

*Rutgers AAUP*

*Emeriti*

# Reporter

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**THE CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER**  
**Elfriede Schlesinger, Chair**  
**Professor Emerita, Social Work**

As I sit here, looking at the remnants of the disappointing snow of January 2015, I ponder on how the Emeriti fared in the Fall of 2014. It was a busy semester with our main focus on recruiting a range of highly qualified speakers to speak to us on a variety of issues. Other matters also required our attention, including recruiting of new retirees, responding to requests for information about retiree perks and benefits for our new fellow emeriti – those retiring from the medical school, and initiating social relationships with the AAUP-AFT, who share their quarters with us.

As has been true in the many years past, the speakers who we invited were better and more interesting than any one group could hope for. We started with a number of lectures targeted to the major events in the world – the war in Gaza presented by Dr. Azzan Yadin-Israel, and a talk by Professor Hooshang Amirahmadi that analyzed historical perspectives and events in the wider Middle East. Reflecting the group's decision that we enjoy diverse, perhaps even disparate topics, we heard from our own Judy Stern who departed from the focus on international events and spoke about "Traumatic Brain Injury: An Effect and Cause of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse." Our last meeting of the year was devoted to partying.

In planning for the annual holiday festivities, we met with the AAUP-AFT Executive Director Patrick Nowlan and decided on a joint party, drawn on both of our treasuries and talents, with the approval of AAUP-AFT President Lisa Klein. Had we evaluated the resulting event formally, I think we all would have gotten very high marks. We had a glorious luncheon, music and some remarks about our groups. Having a joint event was a first.

A number of other issues came to our attention. I had found it easy to forget that Rutgers is in the throes of major changes, not the least being the merger with the Medical School. We were quickly reminded when Emeriti from the Medical School, now Emeriti of Rutgers, approached us to learn about the benefits to which Rutgers Emeriti are entitled. Several asked to discuss their situation with us. We learned that they have a long way to go for their benefits to match ours. We agreed to maintain communications.

I am glad to report that our membership has remained stable. Recruitment efforts were made. All newly retired faculty were invited to join us. Additional recruitment efforts are under consideration. Also under discussion is the possibility of developing our own website.

As this newsletter is being written, there are discussions under way to step up our recruiting efforts and to continue to think about new developments.

Again, I thank all of you, emeriti and staff, for all of your efforts in assuring that our group maintains the work that we need to do to keep the group going.

**EDITOR:**  
**DONALD BORCHARDT**



## 44+2 YEARS AT RUTGERS: QUO VADIS?

Dr. Joseph Potenza has been a leading figure among Rutgers faculty and administrators for many years. After having been graduated from Harvard University with a Ph.D., he served in the United States Army as a physics researcher and separated from active duty as a captain.

His Rutgers career has been long and highly distinguished. Dr. Potenza has received considerable recognition for his successes. In 1996, he became a University Professor of Chemistry. He was cited three times for his outstanding teaching, receiving the prestigious Warren Susman Award among others. His non-Rutgers awards have also been numerous, including an Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship.

Notwithstanding his many years as an administrator, he has pursued extensive research in chemistry, authoring in excess of a hundred and seventy articles in many areas of his field. In 2012, this exceptional record led to his being named an American Chemical Society Fellow.

During his talk to the Emeriti Assembly on June 24, 2014, Dr. Potenza chronicled his Rutgers career as a professor and service as a department chair and as both a dean and provost at the administrative level. Using what may well be his unique perspective of developments at Rutgers, moreover, he described and analyzed the considerable changes that occurred during his nearly half century of service.

Most members of the Emeriti Assembly served as Rutgers faculty members over time periods that paralleled, at least roughly, Dr. Potenza's years at the university, and, therefore, they were well positioned to participate in the lively discussion that followed his presentation.

One of the major changes at Rutgers in the course of several past decades that Dr. Potenza viewed as particularly beneficial was the controversial consolidation of academic departments on the New Brunswick-Piscataway Campus in the 1980s. That consolidation has gradually led to fundamental transformations in the role of the undergraduate colleges in New Brunswick.

Dr. Potenza also applauded the recruitment of what are termed "world class scholars" in various departments to improve the quality of teaching and, especially, research. That assertion sparked a number of comments during the discussion. Misgivings were expressed about the possibility that some "world class scholars" may not fulfill the expectations of the university and their departments that were anticipated on the basis of their prior accomplishments. Such appointments put a good deal of pressure on the limited funds available for faculty

salaries, moreover, in the view of some Emeriti Assembly members.

Lastly, Dr. Potenza spoke to Nobel Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner E.O. Wilson's book, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* and how the Chemistry Department at New Brunswick is an example of consilience. Chemistry, for example, dramatically changed since he came to Rutgers in 1968, when there were three departments in New Brunswick. The three departments were merged into one department, ultimately named the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, in which many faculty members have joint appointments in disciplines, such as Chemical Engineering, Physics, Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Pharmacy, etc. This would appear to be consilience at work.

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU

A special thank you goes to Isabel and Mel Wolock for the invitation to members of the Emeriti Assembly with spouses and friends to visit their home for a delicious lunch and friendly conversation on August 12, 2014. The Wolocks have done this for many years so that it has become an annual social event we look forward to and remember with pleasure. It was a delightful occasion again and we appreciate the attention given to our members.

The next meeting of the  
Emeriti Assembly is scheduled for  
11:30 a.m. on  
Tuesday, February 17, 2015  
at the AAUP-AFT Office,  
11 Stone Street,  
New Brunswick.  
Professor Emeritus Gordon Schochet  
will speak about  
"Chickens, Chimpanzees, and Lawyers:  
Reinventing and Expanding Rights"

## THE RECENT GAZA CONFLICT

"The Recent Gaza Conflict" was a presentation by Dr. Azzan Yadin-Israel, Associate Professor in Departments of Jewish Studies and Classics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, given in the AAUP-AFT Conference Room at 11 Stone Street, New Brunswick, on September 16, 2014. Following are notes taken at the meeting by Benjamin R. Beede, Secretary of the Emeriti Assembly.

Dr. Assan Yadin-Israel stated that he is not a specialist in contemporary Middle Eastern affairs, and his lecture is not based on personal research.

He does wish to put the highly charged issue into historical contexts. There are several prisms through which various groups view Gaza. Each group, moreover, has internal political problems that further complicate matters.

HAMAS was in a problematic situation in regard to the West Bank and Gaza. There was a dichotomy between HAMAS and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Thus, there was not a monolithic Palestinian movement. HAMAS and the PLO were moving toward co-operation.

In Israel there was friction between the relatively moderate prime minister and the foreign minister. Israel was opposed to a unified Palestine grouping. There were and are groups on the Palestine side that are more extreme than HAMAS. Nevertheless, recent kidnappings were undertaken by HAMAS. Israel responded with relatively heavy artillery fire.

Another prism with which many view the Gaza issue is the Islamist ideology, which is espoused by HAMAS. The revival of Islamist elements has reshaped political alliances in the Middle East. The Muslim Brotherhood has been a powerful force for many years. HAMAS is an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Some Middle Eastern governments did not react strongly to Israel, while others did. Egypt was more moderate, whereas Turkey was not. Israel, in fact, can be seen as a proxy force for moderate Middle Eastern regimes.

There is three-sided conflict in Syria. ISIS, which has a Sunni allegiance, is fighting both the Assad government and some of those rebelling against Assad. The complex situation has brought Iran and the United States to having some shared interests or stakes.

A third prism for analysis consists of the broad political dimensions of the situation, specifically the possibility of

an Israeli/Palestinian compromise on many issues. A question now is whether the situation is working in favor of Israel.

There are various questions intrinsic to the Israeli/Palestinian situation that need to be answered.

Are Israelis bound by race, religion, or other factors? Zionism differs from classical European nationalism, which is based on language and traditional territorial holdings. Judaism is an identity that extends beyond religion, but is it really nationalism?

What are the sources for the various groups? Much of the funding for the Palestinians comes from the Gulf States. Qatar is supportive, but Saudi Arabia is less involved.

How should the territories held by Israel be described? Gaza is no longer occupied territory, but the West Bank is in that category. Gaza is held in a chokehold through the blockade, and this control is much resented by the Palestinians. Israel believes that many resources made available to the Palestinians are being used to construct tunnels and take other measures intended to facilitate incursions and rocket fire.

The phrase "occupied territory" can be used in a neutral or controversial fashion. The West Bank is in legal limbo. It has not been annexed. The Israelis do accept "occupied territory" to designate the West Bank. The application of law there is bifurcated. Ordinary law is used for Israeli citizens, but military rule is in effect of Palestinians.

Most of the West Bank now held by individual Israelis was not purchased. Rather it was seized by the Israeli military forces.

Gaza was described by one of the attendees as a "prison camp." Dr. Yadin-Israel acknowledged that Gaza is a difficulty area for its habitants. Once the Israelis evacuated the area, however, the Palestinian authorities did not focus on benefits for the people of Gaza.

Another comment was that expectations for Israeli behavior tend to be higher than for other Middle Eastern states and groups, and, indeed, countries in other parts of the world. Dr. Yanin-Israel agreed that a double standard is sometimes employed, but, at the same time, Israeli transgressions should not be accepted or condoned.

An attendee suggested that there is a need for increased security for Israel and improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinians. Gaza inhabitants are being "held as hostages," under current conditions.

Overall, Dr. Yadin-Israel is pessimistic about a settlement in the near future. The "two-state" approach has not been implemented for various personal and ideological reasons. Another problem is the refugee issue. Many Palestinians who lived in what is now Israel no longer reside there. In Israel there is greater "religious radicalization" which also affects prospects for a settlement.

## THE NEW GEOPOLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

"The New Geopolitics of the Middle East" is the title of a speech given by Professor Hooshang Amirahmadi at the Emeriti Assembly of the Rutgers Council of AAUP-AFT Chapters on October 21, 2014. Professor Amirahmadi teaches at the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University. Dr. Amirahmadi has a notable record of leadership in the study of Middle Eastern affairs. He has written or edited numerous books and conference proceedings, and he has written as well over two hundred scholarly articles and chapters in books. His career also includes extensive consulting with various organizations, such as the World Bank. The following notes were taken by Benjamin R. Beede, Secretary of the Emeriti Assembly.

My talk this morning will focus on the New Geopolitics of the Middle East. The title suggests that we are witnessing a new politics occurring across the Middle East geography. Geopolitics sits at the intersection of geography, power, and foreign policy.

By NEW I do not mean to suggest that we have already witnessed a complete break from the old and existing geopolitics in the region. The new geopolitics is emerging as the old lingers and perhaps still dominates. In other words, we are in a transition period toward a new geopolitics.

Geopolitics is often focused on exercise of power and foreign policy over the following factors:

1. Demographics
2. Territory and border
3. Natural Resources
4. Climate and Environment
5. Trade Routes and Human Traffic

In the emerging geopolitics, these factors are taking different configurations and significance than under the existing/old geopolitics.

The Middle East territory has for centuries been a crossroad of Europe, Africa and Asia. As such, the region has been a bridge for people, trade and ideas. It was this "bridging" capability that made the region home to many powerful states including Persian, Arab and

Ottoman empires. That same quality of the Middle East is also at the heart of making the region home to the world's three important religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Significantly, and for the purpose of this lecture, the Middle East has also been a territory most attractive to outside powers, including Europeans, Russians and Americans. The colonial Europe, imperial Russia and capitalist America have at various times and with varying degrees dominated the region, and have left lasting, at times devastating, impact on the Middle East territory, people and political economy.

It was almost 100 years ago that the Ottoman Empire, following the World War 1, lost its dominance of the Arab world to the winning European colonial powers. This date, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, marked a turning point in the history of the contemporary Middle East as well as Islam. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Muslim world lost its positive energy and image, a development that continues unabated.

On the basis of a Sykes-Picot map of 1916, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region) was divided into new territories with superficial sizes and borders that also divided people, ethnic groups, religious sects and natural resources such as important rivers. The new map, largely straight lines, had no historical basis or even geographic logic. Its logic was purely political. The new map had one overarching aim: "divide and rule."

Britain, France and Italy then placed these territories under their domination, further isolating them geographically and culturally. This way, the seed of future conflict in the MENA region was well planted by the colonial powers. The inter-state, inter-ethnic, and inter-sectarian conflicts today are the direct products of the European policy of divide and rule.

If WWI ended the Ottoman dominance, WWII became the cause for the collapse of the European colonial dominance. However, before giving independence to the territories they controlled, the European powers created new nations and placed them under the dictatorial control of the pro-European political elite they had trained. This top-down nation-building continues to harm citizenship and civil-society development in the Middle East today.

Meanwhile, the Cold War between the former USSR and the US led to a new division of the world among the two superpowers, dividing the new nations along a new East-West line. This development coincided with two other important changes: the emergence of oil as the main source of world energy and the establishment of the State of Israel. The US then became the guardian of oil and Israel as well as the dictatorial regimes in the Middle East.

Oil, the engine of Western economic development, became a curse for the Middle East people. It now determined everything that happened in the region including growing underdevelopment and violence. Oil led to ever-growing military purchases by the Middle Eastern dictators, increased militarism of the dictators, exploitation of the working people, and suppression of the middle class. It also helped dictators destroy nationalist and democratic movements in the region. Meanwhile, oil led to growing poverty, income and wealth inequality, and dependency on the West. As the super-rich has flooded the West with its money, the super-poor has struggled to survive.

The Establishment of Israel further exacerbated external interventions and local disappointment. In particular, the Arab loss of wars and lands to the new Jewish state became a new source of anger and frustration. The failure to settle the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, coupled with Western stereotyping and racism, failed attempts at reform and revolution, and growing dominance of the local dictators supported by the outside powers, led to a deep sense of humiliation among the Muslim people of the region.

Indeed, the extremists groups such as AL-Qaeda, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, Khorasan Group, the Taliban, the Lebanese Hezbollah and the Hama among others are the direct product of this sense of injustice and humiliation. Specifically, the two forces of local dictatorships and imperial powers are at the root cause of these so-called Jihadist movements, including the ISIS. Even the Islamic Revolution in Iran 35 years ago had a similar root: dictatorship of the Shah and imperial dominance of the US. No wonder that the revolution's top aim was to fight and destroy these two forces.

I say "so-called" Jihadists because the prime mover of the forces like ISIS is not religion but politics. No wonder that they are fighting the US and Britain as well as local dictators (like ones in Iraq and Syria) rather than destroying churches or synagogues. Again, let me impress upon you that the fight in the Middle East today is not religious but political. We are for sure not witnessing the so-called "clash of civilization." Specifically, the fight is about territory, resources, trade routes and human traffics, as well as dignity, identity, independence and self-preservation.

While this distinction between the religious and political nature of the on-going conflict in the Middle East is largely true, it should not mean that the so-called Jihadists are not using Islam to further their cause. It is only unfortunate that this should be the case; and it is even more unfortunate that the Western audience should not be able to distinguish between Islam (the religion), Muslims (the greedy individual) and Islamic territories (a complex of geography and culture) as well as between the political wars and religious conflicts.

However, while the conflict with ISIS is a political one, its root cause is historical and structural as well as psychological and ideological. That is, it is an over-determined, multi-causal conflict. As such, the conflict will have no military solution even if the so-called anti-ISIS coalition succeeded to decimate it in the near future. As long as their root cause remains, the kind of ISIS forces will rise up from their ashes. Let me also impress upon you that the Jihadists have surged because the local dictators and imperial powers destroyed nationalist, socialist, and secular democratic alternatives in the region. They are on the rise also because of massive armies of poor and unemployed people ready to be hired for pennies.

Just like killing Osama Ben Laden and diminishing Al-Qaeda did not end Jihadist movements, destroying ISIS will not end the movements of the downtrodden and humiliated Islamic populace. Indeed, it is not difficult to predict that the Jihadist movement will continue to grow in the future and become a new reality in a Middle East torn by multi-dimensional conflicts and violence.

Meanwhile, the American power in the region has peaked and will continue to diminish moving forward. The US is also losing its interests in Middle East oil as it can now pump shale oil at home. However, American concerns regarding the Israeli security, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and Iran will remain. Europe powers will remain concerned as well but they will be guarded in their policies and only peripherally involved. The vacuum can increasingly but only partially and ineffectively be filled by Russia and China but also by an assertive India. Meanwhile, the OPEC oil will lose its significance and oil prices can decline leading to economic ruin of oil-exporting nations and their political collapse as well. We are already speaking of a world without OPEC

This dismal state of affairs notwithstanding, no current power is willing to acknowledge the causes or address the right cures for the problems that besiege the region today and can cripple it in the near future. On the contrary, there is an insistence on continuing with the corrupt old practices and policies. Yet, the Middle East needs democratic politics, developed economics, and patriotic leaders. It is no wonder that the Arab Spring emerged, and in the aftermath of its failure we now face extremist movements like the one waged by the ISIS. Where else can a humiliated and downtrodden population turn to for help?

I think for at least the next 20 or so years, the region will not be in a peaceful and stable situation. If any, we will witness continued disorder of a higher order. ISIS or its successors will remain, US-Iran conflict will not easily resolve, the Palestinian-Israeli peace will remain elusive, the Assad regime will collapse, Iraq will be further disintegrated, Sunni-Shia conflict will intensify, and anti-

Western sentiments will further rise. Meanwhile, hotspots like Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Pakistan and Afghanistan will be facing an uncertain future to say the least. The Gulf Arab states will also see their stability eroded, and Turkey, Egypt and Iran will be challenged in many directions, making their stability questionable as well.

As these old and new conflicts will continue, they will assume new dimensions and urgency as well. For example, intra-state conflicts will increasingly involve the younger generation of the educated middle class, relations between the poor and the rich will become more antagonistic, secular and religious forces will have a harder time to co-exist, and intra-religious conflicts will intensify as will the tension between the Sunnis and the Shias.

Unable to deal with domestic matters, the imperial forces will be "invited" by the local elite to interfere in their domestic affairs. This will lead to a new pattern of imperial intervention in the region. Meanwhile, a new era of imperial rivalry will ensue with Chinese and Russians challenging the dominance of Americans and Europeans in the Persian Gulf and the Levant.

The Middle East will be a hotbed of various conflicts as we move into a new era of economic, political and cultural globalization. To conclude, in my humble opinion, that will be the shape of the new geopolitics of the Middle East, a region of political disorder and economic ruin with hugely conflicted geographies and anti-West orientation.

## TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Professor Emerita Judith Stern spoke on November 18, 2014 on "Traumatic Brain Injury: An Effect and Cause of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse," based in part on an invited commentary of this title published in *Current Neurology and Neuroscience Reports*, 2004, 4(3/May), 179-181.

Dr. Stern retired after teaching psychology at Rutgers from 1973 to 2008. She has a most impressive publication record, including close to 80 articles, book chapters, and research reports. She has been an active participant in conferences and has been a member of five editorial boards of scholarly journals. The following notes were taken by Benjamin Beede at the presentation.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is the result of intense external force on the brain, without penetration of the skull. Such injuries have varied effects, such as intracranial bleeding or increased pressure, release of toxic

chemicals, and wide-spread neuronal damage underlying dementia and personality changes from repeated concussions.

TBI requires rapid treatments. It is a major cause of death, especially among males. Vehicle accidents, falls, and violence are often the origin of such injuries. War, domestic abuse, and athletic injuries are key factors. There can be "pressure blasts" in military encounters. In the military sphere, seven per cent of veterans have both TBI and post-traumatic stress disorder. Boxing has declined in popularity, probably owing to the obvious ill effects of blows to the head. Football is now receiving much more attention than in the past. Chronic problems may be endemic among football players.

TBI-induced changes in brain functioning are most likely due to damage to the prefrontal cortex and the temporal lobes. The prefrontal cortex is critical in the executive functioning of the brain and long-term memories. Much damage was done to people who underwent pre-frontal lobotomies, for example. Temporal lobe damage results in failure to form new memories and negative emotionality. Dementia, confusion, and personality changes after repetitive TBIs may induce attacks on others and suicide.

A third of emergency room visits by women are the result of domestic violence (DV). Not only are domestic abusers often the victims of TBI, but the attacks that they inflict on others often cause similar damage. Such injuries may damage women's mental abilities to such an extent that this contributes to their difficulty in breaking with their abuser. They simply lose the ability to make appropriate decisions about their lives. There are often cycles of love and abuse, although these are uncommon with TBIs arising from military experiences.

There are long-term problems and heavy costs that arise from domestic violence, at least 3-5 billion in medical costs alone. Among infants and toddlers, physical abuse is a leading cause of death and serious head injury; this is much more so for infants - due largely to "shaken baby syndrome" - than toddlers and more so for males than females.

The question arises about what can be done to reduce the number and impact of TBIs. Many cases are missed during emergency room treatment. Therefore, screening should be implemented by emergency room staffs. Treatments include pharmaceuticals and cognitive-behavioral therapy. Reduction in TBIs calls for a major change in societal acceptance of violence in personal relationships and in sports. Football and hockey fans, for example, are part of the problem, because many of them obviously enjoy violence, as exemplified by fights that have nothing to do with the conduct of sports.

## HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Members of the AAUP-AFT Executive Council and members of the Emeriti Assembly Executive Committee got together for a holiday luncheon at the AAUP-AFT building on Stone Street in New Brunswick on December 16, 2014. Ideas were exchanged with brief speeches by Lisa Klein, President, Patrick Nolan, Executive Director, and Sherry Wolf, Organizer, of the AAUP-AFT; and, Elfriede Schlesinger, Chairperson, and Benjamin Beede, Secretary, of the Emeriti Assembly. It was a rare opportunity for socializing between the two organizations. The normal day-to-day communication is by telephone and written memos to keep everyone informed of the ongoing activities, so this was an opportunity to relax and enjoy the relationships in person.



*Emeriti Assembly members at their holiday luncheon on December 16, 2014.*

## NOTICE

The Rutgers Retired Faculty and Staff Advisory Council has been meeting for two-and-a-half years in an effort to form an umbrella organization to bridge the gap between established retiree groups on all campuses and the administration. A special space has been constructed at the Administrative Services Building II located on Highway One of the New Brunswick campus. Former Rutgers president Richard McCormick is scheduled to speak there on February 13, 2015, to inaugurate this new facility.

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](mailto:aaup@rutgersaaup.org)  
[www.rutgersaaup.org](http://www.rutgersaaup.org)

### 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](mailto:aaup@aaup.org)  
[www.aaup.org](http://www.aaup.org)

### American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

555 New Jersey Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
Phone: 202-879-4400  
[www.aft.org](http://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](http://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](mailto: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.shtml>