

Undergraduate Research Center Newsletter

June 15, 2007

Calendar June 2- June 9

June 15, 2007

President Prager's Social
Dinner at Annenberg President House

June 16, 2007
8:15 am-late
afternoon



San Gabriel Mountains Hike with Prof. Chris Craney
Meet at 8:15 at parking lot between Biology and
Chemistry buildings
Lunch provided

June 17, 2007
open end



Colors of Light and Stone
[Bowers Museum](#)
2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana
Arguably the most important private gem collection in the
United States.

June 17, 2007
4:30 pm



Let Loose in Los Feliz
Friends of the LA River walk
Meet at the Guardians of the River Gate, adjacent to the
parking lot of Eatz restaurant at 3207 Los Feliz Blvd in North
Atwater Village
www.folar.org/

June 20, 2007
12:00 noon

Gwen Hill, [Making Yourself Competitive for National
Fellowships and Scholarships](#)
Samuelson Pavilion, includes lunch

June 22, 2007
10:00 am-8:00 pm

Pacific Asia Museum Free Day
46 N Los Robles AVE
Pasadena CA 91105
<http://www.pacificasiamuseum.org>

June 22, 2007
6:30 pm



Norton Simon screening of "The Chess Players"
Norton Simon Museum of Art
411 W. Colorado Boulevard
Pasadena, CA 91105-1825
626.449.6840
<http://www.nortonsimon.org/>

June 22, 2007
7:00 pm

Student Film Festival
Alumni Auditorium, includes snacks

My favorite skits: *Mac Store Geeks give a presentation in which they have to use one employees personal laptop that features some compromising media. *A Vietnamese motivational speaker teaches the crowd how to get what they want. *An office mail room clerk performs a surprising song at a company party."

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"This is a fun thing to do in L.A. You'll be amazed at how quick the performers are and how funny their performances can be. They perform live skits - some of them created on the fly. They also like audience participation - so don't be shy. It's really upbeat, the performers have a lot of energy - and it's a small room - so it's infectious. At some points I've found myself staring at some of the actors and realizing that I've seen them in various TV shows and movies - it's refreshing to see them strut their stuff and show off just how talented they are."

Students' Corner

Matthew Hunter

**An Examination of the "Special Political Relationship"
between the United States and Great Britain**



1. Your topic strikes me as especially timely. How long is the period that you are examining in your research?

The time period I'm focusing on is the last hundred years, but obviously the last twenty five, with the exception of World War II, are probably the most important. I say the last hundred years because the turn of the century was really when Britain began to decline as the global super power and the United States began to take its place. A strengthening of the relationship goes back further; In 1880 Queen Victoria presented President Hayes with the Resolute Desk-the desk in the oval office-and later President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Lord Salisbury actually developed a warm relationship, as Britain sided with the United States in the Spanish-American War while the U.S. sided with Britain in the Boer War (despite overwhelming support for the Boers amongst the population). The concept of Naval Supremacy cannot be underestimated, and President Roosevelt's decision to enlarge the American Navy was paramount in the transition from Britain to the U.S. as the world's superpower.

2. How would you characterize the stance of Britain towards the war in Iraq? What, in your opinion, are the chief factors that influenced Tony Blair's support of the US military involvement despite the fierce opposition of France, Germany, and Russia?

Britain has obviously been a great friend to the United States over the years, probably most importantly in Iraq. Most polls I've seen show British public support for the war mirroring that in the United States: when it looked like it would be easy, everyone jumped on the bandwagon, and as soon as it got difficult, most people decided they were against it. The interesting thing is that Britain has suffered far fewer casualties than the U.S. has, and their troops are primarily in Basra, a

relatively safe part of the country. To my knowledge, the British haven't lost more than 200 combat troops.

But the war is a testament to an influential political concept in Britain, one which was started by Churchill and reached its popularity peak during Thatcher's mandate; **Britain's destiny is tied to that of the United States.** There are no two countries in the world that are real "major players" politically that are as culturally similar as the U.S. and Britain. (I exclude Canada and Australia because those countries do not have the international influence or military power that the U.S. and Britain have). America's institutions are inherently British, obviously. Tony Blair is a strong believer in this.



Blair was advocating fighting "human rights" wars even before George Bush became president. Blair was instrumental in prodding President Clinton to send troops to the Balkans to stop Slobodan Milosovic. Clinton was reluctant to do this. When the UN wanted to raise an army to send to Sierra Leone, Blair was the only leader from a major industrial power who willingly committed troops. In President Bush, Tony Blair found a friend who would stand with him on spreading democracy and fighting for human rights. And Blair really understands the importance of the U.S./U.K. relationship. But Britain's importance to the United States might even be more significant- Blair is a much better diplomat than Bush, has more experience and a more refined vision, and has provided the United States with legitimacy. America as a nation would be in a lot worse standing had Britain not stood by us.

Interestingly, Blair had never much cared for Jacques Chirac or Gerhard Shroeder, so Bush wasn't intimidated to stir opposition from France and Germany. I think this also goes back to the cultural issue; most Britons, as well as the British government, consider themselves closer to the United States and the Commonwealth countries than they feel to continental Europe, especially since the end of WWII. Charles De Gaulle really sandbagged Britain on two occasions when they were trying to join the European community, so I think there remains a lot of bad blood.

Another interesting aspect of the international opposition issue is that all of the **people who opposed the Iraq war are no longer in office, and the ones who did are still there;** Shroeder got booted and was replaced with the much more U.S. friendly Angela Merkel. Chirac is now gone, and was replaced by Nicholas Sarkozy who mentioned in his acceptance speech that the U.S. was a friend, and diplomatic relations need to be repaired. (It was also reported that before the election Sarkozy had apologised to administration officials during a trip to Washington for French "arrogance"). Paul Martin in Canada got replaced by Stephen Harper, another friend of the U.S.

Blair was obviously reelected, as was Howard in Australia, Koizumi in Japan (who has since been replaced by the even more conservative Abe, who has carried on Koizumi's policies), Jan Peter Balkenende in the Netherlands, Anders Fogh Rasmussen in Denmark. The United States has been enthusiastically supported in Eastern Europe, and those countries have been very gracious in lending support to the war. One need only look at the reception Bush got in Albania over the weekend... they like him more there than they do in Texas. (*They stole his wallet, Matthew!)

The two exceptions were Italy and Spain. In Spain, Jose Maria Aznar, who was a friend of Bush's and a supporter of the war (Spain sent a lot of troops to Iraq), blew it for his party by blaming the Madrid train bombings on ETA. Polls showed that his party was in a position for re-election, but they lost it for themselves. The other was Silvio Berlusconi in Italy. But Italian elections are a crap-shoot, and he only lost by a tiny margin. He was also marred by charges of corruption.



3. Tony Blair is leaving his office to (most likely) Gordon Brown on the 27th of this month. One of the first issues on the new prime minister's agenda is going to be the withdrawal of British troops from Iraq. What, as far as you are informed, is Brown's position on the withdrawal? How will Great Britain's disentanglement from the war will affect the ongoing heated debate on troops withdrawal in the U.S. government and public?

I doubt that a Gordon Brown premiership will bring much change. I don't think he'll want to "rock the boat." Bush might not be as close to Brown as he was to Blair, but Gordon Brown has been a good soldier in the Blair premiership for a lot of years. I think Blair has put the Iraq expedition on cruise control, and minus a major disaster there will not be a whole lot policy-wise for Brown to have to do. The media has completely misreported the British leaving Iraq, in any case. Britain has 7,500 combat troops there and is drawing that number down to 5,000. They aren't packing their bags and counting their losses. It looks bad in the United States, naturally, and won't help drum up support for the war, but it's really a testament to the good work the British army has done and the security in Southern Iraq.

4. What methodology are you planning to use to utilize the analyses of historical diplomatic relationship between the countries to make political predictions about its future development?

I'm doing a lot of reading...I read a good newspaper every day, and I try to read at least one British daily (usually the Daily Telegraph). I have come up with a reading list, and the authors include historians and politicians who have been involved in Anglo-American relations. Autobiographies are a great first-hand source as well. Interviews are equally as important. I've made contact with Lord Anthony Giddens in London, and Bob Peirce, the Consul General from Britain here in L.A... Peirce made some good suggestions to add to my reading list.

I'm also fortunate to be working with two great professors. Amb. Shearer has been a great guide and has many friends with knowledge on the subject. I don't know if there's anyone around who knows more about European politics than Professor Caldwell. Without their help I doubt this project could even get off the ground.

(Ivelina Georgieva)

Check out classes offered by the Politics and DWA departments at

<http://departments.oxy.edu/registrar/catalog/pols.html>

<http://departments.oxy.edu/registrar/catalog/dwa.html>

