

VSSA Newsletter

Fall 2007

Newsletter of the Virginia Social Science Association, founded in 1926

THE VIRGINIA SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

Please plan on attending the VSSA's

81st ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, April 5, 2008

Virginia Military Institute

Lexington, Virginia

OUR MISSION

Bringing together undergraduates; graduate students; faculty from K-12 as well as all institutions of higher education in Virginia; and professionals related to the social science disciplines. We envision three main interrelated missions regarding teaching, research, and outreach: (1) promoting multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary work in the social sciences; (2) offering students, even/especially undergraduates, opportunities for professional development in presenting their scholarship; and (3) bringing together teachers at all levels of education in Virginia.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The VSSA welcomes paper proposals from faculty, graduate students and undergraduates for the **April 5, 2008, Virginia Social Science Association Annual Conference**. To be considered for inclusion in the program, please submit the proposal by January 22, 2008. The proposal should include the following information: **Name, paper title, e-mail address, phone number, school name, academic status (undergraduate, graduate, faculty member), and faculty advisor's name and contact information if you are a student**. The proposal should be one page in length and should summarize the theoretical argument, methodology, findings, and significance of the project. **Proposals to present papers** should be sent via e-mail to Mary Stegmaier at stegmaier@virginia.edu.

Student paper awards: Faculty members are urged to encourage their **graduate and undergraduate** students to submit scholarly papers for the "Best Paper" Competitions. Papers for the competition can be submitted with the proposal by January 22, or if the student needs some additional time to polish the paper, the proposal must be submitted by January 22 and the deadline for the completed paper is February 22. The paper requirements for award consideration are:

- (1) Maximum length (text and notes): 20 standard double-spaced pages.
- (2) Submissions for a prize must be **endorsed by a faculty member** in writing (via an email message).
- (3) Student submissions must be accompanied by a cover page that supplies all the following information: **Name of author, title of paper; school, graduate or undergraduate, year in school, major; phone, email, mailing address; name and contact information of the faculty member endorsing the paper**.
- (4) Each submission must be received as a **single electronic file**, by **February 22, 2008**, sent to Mary Stegmaier at stegmaier@virginia.edu. If the paper contains many pictures or tables, please contact Mary in advance of the deadline to arrange a hard-copy submission.

ANNUAL DUES AND CONFERENCE FEE

Annual memberships, on a **calendar year** basis, are **\$10 for students and \$25 for faculty**.

The combined membership dues and conference fee for 2008 will be **\$65 for faculty** and for practitioners (reduced to \$40 for life members and other people who have already paid their membership for 2008); **\$30 for students** (except for VMI students) and for **K-12 teachers**; and **\$10** (just the student membership dues) for **VMI students** presenting at the 2008 conference. (Note that these figures for the conference are for **pre-registration**, due to the treasurer by March 27, before the conference, as will be detailed in the March Newsletter; on-site registration will be another \$10.)

Make **checks payable to VSSA** and send them to:

Chuck Carey, VSSA Treasurer
1102 Biltmore Avenue
Lynchburg VA 24502

email: wahokie@gmail.com

For other information about the **venue**, contact: Prof. Tinni Sen, VMI, at SenSB@vmi.edu.

For other questions about the **program**, inquire of Prof. Mary Stegmaier at stegmaier@virginia.edu.

VSSA OFFICERS for 2007–2008

President:	Peter Wallenstein (History, Virginia Tech), <pwallens@vt.edu>
Vice-President:	Mary Stegmaier (University of Virginia)
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Message from the VSSA President, October 2007

Peter Wallenstein

The annual meeting of the VSSA, held on March 31, 2007, at the University of Richmond, enjoyed felicitous facilities as well as exemplary local arrangements work by VSSA board member and UR history professor John Treadway. The conference was well attended, with fine presentations made by scores of faculty and students from across the state and indeed from other states. The high point, as usual, was the plenary session, at which six award winners (or in one case his representative) spoke—in John Ramsey’s language, when the VSSA originated this

feature of the annual conference, about “what I do, and how I got where I am”—followed by the awards luncheon, at which these six awards were presented, as well as various other awards.

Among the awards given for **best undergraduate papers** submitted for the essay competition (and presented at the conference), First Prize went to **Kate A. Cristol** (University of Virginia) for “‘A Duty to Respect’: The Function of Chivalry in the Southern Political Context.” Second Prize went to **Liz Downey** (Virginia Tech) for “From Sleepy to Bustling: How the Restoration of Williamsburg Changed the Town and Its Inhabitants.” Third Place recognition went both to **Bridget Devlin** (Virginia Tech) for “From Sacrifice to Celebration: Virginians in World War II” and to **Nathen Baker** (Virginia Tech) for “The Integration of White Students at Hampton Institute.”

As for **graduate student awards** for essays submitted for prize competition and then presented at the conference, First Prize went to **Robert Murray** (Virginia Tech) for “Trepidation before the Dawn: Robert J. Breckinridge, Robert Wickliffe, and the Anti-Slavery Movement in Antebellum Kentucky,” and Second Prize to **Jack Atkins** (Virginia Tech) for “‘It is Useless to Conceal the Truth Any Longer’: Desertion of Virginia Soldiers from the Confederate Army.”

Most student presenters had not submitted their papers for the essay competitions. The Association also made a different kind of awards, for **particularly effective presentations by undergraduates** at the conference. At the close of the conference, it was determined that such recognition for 2007 should go to **Kate A. Cristol** (University of Virginia); **Jennifer Lamb** (Virginia Tech); **Margaret Krome-Lukens** (Randolph-Macon Woman’s College); **J. Ryan Marsh** (Virginia Military Institute); and **Jamie Settle** (University of Richmond).

At the Third Annual John Ramsey Awards Luncheon, we acknowledged **John Ramsey** for his outstanding, indeed heroic, efforts on behalf of the VSSA over a great many years (just to take two examples, he served as president in 1984–85 and again in 2001–02). We acknowledged this past year’s officers and their fine work, we **elected officers** for the coming year, and we approved an amended **VSSA constitution**.

The VSSA officially thanked **Donald L. Zeigler**, geographer at Old Dominion University, for his tremendous contributions to the Association over a great many years—including service early on as auditor, newsletter editor, and member of the VSSA board, and more recently as VSSA president in 2003–04—by presenting him with the 2007 **Mario Zamora Distinguished Service Award**.

In addition, we recognized the charter members of a newly identified group, the **VSSA Distinguished Alumni—Officers Emeritus**, former officers who with their leadership and commitment contributed much to the VSSA’s operations and who continue in one way or another to be actively involved in its affairs, including as a rule attending the annual conference:

John Ramsey (Political Science), retired, Old Dominion University
Raymond J. Jirran (History), retired, Thomas Nelson Community College
Bernard Levin (Psychology), Blue Ridge Community College
John Tinkham, retired, Troy State University

Gregory L. Weiss (Sociology), Roanoke College
Donald Zeigler (Geography), Old Dominion University
Robert Durel (Sociology), Christopher Newport University

The VSSA's **scholar awards for 2007** were presented to **Rose Mary Sheldon** (History), Virginia Military Institute; **O. Kendall White Jr.** (Sociology), of Washington and Lee University, and **Thomas R. Morris** (Political Science), currently the Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Dr. **Thomas R. Morris** is the author of *The Virginia Supreme Court: An Institutional and Political Analysis* (1975) and numerous other works on Virginia government and politics. He did his undergraduate work at VMI and earned his Ph.D. at the University of Virginia. Then he taught for many years at the University of Richmond, where he was honored as University Distinguished Educator in 1982, chaired the Department of Political Science, and also chaired the Faculty Council. From 1992 to 2006, he served not only as a professor of political science at Emory and Henry College but also as president of the school, and then Governor Tim Kaine appointed him to his current post as head of the Virginia Department of Education. Across a distinguished career that has extended well beyond academe, as he worked in the realm of practitioner and contributed, too, to the education of the broader citizenry, he has often he served as a political analyst for television and newspapers, and he also served on a state commission on government efficiency and chaired one on taxation.

Professor **Rose Mary Sheldon**'s many publications include *Intelligence Activities in Ancient Rome: Trust in the Gods, but Verify* (2004) and *Spies of the Bible: Espionage in Israel from the Exodus to the Bar Kokhba Revolt* (2007). She earned a B.A. at Trenton State College in New Jersey, her M.A. at Hunter College in New York, and her Ph.D. at the University of Michigan. After holding teaching positions at Montana State University, Norwich University, and elsewhere, she came to the Virginia Military Institute in 1993, where she was promoted to professor of history in 2000 and appointed head of the Department of History in 2005. A written version of her comments at the plenary session are scheduled to appear in a special section of the 2008 *Virginia Social Science Journal*, which will be distributed at the VSSA conference at VMI next April 5.

The many publications of **O. Kendall White Jr.**, who is the William P. Ames Jr. Professor in Sociology and Anthropology at Washington and Lee University, include dozens of scholarly articles on such topics as race, feminism, marriage, and homosexuality and the Mormon Church, as well as *Mormon Neo-Orthodoxy: A Crisis Theology* (1987) and the co-edited *Religion in the Contemporary South: Diversity, Community, and Identity* (1995). He earned his B.S. and M.S. at the University of Utah and his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University. He came to Washington and Lee in 1969, and he has taught there ever since, with an extended stint as chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. His comments from the 2007 plenary session will also appear in the 2008 *Virginia Social Science Journal*.

For distinguished service to the Commonwealth, the VSSA's **Distinguished Service Award** for 2007 went to **Chief Justice Leroy Rountree Hassell Sr.**, who has served on the Virginia Supreme Court as a justice since 1989 and as chief justice since 2003. The court's first African

American chief justice, Chief Justice Hassell was originally named to replace Justice John Charles Thomas, the court's first African American justice.

This year, the VSSA initiated a new category of recognition, the **Distinguished Career Award**, which might go to someone we viewed as particularly notable for some combination of reasons—and, unlike our other recognition, regardless of whether the recipient might be able to attend and participate in the conference in general and the plenary session in particular.

For 2007, the VSSA presented a Distinguished Service Award to **Oliver W. Hill Sr.**, civil rights attorney extraordinaire. Mr. Hill, who graduated second in his class to Thurgood Marshall at Howard University Law School in 1933, was accompanied to the conference by his son, Virginia State University psychology professor Oliver W. Hill Jr. Two months shy of 100 years old, Mr. Hill spoke to a rapt audience of a few of his experiences over the generations as well as of his continuing commitments.

Mr. Hill began his career as a civil rights attorney as one of the lawyers working on cases that sought to bring the salaries of public schools teachers in the black schools of Virginia in line with what their white counterparts were receiving. In the early 1940s in Richmond, for example, the lowest paid white teacher, a first-year woman in a white elementary school, received at least a dollar more than the highest paid black man serving as principal of a black high school. In 1948, Mr. Hill was elected for one term to the Richmond City Council, the first African American to win election to that group since the 1890s. Hill was a leading attorney in the Virginia case from Prince Edward County that became part of the cluster of cases known to history as *Brown v. Board of Education*. His was a towering presence across many decades.

Oliver Hill died this past summer. Invited by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* to comment on his life, I wrote an op-ed that appeared on August 12, the day of his funeral. (The full text of the published op-ed is available for reading on my website at Virginia Tech.) The newspaper found it necessary at the last minute to make some cuts in what I had written, and I have chosen to include that missing material here, as these two passages distinguish a personal retrospective from simply an academic evaluation of his public life, all that remained in the published version; and one of them speaks directly to the VSSA conference and the Association's recognition of Mr. Hill's extraordinary life:

I ran into Mr. Hill any number of times over his last twenty years. My two most recent memories are sweet ones indeed. Three summers ago, my wife and I stopped by his house to give him a signed copy of my new book *Blue Laws and Black Codes: Conflict, Courts, and Change in Twentieth-Century Virginia*, which had a chapter "The Siege against Segregation: Black Virginians and the Law of Civil Rights" in which he played the central role. We spent a delightful hour or so together, with me reading bits of it to him (by then he had gone blind), and he would comment, often extending the treatment.

And then this past March his son accompanied Mr. Hill to the annual conference of the Virginia Social Science Association, where he was presented a distinguished lifetime service award, yet another in a long string of such awards he received during the last two

decades of his very long life. There, his voice was still pretty strong, as was his handshake, and his convictions remained indomitable.

There was a second Distinguished Service Award as well. Late last March, I published an op-ed in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* announcing and explaining the imminent presentation of a Distinguished Service Award to **Dr. Yacob Hailemariam** (the full text of this op-ed is also available for reading on my website at Virginia Tech):

Dr. Yacob, as he is known to colleagues and former students, is falsely charged with capital crimes in his native Ethiopia. Two years ago, Yacob Hailemariam, who had taught at Norfolk State University for some 20 years, took early retirement to return to his native Ethiopia so he could run for a seat in his nation's parliament.

Victorious in the polls in May 2005, he and his reform colleagues soon found themselves in prison, where they have languished for well over a year. Charges against Hailemariam include genocide — a particularly vicious charge given his active work on behalf of the United Nations in the 1990s investigating genocide in Rwanda. Friends, relatives, and other supporters of what Amnesty International calls prisoners of conscience have rallied in support of Hailemariam and his jailed colleagues.

WITH YACOB Hailemariam in mind, the Virginia Social Science Association (VSSA) decided some months ago to create a new award, which will be given this year for the first time. The VSSA, meeting this weekend at the University of Richmond for its annual conference, is conferring upon him a special Distinguished Career award.

While he was in prison and his daughter was in Ethiopia to be near him, Dr. Hailemariam's wife and son attended the VSSA conference, and his son, Sefonias Yacob, spoke on his behalf at the plenary session. A few days later, his son sent me an email message that said in part:

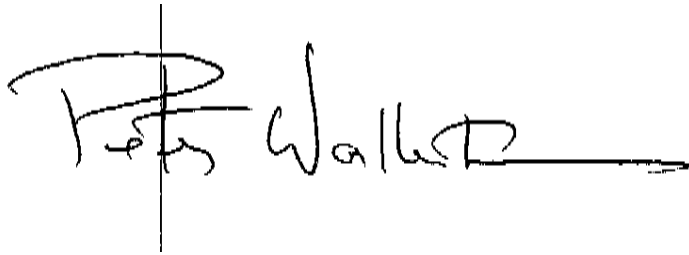
I just talked to my sister in Ethiopia and she told me that all of the prisoners were quite happy to hear of the VSSA's work and they even held a mock ceremony of sorts, where my father spoke to all of the prisoners in acceptance of the award. So needless to say, this was a nice piece of news.

Months later, in August, the delightful news came that Dr. Hailemariam and his imprisoned colleagues had been released. They were free at last. From VSSA board member Thomas E. Poulin, who had originated the nomination of Dr. Hailemariam for a special award, came this message in late October:

Last Saturday, I had the distinct honor and privilege to attend a small picnic. Dr. Yacob had returned to his home in Virginia Beach. He is doing very well. After his release, he spent some time continuing his efforts towards democratization in Ethiopia. He is now home re-grouping, but intends to return to Ethiopia with his wife, Tegist, to attempt to take his rightful seat in Parliament, which was previously denied him. He repeatedly expressed his gratitude for the efforts of the VSSA, stating it was an incredible morale booster to him and his colleagues in prison.

The work of the Virginia Social Science Association goes on. To all readers of these words, I invite you to consider participating in future conferences, attending them even if you are not on the program, and to join us in what we do. There is work for many hands.

The next edition of the *VSSA Newsletter*, to be distributed in March 2008 and posted on the VSSA website, will include the program for the April 5 conference at VMI. Until then, all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Wallenstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line through the middle of the name.

Peter Wallenstein
President, Virginia Social Science Association
Professor of History, Virginia Tech

VIRGINIA SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

—MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION—

Calendar year 2007 or 2008

Enrolled students (graduate or undergraduate), per calendar year \$10.00

Faculty and all others, per calendar year \$25.00

Please provide information for our MEMBERSHIP ROSTER (**especially your email**):

Name _____ Discipline _____

Institution _____

Office Mailing Address OR Home Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Office Phone (____. _____. _____) or Home Phone (____. _____. _____)

Fax (____. _____. _____) **EMAIL** _____@ _____

Please send this membership form (make **check payable to VSSA**) to:

Chuck Carey, VSSA Treasurer
1102 Biltmore Avenue
Lynchburg VA 24502

email: <wahokie@gmail.com>