

## MORALITY, RELIGION AND TERRORISM

In light of the catastrophic events of September 11, 2001 and the worsening situation of terrorism in the Middle East, this issue of the *Forum* attempts to address the question of "good vs. evil" and the role of religion in morality. UW Philosophy Professor Jan Narveson, in *A Point About Theological Terrorism*, examines a number of popular theories for moral codes of behaviour. He questions the role of religion as a source of morals and examines the declarations of those who perform evil deeds in the name of their gods. In "Religion's Misguided Missiles" (reprinted from the *Guardian*), UK scientist Richard Dawkins asks what motivates suicide terrorists. Prof. Mohamed Elmasry, of UW's Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, addresses these two articles in

"Who Needs Religion? Today's New Faith Is The Cult Of Chopped Logic."

And where does one look for the so-called "root causes" of terrorism, conflicts and hostilities in general? Imperialism? Religion? Poverty? Prof. William Moul of UW's Political Science Department reviews the book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, by Samuel P. Huntington, first published in 1996.

Also relevant to ethics is the issue of "student cheating", viz. *UW Daily Bulletin*, 8 April 2002. Plagiarism is examined by writer Robert Fulford in "Students Learn From Their Masters," reprinted from the *National Post*.

### PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATORS?

The Council of the Faculty Association of the University of Windsor (WUFA) has endorsed a motion by its Administration Evaluation Committee to proceed with devising a model for the evaluation of administrators at the University of Windsor. The Committee's report is reprinted in this issue.

### "B.S. BINGO" – THE NEWEST GAME TO ROCK THE PLANET!

Do you keep falling asleep in meetings and seminars? What about those long and boring conference calls? Here's a way to change all of that (p. 17).

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## EDITORIAL

I would like to thank Profs. Jan Narveson, Mohamed Elmasry and William Moul for their contributions to this special issue of the *Forum*. We at the *Forum* hope that their willingness to write substantial articles at rather short notice during a very busy time of year will be appreciated by our readers. Of course, the best way in which their efforts can be acknowledged is through feedback and continued discussion of the topics that they have addressed.

Thanks also to Jeffrey Shallit for drawing my attention to the *Guardian* article by Richard Dawkins. Obviously, Dawkins' article was written in response to the September 11 massacre. Nevertheless it remains relevant given the recent revival of suicide bombings in the Middle East, thanks to a seemingly continuous supply of men – and now women – who are willing to sacrifice their lives in order to kill others.

I also thank Joseph Novak (Philosophy) for making me aware of Samuel Huntington's scholarly work, *Clash of Civilizations*. I found "Clash" to be a refreshing analysis of post-Cold War world affairs. It has inspired me to consult some of the many references that are cited. I am indeed very glad that Bill Moul accepted the invitation to review this book for the *Forum*.

A number of readers from across campus have expressed their appreciation for U. Alberta law professor Wayne Renke's detailed case study of arbitrator Ross Kennedy's report on the FAUW/UW grievances (*Forum*, March 2002). As pleased as I am to receive this feedback, I am nevertheless sorry to see that some (many?) members of UW's Senate Undergraduate Council may not have had an opportunity to read Prof. Renke's article. In its March 26 meeting (which I attended as a spectator), the committee was putting the finishing touches to a report that would advise the Vice-President, Academic and Provost (in response to his request) on a process for changing class grades.

The final version of the SUC report lists a process that differs quite significantly from the policy proposed by the FAUW (President's Message, *Forum*, Oct. 2001). The most striking difference is that the Council leaves the final decision to change grades (and possibly by how

much as well, although this is not stated explicitly) with the Dean. A discussion of the proposed procedure is, however, beyond the scope of this editorial. I simply wish to draw the reader's attention to a sentence which can be found in the section entitled "Background Information for the Vice-President, Academic & Provost":

Council acknowledges the authority of the Dean, but strongly believes that the Dean should be advised by a Committee to avoid her/him being both judge and jury.

As consultative as the Council has tried to make the process, doesn't the phrase "recognizes the authority of the Dean" have the aroma of the "institutional academic freedom" expressed by arbitrator Kennedy in his award?

Those who have read Renke's article will remember his claim that Kennedy was incorrect in his interpretation of institutional academic freedom. Consequently, his Award subverted collegial academic freedom by supplanting "governance through internal academic institutions with governance through the Dean." Also, according to Renke, "a Dean as a true 'executive' officer is not the holder of 'empty' power." Rather, a Dean is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that processes of "collegial governance" are carried out. In this particular case, it would mean that the decision to change class grades is to be made by a *committee* and *not* by an individual (e.g., a Faculty Dean). I believe that such a process already exists in the Faculty of Engineering and perhaps in some other Faculties at UW, but certainly not in all of them. One can only hope that any future discussions of grade-changing – which should necessarily begin in UW's Senate – will address this important point.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all who have contributed to past issues of the *Forum* in a variety of ways, including articles, letters, book reviews and even proofreading! And, of course, thanks to Pat Moore for her excellent work in the production of this newsletter. Once again, the *Forum* will be operating in reduced-output mode over the Spring term, with one issue appearing in June. I wish you all a pleasant and productive summer.

ERV

## A POINT ABOUT THEOLOGICAL TERRORISM

by Jan Narveson  
Department of Philosophy

The terrible events of Sept. 11, 2001 were unprecedented only in one respect: the amount of material damage done by men commandeering civilian means of transportation. Yes, there was a great loss of life, but casualties of similarly-motivated actions over the centuries run to many thousands of times the number killed on that day. The lessons were many and have been pondered in innumerable ways. 9/11 provided me with the stimulus to think and write about an important aspect of that tragedy, namely, its ostensible rooting in a religious belief. The men who commandeered that plane believed that they were carrying out the "will of god," and believed, too, that they would be richly rewarded for what looked otherwise like an act of plain murder. As Salman Rushdie has recently observed, this is familiar stuff. But that doesn't make it all right.

The burden of this discussion is simply that the view of these men about what they were doing cannot be the right one. In my view, those men were dupes. If others have viewed them as heroes – as apparently is the case – then they would have to have other reasons for thinking so. And perhaps they do, but that is not the subject of this discussion. Instead, I want to look at the declarations of people who perform evil acts because they think that they are somehow carrying out the intentions of the deity. I should add that theological claims are by no means the only ones affected by the argument I develop here. I'll add a note on that later.

The question here is one of general morality or alternatively of political morality. General morality is the set of rules and requirements on one's behavior to which everybody is subject. Political morality is the set of rules and requirements that apply to people in regard to political-type activities. Some people profess to believe that there is no such thing as political morality – but then, some people profess to believe that there is no such thing as morality at all. In this short article it will not be easy to explain convincingly why these people do not know what they are talking about. Possibly there are also a few people out there who simply don't care whether they live or die. I am not writing for their benefit and am not sure who could.

It's familiar stuff that there is a good deal of disagreement about morals. We should make a few distinctions, though. Firstly, there is certainly plenty of disparity of thought among people about how to live one's life. But that is not the subject of morals, nor therefore of this discussion, however, as will be emphasized shortly. Secondly, there are many matters that we might call "minor morals" – etiquette, for instance. We expect disparity here and many of us welcome it, really. Whether that should be called "disagreement" is not clear. The F's do it one way, the G's do it another, and there's no big problem about that, so far as it goes. Not, that is, until the F's go proclaiming

to the G's that the F-way to do it is the only acceptable way to do it, and propose to back up their insistence with guns. We then have a disagreement, all right – the kind of disagreement for which something needs to be done, and the kind that general morals do address.

But there is, thirdly, a very basic level of morals, and it is what we are talking about here. At this level, there is a lot less disagreement than you might think. Very few people anywhere seriously believe that killing other people is simply neutral, like parting your hair on the left. And very few people seriously believe that once you've promised somebody you'll do something, it is a matter of absolute indifference whether you then do it, as if you'd never said a thing on the subject. Few people seriously believe that if you just happen to feel like breaking somebody's arm today, no explanation given, then that's perfectly OK. There are, in short, some general, basic points about interpersonal relations that are not much disputed by reasonable people. Generally speaking, what is agreed upon is that we are not to proceed by threatening each other with evils, but rather to proceed on terms that are mutually agreeable. We are, in the words of Thomas Hobbes, to "seek peace and follow it" and it is only when we are unable to achieve that piece – because the persons with whom we are dealing insist on attacking us – that we are entitled to defend ourselves.

Of similar stripe is Hobbes' famous principle that we are to insist on "no more liberty for ourselves than we are willing to allow to others," and that we are to keep commitments we have voluntarily entered into with others. These are Hobbes' first three "Laws of Nature" (Leviathan, Chaps. XIV and XV, for the scholarly). There is plenty to quarrel about in all sorts of particular cases but anyone who (1) says that he can do whatever he likes and the hell with the rest or (2) pays no attention to his commitments and shows no respect for others, is simply morally bankrupt.

In addition, we must remember that much moral discussion is not about basic principles as such but rather about particular cases: Is this person guilty or not? Did he do it or didn't he? Such questions, of course, can never be settled purely in the abstract. Conflicting views of the evidence, etc., will always be a major part of moral discussions. But, as I say, that does not imply a disagreement about basic principles.

Now, if we address the question, "What is the *basis* of these universal restrictions on behaviour?" there are indeed quite a few general accounts that have been given down through the history of the subject – depending, to be sure, on what you consider an "account". For present purposes, I will divide these accounts into the following categories:

- (a) they're rules of one's tribe, and their tribal origin is what makes them valid;
- (b) they're commands of god or the gods;
- (c) they're just there, in the nature of things, like the laws of chemistry;
- (d) they're personal commitments;
- (e) they're based on each person's interests, taking into account his relations to everybody else and to the world around him (or, obviously, her.)

I'll start with quick comments about (c) and (d). Regarding (c), the view that morals are natural is tempting, especially because it's so vague. But any reasonably clear account shows us that it has serious problems. First, how is it that people can fail to "see" this view? If they do fail to see it, what could one do to get them to do so? Second, and a matter of enormous controversy especially in the last century, if it is claimed that morals are just facts, why can't people note these facts but ignore them? So grass is green – so what? What must I do in view of that? This sort of view invites us to think that the analogous question, "So it's wrong – so what?" would be perfectly possible and reasonable. But it's not – someone who thinks it is has missed the point.

Regarding (d), one just has to note that of course we want people to be personally committed to doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong. But the question is whether the personal commitment is all there is to it. If morals are merely a matter of personal commitment, then some people will be committed and others not. It's like chocolate and vanilla, right? It might be possible to dream up a sillier account of morals, but I don't plan to try.

A not-so-quick comment is in order regarding (a). Morals have indeed been part of the stuff of tribal life since time immemorial. This is hardly surprising, for no human group can survive for long without a basic general expectation that the next person you encounter won't stab you when your back is turned. However, it is fairly easy, and has been a marked tendency, for tribalism to confine the benefits of morals to fellow members of the tribe: "Don't kill the guy next door, no; but the guy on the other side of the hill is another matter – he's fair game!" Needless to say, tribes that behave in this way are asking for trouble in their intertribal relations. Historically, humanity has quite amply experienced such troubles and continues to do so. What should be particularly obvious is that an intertribally valid morality cannot be based on any particular tribe's customs or beliefs. And at this point we can usefully move to our main topic, religious moralities.

The religious person claims to believe that the requirements of morals are literally the say-so of god. Now, I shall for present purposes ignore the many religions that don't exactly have a belief "in god" but perhaps have multiple godlike entities to relate to, or possibly none. My concern here is with the monotheistic religions. These religions have as a crucial tenet

that only one such deity can and does exist and that this being is somehow possessed of a sort of moral authority. It is enormously interesting that the conceptual rigging of these kinds of religions sounds "absolutist." Rather notoriously, however, when questions come up as to which of the umpty-umpt different accounts of what this being is like, what he wants us to do, and what we are supposed to do to and for it, there is enormous disparity in the replies.

Not surprisingly, this disparity can lead to strife. Why so? The reason is fairly straightforward. The religious person believes that there simply can't be anything that matters as much as (his) god. How could anything be more important, after all, than the fundamental source of everything there is, the creator of the heavens and the earth, and so on? Moreover, and relevant to this discussion, if this god's commands have the status of fundamental moral rules, then is it not, of course, our absolute duty to do whatever he says? How could it not be?

It is not surprising that religious people think that way and it is often difficult to explain to them why their view is untenable – that it is, in fact, terminally confused. But it is. There are two major points to make in this regard. The first is that the religious person's account of how morality works cannot possibly be right. The second is that the morality to which he is in effect subscribing is one that is on the rails for big trouble. In fact, this morality is an invitation to the most devastating kind of warfare. The serious proponent of religious morality is the enemy of mankind and deserves to be treated accordingly.

Regarding the first point made above, which is the more fundamental matter, the religionist needs to be asked why we should obey the commands of god. This is likely to be a bit of a surprise to him: How could we not think we have a duty to obey the commands of god, after all? But that is not my point. Rather, the point is to ask, why the fact that god, rather than somebody else – the religionist's next-door neighbor, say, or Jean Chrétien – tells him to do something is any reason to think that it is thereby the *morally right* thing to do. What is it about god that distinguishes that personage from all others, and that entitles him, as it were, to order us about? We understand that when our neighbours or, for that matter, political leaders, movie stars, philosophers, etc., propose that we should do this or that, what they say just could be mistaken. But god, so we are told, cannot be mistaken. Now, why is this? There is, again, an easy and obvious answer. God, we will be told, is by definition right about everything – he knows everything, after all. So, once we are sure that it is god who tells us to do so-and-so, there can be no question!

What religious people may not realize is that in giving this entirely correct (so far as it goes) answer, they are walking into a trap. Let's next ask: "To which subjects that god is right about is it relevant to appeal in connection with morals?" There is, at this point, a fork in the conceptual path ahead of us. One fork goes like this: "Hey, look – god is the superpower, he created everything, and so whatever he says goes – no reason required.

Might makes right!"

Now, it doesn't, of course. Any religious person will have a view of many things that are either matters of sheer indifference – the way we part our hair, for example – or matters that are "wrong." Well, suppose that the cosmic bully tells us that from now on it is our absolute obligation to throw salt over our left shoulders every morning at 9:00 a.m. or to say "Thwickum thwickum" quickly every Wednesday precisely at noon? ... Of course, our religious person will say that god has given no such commands. Maybe, but *how* does he know that? One answer would be that it isn't written so in the sacred book (say, the Hebrew Bible or the Koran) that is the source of the religious person's information about the doings of the god in question. But another answer is that anyone who would command such things is crazy, a crack-pot – not the august deity who created the world, etc. It is this second answer in which we are interested. Turning to morals, it becomes really obvious that it is the other fork in the road that represents the path that we must take. We must reply, in brief, that god would never tell us to do anything wrong because, after all, god is good – indeed, perfect!

This, of course, is the right answer. However, the question now arises: "What answer is it?" When the religious person, or anybody, characterizes god as good, he must be saying something about that personage – something meaningful and relevant. If so, then he has also implied the truth that things like morals simply cannot be the sheer arbitrary say-so of some cosmic bully, as I previously put it. To be god is to be perfect. To be god is to exemplify supremely the various properties which we all understand under the label 'good'. The goodness of those properties has to be understood, in short, antecedently to the characterization of some being as "god". As Plato recognized two and a half millennia ago, it is not the case that what makes X right is that god commands it; rather, god commands X *because it is right*. What god must *know* is that X is right and wrong, and why – he must *know* this, as opposed to simply happening to feel like declaring it to be so on a particular day on some unintelligible whim or even for no reason at all.

The implication of this point is profound. Moral principles, moral claims and moral judgments have to be understandable on their own if it is to make any sense to say that god is good, righteous or whatever. It is absolute nonsense to claim that the domain of morals is simply god's private property. Different religions may incorporate differing views as to what our duties are, but those are differences of the same kind that can affect anybody's beliefs, whether religious or otherwise. But the belief that "god" commands us to go around murdering innocent people, for example, is not acceptable. Anyone who professes to believe this has to believe that the victims in question are basically *not* innocent. Moreover the victims must be so guilty that they *deserve* the treatment that "god" has ordered the religious enthusiast to carry out. But if the enthusiast is going to claim this, then he'd better have the

goods. Otherwise, we are in the position of confronting someone who says, "Jones deserves death, but not for any reason that I can possibly supply!" Uh, huh....

To return, now, to our central topic in its other aspect. Beliefs about gods, down through the years, have been the property of tribes as much as mores (and, of course, for the same reason). Adherents of religions have supposed that god cheers for their tribe and frowns on others – though that does raise, of course, the little question why god went to the trouble of creating all those strange people who refuse to believe the obviously correct religion – ours, that is – or even any religion at all. Religious persons are not very good at supplying answers to such questions; the gist of their replies tends to be that it really wouldn't be any fun if we didn't have any enemies, now, would it? – Not the sort of attitudes that it makes sense to attribute to supposedly divine beings, when you get right down to it.

But never mind. What we may now note is that the belief that nonmembers of our tribe may be treated in just whatever way we like is obviously unacceptable to any serious view of morals. People who believe this are moral sophomores – they simply haven't thought through what they are saying. But we can point out a new aspect of this, which also tends not to be borne in mind by the ultra-religious, or for that matter the ultra-enthusiastic proponent of many sorts of ideology. This is that the general rule against killing innocent people implies that sheer nonadherence to one's own faith is not a legitimate ground for setting that rule aside. Contrary to St. Thomas Aquinas who taught that heretics must be executed, the correct rule is that persons of either all faiths or no faith are equally protected and equally obligated by the rule against killing or, more generally, against imposing serious harm on one's fellow beings unless they are intend to initiate such harm against us.

Well, why *is* this the "correct rule"? It is because of the inevitability, the necessity, of view (e) on my list of options. Here we all are, in the same world, with comparable powers, a wide range of interests and lives to pursue. Wanting to get on with their various lives, people have an urgent interest in not having those lives terminated or seriously disrupted by their fellows. So the way to go is to agree to mutually adopt an attitude of what amounts to tolerance toward those around us. It does not matter what interests you have, to what particular religion you subscribe or what your tastes in music are. What matters is only this: Each of us is capable of making the lives of those around us miserable. In turn, those around us are capable of doing the same to us. But we don't want to be miserable so we would all do a lot better by refraining from such activity. And we can get those benefits only if we do refrain, and agree – practically, as a matter of sincere commitment, and not just abstractly – to refrain, provided that the others do so as well.

Every religious person presumably believes that his particular religion is the one true religion and that all the others are, alas, deluded or have made a mistake somewhere. But of course

there is no resolution of the differences among all these claimants to the truth. Returning to morals and the world we live in, we obviously cannot wait until all disputed theological matters are resolved to make a declaration for peace.

Now consider the situation of the religionist whose religion happens to be "liberal", as many are nowadays: This person's religion does not include a clause that adherents of rival religions are eligible to be burnt up or beheaded. But he still wants to maintain that the reason why we should be tolerant is that his version of god happens to be like that. That response, however, offers just the wrong reason. It is crazy to think that the doctrine of toleration is based on some particular religion, or any religion. "We must tolerate religions X, Y, and Z because religion W says so!" And, of course, it would probably be false, too. Many religions have been notoriously intolerant.

The superiority of peace to war is common property to all believers and if their religions declare otherwise, then they have much homework to do, viz., to return to their sacred books and reinterpret them so that they do not promote the intolerances in question. For one thing is perfectly clear: The rest of the world cannot tolerate anyone who proclaims as a matter of faith that it is his sacred duty to go out and kill all unbelievers. The person who advocates this is in effect making a declaration of war against everyone else. Needless to say, those others would be well advised to defend themselves against such people. What else, after all, is there to do? "To convert," by the way, is not the answer, as would be obvious to any believer. To say that is to have missed the point. Others are as firmly convinced of their rival beliefs as you are of yours. Asking another to convert makes exactly as much sense as him asking you to convert – namely, no sense at all.

The above point can now be firmed up with some fundamental analysis. These rules of morals are addressed to everybody. They ask each person to do or refrain from certain things, especially the latter. When such a request, or more precisely, insistence – "command" if you will – is thus addressed to someone, that someone is addressed as a fellow being who understands what you're saying to him or her. But he is also addressed as someone who is going to make up his own mind in deciding what to do about it. If we are to make such addresses to people and if we are to have any hope of acceptance, we must also suppose that there is good reason, from their own point of view, to comply. There is no point in telling somebody to do something that you know perfectly well he has no reason whatever to do. To take an example relevant to the present context: People who cite passages in sacred books, such as the Bible or the Koran, on behalf of this or that moral command need to be politely reminded that most of the people they are talking to have no use whatever for that document, so that reference to it, instead of somehow adding weight to their argument, probably makes things worse. What we need to do in addressing something to literally everybody is to try to find a reason that almost everybody would respond favourably.

Now, this is why the basic rules of morals are what they are, in fact. Each of us has an interest in remaining alive and healthy and in not being interfered with in the pursuit of activities that matter to us. Each of us therefore has a reason to desist from activities that would, in the words of John Locke, harm persons in their "life, health, liberty, or property." When you think of it, this is basically equivalent to not harming innocent people; that is to say, not worsening their situations in those respects in which we can depend on them, in turn, not to inflict harm to yet others. It is a fairly simple rule, and well understood everywhere, at least at the person-to-person level.

Somehow, however, it is widely thought that politics affects all of this and that the state can simply go ahead and invade individual people's lives all it wants. I am not sure whether any reader of this article seriously believes any such thing, but if so, it is a matter for another article of at least this length, and will have to wait. For the rest of us, I trust, the point is clear enough. Governments exist to enable us all to live better lives, and any government bent on enslaving us, or otherwise making us miserable, is a government that has no business existing. No government has the right to harm the hair on any innocent person's head. And regarding the action of aiming bullets at non-innocent persons – we have our doubts about that too, unless our backs are very much up against the wall.

But as I say, that will have to wait. The point here has just been to examine a certain much-too-familiar syndrome afflicting human relations for a long time. Morals impose neither religion nor secularism on anyone. They do, however, impose respect for the lives of others. The basis of this respect are the fundamental interests that each of us has as a human being, surrounded by others with their own interests and very different views of what makes life good. The way to go, in other words, is to accept that other people actually have rights, just like oneself. Those who think that these basic matters of interpersonal relations are based on some religion or some other sort of ideology about which people differ have failed to think about what is involved. Their proposal about how to settle a dispute between A and B is: Take A's side! The right answer must be to find a principle to which both A and B, given their differing viewpoints, have reason to subscribe and then to have them adjust their actions accordingly.

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## RELIGION'S MISGUIDED MISSILES

**Promise a young man that death is not the end and he will willingly cause disaster**

*by Richard Dawkins  
Oxford University*

A guided missile corrects its trajectory as it flies, homing in, say, on the heat of a jet plane's exhaust. A great improvement on a simple ballistic shell, it still cannot discriminate particular targets. It could not zero in on a designated New York skyscraper if launched from as far away as Boston.

That is precisely what a modern "smart missile" can do. Computer miniaturisation has advanced to the point where one of today's smart missiles could be programmed with an image of the Manhattan skyline together with instructions to home in on the north tower of the World Trade Centre. Smart missiles of this sophistication are possessed by the United States, as we learned in the Gulf war, but they are economically beyond ordinary terrorists and scientifically beyond theocratic governments. Might there be a cheaper and easier alternative?

In the second world war, before electronics became cheap and miniature, the psychologist BF Skinner did some research on pigeon-guided missiles. The pigeon was to sit in a tiny cockpit, having previously been trained to peck keys in such a way as to keep a designated target in the centre of a screen. In the missile, the target would be for real.

The principle worked, although it was never put into practice by the US authorities. Even factoring in the costs of training them, pigeons are cheaper and lighter than computers of comparable effectiveness. Their feats in Skinner's boxes suggest that a pigeon, after a regimen of training with colour slides, really could guide a missile to a distinctive landmark at the southern end of Manhattan island. The pigeon has no idea that it is guiding a missile. It just keeps on pecking at those two tall rectangles on the screen, from time to time a food reward drops out of the dispenser, and this goes on until ... oblivion.

Pigeons may be cheap and disposable as on-board guidance systems, but there's no escaping the cost of the missile itself. And no such missile large enough to do much damage could penetrate US air space without being intercepted. What is needed is a missile that is not recognised for what it is until too late. Something like a large civilian airliner, carrying the innocuous markings of a well-known carrier and a great deal of fuel. That's the easy part. But how do you smuggle on board the necessary guidance system? You can hardly expect the pilots to surrender the left-hand seat to a pigeon or a computer.

How about using humans as on-board guidance systems, in-

stead of pigeons? Humans are at least as numerous as pigeons, their brains are not significantly costlier than pigeon brains, and for many tasks they are actually superior. Humans have a proven track record in taking over planes by the use of threats, which work because the legitimate pilots value their own lives and those of their passengers.

The natural assumption that the hijacker ultimately values his own life too, and will act rationally to preserve it, leads air crews and ground staff to make calculated decisions that would not work with guidance modules lacking a sense of self-preservation. If your plane is being hijacked by an armed man who, though prepared to take risks, presumably wants to go on living, there is room for bargaining. A rational pilot complies with the hijacker's wishes, gets the plane down on the ground, has hot food sent in for the passengers and leaves the negotiations to people trained to negotiate.

The problem with the human guidance system is precisely this. Unlike the pigeon version, it knows that a successful mission culminates in its own destruction. Could we develop a biological guidance system with the compliance and dispensability of a pigeon but with a man's resourcefulness and ability to infiltrate plausibly? What we need, in a nutshell, is a human who doesn't mind being blown up. He'd make the perfect on-board guidance system. But suicide enthusiasts are hard to find. Even terminal cancer patients might lose their nerve when the crash was actually looming.

Could we get some otherwise normal humans and somehow persuade them that they are not going to die as a consequence of flying a plane smack into a skyscraper? If only! Nobody is that stupid, but how about this - it's a long shot, but it just might work. Given that they are certainly going to die, couldn't we sucker them into believing that they are going to come to life again afterwards? Don't be daft! No, listen, it might work. Offer them a fast track to a Great Oasis in the Sky, cooled by everlasting fountains. Harps and wings wouldn't appeal to the sort of young men we need, so tell them there's a special martyr's reward of 72 virgin brides, guaranteed eager and exclusive.

Would they fall for it? Yes, testosterone-sodden young men too unattractive to get a woman in this world might be desperate enough to go for 72 private virgins in the next.

It's a tall story, but worth a try. You'd have to get them young,

though. Feed them a complete and self-consistent background mythology to make the big lie sound plausible when it comes. Give them a holy book and make them learn it by heart. Do you know, I really think it might work. As luck would have it, we have just the thing to hand: a ready-made system of mind-control which has been honed over centuries, handed down through generations. Millions of people have been brought up in it. It is called religion and, for reasons which one day we may understand, most people fall for it (nowhere more so than America itself, though the irony passes unnoticed). Now all we need is to round up a few of these faith-heads and give them flying lessons.

Facetious? Trivialising an unspeakable evil? That is the exact opposite of my intention, which is deadly serious and prompted by deep grief and fierce anger. I am trying to call attention to the elephant in the room that everybody is too polite - or too devout - to notice: religion, and specifically the devaluing effect that religion has on human life. I don't mean devaluing the life of others (though it can do that too), but devaluing one's own life. Religion teaches the dangerous nonsense that death is not the end.

If death is final, a rational agent can be expected to value his life highly and be reluctant to risk it. This makes the world a safer place, just as a plane is safer if its hijacker wants to survive. At the other extreme, if a significant number of people convince themselves, or are convinced by their priests, that a martyr's death is equivalent to pressing the hyperspace button and zooming through a wormhole to another universe, it can make the world a very dangerous place. Especially if they also believe that that other universe is a paradisaical escape from the tribulations of the real world. Top it off with sincerely believed, if ludicrous and degrading to women, sexual promises, and is it any wonder that naive and frustrated young men are clamouring to be selected for suicide missions?

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There is no doubt that the afterlife-obsessed suicidal brain really is a weapon of immense power and danger. It is comparable to a smart missile, and its guidance system is in many respects superior to the most sophisticated electronic brain that money can buy. Yet to a cynical government, organisation, or priesthood, it is very very cheap.

Our leaders have described the recent atrocity with the customary cliché: mindless cowardice. "Mindless" may be a suitable word for the vandalising of a telephone box. It is not helpful for understanding what hit New York on September 11. Those people were not mindless and they were certainly not cowards. On the contrary, they had sufficiently effective minds braced with an insane courage, and it would pay us mightily to understand where that courage came from.

It came from religion. Religion is also, of course, the underlying source of the divisiveness in the Middle East which motivated the use of this deadly weapon in the first place. But that is another story and not my concern here. My concern here is with the weapon itself. To fill a world with religion, or religions of the Abrahamic kind, is like littering the streets with loaded guns. Do not be surprised if they are used.

*Richard Dawkins is Professor of the Public Understanding of Science, University of Oxford, and author of The Selfish Gene, The Blind Watchmaker, and Unweaving the Rainbow.*

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### **FAUW Forum**

*The FAUW Forum is a service for the UW faculty sponsored by the Association. It seeks to promote the exchange of ideas, foster open debate on issues, publish a wide and balanced spectrum of views, and inform members about current Association matters.*

*Opinions expressed in the Forum are those of the authors, and ought not to be perceived as representing the views of the Association, its Board of Directors, or of the Editorial Board of the Forum, unless so specified. Members are invited to submit letters, news items and brief articles.*

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# WHO NEEDS RELIGION?

## Today's new faith is the cult of chopped logic

by Mohamed Elmasry  
*Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering*

Would any rational person conclude that Canada is a bad country if every year it produces 30 violent criminals (one for every one million Canadians)? Would anyone assume that all university professors in this country are potential sex-offenders because a handful (literally) are charged annually with sexual harassment?

And would anyone blame "nationalism" for the millions of civilians who lost their lives during World Wars I and II? Or for the millions more who survived U.S. nuclear attacks only to see their offspring inherit a legacy of physical and mental illness?

Closer to home, would anyone believe without question that a Waterloo man with a beard, long hair and blue eyes, claiming to be Jesus Christ, really is Jesus just because he might look like the traditional artists' image?

Any rational adult would recognize all of the above speculations as blatant chopped logic and would respond with a resounding "no" even if the term itself might be unfamiliar.

But chopped logic is nevertheless alive and well in our culture. It can be used to conclude that because someone says they are killing "in the name of God," they must be telling the truth.

People who use such fear-based reasoning are apt to point fingers saying "I told you so," and proclaim that it makes more sense to believe in no divinity than to follow a God who commands humans to do terrible things to each other. So the finger-pointers will say, for example, "all religion is bad, especially (fill in the one being vilified at the moment). See what trouble it causes? Humanity is better off without it. We can show you a better way, the only way."

Yet those who point fingers at the deficiencies of any religion are in fact propagating their own brand of faith –although they don't call it that. Of course they have the right to express their beliefs, but if they proselytize to the public, it is only fair that their methods of chopped logic be challenged.

One of the very earliest lessons my mother drilled into me was this unforgettable warning: "If anyone tells you, 'I am committing murder in the name of God,' he is a liar, liar, liar, liar!"

I have been reflecting on this deeply over the past few months, wondering about those self-proclaimed Muslims suspected of murdering the catastrophic September 11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. I wonder how many will believe any self-declarations from them that their despicable deeds were done "in the name of God?"

Tragically, those who would pervert or distort scripture to support their killings "in the name of God" are not exclusive to Islam. Following the 1995 assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, an unrepentant, even exultant, Yigdal Amir faced a judge and proclaimed; "According to Jewish law, you can kill the

enemy." The confessed killer then added; "My whole life, I learned Jewish law." Fourteen years earlier, the popular Egyptian president, Anwar Sadat, was assassinated by a Muslim who also claimed to be doing the will of God.

In recent years, such crimes committed by self-proclaimed Muslims and Jews have been matched by Hindu attacks on mosques and Muslims in India, a Japanese cult's poison-gas murders in the Tokyo subway, Christian vigilante assaults on abortion clinics in the U.S., and Algerian Muslims killing one another – all in the name of religion.

In 1994, former Presbyterian minister Paul Hill took shotgun in hand to a Florida abortion center, where he killed Dr. John Britton, together with the doctor's 74-year-old bodyguard. In the same year, Alabama priest Fr. David Trosch sent a letter to 1,000 people saying the time would soon come when "we will see the beginning of massive killing of abortionists and their staffs."

In his famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught, "Blessed are the peacemakers," but that didn't stop European Christian crusaders of 1100 C.E. who travelled to the Holy Land, where they slaughtered tens of thousands of Jews and Muslims in a single week – nearly 7 million people in relation to today's world population.

The sad part of all the above incidents is that too many people are exploiting it to advance their own political and religious agendas.

While anti-immigrant "crusaders" and Muslim-bashers are emerging in Canada and the U.S., old and terrible enmities continue abroad – the British against the IRA, Israelis against Palestinians, the Spanish against Basque separatists, East Indians against Kashmiris, Russians against Chechens ... and the list goes on. In every case, political exploitation is perpetuating the human tragedy, while the governments in charge claim to be "fighting terrorism." And people seeking to convert others to their own religion, or to no religion at all, are doing the same.

An ancient Roman proverb warns, "Beware the man of one book." In today's world, it seems the "one book" is sometimes religious scripture, and at others, a political or a religious agenda. But in the end, the result is tragically the same – thousands of innocent people lose their lives, and most of them hold no books at all.

I remember once again my wise mother's teaching about the poisonous lie behind "killing for God." And I think how sad it is that this lie is still believed and used as a tool for terror, or for advancing individual political and religious agendas.

*Prof. Elmasry is National President of the Canadian Islamic Congress. He can be reached at [elmasry@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:elmasry@uwaterloo.ca)*

## CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS — REVIEW

by William Moul  
Department of Political Science

**Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.**

Who we are and where we belong are fundamental questions to which, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, many people answer in terms of a nation, of an ethnic or communal grouping, of a religious faith, and, most broadly, of a civilization. Those who answer that way usually demand that other people do the same. Samuel P. Huntington, professor of Government at Harvard University, sometime United States government official, and long time intellectual provocateur, argues that those answers and demands lead to a reconfiguration of world politics. The Cold War ideological poles, defined by the United States and the USSR, defined within Western civilization, have given way, he claims, to a multipolar and multi-civilizational world for the first time in world history. Civilizations, "the biggest 'we' within which we feel culturally at home as distinguished from all other 'thems' out there" coalesced long ago, usually around major religious traditions. Now more than ever, because they rub against one another in a small world, civilizations are politically potent. Huntington places eight civilizations on his map of the new world politics: Western; Orthodox, principally Russia, plus Greece and Serbia among others; Sinic or Confucian, China plus Vietnam, Korea and Chinese communities in Southeast Asia; Japanese which stands alone; Hindu; Islamic; Latin American; and "possibly" African.

The claim that the world is now multipolar, not unipolar, and never before multi-civilizational, slights the unprecedented dominance of the United States, exaggerates the might of others, and overlooks Russia, Japan and the Ottoman and the Chinese empires in great power politics at the turn of the last century. Exaggerations, simplifications, distortions at the edges are inevitable when making a map of world politics useful to policy makers. What are acceptable exaggerations, simplifications and distortions depends, in part, on the United States elites who are to use Huntington's map. Communal and ethnic slaughters within a civilization are of little concern to the intended users. African states, unless part of the "intercivilizational quasi war...between Islam and the West" are kept at the edges of the civilization based map. Therefore, the genocidal massacre of 600,000 people of one ethnic category by the Rwandan government officials of another ethnic category, done at the time Huntington was writing, and not discouraged by those to whom he wrote – they discouraged those who sought to stop the killings – merits an (error filled) sentence. On the other hand, the imagined threat of Mexico

and of Hispanic Americans to Western civilization merits many pages of worry.

The terrible danger which concerns Huntington is war between nuclear missile armed core states of different civilizations. He thinks that such a war could develop in two ways. The first is expansion from "fault line wars" between neighbouring states from different civilizations or from war between those of different civilizations within the confines of a single state. The interests of the core states of different civilizations encourage them to rally behind civilizational kin and the fear of utter devastation should encourage them to impose a settlement. The Bosnian War is called the first war of civilizations because, with a significant exception, kin rallied behind kin and the strong forced a settlement. States within what was Western Christendom supported Croatian kin; Russia looked out for Orthodox Serbia; Muslims in many countries rallied to the Bosnian Muslims. As Huntington notes, the United States support for the Bosnian Muslims is difficult to explain in terms of kin country rallying.

The clash of civilizations does little to account for the second possible path to terrible war, one that is "a more dangerous" path than the expansion of a fault line war. The illustration of how such a war might come about is the United States coming to the assistance of Vietnam invaded by China, so to continue the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war. The scenario closes with nearly all civilizations exhausted or destroyed, India free "to reshape the world along Hindu lines" and the Hispanic leaders, firmly in control of the United States government, drawing closer to their Latin American kin and away from the West. The illustration is odd because "the clash of civilizations" paraphernalia – members, core, torn, cleft and lone countries – fits the fanciful course towards the end of the war but not the path to the war in the first place. At the outset there is not the expected civilizational solidarity or "bandwagoning" – China invades Vietnam, Vietnam did not ally with China; the United States, not the West, objects to Chinese domination, and does so for longstanding geopolitical interests in East Asia; Sinic kin do not rally; Japan, allied with the United States, tilts to China. There is less a new "clash of civilizations" than old Realpolitik. The "clash of civilizations" adds little to such stories of conflicts of state interests and geopolitical balances of power.

The "clash of civilizations" confuses many times when a good map would not. One example is the invocation of "the clash of civilizations" when discussing the United States efforts to

open the Japanese market to numerical targets for United States luxury automobiles. The example does illustrate the importance of cultural, not civilizational, differences: European manufacturers who exported both left hand drive and right hand drive vehicles found more Japanese buyers than did American manufacturers who would make only right hand drive vehicles and demanded that Japanese buy them. Perhaps, as Huntington claims, there are "deep imperatives within American culture...[which] impel the United States to be at least a nanny, if not a bully in international affairs." To wrap narrow self-interest in the advancement of Western civilization can only encourage a bully and a nanny.

Elsewhere Huntington makes plain that the Western imperial states were the bullies of world politics and that they are not as powerful as they once were. Since 1920 or so, when the West ruled most of the non-Western world, the aggregate Western might has been fading. "The [anti-colonial] revolt against the West was legitimated by asserting the universality of Western values; it is now legitimated by asserting the superiority of non-Western values." Modernization, he argues, leads to not to Westernization, or at least not to durable Westernization, but to processes of indigenization, which are marked by religious revivals. The comparison of the political impact of the Protestant Reformation in Western Christendom and Resurgent Islam within the Muslim world is striking. I will come to his discussion of the "Islamic threat" shortly. Here I wish to point out that on his map of world politics, built for United States political class, the West is to be viewed from the rest. "What is universalism to the West [democracy, individual liberty] is imperialism to the rest", writes Huntington, and often hypocrisy is the price for universal pretence. "Democracy is promoted but not if it brings Islamic fundamentalists to power; non-proliferation is preached for Iran and Iraq but not for Israel; free trade is the elixir of economic growth but not for agriculture; human rights is an issue with China but not with Saudi Arabia" (184); the threat of genocide cannot be tolerated in Europe but the deed is carefully ignored in Rwanda; and so on and on. The assessment that "the dangerous clashes of the future are likely to arise from the intersections of Western arrogance, Islamic intolerance, and Sinic assertiveness" is shrewd.

The parts of *The Clash of Civilizations* that have excited the most public ire, and, one does suspect, considerable but less public praise, concern Islam. Huntington writes that "Islam's borders are bloody, and so are its innards" and continues on "the Muslim propensity toward violence" with some quantitative evidence. "While Muslim states resorted to violence in 53.5 percent of their crises [during 1928-1979], violence was used by the United Kingdom in only 11.5 percent, by the United States in 17.9 percent, and by the Soviet Union in 28.5 percent of the crises in which they were involved." One could notice in the same source, as Huntington does not, that India resorted to violence in 90 percent of the cases in which India

was involved, the Netherlands in 67 percent and Israel in 56 percent. What the numbers on individual states and the civilizational aggregate mean is not plain. Contrary to his provocative statements repeated above, Huntington does not argue that violence within and among states with Islam as the dominant religion has much to do with religion. Among less important reasons, he cites the demographic explosions in Muslim societies and the absence of a strong core state to keep order within Islam and to act on the behalf of Islam when dealing with non-Muslims.

The deep and many divisions among states with Muslim populations mislead Huntington's discussion of the "intercivilizational quasi war" between Islam and the West. He dates the start of the "quasi war" at the Iranian revolution in 1979 (which happened to be the eve of the longest interstate war of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in which hundreds of thousands of Muslims killed hundreds of thousands of Muslims. The United States aided Iraq against Iran.). The "war" is said to be a "quasi war" because: all Islam is not fighting all of the West; some Muslims and some Americans, not including United States government leaders, use the word "war"; and, save Desert Storm, the violence is intermittent and not between military forces of political communities. Therefore, "quasi-civilizational-quasi war" would be more accurate. Would it not be simpler to forgo the notion of civilizations at war? Yes. Moreover, to leave Israel off of the map, as Huntington does because Israel is not of the West, misses much of the conflicts in the Middle East parts of the Muslim world.

Exaggerations, simplifications and distortions are unavoidable in any map of world politics, not only one filled with "clashes of civilizations". "Obviously", writes Huntington, interstate relations within civilizations and between them are "complicated, often ambivalent, and they do change". "Obviously" all in one civilization do not act in the same manner towards those in another civilization. Common interests of those in different civilizations do encourage co-operation and "obviously [conflicts] occur within civilizations." Obviously the state remains the basic political actor. Indeed his map of emerging patterns of enmity and co-operation among civilizations is dominated by great states -- the United States, Russia, China, Japan and India. My point is that to understand, say, the line of conflict that Huntington draws between Hindu and Islam on the one side and Sinic and Islam on the other side, one should fix on the triangle of relations between India and Pakistan and China. There is little or nothing gained by talking here of civilizations. To say this is not to say that cultural identifications -- ethnic, communal, national -- do not matter in the politics of states.

One test of the usefulness of a map of world politics intended for policy making is to imagine what those who

would use it faithfully would do. On September 12, 2001, the President of the United States, map of the clash of civilizations in hand, would see the mass murders on the day before in Washington D.C. and New York as further rounds in the war with Islam to be met immediately by military action. Whatever one might think of President Bush's ill-conceived and frightening "war on terrorism" and the silly "axis of Evil", the "war" is not against Islam and the civilizations are not deemed "Evil".

To avoid disastrous clashes, Huntington ends his book with three rules for the rulers of great states. I put them in an old fashioned language – "sphere of influence" for "civilization" – because the rules do make general good sense. The *abstention rule*, a basic one of the Cold War, is that great states do not intervene in the sphere of influence of another great state. The *mediation rule* is that, in case of war between rival states on the borders of spheres of influence, the great states negotiate and if necessary, impose order on the weak, not escalate the war. If the war is a civil war, the great states should negotiate

and impose what order can be imposed rather than expand the war and wreck the country, as happened often in the Cold War. The *commonalities rule* is to act so to strengthen civilization against barbarism – such as that in Rwanda – by expanding "the values, institutions, and practices... [peoples] have in common". To speak of "the clash of civilizations" makes the third rule, a very difficult one, much more difficult to follow.

Mass media invocations of *The Clash of Civilizations* to understand all sorts of world politics are commonplace. We should know more than the title, if only to query those who invoke titles (and those who write reviews). To amend Keynes, titles "are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence... Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler[’s title] of a few years back." Do read the book.

## ANNOUNCING THE FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERDISCIPLINARY COFFEE TALK SOCIETY

Thursday, April 25th, 5:00 pm  
Grad House (upstairs)

A few months ago, I advertized the idea to found an informal society of researchers at UW, who are interested in running a series of interdisciplinary talks. In the meantime a number of people from a wide variety of departments have expressed interest and we are ready to have our first meeting! If you are interested in joining us, just come along to our first meeting on the 25th, or drop me a line.

The plan is that about once a month one of us, be it a professor, a postdoc or a graduate student, gives a talk on some fascinating topic relating to his or her research, in terms understandable to all and yet on a high level. I hope that we'll have a good mix of people from the arts, the humanities and the sciences.

I am a new faculty member in Math and you can reach me at [akempf@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:akempf@uwaterloo.ca) (Achim Kempf, ext 5462). I'll post the latest news about our society on the web site:

<http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~akempf/icts.html>

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Further comments on leadership

From the point of view of democracy, the question is whether a leader wields power in such a way as to empower the led. Does the leader nourish a culture of politically informed, engaged, active, outspoken participants, or a culture of compliant lackeys and drones?

Otto von Bismarck, German chancellor from 1871 to 1890, was a successful leader in some respects. Formally only second in command, he outwitted Kaiser Wilhelm I and ran the empire by his own designs. Bismarck consolidated power in the chancellor's office, worked hard, took charge, and made vassals of everybody else. He did a lot and would have done more except that he got fired by Wilhelm II, two years after the latter ascended the throne in 1888.

Decades later, as Germany faced defeat in the Great War and then gradual descent into totalitarian hell, the sociologist and democrat Max Weber wrote this retrospective appraisal of Bismarck's leadership:

Bismarck left behind him as his political heritage a nation without any political education, far below the level which, in this respect, it had reached twenty years earlier. Above all, he left behind a nation without any political will, accustomed to allow the great statesman at its head to look after its policy for it. Moreover, as a consequence of his misuse of the monarchy as a cover for his own interests, in the struggle of political parties, he left a nation accustomed to submit, under the label of constitutional monarchy, to anything which was decided for it, without criticizing the political qualifications of those who now occupied Bismarck's empty place and who with incredible ingenuousness now took the reins of power into their hands. (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1917, quoted in K. S. Pinson, *Modern Germany*, 1954).

*Ken Westhues*  
*Sociology*

Surely better reasons exist for academic decisions being essentially in the hands of faculty than the reasons given by the President of the FAUW in the February issue of the *Forum*. Concern for the fragile egos of prima donna professors is more embarrassing than convincing as a reason. Whether the Stan Lipshitz academic freedom case was merely the result of him feeling "slighted" is of course for Stan to agree or disagree with. But if Nancy Olivieri were to be asked the same question, I'm quite sure that she would disagree

strongly, despite the attempt to see "slighting" as something common between the two cases. Undoubtedly she would speak instead of the importance of being free to disseminate information which saves patients' lives.

Keeping Aristotle front and centre, and switching from Rhetoric to Logic, would the person (violating Kant's academic freedom by causing his "expertise" to be "challenged"?) who differed from Kant's opinion that nothing new could possibly be done in Logic, beyond what Aristotle had accomplished (or his opinion that no geometry for physical space was possible other than Euclidean geometry) be unwelcome around here, if we had resuscitated Kant and recruited him to our faculty? My apologies to philosophers for the oversimplification, and perhaps for not producing 4.28 pages full of nothing but footnotes.

The four-and-a bit pages of footnotes in the same issue came from an Ottawa conference speaker. Does anyone know how many locals got to go, expenses paid by FAUW? And whether, in the lobby of the Sheraton, they ran across any Waterloo administrators, perhaps attending one of those expensive "leadership" seminars discussed at length in an earlier issue? Analysis (not analysis) of the logical qualities of the lengthy article which preceded the four pages of footnotes is best left for elsewhere, as the Editor is short of space.

Returning to the issue of having one's expertise challenged, that's certainly something that every enriched math class instructor must face, usually politely but firmly, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Everything you claim, they want you to prove. A university where that happens seems far superior to one where every decision, e.g., on what colour of paperclips to buy, needs to be taken by a townhall meeting of all the professors, or by some union-management committee.

Finally, I heartily agree with the President that "defending yourself with language is a far superior strategy than (sic) promoting brawling on the city streets" (or in "our office or mine").

*Peter Hoffman*  
*Pure Mathematics*

*(Editor's Note: Four members of the FAUW Board of Directors attended the Grievance Arbitration Conference at the Sheraton Ottawa Hotel. Prof. Fred McCourt's expenses were paid by CAUT since he was an invited speaker. The FAUW covered the expenses of Profs. Len Guelke and Ray McLenaghan, who are members of the FAUW Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. Prof. Jeanne Kay Guelke paid her own way.)*

## EVALUATING UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS?

*The Council of the Faculty Association of the University of Windsor (WUFA) has endorsed a motion by its Administration Evaluation Committee to proceed with devising a model for the evaluation of administrators at the University of Windsor. The final draft of the Committee's report is reprinted below with permission.*

### **Report of the Administration Evaluation Committee Faculty Association of the University of Windsor Dated: March 19, 2002**

The Administration Evaluation Committee met on several occasions. Its first order of business was to decide how to proceed with its study of the feasibility of implementing a performance review of the administration by our membership. Both the CAUT and the AAUP were contacted to determine whether or not institutions exist that currently employ performance reviews. Our CAUT contacts yielded little information, and a negative response from James Turk. However, we were more successful at the AAUP where Robert Kreiser informed us that a number of models are currently being employed at institutions in the United States.

In fact, the AAUP has been endorsing the evaluation of administration by faculty since 1974. In its 1974 statement on *Faculty Participation in the Selection and Recruitment of Administrators*, the AAUP had argued that "the faculty role in determining the retention of academic deans and others at this administrative level should be coextensive with the faculty role in their selection" and it recommended the development of an "institutionalized and jointly determined procedure" (*Academe: Bulletin of the AAUP* 66, no. 8 (1980)). In its June 1981 annual meeting, the AAUP adopted the following statement as policy: "Institutions should develop procedures for periodic review of the performance of presidents and academic administrators. The purpose of such periodic reviews should be the improvement of the performance of the administrator during his or her term of office. . . . Fellow administrators, faculty, students, and others should participate in the review according to their legitimate interest in the result, with faculty of the unit accorded the primary voice in the case of academic administrators." (See the Report of the Tennessee Conference, American Association of University Professors, February 1, 1990: [http://web.utk.edu/~glenn/UTK\\_AAUP\\_Fac\\_Eval\\_Adms.html](http://web.utk.edu/~glenn/UTK_AAUP_Fac_Eval_Adms.html).)

The Committee therefore decided to study the evaluation models currently in use at the following institutions in the United States: The University of Tennessee, The University of Massachusetts, The University of Minnesota, The University of Indiana (Bloomington), The University of Colorado

(Denver), Nova Southeastern University, the University of Michigan, Miami University (Ohio), and Iowa State University. (All these institutions provide on-line access to their models.) In its study of these models, the Committee noted interesting differences between them: some are conducted by Boards of Trustees or Governors, and some by administrators; some are carried out by special review committees attached to Senate, and some by faculty councils or committees. In addition, the Committee also observed that some evaluations canvass the whole faculty; others canvass only a proportion of faculty members; still others canvass only administrators. Despite these differences, all evaluations have similar objectives: they have the formative goal of providing useful feedback to administrators, and not merely the summative aim of grading past performance.

The Committee also searched for literature on the topic of the evaluation of administrators. However, this search did not yield much information, leading the Committee to conclude that there is little literature available on the subject of performance reviews of administrators. In its discussion of evaluation models, the Committee also decided to bring to the attention of Council some of the questions that were raised which the Committee believes it is Council's prerogative to answer. Two questions in particular should be considered by Council: Should departmental heads (who are members of the bargaining unit) be evaluated? How often should periodic reviews be conducted?

On the basis of its deliberations, the Administration Evaluation Committee is presenting to Council its recommendations for the principles that, in its opinion, should underlie the evaluation of administrators at the University of Windsor, as well as for the objectives to be attained by these evaluations. The Committee is also appending to this statement copies of two models: one is recommended by the AAUP, and the other is currently employed by Iowa State University. Finally, on the basis of its study of the feasibility of implementing a performance review of the administration, the Committee is asking Council to endorse a motion to develop a model for the

evaluation of the administration at the University of Windsor by our membership.

### **Recommendations of the Administration Evaluation Committee**

The Administration Evaluation Committee recommends for Council's consideration the following statement regarding the rationale and objectives for performance reviews of the administration:

The University of Windsor Faculty Association (WUFA) is committed to the principle of effective leadership of the university. An important aspect of effective leadership is the periodic review and evaluation of academic administrators.

Administrators are employed by the university community to coordinate the day-to-day operations of the university; they are also responsible for future planning at the university. To a considerable extent, the ability of the university community to function satisfactorily and to attain its goals is contingent upon the performance and the vision of its administrators. Their policies, decisions, and actions bear directly on this community; they also have a significant impact on all aspects of the working lives of faculty: from appointments, promotion, and tenure, to teaching loads and assignments, research, service to the university, etc. At the same time, administrators are responsible and accountable to the university community, and in particular to the faculty. Their authority is delegated in part by faculty who assist in search procedures, or whose views and opinions about prospective administrators are solicited.

For these reasons, the primary voice in the evaluation of administrators should be that of the faculty, who are not just another constituency on the campus but the principal custodians of the institution's history, traditions, mission, and standards. The evaluation of administrators by faculty also recognizes that faculty comprise a highly educated work force and have ideas of value; their satisfaction, commitment, and productivity will only increase when their ideas are heard. Of course, the faculty evaluation of academic administrators does not preclude participation in the assessment process by fellow administrators, senators, students, board members, or others delegated by the administration.

That public accountability is best guaranteed through performance evaluation is a principle which is widely accepted with respect to instruction. However, evaluation

is neither conventional nor systematic for campus administrators. As an organization representing the interests of faculty at the University of Windsor, WUFA naturally has an interest in the performance of academic administrators (from department heads,\* deans, associate deans, and the head librarian, to the Vice Presidents, and President). WUFA views the evaluation of administrators by faculty as a means to achieve the following objectives:

1. To promote the principle of shared governance, particularly with respect to matters that are central to the mission of faculty.
2. To answer external and internal demands for accountability.
3. To improve the environment for teaching, learning, research, and scholarship.
4. To provide feedback and information to administrators which may lead to improvement in the performance of their duties and the functions of their offices, and to assist them in establishing and attaining institutional goals.

Respectfully submitted by:  
The Administration Evaluation Committee

Abdul-Fattah Asfour  
Bill Conklin  
Deborah Cook (Chair)  
Linda McKay  
Jim Winter

\* There was some difference of opinion in the committee over the proposed inclusion of department heads, because they are members of WUFA. Nevertheless, department heads do evaluate faculty for renewal, promotion and tenure, for example, and some felt they should not be excluded. One department head canvassed by the committee thought that good evaluations would protect him from administrative reprisals. One proposal was for the optional inclusion of department heads. A decision on this is left to Council.

*The Forum thanks the WUFA Council for permission to reprint the report of the AEC.*

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## STUDENTS LEARN FROM THEIR MASTERS

by Robert Fulford

Doris Kearns Goodwin, an American author of formerly unimpeachable character, has been struggling to maintain her dignity while dealing with the ugly revelation that her 1987 book, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, contains plagiarized material. She's withdrawn from the Pulitzer Prize board of judges, taken indefinite leave from *NewsHour With Jim Lehrer*, and tried to seize the initiative by confessing to even more plagiarism than anyone else has detected. Not only does her book contain passages lifted from Lynne McTaggart's *Kathleen Kennedy: Her Life and Times*; Ms. Goodwin says it also borrows from several other sources.

Her embarrassment resembles that of Stephen Ambrose, whose reputation was eroded when it emerged that *The Wild Blue*, his book about Second World War bomber crews, contains passages lifted from *Wings of the Morning*, by Thomas Childers. Ms. Goodwin and Mr. Ambrose have explained that these were merely mistakes and will be fixed in later editions. *The New York Times*, in a compassionate spirit, has employed a wonderfully Clintonian euphemism for literary stealing: "inappropriately copying."

Ms. Goodwin and Mr. Ambrose learned their trade in graduate school, where they were supposed to absorb the ethics of attribution. But the university world is also increasingly afflicted with plagiarism. At the University of Toronto the *Independent* newspaper has been boiling over with stories about a highly controversial incident that hinges on what precisely constitutes plagiarism. If the particular student involved turns out to be guilty, that will be only one of about 200 cases Toronto detects each year. Carleton University reported 50 in one recent academic year, the University of Alberta 70. No doubt far more students escape undetected. But of course they escape only in a dubious sense: They obtain acceptable marks and a degree they will always know is partly bogus.

If plagiarism has increased among both professional writers and students, there's a common cause, the industrialization of knowledge. Writing and teaching have become less like crafts and more like industries. Instead of working alone, writers and teachers now tend to break their tasks into component parts and piece them out, like manufacturers. Ms. Goodwin, with three researchers full-time and one part-time, operates a small word factory. This increases productivity (Mr. Ambrose and his helpers have produced eight books in five years) but diminishes control.

Meanwhile, the universities, with too many students taught by too few professors, spread the work to underpaid teaching assistants. Again, productivity increases and control declines. When professors lose touch with students, plagiarism becomes harder to notice; the best plagiarism detector is a teacher's intuition.

In 1995, *Harper's* magazine scandalized academic Toronto with an article, "This Pen for Hire." Written by a confessed academic ghost-writer under the pseudonym Abigail Witherspoon, it depicted a squalid little corner of academe where rich kids hired poor kids to

churn out customized essays. In 2001, Abigail's story reads like an artifact from ancient times. She worked in a cottage industry, before her customers had access to vast Internet resources. Today university graduates often sell their old papers to online agencies, "paper mills," which then re-sell them to other students, all major credit cards accepted. A paper submitted at McGill this week may have been written four years ago in Oregon.

The University of Alberta's *Faculty Guide to Cyber-Plagiarism* reports that the Internet makes cheating easier. It urges teachers to print out an essay purchased from an online paper mill and discuss it in class, to demonstrate that teachers know about Internet fraud and about "corresponding plagiarism detection services."

That's a reference to search programs designed to fight the paper mills. One agency, PlagiServe (which operates in Ukraine) claims it can tell whether any given paper was purchased. Its Web robots crawl the world, monitoring paper mills, buying their products. PlagiServe guarantees it can eliminate cyber-plagiarism.

The Kimbel Library in South Carolina has compiled a list of 150 paper mills, all named something like Dr. Essays, DueNow, or Genius Papers. Those I've checked are not, so far as I can tell, run by the sharpest knives in the academic drawer; some operators are as dim as the students they serve. If you ask Papers4Less to provide an essay on Lyndon B. Johnson and the Vietnam War, it reports proudly that it has 33 papers available. Unfortunately, several of the 33 concern another Johnson, Samuel. Still, the prices are low, US\$3 to US\$20.

The up-market Paper Store declares on its site that the material it sells is "only to assist students in the preparation of their own work." This resembles the contracts written by escort services stipulating that the prostitutes they manage are forbidden to engage in sex. Paper Store has a site selling Aristotle essays exclusively. You can buy four pages on Aristotle and the *Nicomachean Ethics* for US\$39.80 but a more complicated piece, relating the *Nicomachean Ethics* to abortion, runs eight pages and costs US\$79.60. You want quality, you pay for it.

As it happens, it was Aristotle who gave the best advice on this matter. We learn virtue through practice, he said. To become a builder, you build. To become just, you perform just acts. "We are what we repeatedly do." Excellence is not an act but a habit. Cyber-plagiarists learn, in a sophisticated way, the ancient habit of fraud. Next they will learn how to explain, when caught, that it was all an accident.

National Post  
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The Forum thanks Mr. Fulford for permission to reprint his article.

(With thanks to an off-campus reader from Toronto)

## MAKE MEETINGS FUN WITH "B.S. BINGO" – THE NEWEST GAME TO ROCK THE PLANET!



Do you keep falling asleep in meetings and seminars? What about those long and boring conference calls? Here's a way to change all of that.

- Before (or during) your next meeting, seminar, or conference call, prepare your "B.S. Bingo" card by drawing a square – people have found that 5" x 5" is a good size – and dividing it into columns, five across and five down. That will give you 25 1-inch blocks.
- Write one of the following words/phrases in each block:
 

synergy	strategic fit	core competencies	best practice
bottom line	revisit	take that off-line	24/7
out of the loop	benchmark	value added	proactive
win-win	think outside the box	fast track	result-driven
empower (or empowerment)	knowledge base	at the end of the day	touch base
mindset	client focus(ed)	ballpark	game plan
Leverage	paradigm		

Of course, you are welcome to add words common to your institution to this list. For example:

infrastructure	diversified	rationalized	state-of-the-art
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However, try not to make the game too easy by adding words such as "excellence" or "innovation" – it's just less fun then.

- Check off the appropriate block when you hear one of those words/phrases.
- When you get five blocks horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, stand up and shout "BULLSHIT!"



### *Testimonials from satisfied "B.S. BINGO" players:*

- ◆ "I had been in the meeting for only five minutes when I won." – Jack W., Boston, MA
- ◆ "My attention span at Senate meetings has improved dramatically." – Deborah D., Orlando, FL
- ◆ "What a gas! Meetings will never be the same for me after my first win." – Bill R., New York City, NY
- ◆ "The atmosphere was tense in the last Faculty Council meeting as 14 of us waited for the fifth box." – Stephanie G., Winnipeg, MN
- ◆ "The speaker was stunned as eight of us screamed "BULLSHIT!" for the third time in two hours." – Kathleen L., Atlanta, GA
- ◆ "I must admit that my self-esteem suffered greatly when this game came to my campus, but after I left the administration I had an absolute gas!" – Ted K., St. John's, NF
- ◆ "'B.S. BINGO' – Mamma mia, che gioco affascinante!" – Francesco V., Milan, Italy
- ◆ "'B.S. BINGO' funktioniert wie geschmiert auch im deutschen!" – Sabrina G., Heidelberg, Germany
- ◆ "To je izvrstna zabavna igra. 'BS BINGO' je 'super!'" – Janez K., Ljubljana, Slovenija
- ◆ "'B.S. BINGO' ka jawab nahi!" – Narinder S., New Delhi, India

## A MESSAGE FROM CAUT

March 7, 2002

TO: Presidents and Administrative Officers Local and Provincial Associations

FROM: Tom Booth, President, CAUT

RE: Support for Retired Female Academics Court Case

I am writing to ask your support for a historic human rights case for female academics. Many of you will have heard of the "University of Toronto Pensioners Case" (so dubbed in attached September 2001 article by Michele Landsberg in the *Toronto Star*). While seeking fairness for four distinguished retired faculty from the University of Toronto, the case also is making visible pension discrimination suffered by female faculty, as a result of the inherited effects of unresolved wage discrimination during their careers. The case arises from the University of Toronto context, but it will set a precedent for faculty across Canada.

In March of 2001, a group of retired female academics from the University of Toronto, including such highly renowned academics as Phyllis Grosskurth and Ursula Franklin, launched an action against the University for monetary damages caused systemic sex discrimination in pension benefits. The claim alleges that the University saved hundreds of thousands of dollars (plus interest) by maintaining lower pay for those women throughout their careers and into retirement. The women, who were performing the same or similar work as that of their male counterparts during their careers as faculty members, are now receiving pension benefits as low as \$20,000/annum, significantly lower than their male colleagues of similar status, years of service, etc.

In 1991, the University agreed to pay existing female faculty specific wage adjustments to remedy an identified discriminatory wage gap. But female faculty who had retired before the date of the agreement were excluded from the benefits of the agreement.

Pat Armstrong of York University, a recognized expert in gender discrimination and women's work commented that:

"this case and this equity issue affects all female academics, retired and practising, regardless of institution. Current pay data from Statistics Canada not only reveal that fewer women than men are in the rank of full professor, but that salaries remain lower for female academics compared to their male counterparts. The effect of unequal representation in the higher paid ranks and unequal pay in the same ranks will result in reduced pension benefits at the end of the day. Time and time again across the country faculty associations have entered into salary comparisons between male and female academics in similar departments and faculties. Time and time again wage differentials have been identified, and in some cases adjustments implemented. But systemic discrimination is not eliminated by one-time adjustments and past discrimination is not eliminated when pensioners continue to suffer from past practice."

Not surprisingly, given the income of these retired faculty members, the litigation is not something that they can financially support. CAUT urges our local associations and individual affiliated members to support the historic efforts of these four retired faculty members by sending a donation to their legal fund. Donations should be sent to their legal counsel Mary Eberts, Eberts Symes Street & Corbett, 133 Lowther Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M5R 1E4. Cheques should be made payable to "Law Office of Mary Eberts, in trust."

# REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE FAUW COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES

by Edward Vrscaj  
Vice-President, FAUW

The meeting was held on Wednesday, March 20, 2002 in DC 1568 and began at 5:00 p.m. The following members were present: Peter Chieh, Mieke Delfgaauw, Paul Fieguth, Jeanne Kay Guelke, Len Guelke, Kevin Lamb, Christine Jewell, Pl. Kannappan, Ian Macdonald, Paul Malone, Fred McCourt, Pat Moore (FAUW Office), Metin Renksizbulut, George Robertson, Delbert Russell, Kenneth Salem, Maria Sillato, Edward Vrscaj, Paul Wesson, David Williams, Judy Wubnig. A significant number of regrets were received.

The meeting was chaired by the Vice-President due to the absence of President Catherine Schryer. (Catherine was attending a conference in Chicago where she received a best-article award from the National Council of Teachers of English.)

The VP's report included the following topics: the recent ratification of the M of A Articles 15, 16 and 17; the successful salary negotiations this year (thanks to Metin Renksizbulut and his negotiating team); the re-establishment of the Hagey Lecture Committee and an increase in its operating budget (in order to increase the honorarium for Hagey Lecturers – all funding is shared equally by the FAUW and the UW administration); a pledge of \$10,000 by the Board to the CAUT Academic Freedom Fund; the ongoing "grade-changing" affair.

Very spirited discussions of several of the above topics took place. First, many expressed their dissatisfaction with the electronic voting process for ratification of the M of A articles and would have been content with a paper ballot. Some of the reps pointed out that many of their colleagues encountered difficulties, especially when trying to vote from off-campus locations.

A couple of council representatives noted that the Board now had more money to work with thanks to the Rand formula. They wondered whether it might now be possible to reduce the membership fees. Past President Fred McCourt qualified that even before the Rand formula, FAUW membership rates were among the lowest in the county and that the Board had to work with a shoe-string budget up to the present time. He also mentioned that the fees were reduced by a small amount shortly after the Rand formula was adopted by the Association. Even though it was a token amount in practice, the reduction was made as a matter of principle. He and other members of the Board also mentioned that the question of reduced fees had indeed recently been addressed by the Board but that it was simply too early to do anything. They explained that the Board's current goal was to build a reserve of funds for normal expenses as well as possible future needs such as arbitration costs and that the working formula for this reserve is typically recommended, according to proper accounting principles, to be roughly six months of revenue.

It was also mentioned that the FAUW Board is considering current limitations in office space and staff complement: other faculty associations with similar sizes of memberships have at least 1.5, if not two, staff positions associated with their operations. The amount of work involved with the FAUW Office (including the *FAUW Forum*)

has truly grown beyond the limit of what one full-time staff member can meaningfully be expected to do.

Written reports of Committee Chairs and Officers – Academic Freedom and Tenure, OCUFA Director, Pension and Benefits, Status of Women and Inclusivity – had been circulated with the notice of the meeting and were open for discussion. The Editor of the *FAUW Forum* gave an oral report.

In summary, Board members who were present at this meeting felt that it was very successful, with a good deal of relevant discussion and exchanges of opinion. Several representatives expressed their appreciation for being kept informed about CAUT and OCUFA matters by means of the e-mail documents that have been forwarded regularly from President Catherine Schryer.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

## WANTED – PREFERABLY ALIVE!

### FAUW COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS:

#### Faculty of Applied Health Sciences

Kinesiology  
Recreation & Leisure Studies

#### Faculty of Arts

Accountancy  
Anthropology  
Fine Arts  
History  
Political Science  
Sociology

#### Faculty of Engineering

Management Sciences

#### Faculty of Environmental Studies

Architecture  
Environment & Resource Studies  
Planning

#### Faculty of Mathematics

Combinatorics and Optimization

#### Faculty of Science

Biology  
Earth Sciences

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Catherine Schryer  
Department of English

Greetings and salutations!

Spring brings with it change at least, and, if we are fortunate, renewal. At this time of the year, the FAUW Board changes its membership and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Board who are leaving and welcome the members who are joining.

First, however, I would like to thank the Board and all the members of FAUW who asked me to remain as President for another year. Being President of the FAUW has afforded me an opportunity to understand how a large institution like a university functions and the opportunity to voice my advice and concerns on important issues. The FAUW Board is also almost the only interdisciplinary group that we have on campus. As a member of the Faculty of Arts, I continue to enjoy interacting with colleagues in different disciplines and have even discovered valuable research connections in the process.

I would also like to take this opportunity to renew my commitments to the projects that I have undertaken as the President of the Association. I will continue to advocate for policies and procedures that support collegial governance. As a university, we need such forms of governance to sustain our efforts as researchers and instructors. I will continue to advocate for equitable policy and procedures. My particular concerns in this area relate to the treatment afforded to our professional librarians and to the UW's weak track record in terms of attracting, retaining and promoting female faculty members. Finally, I will continue to develop the infrastructure of the FAUW itself by further enhancing the role of the Council of Representatives, by providing more resources for our staff, and by bringing new people into our various committees.

So on to the new and renewed Board.

Several key members of the Board are leaving – specifically Bill Power and Jeanne Kay Guelke. Bill has spent many hours helping developing articles for our Memorandum of Agreement and has been an active member of our important Compensation Committee. We will miss his presence on the Board, particularly because he brought to our attention the issues and concerns of younger faculty members. He has promised to consider coming back to the Board and we will be holding him to that

promise. Jeanne Kay Guelke has held an ex-officio position on the Board as Chair of the Status of Women and Inclusivity Committee and continues to be an active member of the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. Over the last several years she has made a positive contribution to the Board's deliberations in terms of bringing to our attention a range of equity issues. We will miss her advice.

Fortunately, three important members of the Board have been re-elected: Metin Renksizbulut, Frank Reynolds, and Ed Vrscay. Metin, as many of you know, was Chair of our Compensation Committee this year and negotiated a fair two-year salary contract. He is an invaluable source of information about university finances and a valued member of the Faculty Relations Committee. Frank Reynolds continues on the Board as an important resource on issues related to Pensions and Benefits. His background has proved particularly useful to the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee and has helped that committee find resolution to some difficult cases. Finally, Ed Vrscay has been another valued member of the FRC and continues as editor of the *Forum*. In my view Ed's work on the *Forum* has energized intellectual discussion and debate on this campus.

Continuing voting members of the Board include Fred McCourt as Past President, Len Guelke, Ray McLenaghan, Mieke Delfgaauw, and Conrad Hewitt. Fred has agreed to stay on at least until next Christmas. He and the other past presidents (Len Guelke and Ian Macdonald) provide the institutional memory and advice that are essential for organizations like the Association. Ian MacDonald will stay on the Board as a non-voting, ex-officio Director in his capacity as Chair of the Pensions and Benefits Committee.

Finally, we welcome two new members to the Board: Roydon Fraser from Mechanical Engineering and Melanie Campbell from Optometry. Roydon has been an active member of the AF and T committee for several years, and his experience will be of great assistance to the Board. Melanie also brings with her valuable experience because of her connections to the School of Optometry. Historically, the School has had only one other of its members on our Board. We look forward to her insights and contributions.