This spring, the Weatherhead Center is facing some of the most significant challenges in living memory. They are financial in nature, and arise from circumstances that are not of our own making. The global financial crisis has helped to devastate Harvard's once unparalleled endowment. The estimated damage is anywhere from a loss of 30 percent on the optimistic side (Harvard's official estimate) to 50 percent on the pessimistic side (as speculated in the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, and elsewhere). Furthermore, new buildings, expanding the faculty, and more generous student financial aid guarantees have left the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) facing annual structural deficits of well over $100 million. The combination has been disastrous for FAS finances.

Our Center is an integral part of the FAS. Its faculty are our associates. Its students populate our Center, enliven our seminars, and enrich the research associated with the WCFIA. In important ways, Harvard's international and area studies centers are the FAS. As such, we have been called upon to contribute to addressing the difficulties we are all facing in common. As of this spring, the request has become clear: we have been asked to relieve the FAS unrestricted budget in an amount equal to 15 percent of our total 2009 budget. That means we will commit $700,000 from our budget to support the FAS, particularly for student grants and faculty salaries. This is in addition to 15 percent cuts in the Center's administrative budget from FY09 to FY10 that have been required by our financial circumstances.

Let me be clear: FAS priorities are our priorities. We are a research center, dedicated to the production, preservation, and propagation of knowledge related to international, transnational, and comparative social, political, and human affairs. Nothing could better describe the essential purposes of the FAS. We are finding new ways to support these basic purposes, by reducing our extraneous activities, implementing efficiencies, and creatively designing our programs to fit these priorities.

To give just a few examples, the WCFIA will tailor its faculty research grants more than ever to support crucial research objectives. We have instituted a special category of research grant, our Incubation Fund. The purpose here is to encourage faculty to craft proposals and develop strategies for seeking external funding on a grander scale. These funds are seed money, if you will. They are designed to support early efforts to demonstrate the plausibility and practicality of a research proposal that eventually should fly on its own wings with major support from private and public funding agencies. We recognize the risks are great, and
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Cover: Sugata Bose, Gardiner Professor of Oceanic History and Affairs; Amartya Sen, Thomas W. Lamont University Professor; Harvard President Drew Gilpin Faust; and Elizabeth Cohen, Howard Mumford Jones Professor of American Studies, at the Project on Justice, Welfare, and Economics’ April 15th conference, “What Just Happened? What’s Next? An Interdisciplinary Look at the Current Economic Crisis.” Photo credit: Sofia Jarrin-Thomas

that large returns are not always assured. But we believe in the ability of WCFIA Faculty Associates to compete in the marketplace of ideas. We will back this belief with our funds. We will contribute the overhead earned on outside grants directly to the FAS.

The WCFIA will also use its resources to support faculty sabbaticals—one of the most expensive personnel items in the FAS budget. Next year we hope to work directly with the departments of our Faculty Associates to determine how to support the research leave plans of faculty whose projects touch on the core substantive concerns of the Weatherhead Center. We plan to continue supporting “Synergy Semesters,” which provide financial assistance to faculty who commit to developing courses that relate to their research undertaken while on sabbatical. This year we are funding three such research leaves: Nahomi Ichino, assistant professor of government, will conduct a field experiment in Ghana on electoral misconduct; Filiz Garip, assistant professor of sociology, will examine contemporary Mexican-U.S. migration flows; and Muhammet Bas, assistant professor of government, will research decision making in the presence of unexpected shocks—something we have all had to do lately! Unfortunately, our ability to fund incremental leaves will be significantly curtailed by the goal of 15 percent support to the FAS, but we hope to reinstate such leaves once the worst of the financial crisis is behind us.

What else can we do as citizens of the FAS? Student support has long been one of the central purposes of our Center, and we will redouble our efforts here to support commitments made by the FAS. We plan to increase our financial support for dissertation completion years. We plan to maintain or possibly to expand our Graduate Student Associate Program, providing at least two dozen of the top graduate student scholars from across the FAS an intellectual community and a physical space to work. We are also considering a plan to support undergraduates financially in their senior years as Undergraduate Associates of the Center. Finally, we can support our students while we support our own faculty. The Weatherhead Center will look especially favorably on faculty applications for research funds that include a significant graduate student research component. These plans fulfill our goals as a multigenerational research center, and support the FAS in these difficult times.

Financial stringencies present some opportunities that we have never fully taken advantage of in the past. Academic conferences are one example. We have the technology to do a great deal of virtual conferences in varying formats, but so far we have not felt the need to encourage our affiliates to use such technology. Now is the time to explore the possibilities for gathering intellectual interlocutors without having most of them leave home, thereby saving on travel, hotels, and meals, and leaving a much smaller footprint on the environment. Not all conferences should be held virtually, but we can forge denser connections with our colleagues around the world at much lower cost if we are willing to experiment with technology. But there are even more profound opportunities here: we can use fiscal constraints as an enticement to rediscover the broader Harvard and Boston-area communities. The WCFIA wants to fund conferences that draw us together across programs, departments, schools, and local universities. We are fortunate that the wealth of local intellectual riches allows us to draw from among the world’s scholarly leaders right here in our own backyard. A good example of a conference that draws heavily (though not exclusively) on local participation will be that on “Empires and Their Core Nations,” organized by Professors Terry Martin (Department of History) and Mark Elliott (Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations). We hope to encourage similar interactions among local scholars in the next few years.

There is no question that the WCFIA will make the necessary adjustments. But to be frank, this is not easy, and will involve new ways of thinking about our needs and programs. Fortunately, we have a talented, flexible, and efficient staff that has shown its willingness and ability to adjust. Several will be leaving us voluntarily for either career-enhancing opportunities elsewhere (Jessica Hejtmanek, Sofia Jarrin-Thomas, Jennifer Novick, Amanda Pearson, Adelaide Shalhope, and Thanh Tran) or to retire (Beth Baiter and Katharine Jones). For the most part we cannot hire people to replace them. We wish each and every one of these friends and professionals the very best.

As I will be taking a sabbatical leave in academic year 2009–2010, I am happy to announce that Professor Jeffrey Frieden has agreed to serve as Acting Center Director in my absence for the fall 2009 semester. I am very grateful to him, and am certain he will do a terrific job leading the Center next year.

Finally, you are holding in your hands the last paper version of the Centerpiece, a newsletter that was initiated nearly 2 years ago by then–Center Director Samuel P. Huntington. (Please see In Memoriam on page 13.) I hope you will visit our Web site, www.wcfia.harvard.edu, where all future editions of our newsletter will be available. (For details on our plans for the electronic Centerpiece, please see page 8.)

Despite the challenges, the WCFIA continues to focus on its mission of supporting cutting-edge research on international, transnational, and comparative issues. More than ever, I have appreciated the cooperation and input from staff, students, and colleagues who have helped us to make many of the right decisions with our resources in these financially constrained times.

Beth A. Simmons, Center Director
Robert Bowie Receives the Commander’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany

Robert Bowie will celebrate his 100th birthday in August. To honor this milestone the president of the Federal Republic of Germany presented him with a high German decoration. At a ceremony attended by members of Bowie’s family, friends, and former Fellows, Ambassador Scharioth evoked Robert Bowie's extraordinary career and role in postwar European and German history. Referring to “Germany's integration in the West, Franco-German reconciliation, European integration, and, of course, German unification—which would have been impossible without the first two,” the ambassador remarked that “in Robert Bowie, we today honor an outstanding member of America's greatest generation who has made remarkable contributions to all of the above.”

Robert Bowie, as was recalled on this occasion, played a very important role as assistant to General Lucius Clay in rebuilding German democracy in the immediate aftermath of World War II. As legal advisor to John J. McCloy, U.S. high commissioner to Germany, Bowie authored some of the most crucial clauses of the agreement between the Allies and West Germany. In so doing, he defined with amazing foresight the goals and conditions of the West’s policy with regard to making a united Germany an integral part of the West, which became reality four decades later. The ambassador stressed that Robert Bowie was one of those influential Americans who was convinced that a united Europe, based on Franco-German reconciliation, would become a close partner of the United States. As a close friend of Jean Monnet and an admirer of Konrad Adenauer, Bowie relentlessly worked toward this goal.

After returning to the United States, Robert Bowie continued to support these causes as head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff and as a member of the Eisenhower administration. In 1957 as the newly appointed founding director of the Center for International Affairs, Bowie made the political, strategic, and economic aspects of relations with Europe one of the central foci of Harvard’s new research center.

Referring to the 60th anniversary of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador Scharioth concluded his tribute by stating “...a united, prosperous, and democratic Germany, a Germany that is firmly integrated in the West and lives in peace with all its neighbors, this is also Robert Bowie’s life’s work.” Warmly applauded, Robert Bowie thanked the ambassador and to the delight of the audience attending the ceremony recalled his encounters with the great politicians of the postwar period who had shaped a new relationship between Europe and the United States, a relationship he declared to be of continued crucial importance to the future of democracy and world order. He also stressed that he had always considered it the Center’s role to promote these goals and explicitly mentioned the Fellows Program as an important instrument to foster understanding and networking among policy makers to advance these causes.

Beth A. Simmons and Philippe Aghion Named Fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Beth A. Simmons, director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs in the Department of Government, and Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Philippe Aghion, Robert C. Waggoner Professor of Economics, have been named American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) Fellows. Considered to be one of the nation’s most prestigious honorary societies, Academy members include 160 Nobel Prize laureates and 50 Pulitzer Prize winners.

Graham Allison Receives National Academy of Sciences’ Award

Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Graham Allison, director of the Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, received the 2009 National Academy of Sciences' Award for Behavioral Research Relevant to the Prevention of Nuclear War. According to the NAS Web site, he is being honored “for illuminating alternative ways of thinking about political decision making with special relevance to crises, including nuclear crises, as demonstrated in his groundbreaking Essence of Decision and subsequent work.”

Two Faculty Associates Named 2009 Carnegie Scholars

Weatherhead Center Faculty Associates Asim Ijaz Khwaja and Tarek Masoud have been named 2009 Carnegie Scholars by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The honorees were selected for their compelling ideas and commitment to enriching the quality of the public dialogue on Islam. Khwaja and Masoud will receive two-year grants of up to $100,000 from the foundation.
The Human Costs of Economic Crises: How Politics Can Make You Sick or Healthy by Marcus Alexander

Marcus Alexander’s health economics research includes work at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School, Amgen, and Genentech. His publications include articles in journals of political science, economics, and medicine. A Graduate Student Associate at the Weatherhead Center, he is completing his Ph.D. in the Department of Government and plans to pursue an MD at the Stanford School of Medicine in fall 2009.

The old saying “Penny-wise, pound-foolish” acquires more of a literal meaning when economic recessions hit—even in the wealthiest nations. Here in the United States, both obstetricians and primary care physicians are well aware that when times get tough, expectant women often cut their caloric consumption, eat less healthy foods, and visit physicians less often. But going beyond the anecdotal accounts, is it actually possible that economic crises cost human lives, even in the most advanced economies such as the United States?

Economic research on health in all advanced economies since the 1950s suggest that the answer is yes: Economic crises can reach costs in excess of 1,000 newborn lives per year in a country such as the United States. These findings were the result of work I conducted with economists Matthew Harding and Carlos Lamarche, drawing on interdisciplinary expertise and data resources at both the Harvard Medical School and the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research.

Surprisingly, our research demonstrated that when the economy tanks, more infants die in the United States than any other wealthy nation—despite the United States having the largest economy, the best available medical technology, and the highest rates of health care spending of all countries in the world. An annual reduction in GDP of a single percentage corresponds to over 3% increase in infant mortality. The infants in the United States are more vulnerable than in any other nation.

Estimates from our study show that past economic crises in the United States cost between several hundred and close to 2,000 infant lives, depending on the magnitude of the economic shock. Under most conservative estimates, U.S. infant mortality temporarily spiked 4% during the 1982 recession and rose 1.9% in the 1991 recession. Taking into account the already high levels of infant mortality in the United States, which reflect poor health performance compared to other wealthy nations, we estimated that the 1982 recession cost over 700 female and close to 1,000 male infant deaths. The less severe 1991 recession cost the United States a total of 700 newborn lives that otherwise could have been saved in good economic times.

Economic crises since the 1950s have seen significantly greater infant mortality not only in the United States but also in the rest of the nations with comparable levels of wealth and availability of medical care, including Western Europe, Japan, and Australia. Economic crises have the worst effect in countries that already have unhealthy populations. Because the United States has the highest infant mortality of all wealthy nations, a recession of equal magnitude impacts the United States to a much higher degree than low-mortality countries such as Finland or Sweden. Economic crises exacerbate the existing problems that year after year drag the United States down to the bottom of international rankings based on infant mortality.

The Current Recession is a Silent Killer

The United States and the rest of the West are in the midst of experiencing the worst of the economic downturn that started with the implosion of the American financial sector in September 2008. Today, more than six million Americans have ongoing claims for unemployment insurance and other jobless benefits, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. A survey of economists by Bloomberg in the first week of April forecast a 2% decline in the GDP in the second quarter of this year. The U.S. economy contracted 5% in the first three months of 2009. Industrialized economies around the world are experiencing a similar downturn. In April, as the Bundesbank announced that the German recession had “intensified further,” the central bankers of the Euro zone were getting ready to announce that the economic crisis may be at its worst now, according to Reuters.

In the midst of the crisis, the United States still faces the prolonged and unsolved problems of poor health care coverage and uncontainable health care costs—including Medicare—that threaten to bankrupt the federal treasury in the coming decades. In the midst of this dual crisis, President Obama’s fight to rescue the United States from the recession and fix its health care system fails to appreciate that the current recession is also a dangerous, silent killer of newborns. Based on previous recessions, the current crisis will be extremely costly in terms of human lives, especially the lives of the most vulnerable members of our society with no political voice of their own.

The chairman of the Board of Governors of the U.S. Federal Reserve, Ben Bernanke, recently announced that the current recession will “probably” end by the end of 2009. By that time, however, with up to 5% negative growth, the U.S. infant mortality rate could rise by up to 15% this year alone. Our research indicates that under the worst economic forecasts, thousands of infant lives could be lost. These are the babies one would expect to be saved under normal economic conditions.

Public Spending Saves Infant Lives in Crises

While all advanced economies are experiencing an economic crisis, not all of them will experience the same human costs. Low-mortality countries such as Sweden and Finland can be expected to see virtually no change in terms of infant mortality. What historically makes the United States especially vulnerable, among other things, is its comparatively low public spending on health care given the size of its economy (i.e., as a percentage of GDP). When economic crises strike, substantial government spending is required to limit the loss of infant lives. For example, if the United States were to save the infant lives to be lost even to a 2% annual recession, it would need to increase its public spending as a proportion of its GDP to that of Germany. In other words, the United States would have to have what the opponents of health care expansion refer to derogatorily as “socialized medicine.”

Given the current political climate, it is not reasonable to expect that every time a crisis strikes, the United States will pour billions of dollars into health care to save even a thousand infant lives. Two factors make an increase in spending virtually impossible in the United States: already high medical costs and the growing budget deficit. Increased spending is particularly hard during a recession, and even harder at times of war in Iraq, Afghanistan, and against terror at home. In 2010, federal contributions to Medicare and Medicaid are projected at $453 billion and $290 billion, respectively. But spending on national security is even higher. The Obama administration’s 2010 budget includes allocations of $663.7 billion to the Department of Defense (plus $7.4 billion under the Recovery Act) and $42.7 billion to the Department of Homeland Security (plus $2.8 billion under the Recovery Act). Outside the mandatory health care programs Medicare and Medicaid, in comparison, the Department of Health and Human Services will receive only 7.2% of the total allocated to the Defense Department and Homeland Security ($76.8 billion plus $22.4 billion under the Recovery Act).

The solution to saving infant lives during an economic crisis may therefore lie in longer-term changes to the economic and political landscape in the United States. While there is no immediate prescription in sight to the ailing U.S. health care system, changes emphasized by Harvard economist and one of the architects of Obama’s health care plan, David Cutler, hold promise of both reducing expenditure growth and improving health. Among many things, these measures could help protect infants during economic crises by focusing on prevention, emphasizing the importance of primary care, and ensuring a better continuum of care by stressing the importance of efficient computerized hospital record keeping. In such a reformed medical system, during recessions pregnant women would have greater incentive and ability to access prenatal care, which in turn could help them refrain from making short-term decisions that endanger the lives of their unborn children. A reformed system must ultimately promote “Penny-foolish, pound-wise” thinking when it comes to the medical care of infants and expectant mothers.

The Politics of It All

Despite how hard policy makers try to fix health care systems in wealthy democracies, it should be obvious that they will not be able to do so unless there is political support for such change. A study of politics, inequality, and health I conducted across the United States, Canada, and the ten wealthiest European countries suggests that the picture is not as simple as we thought it would be.

While Left governments can expand public spending on health care to improve life expectancy and reduce infant mortality, Conservative governments may be more efficient in translating dollars spent into health gains. A comparison of trends in health across 12 countries since the 1950s found that an interaction of existing levels of inequality and government partisanship—how Left or how Conservative a government is according to its party ideology—is associated with both life expectancy and infant mortality. Surprisingly, there are health benefits to having not only Left governments that increase public spending but also Conservative governments that can presumably achieve better outcomes once a robust health care state is in place. But in countries such as the United States, where inequality is high, Conservative governments have much less impact, as high levels of inequality offset any short-term benefits of having Conservative governments.

While cross-country comparison over time is important for putting the poor U.S. health performance into context, it does not answer the question of how politics translates into, or even causes, bad or good health. The comparative evidence does show, however, that the poor health performance of the United States cannot be blamed solely on its having either more Conservative governments or high inequality. However, when combined, the twin factors of Conservative governments and high inequality are associated with worse life expectancy and lower infant mortality.

Going beyond comparative analysis, research on individual health policy preferences and voting behavior can tell us something more about

The Importance of Health Care for Voters in the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election.

how politics and the process of representation yield health care policies, which in turn affect health. My study of voting behavior in the 2008 U.S. presidential election shows that, indeed, Obama supporters were more likely than McCain supporters to view health care as either the top or second-top policy priority. Interestingly, the research shows that immediately before the election, neither Obama nor McCain supporters were most likely to place health care at the top of their priorities. Instead, it was the undecided voters, third-party voters, and those who were not even planning to vote who were most likely to feel strongly about health care. This reveals a missing link between people’s needs for better health care and their voting behavior. Even in a presidential campaign that put health care at the top of the campaign agenda (to be pushed to second place only by the economic crisis in the final months), many voters who felt strongly about health care could not make up their mind between the two candidates until the last moment.

For the past century, the health of not only Americans but millions of citizens in the wealthiest of nations had been entrusted to doctors, public health specialists, even economists and policy makers who were committed to designing more efficient and more available health care delivery. New research in political science shows that the key to moving forward may lay in overcoming not technological, scientific, or policy-design challenges, but political obstacles. The question that remains is whether and how those in need of better medical care use the political system—with all its democratic institutions of representation and accountability that modern wealthy democracies offer—to improve their health. And if they cannot, it is possible there is a more serious pathology in American and other advanced democracies.
Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics
By Beth A. Simmons

This volume argues that international human rights law has made a positive contribution to the realization of human rights in much of the world. Although governments sometimes ratify human rights treaties, gambling that they will experience little pressure to comply with them, this is not typically the case. Focusing on rights stakeholders rather than the United Nations or state pressure, Simmons demonstrates through a combination of statistical analyses and case studies that the ratification of treaties leads to better rights practices on average. Simmons argues that international human rights law should get more practical and rhetorical support from the international community as a supplement to broader efforts to address conflict, development, and democratization.

(Cambridge University Press, 2009)

Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Beth A. Simmons is Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs, Department of Government, Harvard University.

Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists
By Rawi E. Abdelal, Yoshiko Margaret Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott (eds.)

The concept of identity has become increasingly prominent in the social sciences and humanities. Analysis of the development of social identities is an important focus of scholarly research, and scholars using social identities as the building blocks of social, political, and economic life have attempted to account for a number of discrete outcomes by treating identities as causal factors. The dominant implication of the vast literature on identity is that social identities are among the most important social facts of the world in which we live. Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, and McDermott have brought together leading scholars from a variety of disciplines to consider the conceptual and methodological challenges associated with treating identity as a variable, offer a synthetic theoretical framework, and demonstrate the possibilities offered by various methods of measurement. The book represents a collection of empirically grounded theoretical discussions of a range of methodological techniques for the study of identities.

(Cambridge University Press, 2009)

Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Rawi E. Abdelal is professor of business administration, Business, Government, and the International Economy Unit, Harvard Business School.

Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate and member of the Executive Committee and Steering Committee, Alastair Iain Johnston is Governor James Noe and Linda Noe Laine Professor of China in World Affairs, Department of Government, Harvard University.

How Do Good Health Technologies Get to Poor People in Poor Countries?
By Michael Reich and Laura J. Frost

Many people in developing countries lack access to health technologies, even basic ones. Why do these problems in access persist? What can be done to improve access to good health technologies, especially for poor people in poor countries? This book answers those questions by developing a comprehensive analytical framework for access and examining six case studies to explain why some health technologies achieved more access. The technologies include praziquantel (for the treatment of schistosomiasis), hepatitis B vaccine, malaria rapid diagnostic tests, vaccine vial monitors for temperature exposure, the Norplant implant contraceptive, and female condoms. Based on research studies commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the book concludes with specific lessons on strategies to improve access.

(Harvard University Press, 2009)

Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Michael Reich is Taro Takemi Professor of International Health Policy, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard School of Public Health.
The Online Centerpiece

After nearly 25 years in print, the current issue of the Centerpiece will be the last one that our subscribers will receive on paper. Starting with the fall 2009 issue, the newsletter content will be available in digital form only.

If you wish to receive an e-mail when the newsletters are posted on the Weatherhead Center Web site (in the fall and spring of each academic year), please let us know by sending an e-mail to publications@wcfia.harvard.edu with “subscribe to newsletter” in the subject line, and we will add your e-mail address to our subscription list.

Also, the Weatherhead Center’s contact database includes postal and e-mail addresses for both current and former Weatherhead Center affiliates. Please help us keep such information updated by submitting the form at this Web address: www.wcfia.harvard.edu/contact/update

And finally, we encourage you to visit www.wcfia.harvard.edu at any time to sign up to receive any of the Weatherhead Center e-newsletters.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Photo Essay

2008–2009 Distinguished Visitor, Program on U.S.-Japan Relations

Carol Gluck, the George Sansom Professor of History at Columbia University, delivers a lecture entitled “Past Obsessions: World War II in History and Memory” in March 2009.
Photo credit: Martha Stewart

WCFIA Fellows’ Symposium, “Rethinking Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for the 21st Century”

Alexis Rwabizambuga, 2008–2009 Fellow, was one of many speakers at the April 17 WCFIA Fellows’ Symposium, “Rethinking Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for the 21st Century” Also pictured, from left to right, are Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Caroline Elkins, (Department of History); Ambassador Matthias Mulmenstadt, Director for African Affairs, German Foreign Office; Rwandan Ambassador to the United States James Kimonyo; and Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Emmanuel Akyeampong (Department of History).
Photo credit: Kathleen Molony

From left to right: Andrew Miller, Julia Choe, Erez Manela (director, Weatherhead Center Undergraduate Student Programs), and Joseph Luna reflect on the day’s undergraduate presentations.
Photo credit: Kristin Caulfield
Nadira Lalji (right) speaks about transborder brokerage in the Bangladeshi women’s movement as part of a panel about the politics of identity and dignity, chaired by Center Director Beth A. Simmons (center). Ola Aljawhary (left) discussed Palestinian refugees in Al-Arish and identity.

Photo credit: Kristin Caulfield

Weatherhead Center Undergraduate Thesis Conference
In February 2009, the Weatherhead Center Undergraduate Thesis Conference featured panels that were organized by regional or disciplinary themes and chaired by Faculty Associates and Graduate Student Associates. The Center’s Undergraduate Associates presented their thesis research findings, answered questions, and received comments and general feedback.

Ana Mendy, one of four students who made presentations at the “Relations and Perceptions Across Borders” panel, spoke about the effects of the Haitian revolution on Dominican national identity.

Photo credit: Sofia Jarrín-Thomas

Killian Clarke participated on the panel on civil conflict in the global south to discuss his research on social movements and authoritarian regimes.

Photo credit: Sofia Jarrín-Thomas

From left to right: The three students that made up the panel “Politics of Union in Europe Today” were Nelli Doroshkin, Claire Guehenno, and Julia Choe. Weatherhead Center Faculty Associate Peter A. Hall, Krupp Foundation Professor of European Studies, chaired the presentations.

Photo credit: Sofia Jarrín-Thomas

In a panel on global challenges and international institutions, Jonathan Weigel talks about the rise of malaria research at universities.

Photo credit: Sofia Jarrín-Thomas
This brief account has three goals: a) to report on the ethnic tensions that arose recently in Québec; b) to recall the challenges that this society had to confront; and c) to outline the approach that was taken to defuse the tensions and to manage ethnic diversity in the future.

Québec is one of the ten provinces of Canada. With 7.5 million inhabitants, it is a minority culture accounting for 2% of the North American population and about 20% of the Canadian population, but Francophones within Québec are a majority (82% of Québécers have French as their mother tongue). Québec has always received a significant number of immigrants (who now represent 11% of the population—the same percentage as in the United States) and its record over the last decades with respect to managing ethnic diversity has been fairly good. Therefore, the tensions that arose in recent years, culminating in the so-called accommodation crisis, were somewhat of a surprise. In the first weeks of 2007, the heated debate reached a level that led the Québec Premier to establish a commission that I co-chaired with the political philosopher Charles Taylor. The work of the commission lasted fifteen months, and its report was released in May 2008.

I believe that what happened in Québec and the way the situation was handled might be of some interest for non-Québécers.

The “Accommodation Crisis”

The approach that Québec has developed to deal with interethic relations includes a widespread practice of “reasonable accommodations,” which consists of changing not the law but some modalities of its application, when the result does not entail undue or excessive hardships in terms of cost, administrative burden, and so forth. The goals of “reasonable accommodations” are to better realize the ideal of equality and to avoid discrimination against individuals possessed of a distinctive condition that sets them apart from the mainstream population (it can be a physical handicap, a linguistic trait, a particular religious belief, etc.). It is worth noting that those accommodation demands always arise in situations where two fundamental rights, two laws, or bylaws come into conflict in their application: for instance, should a Sikh motorcyclist be obliged to wear a helmet (for security) or not (in the name of freedom of religion)? As we know, no right, even a fundamental one, is absolute or unlimited. Therefore, according to the basic principle of accommodation, a true universality of rights requires flexibility in their application in order to resolve situations of conflict. Those situations can be difficult to handle since a formal or pre-established hierarchy between rights does not exist in the Western legal tradition.

The practice of reasonable accommodation had become part of daily life in Québec’s public institutions without generating any public questions or protests. But suddenly, lately, they became a major public issue, being perceived as a set of privileges incompatible with democracy, a violation of the rule of law, a threat to Québec’s common values, and even a threat to the old-stock, “founding” culture. Immigrants soon became the target of a quite negative discourse. In the early weeks of 2007, according to widespread opinion, Québec was experiencing a severe crisis: there was something wrong in the public institutions and a radical overhaul was in order.

The Work of the Commission and Its Diagnosis

During the first ten months of its mandate, the commission conducted many research projects and intense consultations: 31 focus groups and 26 forums (open-mike town-hall meetings) across the province, public hearings (close to 1,000 briefs) in sixteen regions, meetings with dozens of experts, and a continuous conversation with the public through a very popular Web site, et cetera. Three major facts became obvious. First, contrary to widespread belief, the practice of accommodations was under control in the public institutions, where it was just business as usual. For example, the school system usually rejected about half the demands, most of the time reaching an agreement with the claimants after discussion and explanation. Besides, the threat to the common values or to the Francophone culture appeared much exaggerated, if not groundless. Second, to a large extent the media caused the so-called crisis by blowing minor incidents out of proportion. The work of the commission brought to light numerous cases of distortion, omission, and even invention of “facts” (all of which were acknowledged by several reporters afterwards). But the media alone could not have produced such an emotional turmoil without a pre-existing mindset among the population. The third major fact that became obvious to the commission relates to the cultural minority status of Québec. Francophones have fought for centuries to secure their survival in North America. This experience generated a legacy of permanent insecurity, a sense of fragility that was reinforced in recent years by a combination of factors (e.g., globalization, a very low fertility rate juxtaposed against high immigration levels, and failures of the 1980 and 1995 referenda on political sovereignty). Finally, the

Gérard Bouchard is the William Lyon Mackenzie King Visiting Professor of Canadian Studies at the Weatherhead Center, and professor of sociology at Université du Québec at Chicoutimi. A member of the Royal Society of Canada and the Académie des lettres du Québec, Bouchard is trained in sociology and history and has spent over 25 years conducting multidisciplinary research in various fields of population and social history. During the last fifteen years, he has shifted his research priorities toward cultural studies. He is now doing comparative research on collective imaginaries, including national myths and identities in ethnically diversified societies. In 2007-2008, he co-chaired with Charles Taylor a public consultation commission on interethic tensions in Québec. bouchard@uqac.ca
commission came to the conclusion that there was a crisis indeed, but only in the perceptions of the accommodation practices and not in those practices as such. This realization was good news in some respects, but it was also bad news: henceforth, the challenge was to convince people that their deep fears and convictions regarding accommodations were mostly due to misperceptions—not an easy task!

**Examples of Challenges**

The commission faced many other obstacles (and some conundrums). For instance, the media were clearly a major factor in creating the crisis, and we felt duty-bound to criticize their behavior. We were well aware, however, that we would need the media to disseminate the conclusions of our report and to promote its recommendations. Another problem was the strong popular frustration and some aggressiveness directed against the elites as a whole. Many individuals felt that major decisions regarding immigrants and immigration had been made without any consultation, and that they had been told only after the fact about the implications of those decisions. The focus groups were particularly eloquent on this score. Third, as already mentioned, Francophone Québécois are a minority in North America and, understandably, there is a sense of fragility that infuses this culture. But at the same time, this continental minority is a majority within Québec, where their members control the major public and private institutions, and, as such, they are entrusted with important collective responsibilities. Sometimes, however, this majority behaves like a minority in its relationship with its own minorities, who happen to harbor their own sense of fragility. Thus, the outcome is an encounter of anxieties, a combination of insecurities. In other words, here was a majority that felt threatened by its minorities.

Fourth, with regard to Muslim radicalism, it is virtually impossible to demonstrate the inexistence of a terrorist threat. The skeptics can always argue that such threats remain hidden until they surface. This is the source of the “Muslim paradox,” which I characterize as follows: the Québécois would very much like Muslims to integrate into mainstream society. However, because of the terrorist factor, the Québécois keep sending them mixed messages that in turn, lead some moderate Muslims to actually radicalize and marginalize. In short, this is self-defeating behavior likely to generate the very outcome that was hoped to be avoided in the first place.

There were many other difficult issues, such as the expression of religion in the public institutions (secularism is highly valued in Québec), the impact of many immigrants’ traditional customs on gender equality (another “gem” of the Quiet Revolution legacy), and the capacity of Québec to build a strong inclusive identity (a major concern in a minority nation that naturally fears fragmentation).

**A Two-level Strategy: Public Forums and Interculturalism**

Overall, the commission acted on two fronts. First, it was necessary to cool down the population’s emotional outburst and frustration. This was accomplished through the widely attended forums to which all individuals were invited; citizens could grab the microphone and speak their minds with the assurance that they would be heard (in every sense of the word—dozens of reporters attended the forums, which were broadcasted live by two or three television channels). After a few months, it became obvious that a self-healing process was occurring. People had an opportunity to voice their frustrations and, most of all, to confront their fears. Moreover, immigrants took part in the debates, so they too not only expressed themselves but also efficiently countered the stereotypes and criticisms directed at them. There is now a consensus in Québec that the forums had a major impact by defusing the tensions (or, as many observers and participants said, by “lancing the boil”).

On a second front, the commission set out to elaborate a set of principles and guidelines that took the
form of an integration framework for Québec society. This framework is known as interculturalism. Since 1971, for several reasons, all Québec political parties (sovereignist and federalist alike) have consistently rejected Canadian multiculturalism. One reason is sociological. Multiculturalism assumes that there is no majority or national culture in Canada, only minority cultures. This is a non-starter in a Francophone minority nation like Québec. Besides, there is no worry in Canada about the future of the English language, which happens to be the language of both the United States and globalization. This is obviously not the case with the French language, a situation that calls for legal protections. This is a non-starter in a Francophone minority nation like Québec. Besides, there is no worry in Canada about the future of the English language, which happens to be the language of both the United States and globalization. This is obviously not the case with the French language, a situation that calls for legal protections. So, while Canadian multiculturalism is built around a diversity paradigm, the Québec framework is based on a duality or a polarity structure (a Francophone majority and a segment of ethnocultural minorities). Both frameworks, however, are informed by a pluralist ideal: a political philosophy aiming to accommodate cultural and ethnic diversity in full compliance with equality, democracy, and human rights, within the limits of social cohesion. Expectedly, that shared philosophy accounts for several commonalities between the two frameworks (for instance, the embrace of recognition and the accommodation practices).

As to the major distinctive characteristics of interculturalism, the central one lies in the tension between continuity and diversity, that is: the continuity of the “old-stock” Francophone culture (in particular its language) and the diversity brought by immigration. In other words, interculturalism is a combination of culture as root and culture as encounter. It is critical that this tension must not be seen as a problem or a detriment, but as a positive, even creative source of flexibility, a dynamic of constant negotiations and mutual adaptations through public debates. That tension is not a hindrance that ultimately should be overcome and disappear. On the contrary, I think it is a permanent feature. Indeed, the “resolution” of this tension would be achieved only at the expense of one of its constitutive parts: either continuity or diversity. I reject as highly unlikely in the foreseeable future the prospect of a “melting-pot,” a blending of those two components, which does not preclude some blurring of the symbolic boundaries and the emergence of a shared symbolic layer. Finally, the duality will persist because of the willingness of various ethnic groups to preserve their culture. Moreover, the duality is renewed by the constant influx of immigrants and the perceived threat that they represent for part of the host society. Of course, the danger here is that duality evolves into a cleavage or rift between the two components. Yet, interculturalism is designed precisely to prevent such an occurrence by fostering interaction and understanding, building bridges, and making the boundaries more porous.

A second underpinning principle is reciprocity. It informs a definition of integration as a two-way process, as a shared responsibility of the host society and the newcomers. It establishes negotiation as a fundamental mechanism, it calls for a widespread practice of accommodation (or harmonization), and it means that both the majority and minority cultures are engaged in a process of simultaneous, interrelated change. Finally, it emphasizes integration as a dynamic of interaction, exchange, participation, and intercommunity action. Among other things, this implies that the host society must set up policies aimed at inserting immigrants in the workplace according to their level of competence.

Over the long haul, as just mentioned, it is likely that an overarching layer of shared culture or identity will take shape and intensify due to the continuous process of interaction and exchange, but still without erasing the duality structure. Another long-term goal is to develop a culture or an ethics of exchange, debate, and negotiation as a form of cultural capital, a tradition of understanding that prevents stereotypes and ethnicism (i.e., discrimination based on culture, as opposed to racial or biological characteristics). Most importantly, the achievement of this long-term goal calls for the existence of numerous agents, places, and channels of communication.

This may seem somewhat idealistic. Yet, and this is one of the major findings of our commission, such a culture already exists in Québec. We have seen it in action at the grassroots level in the everyday life of public institutions (namely in the spheres of education and health), as well as in the workplace through the collaboration of the labor unions. And we have also seen it across the province, where hundreds of groups, associations, forums, and other local initiatives have been set up to both meet and assist the immigrants upon their arrival, to facilitate their integration, and to foster transcultural exchange. Besides, what framework (interculturalism, multiculturalism, or any other) can realistically function if it is not based on a core of shared views and values, on a common set of habitus (to borrow from Bourdieu), that is: a culture.

Finally, as a pluralist framework, Québec interculturalism is committed to the following: equality and other fundamental rights, the principle of recognition, State neutrality regarding religions, and sustenance of multiple identities (or belongings). It rejects any a priori or formal hierarchy between cultures (which means, for instance, no formal precedence granted to the Québec majority culture), and it promotes the application of the same legal rules to every citizen, while avoiding homogenization.

Exporting Interculturalism?
Several defining attributes of Québec interculturalism are designed to prevent fragmentation, which besits the major concerns of a minority culture. On this ground, there might be a future for such a framework beyond Québec. But one can also envision broader perspectives. Actually, interculturalism could find applications in all nations
Director of the then Center for International Affairs from 1978 to 1989, Samuel P. Huntington, the Albert J. Weatherhead III University Professor at Harvard University, was one of the giants of political science worldwide during the past half century. He had a knack for asking the crucially important but often inconvenient question. He had the talent and skill to formulate analyses that stood the test of time.

The book that brought him to the public eye, and public controversy, *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996), painted on the broadest global canvas. It focused on the significance of religious and other cultural values as ways of understanding cohesion and division in the world. It was the intellectual foundation in 2003 for his opposition to the U.S. decision to go to war in Iraq. This book anticipated reasons for challenges and tragedies that unfolded in Iraq during the past five years.

Among political scientists, two other books were particularly influential. His *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968) challenged the orthodoxies of the 1960s in the field of development. Huntington showed that the lack of political order and authority were among the most serious debilities the world over. The degree of order, rather than the form of the political regime, mattered most. Moreover, it was false that “all good things go together,” because the relationships between political order, democracy, economic growth, and education often created complex challenges and often undercut each other. In the decades that followed, this book remained the most frequently assigned text in research university seminars to introduce graduate students to comparative politics.

Huntington’s *The Third Wave* (1991) looked at similar questions from a different perspective, namely, that the form of the political regime—democracy or dictatorship—did matter. The metaphor in his title referred to the cascade of dictator-toppling democracy-creating episodes that cropped up in the world from the mid 1970s to the early 1990s, and he gave persuasive reasons for this turn of events well before the fall of the Berlin wall.

Huntington’s first book, *The Soldier and the State* (1957), examined the question of civilian authority over the armed forces, or the lack thereof. Huntington’s principal interest was to understand what he called professional “objective civilian control” over the military in the United States but, in so doing, he shed much light on the successful evolution of civilian authority over the military historically in Europe and also in communist countries.

Huntington’s books revealed his mind, but ordinarily he made readers work harder to figure out how he felt. He was a highly disciplined author, a stylist of English language prose, and a master craftsman of arguments and their texts. Yet, in his last book, *Who Are We?* (2004), he left no doubt where he stood on the question that then concerned him. He was an American patriot, and he would like to be remembered for this faith as well.


Mentor to generations of scholars in widely divergent fields, he was the author or co-author of seventeen books on American government, democratization, national security and strategic issues, political and economic development, cultural factors in world politics, and American national identity. He wrote insightfully about war and peace, development and decay, democracy and dictatorship, cultures and structures, migration and displacement, and many other topics. His graduate students teach at the world’s leading research universities and have served in governments and international organizations. Shy in demeanor, Huntington was feisty at seminars and conferences, welcoming debate and relishing the exploration, critique, and defense of complex ideas.

A life-long Democrat, Huntington was foreign policy advisor to Vice President Hubert Humphrey in his 1968 presidential campaign, and he served in the Carter administration on the National Security Council staff as Coordinator of Security Planning (1977–1978). He also co-founded and edited *Foreign Policy* magazine. He served as president of the American Political Science Association (1986–1987) and received the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas for Improving World Order.
Alumni of the Fellows Program of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs have served in various capacities and in many places throughout the world since their days at Harvard. They have pursued distinguished careers in many professional areas, including the diplomatic service, the military, politics, journalism, business, academia, and in the nonprofit sector.


Several former Fellows are working in the Boston area. They include Carlos Blanco (2001–2002), Visiting Professor of International Relations, and Paul Hare (2004–2005), Lecturer of International Relations, both of whom are teaching at Boston University. Antonia Chayes (1984–1985) is Visiting Professor of International Politics and Law, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. Boston's consular corps includes several program alumni: François Gauthier (2004–2005) is France’s consul general; Friedrich Löhr (2007–2008) heads up the German consulate; and Amparo Anguiano (2006–2007) is deputy consul for Mexico. Juan Enriquez Cabot (1996–1997) is currently Chair and CEO of Boston–based Biotechonomy LLC, a life sciences research and investment firm.


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culturally structured around what I have called the duality or the polarity paradigm, that is, a (perceived or real) dichotomy between an “old-stock” culture and a diversity component brought in by immigration. This happens to be the case with most European nations nowadays. For various reasons, those nations are now disappointed with their experience of multiculturalism—whatever that experience has been and regardless of their definition of multiculturalism. At the same time, most of them seem unwilling or hesitant to return to the former assimilationist framework. In this context, interculturalism may well appear as an alternative: an avenue of compromise, a middle way.

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1 The foregoing figures come from the 2006 Canadian census.
3 Meaning: the culture inherited from the first European settlers on the current Québec territory at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Most of them came from France, but this immigration stopped after 1760 when “Nouvelle-France” became a British colony. Otherwise, the true founders of Canada are, of course, the Native people.
4 Our investigation failed to find a real terrorist threat in Montréal, where there is no precedent of that kind.
5 Again, all political parties in Québec acknowledge that it is a nation. This has also been recognized in 2006 by the Parliament of Canada.
6 Most of them are contained in Bill 101 (adopted in 1977), which establishes French as the official language of the civic life in Québec. For instance, immigrants’ children must attend French school up to the end of the high-school level. But the Anglo-Québécers have their own education system.
7 This is a major challenge in Québec, where newcomers as a whole are more educated than the average non-immigrants.
8 Actually, the formation of this renewed identity has been underway for many years in Québec.