*

# Seamus Tuohy

By Jenny Lock, ICAR M.S. Student,  
jlock1@gmu.edu

**O**utgoing President, Graduate Students in Conflict Studies (GSCS): GSCS is the representative body, to the administration and faculty, for all Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) graduate students. GSCS addresses issues of student concern and its officers, elected by the student body, have an active role on various departmental committees including the Advisory Board, Faculty, and Curriculum committees. The co-presidents of GSCS work together to oversee GSCS activities and committees. Being co-president of GSCS changed Seamus Tuohy's second year at ICAR in fundamental ways.



The experience with GSCS was positive for Seamus. The opportunity to work closely with a group of passionate students and faculty who hold the student voice in high esteem was well worth the extra work that came with his position. Seamus describes ICAR as the sort of school where you get out what you put in. The more involved you are as a student, the more you get in return. He felt included in the ICAR community, in part, because he spent so much time here. Between various student positions on the Arlington Campus, GSCS, and membership in multiple working groups, he was able to gain access to a level of community at ICAR others don't often reach.

Seamus is most excited to bring with him the dedication of the group of students who have gotten involved with GSCS's various programs and the faculty who put energy, thought and care into the events and decisions put forward by GSCS.

With thoughts toward future involvement in research or academia, Seamus chose to work on a thesis as his integration option. Using the Los Angeles Police Department (Rampart Division) scandal as a case study, Seamus explored how structural composition impacts cultural and individual understandings of acceptable behavior, and the way that groups within structures enact conflicts. When asked to describe his time at ICAR in one sentence, Seamus said, "The drive and passion of those I have met here has incited me to challenge myself in my understanding of both the complexity of conflict and the creativity necessary for resolution." ■

"ICAR is the sort of school where you get out what you put in. The more involved you are as a student, the more you get in return."

—SEAMUS TUOHY

# Terra Tolley

By Deanna Yuille, ICAR Graduate Admissions  
Assistant and M.S. Student, dyuille@gmu.edu

**I**ncoming President, Graduate Students in Conflict Studies (GSCS): Imagine finding yourself constantly in a disaster zone, surrounded by conflicts with long histories. This is why incoming GSCS president Terra Tolley decided to pursue studies in conflict analysis. After traveling to Cambodia, Rwanda, and the Balkans, she returned to the US to carry out disaster relief work in the Gulf region. While there, she came to the realization that she would like to transfer her understanding of the volatility of post-disaster zones into a degree. Therefore, she has been immersing herself in both her studies and continuing her work on risk and impact assessment since she joined the program in 2007.



Terra's future goals include developing peacekeeping efforts surrounding environmental issues and natural resources. This is due to the fact, she says, "that when I went overseas to work, I got so attached to the area and the people I worked with. I can imagine why land and its use is an important thing to the people that live there." She mentions that she has particular interest in the Balkans region and envisions doing a project on peace parks, which are protected areas that span across the boundaries of multiple countries, where physical political borders have been abolished. Terra adds that these parks are ideal multinational communities that can be used for education and peacebuilding.

Terra will soon be participating in the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute in the Philippines through the global studies program, which is a new opportunity to learn about another culture and increase her skills in grassroots peacebuilding. Terra finds it natural to work in different communities, given her background in anthropology and human rights. Assuredly, she will continue to be an asset to the ICAR community in her new role as she uses her abilities to represent the voices of the students. ■

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August. While his justification that intelligence analysts should be able to speak freely without fear that their words will be printed is understandable, it is not the intelligence community that is the concern. The real concern arises when policymakers are allowed the opportunity to manipulate, without accountability, the findings of such classified assessments in the pursuit of cherished political objectives.



Ivan Sascha Sheehan, above, is an ICAR Visiting Professor.

It is also worrisome that the recent estimate was issued in advance of congressional testimony by General David Petraeus and US Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker. The last NIE was also issued preemptively in advance of congressional testimony.

The *Economist* reports that as many as 84 percent of foreign policy experts do not believe that we are winning the war on terror. Why are so many foreign policy experts troubled by government assessments? The answer is that the highly politicized nature of terrorism incident data used by government officials to make national security estimates is a matter of considerable debate and opens questions as to the accuracy of the reports.

What exactly is being measured to judge this so called "progress"? Is it the number of incidents? The lethality of attacks? The frequency or dispersion of transnational terrorist activity? Moreover, where does this data come from and who collects it?

The commitment of US troops in harm's way and the considerable cost of US military efforts in both Iraq and Afghanistan—now estimated in the hundreds of billions—require that we make accurate assessments grounded in evidence, not politicized statistics.

Consider this: Between 2001 and 2004, as the Bush administration reported progress in the war on terror, my own quantitative analysis of terrorist incidents provided data proving that US counterterrorism strategies were escalating the frequency and lethality of attacks through a policy of preemptive military action.

In fact, during the period from the onset of the war on terror in October 2001 through December 2004, there was a 74 percent increase in the number of transnational terrorist incidents and a 168 percent increase in the number of deadly incidents when compared to the previous eight years.

The NIE, which is meant to offer

the broad consensus of senior analysts within the intelligence community, has reportedly changed little since the last estimate nine months ago. How this could be the case, given the considerable efforts of coalition forces, including a surge in troop presence, is unclear.

What is certain is that until government officials are willing to release key data on which their assessments are based, the public should remain skeptical of reports that suggest progress in the war. It is time the American public stands up and demands an accurate analysis of the efficacy of US counterterrorism strategies by political officials before more lives are lost without justification. ■

## ICAR Hosts Cleanup at Point of View

By Amanda Martin, Assistant to the Director, [amartinv@gmu.edu](mailto:amartinv@gmu.edu)

This month several ICAR staff and students participated in the Alice Ferguson Foundation's 20th Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup. The ICAR volunteers picked up litter along the shoreline of Thompson Creek and Belmont Bay at Point of View and removed over 300 pounds of trash from the waterway. In total, the event saw over 5,000 volunteers working along the Potomac River watershed, collectively removing over 131 tons of trash.

The Alice Ferguson Foundation ([www.fergusonfoundation.org](http://www.fergusonfoundation.org)) founded and has coordinated the Potomac River Watershed Cleanups for the past 20 years to address the Potomac River's significant trash problem. Their goal is to celebrate a Trash Free Watershed by 2013. They are spearheading the Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative, engaging elected officials and stakeholders throughout the region to work collaboratively toward this goal. For more information, please visit [www.trashfreepotomac.org](http://www.trashfreepotomac.org). ■



Above: ICAR students pose with trash collected at the cleanup at Point of View. Photo: Amanda Martin.



Above: ICAR M.S. Student Monica Flores. Photo: Amanda Martin.

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## Dr. Chris Shoemaker: Question and Answer

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seemingly trivial in their dimensions, but were significant in their implications. I was ill-prepared to do that and had to learn on the fly. I had to figure out the kinds of things that ICAR is working on, in a disciplined, structured manner.

*Levine: What is the role for conflict resolution in the US military?*

*Shoemaker:* The ability of the US government to bring some practicalities of conflict resolution to Iraq, in light of the three factions, is spotty. Agencies of the government have been unable to step up as vigorously as they should have, so a lot of the responsibility for the up-close-and-personal work of conflict resolution has fallen by default to commanders on the ground. It's not the neatest solution. Soldiers are not trained to do the conflict analysis or resolution that effective programs require. But the military has had to become conversant just because there was nobody else around to do it. It's not a question of what is desirable, but what is reality on the ground right now.

*Levine: Where can conflict resolution professionals make the most significant contribution in the fields of post-conflict reconstruction and democratic transitioning?*

*Shoemaker:* To understand the nature of conflicts. That is not by any means easy or obvious. There are often subtleties and culture-specific issues that do not lend themselves to rapid or easy understanding. That must be built into the institutions and the mechanisms for formal or informal conflict resolution. We would rather use these mechanisms than those that come out the barrel of gun. ■

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## Landing Careers as Consultants

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who served as one of the presenters. He earned his M.S. degree from ICAR and is now vice president of The Ambit Group, a management consulting firm. He said the intensives are critical for ICAR graduates because "there are still not a lot of job titles out there with what we do, so people have to be creative and perhaps create markets where they don't quite exist." Rachel Barbour, another ICAR M.S. alum, advised the students to focus on networking, informational interviews and practical experience to stand out from the crowd when searching for work in a competitive job market.

The other professionals who participated in the intensive were Alma Abdul-Hadi Jadallah, who earned her Ph.D. from ICAR and is president of her own company, Kommon Denominator, and Stan Bradley, chief of the Investigations and Resolutions Division at the Department of Defense.

Even though Karen still has another year to go at ICAR, she said the intensive helped her "make plans and fine-tune them. It also opened up more possibilities. After the career intensive, new doors were opened just by talking to the presenters and to Julie. It helped me see that there are more opportunities." ■



**Institute for Conflict  
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3401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 4D3, Arlington, VA 22201

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