

Spring 2008

Vol. 2, Issue 3

# Mershon Memo

A newsletter of the Mershon Center for International Security Studies

## Conference to consider Cold War on periphery

In his 1972 essay "The Diffusion of Power," Walt Rostow noted the shift in world power away from Washington and Moscow.

Particularly concerned with the developing world, he asked a question that has yet to be answered: Are men capable of organizing this fragile global community of diffusing power in reasonably stable and peaceful ways, or will the diffusion of power lead to more violence and disorder than we already know?

On April 18-19, the Mershon Center for International Security Studies will examine this question through a conference on "Cold War as the Periphery: New Perspectives on Global Change in the 1960s and 1970s."

The conference is organized by Ursula Gurney, Ryan Irwin, and Paul Chamberlin, all doctoral students in history, with the help of Ralph D. Mershon Professor of History Robert McMahon.

"Cold War as the Periphery" will explore how  
See **Conference** on back page

## Mershon professor examines role of women in international politics

Twenty years ago, few scholars considered the role of women in national security issues because most world leaders were male. Today, with Angela Merkel as prime minister of Germany, Michelle Bachelet as president of Chile, and Hillary Rodham Clinton running for U.S. commander in chief, new attention is being paid to women in public office.

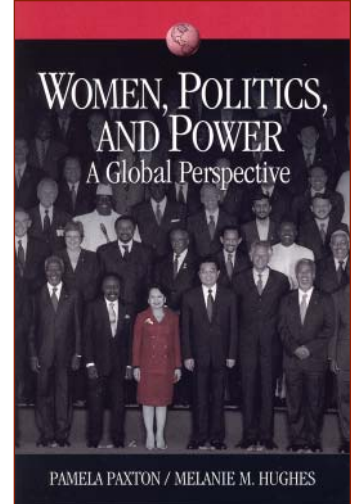
Pamela Paxton, Mershon Center affiliate and Associate Professor of Sociology and Political Science at The Ohio State University, is one of those paying new attention to women with political power. Paxton and Melanie Hughes, a doctoral student in sociology at Ohio State, co-authored *Women, Politics, and Power: A Global Perspective* (Sage, 2007).

Paxton and Hughes' book explores measurements of gender in politics using broad statistical overviews and case studies from around the world. According to their research, the United States ranks in the "middle of the pack" when it comes to political equality for women.

Paxton outlined several ways to measure gender equality in politics such as



Pamela Paxton, Mershon Center affiliate and Associate Professor of Sociology and Political Science at The Ohio State University, is author with Melanie Hughes of *Women, Politics and Power: A Global Perspective*. The book provides a detailed introduction to women's political representation across a wide range of countries and regions.



calculating the proportion of women in a country's legislature or parliament, looking for female heads of state, or noting the year when women got the right to vote.

Internationally, Paxton and Hughes argue, women have made progress in all areas of political decision making in the past century. However, they still have a long way to go to achieve equality with men in most countries.

"Many people think of Scandinavian countries as the most gender-equal globally, and they are partially right," Paxton said. But Rwanda ranks highest for number of women in posi-

tions of political power at 49 percent, while Sweden comes in second at 47 percent. Women make up 16 percent of Congress in the United States.

Another surprise is that Switzerland rates low on the measure of women's suffrage, which was not granted until 1971. Some of the slowest countries to allow women the right to vote include Kuwait, which granted suffrage in 2005, and Saudi Arabia, which still does not allow women to vote.

Americans may not be as favorable toward women as one may think, Paxton  
See **Women** on back page

# Mershon Center for International Security Studies

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>MARCH</b> 24 Spring quarter begins	25	26	27	28 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Sally Marks	29
30	31	<b>APRIL</b> 1	2	3 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Fawaz Gerges	4 3:30 p.m., Mershon 120 Richard Bauman	5
6	7	8 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Shireen Hunter	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Ussama Makdisi	17	18 Conference Cold War as the Periphery	19 Conference Cold War as the Periphery
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29 12 p.m., Mershon 120 David Siegel	30	<b>MAY</b> 1 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Fred Lawson	2	3
4	5	6 12 p.m., Mershon 120 M.J. Peterson	7	8	9 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Maud Mandel	10
11	12	13	14 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Anthony Cordesman	15 12 p.m., Mershon 120 Amaney Jamal	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23 3:30 p.m., Mershon 120 Nita Rudra	24
25	26 Memorial Day	27	28	29	30 Last day of classes	31

For more information and to reserve your spot, please see the Mershon Center website at [mershoncenter.osu.edu](http://mershoncenter.osu.edu)  
**Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave., Columbus, OH 43201, (614) 292-1681**

# Spring 2008 Calendar of Events



Friday, March 28, 2008

**Sally Marks**  
Independent Diplomatic Historian  
*"Reflections on the Balance of Power"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Marks



Thursday, May 1, 2008

**Fred Lawson**  
Rice Professor of Government, Mills College  
*"Syria's Muslim Brothers: Shifting Fortunes, Changing Platforms"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Lawson



Thursday, April 3, 2008

**Fawaz Gerges**  
Christian A. Johnson Chair in International Affairs  
and Arab and Muslim Politics  
Sarah Lawrence College  
*"The Future of Islamist Militancy: A Theoretical and Historical Footnote"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Gerges



Tuesday, May 6, 2008

**M.J. Peterson**  
Professor of Political Science  
University of Massachusetts-Amherst  
*"The Flows of Authority in Intergovernmental Organizations"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Peterson



Friday, April 4, 2008

**Richard Bauman**  
Distinguished Professor of Folklore and  
Ethnomusicology, Communication & Culture, and  
Anthropology, Indiana University in Bloomington  
*"It's Not a Telescope, It's a Telephone: Encounters with  
the Telephone on Early Commercial Sound Recordings"*  
3:30 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Bauman



Friday, May 9, 2008

**Maud Mandel**  
Associate Professor of History and Judaic Studies  
Brown University  
*"Each Algerian Must Feel Palestinian: 1967, 1968, and  
Muslim/Jewish Relations in France"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Mandel



Tuesday, April 8, 2008

**Shireen Hunter**  
Visiting Professor, Georgetown University  
Distinguished Scholar, Center for Strategic and  
International Studies  
*"Islam and Democracy: Are They Compatible?"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Hunter



Wednesday, May 14, 2008

**Anthony Cordesman**  
Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy  
Center for Strategic and International Studies  
*"The Changing Nature of the Afghan-Pakistan War"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Cordesman



Wednesday, April 16, 2008

**Ussama Makdisi**  
Associate Professor of History  
Rice University  
*"Anti-Americanism in the Arab World: A Brief History"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Makdisi



Thursday, May 15, 2008

**Amaney Jamal**  
Assistant Professor of Politics  
Princeton University  
*"Barriers to Democracy: The Other Side of Social Capital  
in Palestine and the Arab World"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Jamal



Tuesday, April 29, 2008

**David Siegel**  
Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Florida State University  
*"Repression, Social Networks, and Collective Action"*  
12 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Siegel



Friday, May 23, 2008

**Nita Rudra**  
Assistant Professor of International Affairs  
University of Pittsburgh  
*"Have Governments Gone Too Far?"*  
3:30 p.m., Mershon Center Room 120

Rudra

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## New mission, vision for International Affairs

International activities are an everyday occurrence at The Ohio State University. By strategically moving toward internationalizing the university, Ohio State's accomplishments will be shared with communities reaching beyond national and cultural boundaries.

The Office of International Affairs at Ohio State serves as the institutional anchor for enhancing and disseminating knowledge about the regions, cultures, languages and significant issues of the world.

To help the university reach its po-

tential, International Affairs recently developed a new mission and vision statement that outlines its activities and lays the groundwork for future growth.

### **Mission**

The Office of International Affairs:

- engages Ohio State's students and faculty in educational and research experiences internationally;
- facilitates the integration of international students and scholars into Ohio State's world of knowledge;
- fosters excellence in the study of languages, the history of arts and cul-

tures and their societies, and international security; and

- provides information and access to Ohio State's academic expertise for the benefit of communities the world over.

### **Vision**

The Ohio State community relies on the unique international expertise of the Office of International Affairs to provide it with information and access to premier opportunities in a global setting.

For more information about international activities at Ohio State, visit <http://oia.osu.edu>.

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## Conference

*Continued from Page 1*

this diffusion of power transformed global politics in the 1960s and beyond. Among the participants are Mark Atwood Lawrence, Associate Professor of History at University of Texas-Austin, and author of *Constructing Vietnam: The United States, Europe, and the Making of the Cold War in Indochina* (California, forthcoming).

The conference will offer fresh insight into issues of racial justice, national sovereignty, and human rights.

## Women

*Continued from Page 1*

said. According to her research, when asked if they had only one child would they prefer a boy or a girl, 60 percent of U.S. citizens said they would prefer a boy. This percentage is higher than even China, where 40 percent of those surveyed preferred a male child.

Why do some countries exemplify greater gender equality than others? The reasons are varied, including cultural perceptions and socialization patterns, Paxton said. She pointed out the

effectiveness of gender quotas in some countries, such as Iraq, Argentina, and Rwanda. In Iraq, the number of women in the legislature skyrocketed from 7 percent to 25 percent due to effective gender quotas in the new constitution.

While legislation may help even political participation in some countries, one inhibiting factor for women is the lack of political ambition, Paxton said. Studies have shown that from a population of equally qualified men and women, a larger number of men than women say they would run for political office and actually do run for office.