

Rutgers AAUP

Emeriti

Reporter

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THE CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

Richard Quaintance

Chair & Professor Emeritus, English

I'm sorry about the delay in this Newsletter reaching you; it's been a busy fall! While continuing to teach at Olli-RU, I've been absorbed in the deliberations and acts of the Rutgers AAUP-AFT's Executive Council, on which as your Chair I get a member's chair. We certainly share President McCormick's gratification, in his September 24 report, with such developments as the Newark campus's growth in diversity of enrollment and programs. But in the face of state underfunding and our increased enrollment, his administration's mounting tuition and fees for students and freezing of faculty salaries threaten the ongoing quality of a Rutgers education. Average class size continues to grow to the point where over-enrolled required courses delay some undergraduates' stay to five years. Underfunded intercampus busing has increased tardy class attendance, while costly new structures rise. Among responses to the President's speech Shanti Tangri voiced concern about possible erosion of our medical benefits. And so on.

When I approached Gerry Pomper about a pre-midterm chat with us on the national political stakes, he *quite understandably* opted for a *post*-election discussion under joint auspices of Emeriti Assembly and Todd Hunt's Retired Faculty Association over lunch at the Rutgers Club November 16. With tips from Shanti, and I hope others of you, I'm assembling a program of fall meetings for us we'll share shortly. Enjoy this season!

Dick Quaintance (requaintance@aol.com)

PEACE IS POSSIBLE:

A PERSPECTIVE ON ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

On March 10, 2010 Professor of English Emeritus Richard Quaintance, President of the Emeriti Assembly, introduced Professor Mazin Qumsiyeh, Bethlehem University, Chair of Palestinian Center, after briefly referring to his own view in 1948 that Israel represented a new kind of state that potentially had a bright future as a model to other nations.

Professor Qumsiyeh began by noting what he views as the incomplete coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by the Western media. He cited what he called "130 years of peaceful resistance" by Arabs to Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine.

He noted the departure of 750,000 Arabs from what is now Israel between 1947 and 1949 and asserted that many Palestinian villages have been deserted or destroyed by military action. About 10-11 million Palestinians (about 70%) are displaced persons. The remainder of Palestine was occupied in 1967.

Much of the talk dealt with the issue of Israeli settlements in what before the 1967 war were Arab areas. Professor Qumsiyeh emphasized what he described as the impact of the settlements on the Palestinians. He said that 80% of their land has been taken from Arabs in the Bethlehem area and that Palestinian areas are becoming increasingly isolated and deprived of water.

Professor Qumsiyeh argued that Israel wishes to make Jerusalem Jewish and described a number of restrictive regulations that are gradually removing Arabs from the city. One Israeli policy requires the destruction of Arab homes built without permits, which are extremely difficult to obtain. Professor Qumsiyeh stated that 25,000 homes have been demolished in the past nine years.

EDITOR:
DONALD BORCHARDT



PREPARING FOR THE INEVITABLE

He interpreted Israeli peace offers as involving the total demilitarization of the Palestinian state, Israeli control of air space, and such critical resources as aquifers. The bottom line, according to Professor Qumsiyeh, is that Israel demands a complete and final end to Palestinian resistance.

Professor Qumsiyeh stated that the Israeli interpretation of a Palestinian state would make it comparable to the Bantustans that were established in the Republic of South Africa during the height of the racist regime there.

He argued that neither side can win the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and asserted that Israeli policies ignore both human rights principles and the rules of international law.

He briefly reviewed political developments during the last years of Ottoman rule and the period of British control between 1917 and 1948. Professor Qumsiyeh blames the British for the violence that began in the 1920s, not only in Palestine but elsewhere in the Middle East. The British rejected Arab demands and carried out significant repression in the 1930s.

Moving forward, Professor Qumsiyeh described the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as a coalition of diverse groups, some of which endorsed violence and many of which did not.

He commented that resistance to the Israelis takes many forms. Indeed, simply living in the West Bank area is a form of resistance.

Professor Qumsiyeh concluded his talk by contending that United States policy with regard to the Palestinian conflict is "the largest impediment to peace in the Middle East," because the United States never attaches conditions to its substantial aid to Israel that might influence Israeli behavior.

Finally, he expressed the view that the wall is not a security measure but rather a technique for holding resources for the benefit of Israelis to the detriment of the Palestinians.

He warned that time is running out for any agreement.

While giving his talk, Professor Qumsiyeh used projected charts, maps, and films to bolster his points.

The presentation was followed by a vigorous discussion. Numerous questions were asked and comments were made by the attentive audience of about thirty-five people.

The invited speaker for the Emeriti Assembly meeting of April 26, 2010 was Professor Deborah Carr, Sociology Department, Rutgers University in New Brunswick. The presentation was made in the conference room of the AAUP-AFT office at 11 Stone Street, New Brunswick. The title of Professor Carr's presentation was "Preparing for the Inevitable: How and Why Americans Prepare for the End of Life."

Our Chairperson, Professor Richard Quaintance, introduced Professor Carr by describing her background and her interests.

Following are notes prepared by Benjamin R. Beede, Secretary of the AAUP-AFT Emeriti Assembly.

Professor Carr stated that she began her end of life studies by examining the experience of widowhood.

She said that Americans are often reluctant to think about death. Only about half the people in the United States have actually done any planning at all for their own end of life. She reviewed the Schiavo case, in which a husband and her parents were at odds about the appropriateness of ending life support for a woman who was in a coma. This situation highlighted the need for end of life planning.

Although most people want to die quickly, dying is generally a slow process that often creates significant financial and emotional problems. The causes of death are relatively stable, but the dying process has been extended by what Professor Carr termed the "medicalization of death."

Most people (about 75%) also want to die at home, but a considerable majority of dying patients expire in hospitals and nursing facilities, not their own homes. Only about 25% actually die at home. Hospice care at home is increasing, but so far it is not too common.

The "Patient Self-Determination Act" passed by congress opened the way for more control by people over their deaths. Living wills and durable power of attorney (or identification of a "health proxy") have become important to document an individual's preferences about their care during the process of dying. They do not always work well for various reasons. Physician compliance with living wills is often low, partly because of conflicts with the families or patients and possible ambiguities in the documents.

Decisions about death are difficult to make in many circumstances, and they may have definite affects on inter-family relationships. Giving durable power of

attorney for health decisions to someone outside the immediate family may help avoid inter-family dissension. Another problem is the tendency even of spouses not to understand their partner's desires and to project their own views on death and dying on the partner, even to the point of acting against that person's wishes. Large numbers of people, such as gays, lesbians, unmarried heterosexual couples, and married couples without children, may have difficulty in designating appropriate health proxies.

Professor Carr recommended that people discuss their wishes about terminal care with relatives and friends to facilitate decision-making at the end of life. One's tolerance for pain and views about the desirable quality of life will play significant parts in crafting instructions about end of life care.

Professor Carr strongly advocates what she calls "public service announcements" that focus on the need to plan the end of life. There is a significant societal impact of the failure of many to plan for end of life. About 30% of Medicare treatment occurs in the last year of life. Much late care is what Professor Carr termed "futile."

Elements that tend to predict one's propensity to plan for end of life are a personal hospital stay, the rather painful death of a spouse or other person of major importance, and a relatively high level of education. Adherence to some religious groups and ethnicity and race are factors that tend to work against end of life planning. African-Americans and Latinos are generally far less likely to engage in end of life planning than whites.

Religion plays a significant role in end of life planning at the individual and the societal level. Certain religions emphasize the desirability of maintaining life as long as possible. Other religions may take a significantly different view. Some people believe that physicians, as experts about illness and death, should make all the end of life care decisions. The educational level of an individual is often an important predictor of whether the person has a living will and durable power of attorney. Level of education has considerable importance, even when religion is considered. Even though a given religious group has a strong, well-known set of principles regarding end of life, the better educated members of the group are rather likely to have living wills and durable power of attorney.

Soon after the presentation Professor Carr provided an extensive group of materials to members of the audience through email.

Professor Carr encouraged active participation by the audience, and those in attendance obliged by asking many questions and making a number of observations.

**AN INTERVIEW WITH SHIRLEY GEISMAR,
Participant in activities of AAUP-AFT Emeriti
Assembly; Married to Ludwig Geismar
By Isabel Wolock, Treasurer,
AAUP-AFT Emeriti Assembly**

In which professional field did you work prior to retirement?

I worked in Social Work -- however, never as a therapist but within institutions or organizations.

What was the nature of the training/education you received in order to qualify for your chosen career?

Part of the education was general -- a resume of needy populations, of legislation, of the roles that social workers had filled within the United States and in England, as our structures were inherited from the English Poor Laws. However, as I had assumed that I would be working within a medical setting - most probably a hospital - I took advantage of a medical specialty wherein we learned about ailments and their consequences on the patient, something about hospital hierarchies and the role of the social worker therein, and also about public health legislation. (I remember reading a good deal about the English model of Public Health Care.) Outside the classroom I spent time in field work. I believe it was three days a week.

One of my patients was an elderly black man who was an amputee and wanted desperately to live with his daughter when he was discharged. One of the problems was that she refused to take him into her home and neither would budge -- he refusing any other alternative and she continually saying no to my entreaties. The problem intensified, and he remained in the hospital at considerable county expense. While I was trying to untie the Gordean knot I read the chart and realized that the attending surgeon, once the reimbursements from the county had stopped, did not continue seeing him. Months had gone by without a doctor's observance. I told my supervisor and she, cognizant of her position within the hospital, did not contact the surgeon directly but telephoned the hospital's head physician. I believe he got chewed out as he deserved. But the history of the discharge of the elderly black man was not solved during my tenure.

Another hospital episode I shall never forget was the case of the Jamaican woman who insisted she had worms in her stomach. While I was in the room a young resident appeared, holding a strange looking contraption made up of what looked like a plunger attached to a stethoscope. The resident told her he had an instrument which would kill all the worms. He held it to her

abdomen, said some mumbo jumbo words and then seriously asked her if the worms had quieted down. "Yes," she said. He continued applying the apparatus until she agreed with him that they had been "killed" or "conquered", whichever words he had applied. She was discharged the next day -- although the problems that had caused the "infestation" had not been uncovered.

What kind of experiences or situations led to your decision to pursue this career?

When I was six, in the first grade, I became ill with osteomyelitis, a severe infection of the bone, affecting one of my legs. For six months I was immobilized with my leg on a pulley pointed toward the ceiling, with the hopes that the infection would "drip" out of the leg and into a tube -- and miraculously it worked. (There was no medication for it during the thirties.) During that time the nurses and aides were my only companions -- there was no TV in those days. I guess that I wanted to pattern my own behavior after them, individuals I not only admired but whom I loved, and who gave their lives to others in dire distress. Although I did not work in a hospital after my education, I did work on behalf of those who needed help of one kind or another.

What kinds of positions did you hold after you completed your training/education?

I worked in a facility for the retarded, a large rural-like campus near Princeton. It had been built in the last century or so, when society was involved in hiding its retarded or mentally ill. I also worked for the state program of Medicaid which found Nursing Homes for geriatric patients who could not afford private facilities. It was my job to visit those Homes that accepted Medicaid patients (not all do) to ensure that social programs to which they were entitled were actually being carried out. Later I joined a small staff that made up a child advocacy organization for New Jersey youth that was situated in Newark but that worked for the entire state. I also was a state worker who was involved in setting up a respite program for geriatric patients where they could find care at a nursing home for a short period of time, so that their regular caregivers could get some time off. And my last position, in the twilight of my career, was working with Isabel Wolock in a program examining child protective cases that had been reported to the Division of Youth and Family Services as abused or neglected but had not been deemed as such when investigated by state workers.

Which positions did you like the best and for what reason?

I liked the child advocacy job the best, because it employed other abilities I had -- writing, assembling data, public speaking.

I was especially elated when the Medically Needy Program was enacted, one upon which I had worked very hard. It enlarged or made much more elastic the traditional Medicaid Program which had extremely low income levels at which one could receive medical aid. The changed program targeted children and the elderly, those with incomes slightly above the stringent levels set for the regular Medicaid program, but considerably below the ability to afford private medical care. There is no way I can describe the elation we all felt because the odds that we would succeed were so unobtainable. To this day I treasure the photo of Governor Kean congratulating us.

In most social work fields you are able, if things go "right," to effect changes or help one individual -- at best, two. It is most unusual to feel that you have been effective in changing society for an entire class of individuals!

Another career that you pursued was as an artist. Tell me more about how this came about, how long you have been painting, and the kind of art you like best.

I have been fooling around with pencils and paper all my life. But then, I had many loves -- writing, singing, acting. One of the most difficult choices I had to make came about in my sophomore year in high school. There were only two "free" periods during the day -- I had already chosen creative writing as one and now there was the wrenching task of choosing between music and art. Since I had a very decent second soprano voice and had been encouraged by my singing teachers to continue, I felt a bit like Jacob when he was commanded to sacrifice his son. (An over wrought comparison I know, but I was very dramatic in those days.) Coming down on the side of art was a decisive move, and it has been art ever since.

It was pencil, charcoal - drawing - in the beginning, and usually of models. Of course when we went overseas to Israel shortly after our marriage, I could not find time or even the inclination to draw. I remember that I had taken along a set of oil paints in our luggage but soon realized it was futile and gave the set away. Shortly after we returned I joined an art class in St. Paul (we moved back to Minnesota, my home) and began to experiment with oils -- but still realistic, models primarily. (We were on the top floor of an old Victorian building; I'll always remember when Ludwig came to fetch me home while we were all working with a nude model; we heard the footsteps coming up the stairs, a pause, and then a hurried retreat down the old wooden staircase. It was obvious that he had started to enter and immediately did an about face when he saw our subject.)

To make a long story short, I did not continue seriously until I retired.

Suddenly having time -- in the beginning it seems to a new retiree that the days will never end -- meant that I could try to take lessons with a REAL full-time artist and I found such - Micheal Madigan - in Hamilton, NJ, near Trenton. With his help I began to experiment with acrylics, a medium that dried much faster than oil and with which you can get a wide range of unusual textures. And gone was reality while in came brilliant, wonderful color. The beginning was difficult and many times I swore I would never return to his studio, for it appeared that in attempting non-representation I was throwing away anything I had ever done before. However, with his help I overcame those periods of doubt and got to a point where I entered competitions, was viewed in many and actually sold - SOLD - paintings.

Now, what type of art do I like the best? I am actually open to anything -- although I admit that I do not care much for the paintings of saints or religious motifs. And some of the Warhol paintings are not my favorites. But I love sculpture and crafts as well as what is called fine art. And believe that many others feel exactly as I do.

FANTASY DOCUMENTS

"Fantasy Documents and the Lack of a Worst-Case Imagination," was a presentation by Professor Lee Clarke, Department of Sociology at Rutgers University, held at the AAUP-AFT office in New Brunswick on May 19, 2010.

Professor Richard Quaintance briefly described Professor Clarke's background and his interests. Professor Clarke received an M.A. and a Ph.D. from the University of New York, Stony Brook. Most of his academic career has been at Rutgers. He has won a number of awards, and one of his books, *Worst Cases: Terror and Catastrophe in the Popular Imagination*, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

He discussed what he termed "probabilistic thinking" and the need for more "possibilistic thinking." Bureaucracies must deal with problems and, therefore, they must prepare plans. They can deal reasonably well with a limited range of *possible* crises, but they are often unable to envisage extreme *possibilities* that can nevertheless happen. This kind of "probabilistic thinking" is now equated with rationality, and it is dominant in disaster planning. "Possibilistic thinking" concentrates on the consequences of events. Professor Clarke accurately predicted the *possibility* of the Katrina disaster, for example.

Professor Clarke used "Pascal's wager" as an example of Possibilism. Pascal argued that the existence of God could not be proved by logic, but the consequences of

ignoring God if He did exist were so severe that it was wise to believe in Him and to follow His teachings as stated in the Bible.

Judgments made are often out of sync with *probabilities*. Buying lottery tickets is an act of irrationality, for example, because of the small chance of winning a prize. When the consequences of doing or not doing something are high, however, looking at *possible* events is worthwhile, even imperative. The elements of "risk" are both "probability" and "consequences," as shown below:

risk = the probability of a given occurrence
x the consequences of it occurring

One of the results of organizations failing to make complete assessments of *possible* problems is their issuance of "fantasy documents" as a form of symbolic behavior. Such statements suggest that the consequences of a given event have been thought through, and fully appropriate preventive measures have been taken.

Fantasy documents embody policies or procedures that have little chance of working, and, thus, their existence can create unrealistic expectations.

The statement by the White Star steamship company about the seaworthy nature of its liner the *Titanic* is an example of a fantasy document. In reality, there were various problems with the *Titanic* including an insufficient number of lifeboats. Another example of fantasy documents are contingency plans, such as the plan for the evacuation of New York in the event of a nuclear attack. Professor Clarke's observations of and theories about such efforts have been examined in detail in his book, *Mission Improbable: Using Fantasy Documents to Tame Disaster*.

One problem in planning and executing responses to disasters is the frequent use of remedies that worked in some situations on a different scale without assessing the usefulness of a similar response in a different situation.

Worst case scenario planning can create unrealistic explanations, too, of course. Claims that a particular kind of disastrous event can occur need to be examined carefully, because they may be used for ulterior purposes by the person or group that puts forth a given disaster theory.

Nevertheless, because there are real-world consequences for the choices made by individuals and institutions, planning for "possible" challenges must be done.

POOL PARTY

On August 3, 2010, Isabel and Mel Wolock hosted the annual pool party attended by Emeriti members and spouses, friends, and members of the AAUP-AFT Office Staff. Isabel and Mel initiated this event several years ago, inviting all to meet in their backyard by the swimming pool at their Metuchen home. A good time was had by all. Some took a swim, and all enjoyed the food and beverages in the relaxing outdoor environment with picnic table and casual chairs. This year, a special dessert cake inscribed with "Happy Retirement Shanti" was provided. Our Chairperson, Richard, led everyone in singing "Happy Retirement to You" as Shanti Tangri stood smiling after his devoted service as Chairperson for more than five years. The beautiful afternoon was filled with friendly conversation among all those who attended. Among those present was former AAUP Staff Secretary Arlene Rosinski who has returned to live in New Jersey after living in North Carolina following her retirement several years ago. A pleasant treat, especially for those who remember her fine work and dedication to the faculty at Rutgers University.

DUES TIME

September is the month for all members of the Emeriti Assembly to pay the annual dues. Please renew your membership by using the form at the end of this newsletter. If you have not yet become a member, now is the time. Welcome!

UPCOMING EVENT:

"The Election of 2010 – An Analysis and Discussion"
Tuesday, November 16 – 9:30 a.m.
The Rutgers Club, 199 College Ave., New Brunswick

Gerald M. Pomper, Board of Governors Professor of Political Science at the Eagleton Institute of Politics and Emeriti Assembly member, has agreed to share his insights into what happened in America on November 2 and what the results may mean for the future.

This program is co-sponsored by the Retired Faculty Association. Reserve for yourself and guests at 732-932-3807 or thunt@rutgers.edu.

Below is a list of organizations and their contact information including web sites you may find useful:

Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters, AAUP-AFT
11 Stone Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1113
Phone: 732-964-1000
Fax: 732-964-1032
E-mail: aaup@rutgersaaup.org
www.rutgersaaup.org

Sign up with Rutgers AAUP-AFT's Action Center:
<http://www.unionvoice.org/rutgersaaupaft/home.html>

American Association of University Professors
1133 Nineteenth Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-737-5900
Fax: 202-737-5526
E-mail: aaup@aaup.org
www.aaup.org

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-879-4400
www.aft.org

AFT's Web Page for Retirees:
<http://www.aft.org/yourwork/retirees/>

Rutgers University's Web Page on Retiree Services:
<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/ben/RetireeServices.htm>

AARP
601 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20049
Phone: 1-888-OUR-AARP (1-888-687-2277)
www.aarp.org

AARP NJ
Forrestal Village
101 Rockingham Row
Princeton, NJ 08540
Phone: 1-866-542-8165 (toll-free)
Fax: 609-987-4634
E-mail: njaarp@aarp.org
Web site: <http://www.aarp.org/states/nj/>

**NJ Department of Treasury
Division of Pension & Benefits**
Links for retirees:
<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/retiree-home.htm>

MISSION AND MEMBERSHIP

The Mission of the Emeriti Assembly is to sustain and enhance the personal, intellectual and University interests of retired faculty. These interests will be met through meetings, special programs, a communications network, and work with other groups concerned with retiree issues. All retired faculty individuals, who are members of AAUP-AFT, are eligible for full membership. Non-voting, Associate Membership is available to retired faculty who are not AAUP-AFT members.

Membership extends from September through August. If you are not a paid member you may fill in the application form below. Your membership enables us to continue to publish the newsletter and make plans for the activities during the year. Membership in the Emeriti Assembly also entitles you to an associate membership in the Rutgers AAUP-AFT Chapters. Some Emeriti also continue AAUP National dues and membership.

Name _____ Telephone () _____
Street Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____ E-mail Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is my check for \$10.00 payable to Rutgers AAUP Emeriti Assembly.
<input type="checkbox"/> NEW member 2010-11 <input type="checkbox"/> RENEWING membership 2010-11
Return to Rutgers AAUP-AFT, 11 Stone Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1113