Dear International Relations Students, Alumni, and Friends:

Greetings from Lewisburg!

It has been a rainy but productive spring. Not long ago, we watched as 31 IR students crossed the podium on the quad to become the most recent IR graduates of Bucknell University. We shared their pride at this time of culmination and, like them and their parents, were full of anticipation for their future. Our graduation speaker, Sonil Gulati ’81 urged graduates to find their passion and follow it while remaining compassionate. A great compass for living a fulfilling life! Like those before them, we know that the Class of 2013 will pursue their path, fortified with skills that are best acquired at a liberal arts institution such as ours. We wish them well.

It turns out that we also had (to our knowledge) a first this year. IR is now in its second generation! You can read more about that in this issue, along with a first person account from an IR alumna, who, after about forty years of being among the very first to set the IR major in motion, returned to campus in May to see her son graduate with a degree in IR.

We concluded a search that will add two new faculty members to our ranks in the fall. We are very excited that we were able to make these hires and can’t wait to introduce them to you in the fall issue of IR Matters! At the same time, we bid a grateful farewell to Professor Watson who, after 19 years of service to IR and Bucknell, is getting ready to retire at the end of this month. His mark on IR and Bucknell is undeniable. We recognized his many contributions with a panel discussion.

Our students have been busy as well. Sigma Iota Rho, our honor society, sponsored two research talks delivered by our students in a student speaker series that aims to engage the greater campus and Lewisburg community with international themes. We intend to continue these talks next year.

Our faculty taught new and continuing courses, frequently using novel teaching techniques and continued their research. We include two pieces penned by them in this issue: the first, by Professor Cons, is on using podcasts as a teaching tool in the classroom. The second, by Professor Waller, is on his ongoing research on the legal battles after the Mau Mau rebellion, which involves civil suits just settled against the British Government arising from cases of torture and unlawful killing during the Kenya Emergency in the 1950s.

This semester also marks the end of my tenure as the chair of the department. Since 2008, I have had the great fortune of working with an outstanding group of faculty. These years were marked by a number of significant transitions: retirements (Professors Stamos and Watson) coupled with the adding of new faculty to our ranks (Professors Cons and Roncallo, and Professors Lenz and Smith who will be joining us in the fall), the transformation of the IR Program into the IR Department, and the launching of a revised major. On another note, we also moved out of our beloved Coleman Hall in preparation of taking up our new offices in Academic West. These were all accomplishments of a truly dedicated group of faculty, supported and sustained by our students and alumni. As I hand over the leadership to the able hands of Professor Mitchell (who already served as the co-chair of the department in the fall before he went on a well-deserved sabbatical), I know that IR’s future will continue to be exciting and vibrant.

For now, I want to extend my deepest thanks to all for your commitment to IR’s mission on campus and beyond. It has been a privilege. Have a great summer!
On April 12, the IR Department held a panel honoring Professor Watson’s career entitled “Hilbourne Watson and His Lifelong Critical Engagement with the Political.” Professor Watson retires at the end of June after 19 years of distinguished service to International Relations and Bucknell. We conceived of this panel to serve as an intellectual anchor to honor his contributions to the Bucknell community. Given that he has been working on issues relating to globalization for a number of years, it seemed appropriate to us to assemble a panel to engage topics that have captured his interest over the years. Among the subjects that Professor Watson has closely and critically examined during his academic career are the political economy of the Caribbean, the viability of the Caribbean as a political entity in a global context, the fate of the nation-state, particularly for small, dependent countries such as those in the Caribbean, the role of race and gender within the discipline of International Relations, migration, Caribbean sovereignty and citizenship, and the general discourse on social class, power and inequality.

The panel featured four distinguished participants who have worked closely with Professor Watson in various capacities over the years. Alex Dupuy, Professor of Sociology at Wesleyan University who works on a number of themes that resonate with Prof. Watson’s body of work, has published broadly on social, economic, and political developments in Haiti and the Caribbean. He spoke about issues of sovereignty, a topic that deeply resonated with Prof. Watson. Bucknell’s own Professor Linden Lewis of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology spoke about the astuteness with which Professor Watson engaged various issues of race, class, and gender. Tom O’Toole ’00, the Executive Director of Cornell University’s Institute of Public Affairs. Tom wrote an honor’s thesis under Professor Watson’s supervision and addressed issues of digital capitalism, a topic that is as salient today as it was more than a decade ago when Tom was writing his honors thesis. Finally, Stefan Ivanovski ’12, also a student of Professor Watson who mentored his honor’s thesis. Joining us digitally from Skopje, Macedonia, Stefan talked about the intellectual role Professor Watson played in his academic accomplishments.

With his retirement, the university loses someone who has worn many hats at the university and done so effectively. He has served Bucknell in what was then the IR program, only the second full line to be associated with it. With his expertise in the Caribbean, he has been an active participant in the Latin American Studies Program that has become a thriving focus for Bucknell. Hilbourne has been teaching and writing on issues of the political economy of globalization long before these became mainstays of contemporary academic curricula.

As his students will tell you, he is a very serious and challenging teacher who expects his students to be able to understand and evaluate unfolding events through the lens of the particular class that he’s teaching. He always sought to challenge them in creative ways to get them to think about the big picture and connect the dots.

We were pleased that many could join us for this panel from near and far, including his family, colleagues, and students. We wish him the best for what will be an engaged and productive retirement.
The Colonial Archive Comes to Court

In April 2011, four elderly Kenyans appeared as plaintiffs in a High Court case which threatened to damage irreparably Britain’s reputation as a generally “benign” decolonizer. They were suing the British Government over injuries which had been inflicted on them during Britain’s war against Mau Mau some sixty years earlier. All had been tortured and detained without trial; and they spoke for many others. The story of how and why they came to court in London and of what then transpired tells us much about what imperial powers will do to suppress opposition and then to ensure that what was done remains hidden. But it also shows how states can sometimes be forced to confront their own pasts through the records they themselves created. In this way, history becomes not just the voice of the past, but its avenger. This story is a very British one, but its trans-Atlantic resonances are unmistakable.

In October 1952, a State of Emergency was declared in Kenya. It lasted until January 1960, though Mau Mau as a military force had long since been effectively eliminated. Four years later, Kenya became independent under Kenyatta, the man whom the British had convicted and detained as the leader of Mau Mau. Mau Mau was by far the most serious uprising against late colonial rule in Africa and the most costly in terms of lives lost and resources expended. Defeating it cost Britain L55m and required 10,000 regular troops, 21,000 police and 25,000 local African “Home Guards”. At least 20,000 people died, nearly all black and mostly at the hands of the security forces, and more than 300,000 were incarcerated, often without trial and for long periods, under appalling conditions. Most of the rest of the targeted population was resettled in "protected villages" under conditions which were little better. Kikuyuland, the epicenter of rebellion, bore the main brunt of counter-insurgency measures, which increasingly targeted civilians rather than fighters, but the Kikuyu themselves were deeply divided by Mau Mau: internal conflict added an extra, and horribly intimate, dimension to the pervasive atmosphere of violence and terror. At Independence, there was much to forget on all sides – Kenya’s future stability might depend on it - but the memory of Mau Mau continues to haunt the Kenyan imagination. The appearance of the four plaintiffs in London brought it finally home.

The journey to court began with the publication of two books in 2005 and the airing of a BBC documentary three years earlier. Based on records available in London and Nairobi, they contradicted an official narrative of harsh measures unavoidably taken against a dangerous and barbaric foe but administered with restraint and, aside from a few regrettable lapses promptly dealt with, within the law. The security operations had saved the Kikuyu from themselves and laid the foundations for a peaceful transfer of power. Now, however, a different, and far darker, narrative was emerging of a "dirty war": a systematic campaign of terror, including torture, murder, rape and illegal detention, designed to "break" both Mau Mau and the Kikuyu. Violations of elementary human rights had been condoned if not encouraged and a culture of impunity ensured that protests went unheard and uninvestigated and atrocities were covered up with the tacit consent of a British government which knew far more of what its lieutenants in Kenya were doing than it ever officially admitted.

Activists in Kenya were already conducting their own investigations, gathering survivors’ accounts of abuses and attempting to document and authenticate them. They intended to sue the British government in its own courts to make the dirty war public. Initially, they ran into a brick wall of official denial. Responding to disclosure requests by London lawyers acting for potential plaintiffs, the British government persistently denied that there were documents relating to Mau Mau still held outside the public domain. In June 2009, however, the lawyers finally obtained a court ruling requiring the government to disclose all documents material to the case which was being brought. Government again denied that additional files existed. It now became necessary for the plaintiffs to prove the existence of such documents – especially files which had been brought back to Britain from Kenya at the time of independence. This was a task which experienced historians with a detailed understanding of colonial archiving were well equipped to undertake.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Secretary in the then Labour Government had come to the conclusion that a policy of refusal and denial was now untenable, especially since the issue was now being aired in public. He accepted that the plaintiffs probably had a case, and his advisors began to consider how the government might satisfy both them and British public opinion with an official acknowledgement that abuses had occurred during the Emergency, an expression of regret for their sufferings and the offer of some form of compensation. A general settlement, without specific admission of guilt, would avoid a damaging court case and perhaps prevent a deluge of further claims.
The Colonial Archive Comes to Court, Cont’d.

After the Spring 2010 election, however, a new (Conservative) Foreign Secretary took office. Advised that the government had no case to answer and that any expression of regret would trigger the flood of claims which his predecessor had been anxious to avoid, he declined to negotiate with the plaintiffs. At the preliminary hearing in April 2011, the government asked for a summary judgment striking the case down on the grounds that Britain had no responsibility since all liabilities had been transferred at independence to the new African government. This specious and, as the judge put it, "dishonourable" claim was a great mistake. The judge ruled against the government and made a specific order that documents, whose probable existence was made clear in detailed statements made by the historians who were searching for them, should be produced as the law required. After further pressure was applied, a large cache of "missing" files was finally "found" in a government depository at Handslope Park. The Handslope deposit surprised even those who had always believed that records were being systematically concealed. It consisted of nearly ten thousand "sensitive" files from thirty-seven ex-colonies. 1500 files were from Kenya and about a third of these concerned Mau Mau. Foreign Office obstinacy had brought its own reward.

To understand the significance of the Handslope "discovery", we must first ask why the plaintiffs were suing the British government over abuses committed in Kenya. Although the plaintiffs themselves wanted a final public acknowledgement of what had been done to them after decades of silence and denial, the case was not about whether there had been abuse – by now that had already been largely conceded - but about whether it had been systematic, whether this had been known in London and how the state had been able to hide it for so long. Answers to all three questions were likely to be deeply damaging. The plaintiffs’ contention was that abuse had been part of a policy of repression. London had been aware of it but had done nothing to stop or prevent it. The British government had thus failed in its duty to protect and was liable, if not directly responsible, for the actions of its subordinates. Historians had long suspected that the British government had indeed known what was really going on in Kenya and had concealed its knowledge, but to prove this in court required demonstrable facts rather than informed assertion. The plaintiffs and their lawyers hoped that the documents now uncovered, when read with those already available, would make the links between Nairobi and London clear; Foreign Office officials perhaps feared the same.

Persistent denial that potentially incriminating documents still existed raised other questions about state secrecy and the duty of public access. The right of access depends on two acts of Parliament. One creates a legal duty to transfer official documents after a certain lapse of time to the public domain. Once transferred, material may remain "closed" under certain prescribed circumstances and for specific periods of time, but the state cannot legally retain documents in its own keeping and without disclosure, though it has clearly done so. The second, more recent, act establishes the principle of Freedom of Information. It allows any member of the public to request material which is otherwise withheld. Requests have to be specific and they can be refused or modified after independent review if good reason is given. Concealing files, as at Handslope, subverts Freedom of Information by making it virtually impossible to know what documents to request. Additionally, in civil cases, an overriding duty of disclosure exists: parties to a suit must be provided with all relevant documents. This applies equally to official bodies and was clearly breached by Foreign office denials in the Mau Mau case. In sum, the government’s position appeared to be not only mendacious but actually illegal, irrespective of what responsibility it might have for abuses in Kenya and elsewhere.

In July 2012, the plaintiffs were back in court: to request permission, finally, to bring their suit against the British government. In a hushed courtroom in central London, three historians, together with the Foreign Office archivist whose determination had finally breached the walls of secrecy, gave evidence which corroborated and contextualized the plaintiffs’ own accounts of what had been done to them so long ago. It was an extraordinary and deeply moving performance which left even the lawyers for the defense abashed.

What followed was perhaps even more extraordinary. Faced with the Handslope files, the government had shifted its position. It now opposed the plaintiffs’ request on two grounds: that the time allowed for suit under the Statute of Limitations (fifty years) had now expired and that most of the officials involved in policy-making and implementation were dead and could, therefore, no longer explain or defend their actions. Whatever the merits of the plaint, it had been filed too late. In his response, the judge carefully reviewed the arguments made on both sides and the history of the case itself.
The Colonial Archive Comes to Court, Cont’d.

He decided that there were precedents for a waiver of the Statute of Limitations in cases where material information had been deliberately withheld, making a timely suit impossible. He also considered that the documentary record was sufficiently full and reliable to overcome the absence of official testimony in court. In a Judgment that was damning and, despite the measured language, clearly outraged, he struck down the government’s objections and gave leave to proceed.

The government immediately gave notice of its intention to appeal the judgment, however "abhorrent" that might appear, but later suspended this with a view to reaching a negotiated settlement instead. Early in June 2013, the Foreign Secretary announced that a twenty million pound compensation package had been agreed with the plaintiffs’ lawyers to cover over five thousand actual and potential claims of abuse. His statement acknowledged that abuses had occurred and expressed regret, but it fell far short of an open admission of responsibility and, indeed, specifically denied any present legal liability for actions taken by the Kenya colonial government during the Emergency. The settlement appears similar to the one being considered by the Labour government five years ago, before the Handslope files emerged. The Mau Mau case will not now come to court, but this is not the end of the story. It is likely that other suits will arise from Malaya, Cyprus and Aden, late colonial counter-insurgency "hotspots" for which "missing" files have also now emerged. If so, the British Government may ultimately be faced with paying millions of pounds in damages – and with further public revelations of human rights abuse.

States do not willingly admit to wrongdoing on a massive scale. What forced the British Government to court? Public accountability emerged here through a combination of circumstances: victims willing and able to demand redress with the expert help of sympathetic lawyers; researchers who knew what and where documentary evidence might be found; an independent judiciary determined to enforce the law and to prevent government from hiding behind the specious arguments of "national security", "confidentiality" and the like; and officials arrogant enough to believe that they could always bury the truth. Could a similar accountability be enforced elsewhere? We must hope so.

Richard Waller
Associate Professor of History and International Relations

Sigma Iota Rho Inducts 10

On April 26, the Delta Gamma chapter of Sigma Iota Rho (SIR) inducted 10 students into the organization. At this occasion, we had the opportunity to thank the Executive Board that took responsibility for SIR programming this year. The department would like to acknowledge the following students for their hard work: Reed Dempsey (President), Anastasia Gilbert (Vice-President), Rebecca Marder (Secretary) and Devon Gorman (Treasurer). The inductees are (all class of 2013): Kristen Marie Brundage, Richard Joseph Curley III, Reed Cameron Dempsey, Jenna Elise Franze, Ruth S. Gabor, Devon Erica Gorman, Rebecca Marder, Lauren Renae Stocks-Smith, Brittany Michele Wanner, and Andrew Higley Watts. Congratulations!

Sigma Iota Rho Year in Review

During the 2012-2013 school year, the Sigma Iota Rho (SIR) honor society for International Relations has worked to increase its membership while furthering the role of our society and the study of international affairs on Bucknell’s campus. Through the leadership of Asia Gilbert (Vice-President), Devon Gorman (Treasurer), Rebecca Marder (Secretary), and myself, SIR was able to accomplish the aforementioned goals through two membership drives, a student speaker series, and an alumni lecture.

Sigma Iota Rho’s mission statement states that the honor society seeks to promote and reward scholarship and service among students and practitioners of international studies, international affairs, and global studies and to foster integrity and creative performance in the conduct of world affairs. With this in mind, faculty advisor Professor Emek Ugur challenged the executive board – as well as the general membership – to develop and implement events in alignment with our mission.

On February 18th, SIR invited Jennie Welch ’10 to return to campus for a breakfast discussion and lecture covering her year in China, studying on a Fulbright Research Scholarship. These two events allowed students and faculty to better understand

Sigma Iota Rho 2013 Inductees:

Krisy Brundage, Rich Curley, Reed Dempsey, Jenna Franze, Ruth Gabor, Devon Gorman, Rebecca Marder, Lauren Stocks-Smith, Brittany Wanner, and Andrew Watts.

For more on SIR, please visit the SIR website.
Podcasts Used to Share Research on Borders, Trafficking, and Statelessness

This semester, students in my “IREL/GEOG 216: Borders, Traffic, and Statelessness” class experimented with using podcasts to share some of their research more broadly. The podcasts, which were accompanied by more traditional, long-format research papers, afforded an opportunity for engaging and communicating information in different ways. The podcasts required students to think differently about audience and voice than their research papers did. While the papers were targeted at me—the course instructor—the podcasts were written and designed to provide information about little understood issues to their peers and to a broader public.

To address this challenge, the class adopted a variety of different creative strategies. Some used radio plays in which students took on roles as various as an inmate in a North Korean prison camp, a prison camp guard and a UN inspector. Some simulated an NPR Morning Edition news story. Students covered topics as various as the neo-colonial expansion of Morocco into Western Sahara, myths about human trafficking in the US, social conditions in Burmese refugee camps in Thailand, and cross-border poaching in Kruger National Park in South Africa.

The experiment yielded a number of interesting results. Students pulled together research from a range of sources, including policy reports, news reporting from US and international media,
IREL 216
Podcasts—take a listen here.

Forty Years and Counting

Forty years ago, I embarked on my Bucknell education with a plan to major in European History. Along the way however courses like Political Geography, Political Science, International Economics, and Sociology made choosing my major a daunting task. I loved all my classes and more important I could not imagine a major without all of the amazing professors (Peterec, Travis, Longley, Stamos to name a few) who taught them. How was I to choose just one or two departments? Since even double majors at Bucknell are incredibly rigorous, a triple or quadruple major was obviously out of the question!

Fortunately, under the guidance of Professors Dick Peterec and Tom Travis, who became my advisors, my Interdepartmental Major in International Relations was born. It seemed too good to be true, since the IR “majors” custom crafted a course of study that allowed us to take our favorite courses with our chosen professors. Among our group, these “majors” combined several departmental requirements in Geography, Political Science, Economics, Language, Religion and Sociology, depending on the students’ focus and a required Senior Honors Thesis. We were also fortunate at that time to have the month of January to pursue personal interests as a part of “Jan Plan”. Professor Peterec escorted a group of 30+ students to parts of the globe rarely seen by college students at that time. It was still the Cold War Era; the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries were essentially off limits for travel, and a war was raging between Israel and Egypt. But for Professor Peterec (“Petie” to his students) these were only minor problems to overcome. In 1974 he led a trip to the Balkans; in 1975 he led a trip to Rome, Athens, Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula; in 1976 (my senior year) he hit the trifecta and led our group to Czechoslovakia, Austria, Moscow, Poland, East Germany, and Berlin (where we crossed “Check Point Charlie” from East to West and returned to at night to stand behind the Brandenburg Gate and the Berlin Wall on the Communist side so that we’d understand and appreciate the freedom we too often took for granted).

What started forty years ago with our crew of students who wanted to learn all we could about global issues, eventually grew into the IR Department.

Shelley Sternad Dempsey IR ’76
Parent of Connor Dempsey ’10 and Reed Dempsey ’13

IR Goes into Its Second Generation

IR has deep roots at Bucknell. And now, it is officially in its second generation. In May 2013, Reed Dempsey, following in his mother’s footsteps, graduated from Bucknell with a degree in International Relations with a double major in Sociology. Congratulations!

Jason Cons
Assistant Professor of International Relations

Reed Dempsey IR’13 and Shelley Dempsey IR’76 on graduation day
my son Reed Dempsey entered the Class of 2013 and the Global Residential College.

On May 20th I sat proudly on the Quad in the shadow of Coleman Hall and watched Reed graduate with a double major in International Relations and Sociology (Legal Studies Concentration). It was nothing short of a dream come true!

Shelley Sternad Dempsey ‘76
Parent of Connor Dempsey ’10 and Reed Dempsey ’13

The other reason is that one spring day, Professor Paula Davis at the Theatre and Dance Department emailed me and told me that she would be conducting research in Macedonia the summer before I enrolled at Bucknell. She needed someone who could translate for her in the field. I agreed and I first met Professor Paula Davis at my home in Macedonia. A couple of days later, Professor Gary Steiner from the Philosophy Department arrived in Macedonia and we hosted him for an afternoon. After meeting two Bucknell professors at my home and hearing about the plethora of opportunities available at Bucknell, I was excited and could not wait to hop on the plane and get to Lewisburg.

Growing up in Macedonia where unemployment rate has been over 30% for the past two decades and seeing my mother (and other people around us) struggle to find and maintain employment; I became motivated to learn more about economic development.

Stefan Ivanovski ‘12

In Their Own Words:
Stefan Ivanovski, Recipient of the 2012 Bucknell Prize in International Relations

Growing up, my parents always emphasized the importance of quality education, but could not afford to send neither my brother nor I to a private school. Everything started one spring day in 2003. Our father received the news that the Macedonian military was sending him to work for three years in the Netherlands. This meant that we would all move to the Netherlands and my brother and I would be enrolled at AFNORTH International High School, a Department of Defense Dependents School (DoDDS). These schools are on par with some of the best private high schools in the U.S in terms of resources and academic rigor. We were all excited about this new opportunity!

After living for three years in the Netherlands (2003-2006), we moved back to Macedonia and I finished my last two years of high school. I enrolled in an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program at Josip Broz Tito high school. In my senior year, I contacted Mr. DeBacker, my high school counselor from AFNORTH (who by the way is from Pennsylvania) and told him I wanted to study in the U.S. and shared with him my list of universities. He reviewed it carefully and considering that he’s known me for three years, his top recommendation for me was Bucknell University, which was not on my list. I thought to myself, “Bucknell! I’ve never heard of it! Is it any good? Is he sure about this?” At first, I had doubts about Bucknell, but I applied and was accepted. I was thrilled!

The multidisciplinary approach of the IR curriculum appealed to me and I was convinced that taking courses in different departments such as Geography, Economics, History, Political Science and International Relations would inform me better of diverse ways to contribute to sustainable economic development. The reason I chose to study Spanish was more practical. I already read about the growing Spanish-speaking population in the United States, and given that I would be spending at least four years in the U.S., I realized that speaking Spanish would be beneficial.

I studied abroad in my junior year in two Spanish speaking countries that I never visited before, Argentina and Spain. Prior to going to Argentina I did
not know much about the country nor could I speak much Spanish. While in Buenos Aires, I learned that in 2001, Argentina suffered a terrible social, economic and political crisis, which led the country to bankruptcy and thousands of blue-collar factory workers were laid off. This was comparable to the economic situation in Macedonia. What was fascinating to me was the response of the newly unemployed to the crisis. Some workers decided to recover the bankrupt factories and enterprises and turn them into democratic workplaces, i.e. worker cooperatives. So, for one of my classes in Argentina, I wrote a research paper on the recovered worker cooperatives.

In that class I learned about the history of cooperatives in Argentina, but by the end, I had more questions than answers. So, I emailed Professor Watson informing him of my intention to write an honors thesis on the topic. I wanted to work with Professor Watson, because I had already taken Theory of International Relations (IR 250) and I was aware of his critical analysis on development issues. I thought that writing an honors thesis under his guidance would best prepare me for graduate studies in the field of economic development and would also help me learn more about worker cooperatives from a critical perspective.

Upon my return to Bucknell in my senior year I started working with Professor Watson (IR), Professor Roncallo (IR) and Professor Kristjanson-Gural (Economics) on this thesis. One of the most rewarding experiences of writing the thesis was the individual work with professors. I was treated as a peer and I could see that the professors pushed me outside of my comfort-zone to think more profoundly and critically about worker cooperatives in Argentina. They advised, supported and provided me with resources and constructive criticism that proved very beneficial in the writing process. I learned that writing a thesis is a tedious and slow process. I once complained to Professor Kristjanson-Gural about the writing process and he told me: “Stefan, there are two speeds in writing: slow, and very slow.” He was right. Getting the thesis done required a major time commitment and determination; however it was a great learning experience.

Looking back, choosing to major in IR has shaped my Bucknell experience in a positive way. I learned to speak and write Spanish fluently, I graduated with Honors in International Relations and received Magna Cum Laude. I was able to travel to different parts of the United States, study abroad in Argentina and Spain as well as complete a Davis Projects for Peace initiative in Puerto Rico. During all four years, I worked hard because I saw these learning opportunities and what’s more I was motivated by the intellectual engagement of both my professors and my peers. In the last semester of my senior year I could see that the hard work was starting to pay off. First of all, I successfully defended my honors thesis on April 13, 2012. A week later, on April 20, 2012, I was very proud to be inducted as a Phi Beta Kappa member and to receive the Bison Award for Excellence in Co-curricular Activities on April 22, 2012. I also received four other awards at graduation.

I would like to send my special thanks to my family for their unconditional support and Professors Paula Davis and Gary Steiner for always supporting me even when I was not aware. Moreover, I would like to thank Professor Watson for being my adviser, professor and a mentor and for inspiring me to push myself beyond the comfort zone. I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Manuel Delgado for inspiring me to travel to Argentina and Spain and contributing to my understanding and appreciation for the Spanish language and culture.

Without the advice and support of Mr. DeBacker, I would not have even heard of Bucknell. I thank Mr. DeBacker for recommending me to such a wonderful institution and supporting me during the application process and my four years at Bucknell.

‘Ray Bucknell!’

Stefan Ivanovski ’12

North Korea's Aggression

As North Korea and the United States edge closer to conflict, Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations Zhiqun Zhu is keeping close tabs on the developing situation. Zhu, the MacArthur Chair of East Asian Politics at Bucknell, discusses his interpretation of Kim Jong Un's regime and its goals in escalating the conflict.

Question: When did the most recent round of aggression by North Korea begin?

Answer: This latest round began in December last year, when North Korea launched its three-stage rocket. After that the United States and other countries were talking about sanctions against North Korea. But before those sanctions were introduced in February, North Korea conducted a nuclear test, for the third time, and this time around the United States sought the help of China, and the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed a resolution condemning North Korea and introducing new
sanctions. So I think to a large extent North Korea's latest sabre-rattling is a response to the new sanctions introduced by the United Nations.

Q: What does North Korea hope to accomplish by this sabre-rattling?

A: They really want is attention and direct talks with the United States. I don't think it's their intention to stage a war or attack America, because they know it's going to be suicidal for them. Their real intention is to reach out to the United States, hoping that the United States will respond. They want a peace treaty with the United States and diplomatic recognition from the United States.

Q: How close to armed conflict is the Korean peninsula?

A: It's very dangerous right now, actually. North Korea has become more belligerent than before, and the United States is also getting more prepared, launching its new missile defense program and dispatching more ships and fighter jets to the region. In addition, North Korea has cancelled the 1953 armistice and declared that it is in a state of war with South Korea. So the situation is really very tense — very dangerous. If there is any miscalculation on either side, a real conflict may break out.

But while I'm getting concerned, I also have confidence that the United States, China, South Korea and, to a lesser extent, Russia and Japan, have the political will and wisdom to work together to control the situation. I suspect that between North Korea and the United States, you never know, maybe privately they are already talking to each other, and I'm pretty sure Chinese and North Korean officials are talking to each other, so diplomacy is likely already taking place. North Korea is a nation that needs to save face, and I do not believe it will step back without getting something in return.

Q: What role can China play in de-escalating the conflict?

A: China has a sort of in-between role, but China also has its own dilemma. It is unrealistic to rely solely on China in this situation. If China puts a lot of pressure on North Korea, the Kim regime may collapse, which may lead to a huge number of North Korean refugees crossing into China. That will create tremendous political, economic, social and humanitarian challenges for China. I think if we try to alleviate some of China's concerns, maybe China will be more willing to help. In this a stable and strong relationship between the United States and China is critical. If the United States and China are not on good terms, China will be less willing to cooperate; less willing to help the United States to deal with the North Korea problem.

Q: Is the United States taking this threat as seriously as it should?

A: I think the United States has done enough to prepare for the worst scenario by sending more warships and troops over there and by building new missile programs, but these are the military dimensions. I don't think it's a good idea simply not to talk to North Korea and adopt the ostrich policy, pretending that North Korea doesn't exist. No matter how much you dislike North Korea's young leader Kim Jong Un, you still need to talk to the regime directly, otherwise the problem will persist and North Korea will continue to provoke the United States and South Korea. They may even start a low-level conflict which will easily escalate into a larger scale war, so it's advisable for the United States to do more than military preparedness.

Q: How has North Korea changed since Kim Jong Un took power?

A: Not much. He initially appeared to be a little bit different from his father in terms of leadership style. He would bring his wife along to attend public events, he appeared to be a more people-friendly leader and even allowed people to hug him, embrace him, and he also introduced limited changes in the capital. For example, now you can use cell phones, and women can wear pants instead of skirts. But these are not real political or economic reforms.

So in terms of whether he is a reformer, I highly doubt it. He appears to be the same type of dictator as his father and grandfather, the difference is he is very young and he has not taken full control of the political system, and maybe he is still heavily influenced by the military and the people around him, and this latest round of sabre-rattling may well be manipulation by the military generals who want North Korea's policy called Songun, or military-first, to continue. So I think much of what is happening now is really for domestic consumption, and in that sense he is no different from his father or grandfather.

Matt Hughes
Department of Communications

IR Faculty News
Professor Cons attended a conference on the Politics of Materiality, hosted by the Sociology
Department at the New School for Social Research where he presented a paper titled “Spatial Corruptions: Material Politics and Sovereignty along the India-Bangladesh Border”. He also gave the key note address at the Alpha Kappa Delta (Sociology honors society) induction at Washington College, titled: Microcredit: A View from the Village. He has also wrapped up work on two major writing and editorial projects. The first is a special issue for the journal Political Geography titled “Geographies at the Margins: Borders in South Asia,” which will include a piece of his own as well as an introduction coauthored with Romola Sanyal (Urban Planning, London School of Economics). The second is a special issue for the journal Ethnography titled: Fieldwork(ers): Rethinking the Role of Research Assistants in the Production of Ethnographic Knowledge which will include a sole authored piece as well as an introduction coauthored with Townsend Middleton (Anthropology, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill). Additionally, a piece co-authored with Elizabeth Dunn (Geography, University of Colorado) titled “Aleatory Sovereignty and the Rule of Sensitive Space” was accepted for publication in the journal Antipode. This summer, I will be participating in a new study on shrimp aquaculture and land grabbing in coastal Bangladesh.

Professor Uçar presented her research at two conferences. She attended the International Studies Association annual conference in San Francisco in April, where she presented a paper, was a participant in a roundtable entitled “Diffusion of Global Studies and International Studies Programs – Challenges and Opportunities in the Design, Delivery and Administration of Interdisciplinary Programs,” chaired a panel on Discrimination and Xenophobia in Europe, and served as a discussant on Mass Opinion and Democratic Norms in the European Union. She was elected vice-chair of ISA’s International Education section and will serve as its program chair for the upcoming ISA conference. In May, she attended the biennial conference of the European Union Studies Association in Baltimore where she presented a paper entitled “Linking Berlin and Brussels: Nongovernmental Organizations Engage the European Union on Asylum.”

Alumni News

In this section, we highlight news from our alumni. Let us know what you are doing by sending us an email to international-relations@bucknell.edu. We would also welcome short submissions on projects or perspectives.

Adam Straubel ’11. My mentor through high school hired me to be the Development Director of a nonprofit youth center for at-risk kids in Coatesville, PA, the same one I attended growing up and interned at my junior/senior summer. We’ve been in a capital campaign for about a year trying to raise the funds needed to purchase and renovate an abandoned grocery store in town. We raised about 1.6m of the 2m we need for project, which is pretty exciting. Construction is set to start in March, so we have pretty tight deadlines. I’m probably going to step away from my role once the campaign is finished, but until then, I’m having a wonderful time.

Of Note: Campus News and Events

Sunil Gulati to graduates: Find your passion, remember your compassion. The president of the United States Soccer Federation addressed Bucknell’s 163rd Commencement.

Bucknell archives reveal rare photograph of first Chinese American. Wong Chin Foo was the University’s first Chinese and second international student.

A sustainable future, beyond environmental concerns. A daylong symposium brought together professors and experts from across disciplines to address sustainability and global change.

Building a brighter future. A pair of sophomores created Bucknell’s first-ever service-learning trip to China, hoping to address the educational inequalities that plague parts of their home country.

Eight days in Japan. A recent grant-funded trip to Japan allowed students to explore the country’s culture, language and its struggles with sustainability.

Sturm Dialogue March 7: ‘Economy Inequality and Democracy’. The Doug Sturm Dialogue, “Is Economy Inequality Undermining Democracy?” was held March 7.

Bucknell ranks high on Peace Corps’ 2013 Top Colleges list.

Ask the Experts: Obama’s second term.