

Note from the Editor

This edition of *Critique* is comprised of winning papers from the 12th Annual Illinois Conference for Students of Political Science, held on April 8, 2004. Papers presented by Nadia Negrustueva, Marc Bacharach, and Mitzi Ramos were recognized as the best papers in the graduate section, while papers presented by Jason Hutchison, Jason Heretik, and Kristin Leefers have received awards in the best undergraduate papers category. Jason Heretik also received an award for the best paper on South Asian/Middle Eastern politics. Further, these pieces not only present diverse issues but also represent various sub-fields within the discipline of political science.

The scope of these papers vary enormously and have been written from a variety of perspectives, representing a broad spectrum of thought. Unintended though it may be, there seems to be an underlining theme in these papers: the issue of participation in the political processes. Nadia Negrustueva addresses the issue of participation from the community development perspectives and argues that in conflict-ridden Chechnya the lack of community participation is resulting in the perpetuation of poverty and uncertainty. Mitzi Ramos argues that participation needs to go beyond tokenism and must lead to incorporation. Her study of the Hispanics in Cicero, Illinois concludes, quite aptly, that much work needs to be done. Kristen Leefers examined the relationship between political development and economic development in Uganda and concludes that economic development is dependent on the political climate - a climate that allows all citizens to participate in governance and protects civil rights. In a democratic society, the highest court of the country is entrusted with the responsibility of protecting these rights. That is why one must examine what influences the decisions of the Supreme Court. Marc Bacharach examines the relationship between the US Supreme Court and public opinion in one specific area: the Eighth Amendment's cruel and unusual punishment clause. One cannot deny the fact that the court in the United States 'has used its power of judicial review to shape, not only abstract constitutional theory, but many factors in American culture, from police procedure, to mental health facilities.' Thus here a number of issues related to participation are at stake: from accountability to tyranny of the majority. Jason Heretik, while discussing the British counterinsurgency measures in the Malay Peninsula and Portuguese counter insurgency measures in

Angola, pointed to the fact that one of the central elements of successes of these operations had been 'winning the hearts and minds' of the people. Jason Hutchison, in his study on the complex regional conflict around the South China Sea, concludes that a solution to the mounting tension can be found through negotiations, with participation of all parties concerned.

It is indeed a joy to have so many thought provoking, well-argued paper in the same edition. We hope to have many more volumes like this in near future.

Ali Riaz