

# POLITICS AS YOU(SUAL)?

A Newsletter by the Political Science Department at the University of Michigan-Flint

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Winter 2007 newsletter contains a wide range of articles, representing the diverse interests of faculty and the department.

The first article reports on the February 19 lecture by Professor Stanley Aronowitz at the Flint Public Library. A former union steelworker and distinguished professor of sociology at CUNY Graduate Center, Professor Aronowitz has visited UM-Flint during the Winter 2007 semester as the Winegarden Distinguished Visiting Professor. The article is written by Diane Newberg, a 30-year UAW member and GM employee, who completed her BS at UM-Flint in 2005.

Professor Jason Kosnoski takes to task the near-iconic image of the 'spat upon' veteran, a central figure in conflicts over returning veterans by anti-war protesters. His article challenges truth of this image, and in doing so describes the political process that lies behind the reconstruction of memory and the conflicts that are at the heart of modern American nationalism.

Professor Peggy Kahn explores the political and cultural conflicts that have accompanied the expansion of the Muslim population in Europe. She describes the policies that shape the migrant experience in European countries, and the climate there of increasing confrontation and political backlash.

The final section is an extensive set of comments by faculty on the books they are currently reading, as a response to student interest.

*Derwin Munroe, Chair*

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PROFESSOR STANLEY ARONOWITZ

## "WAS DE-INDUSTRIALIZATION NECESSARY? WHY DID GENERAL MOTORS LEAVE FLINT?"

BY DIANE NEWBERG

My entire adult life has been marked by the decline of auto industry in mid-Michigan. I was hired into downtown Flint's Chevrolet Manufacturing Plant (Chevy in the Hole) in 1977. At its peak in 1972, GM employed 78,000 in Flint. I had dropped out of high-school to get an early jump on the "good life" in the factories, as my parents and my grandparents had done before me. In 1980 I transferred to Buick City's Hydramatic Torque-converter Plant, a massive, five-mile long complex. In the early 1980's I worked my way through the Lansing plants; Fisher Body, the Olds Main Plant, and the Olds Drop Forge, being successively laid-off from each in turn before winding up at a GM Service Parts Operation west of Lansing. When the opportunity arose to come back to Flint in 1985, I took a job at AC Spark Plug (now Delphi) that led to a skilled-trades apprenticeship, which I (mistakenly) believed would afford some added job security. De-industrialization has shaped my life: GM now employs less than 3,000 workers in Flint.

Stanley Aronowitz argues that deindustrialization, and the near complete abandonment of the City of Flint by General Motors, was a logical and inevitable outcome that followed a sequence of events at the local, national, and international level during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Deindustrialization ultimately had a devastating impact not only on Flint, but many other communities in the industrial heartland of the US.

Aronowitz posed several fundamental questions: Why did American manufacturers so wholeheartedly commit to a strategy of outsourcing, automation, and globalization? The union has long

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## “The Spat-Upon Veteran”

**JASON KOSNOSKI**

On the fourth anniversary of the Iraq war, many people who are not very old, such as myself (I am 36), might be feeling old. We have experienced a war that has lasted much longer than its expected few weeks of “shock and awe,” waited for the capture of Osama bin Laden “dead or alive,” and even lived through both the 2003 and 1991 invasions, both undertaken by Presidents named Bush.

But something I recently experienced made me feel even older, and in a way that was difficult for me to specifically identify. On January 28, I was reading an article in the New York Times concerning a recent anti-war protest. The end of the article told the story of a particular counter-protester, Iraq War veteran Joshuah Sparling. The article stated “later, as anti-war protesters passed where [Sparling] and his group were standing, words were exchanged and one of the anti-war protestors spit at the ground near Mr. Sparling; he spit back.” For some reason, this reminded me of something that had happened in the past. Soon it came to me: history was repeating itself. Just like after Vietnam, veterans were returning from an unpopular war and were again being spat upon by protesters.

This recollection that the returning troops were not supported, that they were spat upon and otherwise abused, affects many in the United States, both pro- and anti-war. Witness the preponderance of “support the troops” yellow ribbons adorning cars. Note the effectiveness of war supporters’ claim that questioning the President’s policy “hurts the troops.” The only problem of this memory is that it isn’t true, and the people who most frequently invoke it know that it’s not true.

In fact, there were huge numbers of veterans who returned from Vietnam and joined anti-war groups. This happened as early as 1966 when the Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee reached out to GIs returning from the war. Anti war activities among veterans continued, with many veterans peace groups attempting to reach active duty military personnel. They established “GI coffee houses” near bases where active duty troops could discuss their situation without reprisals. They established the GI Press Service which distributed 25-30,000 anti-war papers each month that were each passed around to thousands of troops. Active duty troops themselves started 35 underground GI newspapers such as “About Face” at Camp Pendleton, CA, the “Fatigue Press” at Ft. Hood TX, and “The Last Harass” Ft. Gordon, GA.

One of the strongest episodes of veterans and active duty troops expressing their displeasure with the war came in the wake of the October 15, 1969 “Moratorium” march in Washington which drew over 100,000 people, the largest anti-war demonstration in the history of the United States to that point. In reaction to the Moratorium, on November 9<sup>th</sup> a full page add appeared in the New York Times signed by 1,365 GIs supporting the march and calling for an end to the war. A letter to the Times from an active duty GI further demonstrates the sympathy of the troops to the anti-war movement. He states:

“It has been argued by people, such as Vice Presi-

dent Agnew, that the peace demonstrations are demoralizing and dispiriting to those fighting in Vietnam and therefore should not take place. I returned from Vietnam on October 15 and found nothing to be further from the truth.

In my own infantry company, which I believe to be fairly representative, the Moratorium had wide support. It was, in fact, very much a morale builder. The men are intelligent enough to realize that the peace demonstrations are on their behalf. They realize that the greater the pressure kept on President Nixon, the sooner they’ll get home. Even more importantly, the fewer will be their friends who do not return.”

At the time, veterans did not express the view that they were mistreated by the public when they returned. A 1971 Harris poll of returning veterans found that only 1 percent agreed with the statement that “family and friends were not friendly” when they returned, only 3 percent said their “peer group was not friendly” and a huge majority, 94 percent, agreed with the statement that the “reception was friendly” when they returned. Most importantly for this discussion 75 percent of veterans disagreed with the statement “those people at home who opposed Vietnam often blamed veterans for our involvement there.”

So how did the perception come about that Veterans were abused and specifically spat upon? This perception was encouraged by supporters of the war, especially the Nixon Administration, in order to create cleavages between veterans and anti-war groups. It was created through explicit means such as speeches by Nixon and Vice President Spiro Agnew that claimed veterans felt betrayed by anti-war protesters. Also, this view was furthered through covert means, such as FBI infiltration anti war groups such as Viet Nam Veterans Against the War with agents who encouraged vitriolic rhetoric and abuse.

What about the most persistent myth, though: the myth of the ‘Spat-upon Veteran’? Although many have tried to confirm such incidents, the most thorough being Jerry Lembeck in his 1994 book *The Spitting Image* (from which most of the facts in this essay are taken), no photos, contemporaneous newspaper accounts, or police reports have ever been found of protesters spitting on veterans. In fact, after researching 495 accounts from the New York Times, Los Angeles Times and Washington Post, University of California at Santa Barbara sociologists concluded “Stories in which the anti-war movement directly or purposely targeting troops are virtually non-existent.”

The fact is that stories of veterans being abused by anti war activists only surfaced years after the abuses were alleged to have happened. But still, certain accounts, even if related quite some time after the events took place, remain powerful. Take the following:

“Nothing is over. Nothing. You just don’t turn it off. It wasn’t my war. You asked me, I didn’t ask you. And I did what I had to do to win. But somebody wouldn’t let us win. Then I come back to the world and I see all those maggots at the airport.

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# Muslims in Europe

PEGGY KAHN

Hirsi Ayan Ali's new book, *In fidel*, has just been published in the U.S. and selling widely. Ali claims that Islam is incompatible with European Enlightenment ideas. A Somali-born Dutch politician, she was involved with making a provocative anti-Islamic film, *Submission*. The filmmaker, Theo van Gogh, was killed in 2004 by a Muslim, whose murder note also threatened Ali. Bouyeri, the murderer, was a dislocated, second-generation Berber-Moroccan Dutchman who attended Dutch high school, but he came to see European ways as decadent and came under the influence of radical Islam. Shortly after the murder, the "hard-line" conservative Dutch immigration minister revoked Ms. Ali's Dutch citizenship, after alleging that she had lied on her 1992 asylum application, despite the fact that the difficult circumstances of her earlier life and immigration were already public knowledge and that Ali was a leading, articulate Dutch politician in the Minister's own party. The Minister had to revoke the withdrawal of citizenship, but Ali said she had had enough and left for the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C. Is Europe characterized by a conflict between anti-Islamic sentiment, such as Ali's argument that no Islam is good Islam, and the violent fundamentalist Islam Bouyeri seemed to represent? Is there an irreconcilable cultural conflict between Islam and "western secular values" of individual self-determination, especially equal rights for women, public tolerance, and democracy?

Most students of Europe would say that the picture is much more complex and interesting. First, on the whole, Muslims themselves seem to co-exist peacefully with secular and Judaeo-Christian Europeans. Muslim elites in particular, according to Jytte Klausen (2005) in her recent book, *The Islamic Challenge*, are not interested in overthrowing secular liberal democracy but in looking for ways "to build institutions that will allow Muslims to practice their religion in a way that is compatible with social integration." Most British Muslims, long-time residents from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, are peaceful and law-abiding, and recent work on French Muslims also argues that the majority are relatively well integrated.

Secondly, there are many forms of Islam and Muslims in Europe. One sort of diversity is geographical and cultural. Albania and the Balkans have large numbers of Muslims, and Turkey, which may become a member of the European Union, is also overwhelmingly Muslim but a secular state. Muslim minorities in western Europe are also pluralistic, from different ethnic and national backgrounds and different Muslim sects, of different migratory generations. In Europe and else where there are many versions of Islam as a living faith. Tariq Ramadan, a leading spokesperson for "European Islam," argues eloquently against Ali that European values and Islam are compatible. (He was denied a visa to enter the U.S. to teach at Notre Dame.) On the other hand, Islamic extremism is present in Europe, fuelled by socio-economic as well as cultural dislocation of Muslim immigrants, by radical imams, by tribal-ethnic beliefs about the role of women and the abominations of gay sexuality, by additional angers over the war in Iraq and the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict.

Public policy and public cultures towards Islam and Muslims also vary. One set of policies, for example, discussed by Joel Fetzer and Christopher Soper, are policies that allow Muslims to practice their religion and meet religious needs. In France, politicians have prohibited the wearing of the veil (the headscarf) in state institutions, especially schools, invoking a strong notion of French civic republicanism and universality. In the UK and Holland, ministers have recently made disapproving comments about the full burqa. In the UK, Islamic schools and the presence of Islam in the public school curriculum has made more progress than in Germany or especially France. In a number of European countries, it is difficult for Muslims to find space to bury their dead according to religious tradition.

A second set of policies relevant to Muslims are anti-discrimination laws and policies. Interestingly, until recently the UK and other countries didn't have any anti-discrimination law that addressed religion, but the European Union has now taken measures to develop such policies in all its member-states. Most of all, many Muslims are ethnic minority immigrants who suffer repeated and multiple discrimination resulting in marginalization, not because they are Muslim but because they are ethnic minorities. Ethnic marginalization, a palpable sense of isolation and abandonment, rather than religion, provoked the recent uprisings in Clichy-Sous-Bois outside Paris. French state investigators themselves found that the rioting was a "popular revolt" provoked by a toxic concentration of social problems, allowed to fester because France had been so preoccupied with watching Islamic radicals that it had neglected wider social problems.

Various groups have also documented the rise of Islamophobia in western Europe, exacerbated by the 9/11 and subsequent terrorist attacks. Muslims are the second most despised ethnic-religious outsiders after "gypsies," the common name for the Roma peoples who are the largest ethnic minority in the European Union. According to many surveys, however, Europeans as a whole are relatively tolerant, and public leaders and elites play a large part in constructing public images of Muslims, and an EU report lauded the responses of politicians, the media and civil society groups following the 7/7 London bombings.

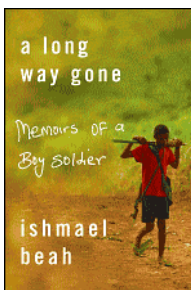
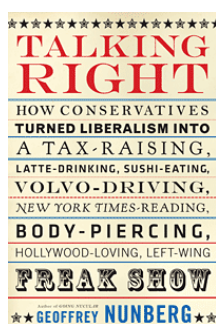
A rapidly growing Muslim population inhabits Europe, a continent where many nation-states have been historically constructed around a common ethnicity, where many Church-state conflicts and compromises evolved over time, and where economies have been growing slowly and restructuring. Progress would seem to lie not in banishing Islam or conversely overturning public Enlightenment values but in the middle ground of thinking through how states can integrate Muslims and at the same time how Muslims can shape their lives in European societies.

## What We Are Reading

PEGGY KAHN

I started hearing about Ishmael Beah and his new book, [A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of A Boy Soldier](#), many weeks ago. The [New York Times Sunday Magazine](#) ran an excerpt from the book, and I learned that this former child soldier had been conscripted at age 12, taken out of the fighting by UNICEF about 3 years later, finished high school in New York City, and then completed a Bachelor's Degree in Politics at the same undergraduate liberal arts school I attended. No sooner had I scooped up the book at Borders than a staff member told me Beah would be reading at the store February 28. The place was packed, and the questions ranged from the penetrating and earnest to the embarrassingly vague and emotional. The book is good and worth reading, but Beah's presence—his human wholeness, his gentleness, his reflectiveness, his commitment to doing something about children and war, and his sense of humor—was even better. A few days after hearing him, I got into a heated discussion with a criminal defense lawyer who said she would never trust someone who had been through a war as a child and that underneath his charming veneer was no doubt an unstable, violent person who would crack some day. However, I disagree with her, because I believe his account of a rich, family- and community-supported childhood before the madness descended, of a rocky but effective rehabilitation process in Sierra Leone, of an incredibly understanding and supportive adoptive family in New York City, and of many years studying liberal arts and finding his voice and purpose. The involvement of children in civil conflicts in Africa and on other continents is an important global human rights issue and one that both international organizations such as UNICEF and non-governmental organizations such as CAW (Children Associated with the War, a program of the Catholic Church in Sierra Leone) are working on.

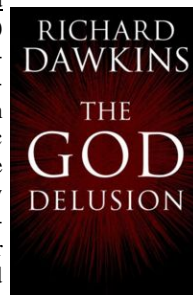
A friend who teaches composition at another Michigan university urged me to read Geoffrey Nunberg, [Talking Right](#) (Public Affairs/Perseus Books, 2006). Nunberg is a linguist who has done a great deal of work on changing public and political language. He enters into the now well-established debate about how the political right has managed to define our public language in an ultimately unproductive way and how political liberals and the Democratic Party have failed to re-frame issues in the public sphere. He quotes not only Orwell but also Edmund Burke on the mischief that can be done with overly emotional and vague political language, surveys the changes in how we understand terms like liberal, class, elite, government, and Christian, and talks about how these words are embedded in longer political narratives.



ALBERT PRICE

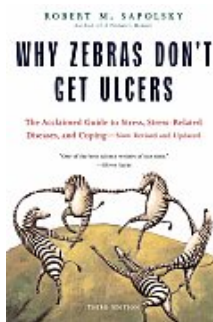
Since the last newsletter I have been reading an eclectic set of books that tend to challenge the common assumptions about a variety of issues including; finance, health care, mass media, and religion. Regarding finance, James D. Scurlock's (2007) [Maxed Out: Hard Times, Easy Credit, and the Era of Predatory Lenders](#) is a fascinating look at the profits for corporations and pitfalls for people of the credit binge undergirding the economy of the United States. This book will also be released as a DVD. The recent problem with the so-called sub-prime lenders is based on banks extending credit to people who cannot afford to repay the loans. This has allowed the housing prices to remain higher than an efficient marketplace would permit. Minimum balance payments on overextended credit cards and home equity loans lead middle income and poor people into perpetual debt with no way out of the situation. The profit from putting people into a modern version of indebted servitude flows to some of the largest and most prestigious financial institutions in the world. That the economy is sitting atop a mountain of unsecured debt should be a concern of policy makers and citizens alike.

Two health related books are of interest. [Should I Be Tested For Cancer? Maybe Not and Here's Why](#) by H. Gilbert Welsh (2006) challenges the value of many of the cancer screening programs across the country. His educational background is as an M.D. and M.P.H. (Master of Public Health) which prepared him to examine data more systematically and logically than is typically the case. Welsh explored the claims of five and ten-year survival rates for cancers and compared them with the mortality rates for the same cancers. He concludes that the value of routine screening is in general very small for most lethal cancers, and in some circumstances may lead to damage from treatment. The research implies that a health care industrial complex exists that would rival the military industrial complex as a corporate boondoggle. Robert Sapolsky's 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of [Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers](#) (2004) is the latest update on his original work that examines the effects of stress chemicals on human health. The specific culprit is a set of compounds labeled glucocorticoids that are released by various organs as a response to stress. These compounds are necessary for quick action in most mammals when fleeing predators or otherwise responding to crises. In humans the same compounds are released on a nearly constant basis in response to non life threatening but stressful situations. In fact, the debt structure/employment circumstances of many people described in Scurlock's book relate well to constant stress chemicals that are physically damaging to people, resulting in premature death and disability. The hopeful note is that the books of Sapolsky and Scurlock suggest that we can consciously change our priorities to reduce both the debt and stress that are harming us.



Distortions and outright deceptions of Mass Media

## What We Are Reading



in the United States are the themes of two recent books by journalists: The Best War Ever: Lies, Damned Lies, and the Mess in Iraq (2006) by Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber, and Static: Government Liars, Media Cheerleaders, and the People Who Fight Back (2006) by Amy Goodman and David Goodman. Rampton and Stauber continue the type of detailed examination of reporting about the war in Iraq that they presented concerning environmental journalism in Toxic Sludge is Good for You. They carefully document the nearly complete capitulation of reporters to the spin control of the Bush/Cheney administration. The style of the writing is funny and serious at the same time. The current debate in Congress over the continued funding of the occupation of Iraq would be much better informed if the members would take the time to read this book. In a similar vein, Amy Goodman of *Democracy Now*, the radio and TV news hour and her brother David Goodman, an investigative reporter, team up to uncover the most egregious deceptions of mass media charlatans. The analysis is cogently presented across multiple content areas in which the public is misinformed by media outlets about events in Iraq. Chapters are cleverly titled such as “Cindy’s Crawford” about the siege of Bush’s Crawford compound by Cindy Sheehan or “Human Wrongs” about the use of autocratic governments to outsource torture for the Bush administration. Both these books provide an informed basis from which to critically analyze what passes for news in the corporate mass media.

The last book in this installment is The God Delusion (2006) by Richard Dawkins. Dawkins is an evolutionary biologist and unabashed atheist. His contention is that religion is akin to a virus that infects societies and empowers people to behave inhumanely toward their fellow men under the authority of their theistic delusions. He brings a vast array of references to the history of horrible acts carried out in the name of various deities. Dawkins accepts no accommodation with religion as being worthy of respect for determining moral principles. He goes so far as to attack the concept of Non Overlapping Magisteria (NOMA) developed by Stephen J. Gould. Gould’s NOMA had been praised as a reasonable way out of the debate between evolution and creationism. According to Dawkins, NOMA must be rejected because it provides support for the idea that religion is a valid way to determine morals for a society. Instead, Dawkins would require any moral principle to be justified by reason, logic and evidence rather than merely divined from mystical (delusional) revelation. This book is not for the faint of heart about faith-based initiatives.

### BILL LAVERTY

I have been reading a range of different books, some of which parallel the American Presidency course being taught Winter, 2007, while others have no particular relationship to classes I teach. The Pirate Coast: Thomas

Jefferson, the First Marines, and the Secret Mission of 1805 by Richard Zacks tells the story of William Eaton and his actions in northern Africa against Tripoli and Barbary states. Eaton was trying personally to recover some lost investments, Jefferson provided some wavering financial and military support to help recover the crew of the American ship Philadelphia who had been sold into slavery after their ship had been taken by the Barbary Regencies (Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli). The book is an interesting tale of the use and extension of executive power beyond what the Constitution permits, if it is read narrowly.

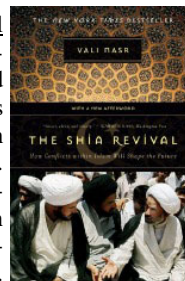
Another book that is related to presidential powers is The Clinton Wars: The Constitution, Congress, and War Powers by Ryan Hendrickson. As the title indicates, the book covers presidential war powers generally, and more specifically actions taken by the American government during Clinton’s presidency. These ventures include Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Terrorism, Kosovo, and Iraq. Ultimately, the author calls for more explicit procedures to restrict a president’s ability to use force without the Congress’ approval.

On a lighter note, Helen Thomas, the dean of White House reporters, compiled a collection of nostalgic stories entitled Thanks for the Memories, Mr. President from the many president’s she has covered in her career including JFK, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, H.W. Bush, Clinton, and George W. Bush.

I also picked up a copy of Bart Ehrman’s Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why, which, if you are a regular reader of the newsletter, you might recall that Dr. Price recommended last semester. This is a really great read about intentional and accidental textual changes to some of the earliest written versions of the New Testament. It is worth finding out why a self-confessed literalist ultimately altered his position.

### DERWIN MUNROE

Vali Nasr’s The Shia Revival (2006) describes the evolution and importance of the schism between Shia and Sunni within Islam, and argues that this will be the most important fissure in Middle East politics in coming decades. He is particularly compelling in describing the dynamic relationship between Iran and the Gulf states, and the prospects for political change in the region.



### Nawal El Saadawi Woman at Point Zero



Nasr argues that the success or failure of US policy hinges on an understanding of that conflict. Amartya Sen’s latest book Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny (2007) takes another view of the contemporary conflict over identity and religion. He argues that identities have been defined narrowly and thus reinforce the illusion of uniform ‘civilizations’: this is a recipe for intrac-

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## “Was De-Industrialization Necessary?” continued

*(Continued from page 1)*

claimed to represent the best interests of their members, but why did they concede the right to have a voice in determining the direction and degree of capital investment, a decision that resulted in the wholesale dismantling industry and employment? Can unions recoup from earlier errors in judgment, or is it too little, too late? Can workers demand the restoration of options, rights, and self-determination in the pursuit of our livelihoods? Can we as a community and as a country succeed in creating a new dialog, or are we doomed to powerlessness and fatalism?

The dismantling of industry in the US northeast and mid-west has been ongoing since the 1950's. A first stage saw the dispersal of manufacturing at the nation level; after 1973-74, the migration of industry became global. This process was part of a long term strategy by corporations. As early as the 1920s, GM and Ford had plans to spread operations throughout the country, a forerunner of the infamous 'Southern Strategy'. Cities that had become synonymous with certain industries (rubber in Akron, meat-packing in Chicago, steel in Pittsburg), eventually lost those industries. Changes were dramatic: Ford's River Rouge complex in Detroit went from 120,000 workers at its peak, to less than 5,000 today. The northeastern textile and garment industry started with over 2.5 million workers, relocated first to Southern states in the late 1950s, then left the US entirely. Automation also took a toll: in 1955, a newly automated Ford plant in Cleveland was able to cut its workforce in half. Oil industry workers declined from 200,000 in 1964 to under 35,000 today. All of these changes reflect strategic choices by management, and were rational decisions to increase profits and satisfy shareholders.

The US workforce was 35% unionized between 1945 and 1973, and the UAW was a major labor union. However, a non-competitive global market gave auto companies and workers a false sense of security. Arguments about competitiveness usually went unchallenged by the unions. During this time, UAW leadership made two critical decisions. The first uprooted militant critics from the membership: those labeled 'communists' or those who merely wanted alternatives were escorted from the plants, expelled from locals, and turned over to the FBI. The second decision was to forgo any attempt to form an economic and decision-making partnership with the corporations in favor of a narrow adversarial relationship. Contracts placed a premium on pay raises, new benefits for the membership and an institutionalized seniority system, but ignored the long-term advantages that come from having a say over corporate investment decisions.

This latter decision improved the lot of workers in the short-term, but had severe long-term repercussions. Contracts in the 1970s allowed corporations to permanently shut plants in Michigan and Ohio and relocate ever southward until ultimately, new factories were being built in Mexico. The contracts allowed some workers to follow their jobs across the country, but this was impractical for many workers and their families. Given a green light to outsource, corporations began making heavy capital investments in low-wage countries to avoid U.S. taxes and regulations, unions,

and higher healthcare costs.

These gradual developments met a UAW leadership that was reluctant to strike. Unprecedented long-term contracts of the 1950s contained "no strike" clauses. In 1949 contract agreements provided comprehensive healthcare and pensions to the rank-and-file, a historic development that marked the beginnings of the private, corporate approach to welfare policy. This contrasted with other industrialized countries, where governments guarantee benefits. No one predicted that this was a ticking time-bomb for American business and workers. The companies were willing to grant anything to buy labor peace. In post-WWII America, factories were expanding and the Big Three were the only game in town: foreign competitors like Toyota were not even on the horizon. Instead of passing on the growing cost of health care and pensions to corporations, the UAW could have fought to make healthcare a federally conferred benefit. This would have likely raised taxes, something the public was loath to accept.

Unions also missed the opportunity to demand a shorter workweek (something European unions successfully won): this would have forced companies to hire more workers. American factory workers resisted this, viewing overtime as something of a birthright. That proposal would also have required corporate accounting information, and UAW president Walter Reuther had made a request for "opening the books". This demand was dropped in 1945 and never raised again. The union eventually came to defend a single principle: the responsibility of the union is to the membership only. By focusing on a narrow range of goals, the union ignored the changing political landscape and its implications for workers, and failed to challenge the movement of capital and other managerial prerogatives. Re-investment in local plants was never made a precondition for peace between unions and corporations until it was too late.

Events in the world economy also sped up globalization. In 1971, the dollar-based world economy and the Bretton Woods financial system were overturned by the negative effects of the Vietnam and the US permanent "war economy". By the late 1970s and early 80s, inflation began to hurt corporate profits and accelerated the pattern of de-industrialization. Companies diverted more and more of their operations overseas and no longer sought to maintain a home-grown infrastructure. Firms also began to diversify, to reduce the dependence of profits on a single manufactured product. This gave corporations more protection from strikes, the last effective weapon in the union arsenal.

Labor responded by putting its 'head in the sand'. They did not protest, so long as members were taken care of, even as the membership shrank and their collective power waned. Unions chose a band-aid approach to alleviate the symptoms of a devastating problem rather address the root causes. The proof was the negotiation of long-term contracts with full employment guarantees in the form of "jobs banks" (with workers being paid not to work) and "full-utilization" clauses where corporations could outsource jobs, but had to pay the remaining workers stipulated amounts of overtime. A system of sub-benefits to augment state unem-

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## Politics as You(sual)?

*(What We Are Reading, continued from page 5)*

table conflict. The book uses a range of historical and contemporary illustrations of this process. Sen, a Nobel prize winner in economics, makes a compelling case for complex identities as a basis for understanding society and politics. The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World (1980) and Woman at Point Zero (1975) are two of the most compelling works by the prominent Egyptian writer and activist Nawal el-Saadawi (who is a visiting speaker at UM-Flint this semester). El-Saadawi has been an advocate for improving the status of women in Egypt and the Middle East for the last 35 years, and was imprisoned by the Egyptian regime for her work. Both books focus on patriarchy and domination, politics (both the traditional and 'everyday' family locations of politics), the relationship between religion and social norms, and the power of 'tradition' and 'morality' in reproducing the oppression of women. Woman at Point Zero is particularly evocative, as a harrowing but ultimately liberating first-person narrative of a woman on death row in Egypt.

*(De-industrialization, continued from page 6)*

ployment checks made longer periods of idleness tolerable for the workforce. The UAW fought for and won '30-and-out' agreements, and cash incentives for or early retirement.

The net result was a reduction in union membership by two thirds since 1975. Labor lost political clout at the national level, and since then this has allowed a right-wing skew to policy, a dwindling of tax receipts and charitable contributions at the local level, and a near complete inability to protect communities from financial devastation and union members from the hardship of plant-closings and downsizing. Workers were trapped in a "musical chairs" competition with other workers, trekking across county and state lines to vie for the few good union jobs that remain.

This description of events rings true for me. Where 28,000 once worked at Chevy in the Hole, there is nothing but a field of weed-choked rubble. Where tens of thousands once toiled over the course of a century, Buick City is now an abandoned, partially demolished brownfield. The Delphi Plant, which formerly employed close to 20,000, is slated for closure this year or next, and I am being pushed into an untimely retirement. Frequently, one can stand on the cross-walk over the railroad tracks and watch machinery and equipment, along with our livelihoods, being loaded onto flat-beds for shipment to points unknown. Our union and elected officials are powerless to stop these gigantic wheels set into motion so long ago.

Prof. Aronowitz concludes that de-industrialization in Michigan and Flint was inevitable, but a by-product of human decisions. UAW leaders and members allowed corporations to make it to happen. Short-sighted goals and policy combined with an inability or unwillingness to grasp the big picture led us down the path to increasing poverty, a devastated middle class, and diminished opportunities for our children. It may take several generations and a global economic sea-change to reverse those trends.

*("Veteran," continued from page 2)*

protesting me. Spitting. Calling me baby killer, and all kinds of vile crap. Who are they to protest me?"

Powerful stuff. The only problem is that the previous quote is from *Rambo*, a movie about a fictional character. And it is in this realm, the realm of fiction, where the myth of the spat-upon, abused veteran truly came to life. From early movies such as *Coming Home* to more recent films such as *Alamo Bay*, *Cease Fire*, and *Betrayed*, Vietnam veterans are shown spat upon, receiving invective, and avoiding physical abuse. This is where the myth was truly given life in images, sounds and emotions, the realm in which it currently persists.

In the face of such evidence that few, if any, veterans were spat upon, that many were actively involved in the anti-war movement, and there existed a conscious effort to obscure these facts, we have an obligation, no matter how one feels about the current war, to tell and retell these stories. Troops do not choose the wars in which they will fight. Therefore questioning a certain policy does not undermine the troops, no matter how it might "feel" that these questions undermine morale or don't support our friends risking their lives. The only way to get rid of this lingering feeling, this irrational belief that dissent somehow hurts active duty GIs is to acknowledge how this invented past affects our current debated.

One final thing about Joshua Sparling and the incident reported in the *Times*. After the story was published, bloggers, who know the history I have just told, began raising important questions and trying to find people who were there at the scene to confirm the story. One blogger ([http://hughesforamerica.typepad.com/hughes\\_for\\_america/2007/01/spitting\\_on\\_the.htm](http://hughesforamerica.typepad.com/hughes_for_america/2007/01/spitting_on_the.htm)) noted this email sent to the reporter who wrote the story. The witness wrote:

"[The reporter] turned to me and told me she had seen a protester spit on a soldier and asked for my comment. I told her I didn't believe that, and she repeated that she had seen this happen. I told her the peace movement is more supportive of the troops than anyone who supports this war, because we want our troops to come home, while those who support the war are advocating sending them into harm's way. So I really could not believe that anyone who opposed the war had spit on a soldier. My comments were not included in your story. I was upset when I read your story the next day to see this was an "alleged" incident and the protester had supposedly spit on the ground in front of the soldier (which is quite different from spitting ON this soldier). In other words, what was related in your story was not at all what that reporter had told me. So she either lied to me or your story is false."

So even this contemporary account leaves many questions unanswered. It doesn't help that Sparling is an outspoken pro-war activist who has appeared frequently on Fox News. Once again, the myth of the spat-upon veteran rears its ugly head. And once again, I feel old.

# Spring/Summer/Fall Courses

## Political Science/ Public Administration

### Spring

- POL 120 American National Government and Politics**  
Lavery MTWR 9.00-10.15
- POL 311 State and Local Politics**  
Lavery MTWR 1.30-4.00
- POL/PUB 390 Internship**  
Morolla
- POL 391 Directed Readings**  
STAFF
- POL/PUB 422 Environmental Law and Public Policy**  
Blum S 9:30-12:15
- PUB 449 Community Development**  
Fields MW 7.15-9.45

### Summer

- POL 230 International Relations**  
Munroe ONLINE
- POL/PUB 309 Political Environment of Public Admin**  
Price TR 1.30-4.00
- POL 359/559 Comparative Revolutions**  
Munroe MW 1.30-4.00
- POL/PUB 390 Internship**  
Morolla
- POL 391 Directed Readings**  
STAFF

### Fall

- POL 120 American National Government and Politics**  
STAFF MW 4.00-5.15
- POL 120 American National Government and Politics**  
Kosnoski TR 4.00-5.15
- POL 120 American National Government and Politics**  
Lavery TR 12.30-1.45
- POL 190 Intro to Comparative Politics**  
Kahn TR 9.30-10.45
- POL 190 Intro to Comparative Politics**  
Munroe MW 12.30-1.45
- POL 190 Intro to Comparative Politics**  
Munroe MW 5.30-6.45
- POL 222 American Constitutional Development**  
Blum S 9.30-12.15
- POL 261 Intro to Political Theory**  
Kosnoski TR 11.00-12.15
- PUB 319 Public Personnel Admin**  
Morolla W 7.00-9.45
- POL 320 Politics and Film**  
STAFF R 7.00-9.45
- POL 323/523 Congress**  
Lavery TR 4.00-5.15
- POL 331/531/WGS 331/531 Women and Work**  
Kahn TR 4.00-5.15
- POL 333/533 International Law and Organizations**  
Munroe MW 2.00-3.45
- POL/PUB 342/541 Welfare State in Comp Perspective**  
Kahn TR 11.00-12.15
- POL 361 Modern Democratic Political Thought**  
Kosnoski TR 2.00-3.15
- POL/PUB 390 Internship**  
Morolla
- POL 391 Directed Readings**  
STAFF
- POL 387 Sex, Drugs and Politics**  
Price MW 12.30-1.45

- PUB 403 Evaluation of Services and Programs**  
Lavery R 7.00-9.45
- PUB 418 Budget: Public/Non-profit Organizations**  
O'Donnell T 7.00-9.45
- PUB 424 Employment, Law and Public Policy**  
Morolla M 7.00-9.45
- PUB 434 Administration of Trial Courts**  
Hughes W 7.00-9.45
- POL 437/537 Problems in American Foreign Policy**  
Munroe TR 5.30-6.45
- PUB 440 Volunteerism and the Independent Sector**  
Brown W 7.00-9.45

## MPA Program

### Spring

- POL/PUB 522 Environmental Law and Public Policy**  
Blum S 9:30-12:15
- PUB 539 Problems in Criminal Justice Admin**  
Price TR 7.15-9.45
- PUB 549 Community Development**  
Fields MW 7.15-9.45
- PUB 589 Independent Study in Pub**  
Price
- PUB 590 Internship**  
Morolla
- PUB 595 Practicum in Applied Research**  
Price

### Summer

- PUB 589 Independent Study in Pub**  
Price
- PUB 590 Internship**  
Morolla
- PUB 595 Practicum in Applied Research**  
Price

### Fall

- PUB 500 Politics, Policy & Public Administration**  
Price MW 5.30-6.45
- PUB 508 Evaluation of Services and Programs**  
Lavery R 7.00-9.45
- PUB 510 Intergovernmental Relations**  
Fields TR 5.30-6.45
- PUB 588 Budgeting in Public/Non-Profit**  
O'Donnell T 7.00-9.45
- PUB 524 Employment, Law and Public Policy**  
Morolla M 7.00-9.45
- PUB 534 Administration of Trial Courts**  
Hughes W 7.00-9.45
- PUB 540 Volunteerism and the Independent Sector**  
Brown W 7.00-9.45
- PUB 541 Welfare State in Comparative Perspective**  
Kahn TR 11.00-12.15
- PUB 563 Introduction to School Law**  
Vergon TBA
- PUB 589 Independent Study in Pub**  
Price
- PUB 590 Internship**  
Morolla
- PUB 594 Grantwriting and Admin in Agencies**  
Vergon S 8.30-11.30 + Online
- PUB 595 Practicum in Applied Research**  
Price