

Note From Editor

This edition of *Critique* comprise of two sections: winning papers from the 13th Illinois State University Conference for Students of Political Science (ICSPS), and a special section on Community Development.

A total of 46 papers were presented at the conference held on April 1, 2005. A panel of judges comprised of faculty members of the Department of Politics and Government chose five papers to be awarded as best papers – three in the undergraduate section and three in the graduate section. Additionally, the Unit for the Middle East and South Asian Studies, Office and International Studies and Programs recognized the best paper written on or about the region. Six of the papers are published in this edition. Papers presented by Brian Crisher of Western Michigan University, Patrick Brown of Providence College, and Miguel Harvey of the University of Texas at Austin were recognized as best papers in the undergraduate section, while papers presented by James Smith of the University of Illinois at Chicago, Clayton Thyne of University of Iowa, and Debu Gandhi of Illinois State University were recognized as best papers in the graduate section. The paper presented by Rebecca Farley of Carleton College received the award for the best paper on Middle East and South Asia.

These papers cover a wide range of topics, represent various sub-fields within the discipline of Political Science and introduce us to a broad spectrum of thought. We are indeed glad to publish these papers, and would like to thank the authors for granting us the permission for publishing their works. These papers address topical issues (e.g., the US national security strategy, Just War theory, Israel-Palestine conflict, etc) but they have implications for the discipline in general.

In the special section on community development we are publishing four papers. The four papers included reflect local, global, and gender areas of concern. All of these papers were submitted from students in the Applied Community and Economic Development program (AECD) at Illinois State University. The Applied Community and Economic Development (ACED) Fellows Program at Illinois State University helps rural and urban communities across the United States with their vital community and economic development needs. It also enhances the skills of students who hope to be part of a new generation of development specialists. An interdisciplinary graduate program of three departments – Politics and Government, Economics and Sociology/Anthropology – includes course works and practical training at home and/or abroad.

Amanda Hudson, in her paper “CSA’s cropping up around the globe,” considers the local movement surrounding Community Supported Agriculture programs. She looks at the economic benefits of these programs at the regional and local levels. Dan Wienecke, in his paper, “Community-Driven Development in Central Asia: A World Bank Initiative,” examines local-level initiatives now being put forth by the World Bank. He investigates the implementation and effectiveness of these programs. Wienecke finds that the programs, while still needing adjustments, are now helping the World Bank fulfill its role in fighting poverty. Danny Santivasci, in his paper, “Tax Increment Financing: Private Investment at the Expense of Local Community,” critiques local initiatives to increase economic development. He finds that these programs inhibit community growth and participation. Santivasci concludes with alternatives to these types of programs. Bunmi Akinnusotu, in her paper, “Where are all the Men? A Revisit to Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Initiatives in Community Development,” argues for a reconsideration of the role of men in community development programs in order to create sustainable development. She advocates inclusion and education of men in these countries.

We expect that these papers will generate some discussions. And we welcome the debate.