

BROCK POLITICS

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STUDENTS DISCUSS CANADA - US ISSUES AT CROSSING BORDERS CONFERENCE

One of the most important relationships Canada has is with the United States.

This relationship is the focus of the 2011 Crossing Borders Conference, which was held in Niagara Falls on Friday, March 11.

Brock Political Science students were asked to present research papers at the conference, which brought together about 200 individuals from the hospitality, tourism and economic development communities in Canada and the US.

Professor Hevina Dashwood encouraged students in her 3P28 Canadian Foreign Policy course to submit abstracts for review, and four were chosen to participate.

"I thought it would be a great opportunity to interact with fellow students who are interested in similar topics and hear what others had to say about those topics," said Drew Ursacki, a third-year Political Science major with a minor in History. "I realized it would be a great networking experience with other peers and influential figures in political and economic discourses."

Ursacki, who presented a paper about the bi-lateral clean energy relationship between Canada and the US, said the conference was a good lesson for future goals.

"It was a really good experience to prepare myself for

future graduate studies and get an idea of what to expect going forward in my education and life," he added.

The conference - which is described as a multi-disciplinary student conference on the United States, Canada, and border issues - began in 1996, and has occurred each year since. It has drawn significant attention from the academic community.

This year's conference was hosted by Brock University.

"It was a major confidence booster, knowing that I could present an intelligent paper to those who work in this field every day and be able to think on my feet when they're asking very tough questions," said Carly White, a third-year Political Science major.

White presented about improving Canada-US security through further NORAD integration, and said that the conference was a great experience.

"It gives students an opportunity to meet many people already working in the industry and to get their perspective on things," she said. "The opportunity to be able to present a paper in front of a conference, something many of us will probably be doing at some point, is great practice for the real world."

Both Ursacki and White agreed that the conference was something



that students should consider participating in next year.

Another feature of the conference was that students from both sides of the border had the chance to hear each other's views on important policy issues.

"It's a great opportunity to meet others who are interested and opinionated about the same issues and topics, and was an excellent experience for myself both personally and professionally," said Ursacki.

"For anyone considering it next year - do it," said White. "It's a great experience that will teach you a lot. Don't shy away from it out of nerves because a lot of people there are doing it for the first time too."

For more information on the Crossing Borders Conference, visit www.crossingborders.buffalo.edu

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The Political Science department would like to thank you for another great academic year. Have a great summer!



THE CONTRIBUTION OF MINING TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

Findings of a Workshop at the University of Ghana Business School, Accra: July 2, 2010

On July 2nd, 2010, research collaborators Dr. Hevina S. Dashwood (Brock University) and Dr. Bill Buenar Pupilampu, (University of Ghana Business School) held a workshop in Accra which addressed the theme of the meaning of sustainable development in the Ghanaian context, and how mining contributes (or detracts) from that goal. The workshop marked the culmination of a two-year research project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's (SSHRC) International Opportunities Fund (IOF) Principal Investigator, Dr. Kernaghan Webb, Ryerson University). (Funding for the workshop was also provided by Brock University's Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, as part of Brock's in-kind contribution under the IOF.)

Pupilampu and Dashwood invited representatives from government, the mining industry, NGOs and academics. It so happened that the date of the workshop coincided with the FIFA World Cup quarter finals, with Ghana's Black Stars slated to play against Uruguay. Although the game was in the evening, my taxi driver suggested that many fans would simply take the entire day off. I was a bit concerned that our workshop would be poorly attended, but we had a very good turn-out.

A number of presenters grappled with the slippery concept of sustainable development at the workshop. What does sustainable development mean? In the context of mining, sustainable development can be briefly understood as mining's contribution to local, regional and national socio-economic development, in a manner that minimizes adverse environmental impacts and harm to local communities where operations take place.

A number of challenges which affect the contribution of mining to sustainable development were identified at the workshop, which can be briefly itemized as follows:

- o Although mining companies are expected to contribute to sustainable development, as is the case with any profit-oriented business, they are not set up internally to promote socio-economic development.

- o The benefits of mining are unevenly distributed, creating the subjective perception and real experience that communities have seen their livelihoods disrupted, while enjoying minimal ben-

efits as a result of mining.

- o Where does responsibility lie for ensuring local communities are not harmed by mining operations? Local government lacks capacity, and tends to devolve responsibility to mining companies. National government has failed to produce an overall framework within which locally-based initiatives can work. State agencies and regulatory institutions lack the capacity/and or inclination to think strategically about how mining can contribute to sustainable development (in terms of local governance, infrastructural development, economic linkages and integration). Mining companies tend to think of their responsibilities as being limited to their 'stakeholder communities', the communities immediately affected by their operations, rather than in terms of their responsibility to promote larger socio-economic development.

So what solutions present themselves to address the challenges related to mining's potential contribution to sustainable development? The consensus at the workshop was that, much as the national government and regulatory framework have a central role to play, solutions are most likely to be found at the local level. One key area identified was the need to shore up the capacity of the District Assemblies, which in theory, are best placed to formulate and deliver development strategies most needed in local areas. For a variety of reasons, District Assemblies lack basic skills around the proper management of funds, the development of strategic plans in support of development, and in representing the interests of constituents affected by mining. A second key area identified is the need to develop viable sustainable livelihood projects that can prosper long after mining companies have closed their operations. Currently, all the mining companies operating in Western Ghana along the Ashanti gold trend (Golden Star Resources, Anglo-Gold Ashanti, Goldfields and Newmont) have incepted various sustainable livelihood projects. As they are now envisaged, such projects depend on capital inputs from the mining companies, so the challenge is to identify ways for them to remain viable business ventures once the mining companies leave.



*By Prof. Hevina
Dashwood*

Professor Dashwood specializes in International Relations (International Political Economy, International Development and Canadian Foreign Policy)



THE CONTRIBUTION OF MINING TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

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To address these challenges, workshop presenters recommended “multi-stakeholder partnerships” between local government (District Assemblies), mining companies, local communities and Chiefs. The advantages lie in the expertise and resources that companies could extend in assisting local government and communities to devise development strategies for local areas that would benefit all communities, rather than just those immediately affected by mining company operations. Potential obstacles to the success of such initiatives include the danger of co-optation of local government by mining companies, and the disagreements between different government agencies over what should be done. Notwithstanding these challenges, there appeared to be consensus at the workshop that multi-stakeholder partnerships hold promise, have been tried elsewhere with some success (in South Africa, for example), and have the potential, if done right, to reduce tensions between communities and mining companies.

Overall, we were very pleased with the workshop and the frank and open discussion about contentious issues. By the way, as football fans already know, Ghana’s Black Stars lost to Uruguay, but for me personally, it was wonderful to watch the game on Ghanaian soil. Better luck next time!

Note: Readers interested in learning more about the issues outlined above may wish to consult our report on Golden Star Resources:

Hevina S. Dashwood and Bill Buenar Puplampu, “Golden Star Resources and Corporate Social Responsibility in Ghana: A Multiperspective Collaborative Case Study,” in K. Webb, ed., *The Multiperspective Collaborative Corporate Social Responsibility Case Study Pilot Project: Reporting on Three Pilot Case Studies of Canadian Mining Operations in Developing Countries* (Toronto: Ryerson University Institute for the Study of Corporate Social Responsibility, 2010), 80 pages, accessible at: http://www.ryerson.ca/csrinstitute/current_projects/Dfait_ch3_GSR_Ghana.pdf

The following co-authored article may also be of interest: **Hevina S. Dashwood** and **Bill Buenar Puplampu**, “Corporate Social Responsibility and Canadian Mining Companies in the Developing World: The Role of Organizational Leadership and Learning”, *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* (Spring 2010), pp. 175-196.

We gratefully acknowledge the research assistance of the following graduate students: **Nathan Andrews**, **Isaac Odoom**, and **Ishmael Wireko** (all Brock University MAs now conducting Ph.Ds, and the administrative assistance of **Sylvia Gawuga** (University of Ghana Business School).



Dashwood interviewing the supervisor at one of Golden Star's oil palm plantations.



REELPOLITICS



[Review of *The Band's Visit* : written and directed by Eran Kolirin, 2007; available on Netflix]

Traversing the Bounds of Politics

"Once, not long ago, a small Egyptian police band arrived in Israel. Not many remember this. . . It was not that important." So begins a remarkable portrayal of a chance meeting between two very different cultures that draws us into the common human comedy (and tragedy) at the core of each. The eight members of the Alexandria Ceremonial Orchestra, stranded in a small Israeli town on the edge of the desert late in the day, are put up for the night by a few members of the local population. Tewfiq, the leader of the band, wears the weight of honour, tradition and personal loss on his face. Circumstances force him to accept the hospitality of Dina, a small restaurant owner, whose evidently modern frankness and lifestyle seems to shock Tewfiq. Yet, as we learn, Dina's lingering loneliness and attraction to Tewfiq suggests there is something missing in her life as well. The meeting and conversation between these two compelling souls is the heart of the film (in all senses) and urges us to ponder the relative insignificance of cultural and political difference. Tewfiq's relationship with the other band members and especially the young Khaled (who bristles at tradition and authority) emphasizes the effects of social change in Egypt and also provides for much of the humour in the film. In one of several hilarious scenes, Khaled, who fancies himself a ladies man, accompanies a young Israeli couple to the local roller skating rink and proceeds to instruct the shy young man in the art of wooing a young lady. But we are reminded of the broad context into which the brief and touching intersection of the lives of the Egyptian musicians and local Israelis is put by the words Tewfiq sings at the end of the film: "Under eternal summer sun our forgotten days are gathered". From this height, we can see the human comedy for what it is and with it the tragic limitations of the political.

- Marc James

Alumni Profile: Chris Marrs B.A. 1998, english lit. / M.A. 2000, political science

The abilities to present, argue and negotiate that I learned through the seminars I took at Brock have been tremendously helpful in my professional career. There is no better practice for going to a job interview, running a meeting or a negotiation than what one will learn the seminar system in a liberal arts program. I also learned how to write effectively and for different types of audiences. The program gave me a broad overview of government and politics and I rely on what I learned in Canadian Federalism and Public Administration on a daily basis.

My first job in government was with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) in Toronto while I was still completing my Masters in Political Science at Brock.

I joined the Federal Government full time as a Security Policy Analyst in 2004, and have held a number of positions with increasing responsibilities in areas such as intergovernmental affairs and trade, standards, and transportation security policy. I have been very fortunate to get a great deal of experience in a very short time having had the opportunity to work on a number of pieces of legislation, Memoranda to Cabinet and Ministerial speeches and briefs on trade, Canada-US relations and security.

My current job is as a Policy Chief with the Surface and Intermodal Security directorate at Transport Canada. The team I manage is responsible for handling external relations for my directorate with the Provincial governments for rail and transit security, working with the United States on surface transportation security

issues, and with our key international partners on land transport security. One of the most interesting parts of my job has been the chance to meet with different levels of government and visit all of the different regions of the country. I have also had the opportunity to represent Canada in meetings in Washington, Los Angeles, London, Bonn and Melbourne with some of our key international security partners. I am also the main point of contact for our group when dealing with other federal departments such as the Canada Border Services Agency, Public Safety Canada, the RCMP and the Privy Council Office on issues that relate to surface and intermodal security.

Chris and his wife (also a graduate of Brock's MA program who works for the Canadian Government) and their two children live in Ottawa.



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