Alumnus Spotlight

Persistence Pays Off for Hill Climber

Mike Casey went to Washington with the hope of landing a position in a congressional office. Unfortunately, he found himself job hunting at a time when scores of others were seeking to fill the few available openings. His willingness to persevere, however, eventually paid off, and Casey was invited to join the staff of Congressman Terry Bruce (D-Illinois) as a press aide.

Casey, who had been quite active in Democratic politics in Ohio, went to Washington just after the general election in the fall of 1988. Because the Republican party was able to retain the White House, he discovered that locating an assignment in a Democratic office was especially challenging. "After the election in November, there was no movement from the Capitol down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House," Casey noted. "In addition, there were a lot of new graduates seeking jobs. So there were literally thousands of resumes for only a handful of positions."

While he was job hunting, Casey worked as a public relations free-lancer and consultant for the American Federation of Teachers. As his job search revealed, however, having congressional work experience is very important in securing a staff position on Capitol Hill. While others might have been ready to seek employment elsewhere, Mike Casey was willing to do what was necessary to get legislative experience.

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Scholar Has Unique Perspective on China

When the recent student protest movement and subsequent violence in China were taking place, Professor Richard Gunther was there to witness much of what was taking place. Professor Gunther, a specialist in comparative politics, experienced firsthand much of what we in the United States were able to learn only through newspapers and television. PostScript was anxious to question him about his trip, and, upon his return, he gave the following interview.

PostScript: How did you happen to be in China at the time of the student protests?

Gunther: I was invited to Wuhan to teach a course as part of our bilateral relationship between the department of political science at OSU and the department of political science at Wuhan University. We also have University-wide bilateral relationships, and this was covered as part of that ongoing exchange arrangement.

I arrived and much to my surprise was asked to teach about democratic theory and institutions and democratization processes. And so I began to teach one undergraduate course and one graduate and faculty seminar on those topics.

I went through the first two weeks of lectures, and then the events in Tiananmen Square brought the curtain down rather abruptly. During that first two weeks, I was going out of my way to find the demonstrations whenever I possibly could. Some of them were quite large.

Wuhan is a strategically important area. It is a major crossroads, particularly because it is the site of the most important bridge in China, linking the northern half of the country with the south. And historically it has been in the center of much political change. The 1911 rebellion that overthrew the emperor, for example, began in Wuchang, which is the city among the three that make up Wuhan, where the University itself is located. And I was rather nervous at the high level of student mobilization at the beginning and then again after the events in Tiananmen Square, because clearly it was providing the kind of provocation that could have given any trigger happy military officer adequate reason to intervene to try to break things up.

Prior to June 3, I was coming to believe that those who were simply dying down. In the power struggle in Beijing, it was becoming clear that Li Peng and Deng Xiaoping had ousted Zhou Ziyang. Paradoxically, rather than pushing in support of the forces of democratization, or liberalization at least, the demonstrations may have had a negative impact, insofar as they may have contributed to the toppling of a moderate Communist party leader.

On the final Tuesday before the slaughter, we were going around town trying to find the action; we could find none. It was clear that the demonstrations in Wuhan were winding down, and we were hearing the same kind of thing from Beijing—that the number of students actually residing in the square had fallen to somewhere about five to ten thousand and that things were winding down to a relatively quiet close.

PostScript: Who were you hearing that from?

Gunther: We were hearing this both from a student grapevine, which was remarkably fast and in some respects remarkably accurate, as well as from the BBC and the VOA. In the urban areas, its really quite remarkable to see how many people are tuned in to the BBC every hour on the hour. In fact, walking in front of the student dorms after the slaughter in Beijing, it wasn't even necessary to have a radio. You could just stand in front of the open windows and get this marvelous stereo effect of the BBC. VOA also broadcast a great deal, but a smaller number of students listened to VOA. Between the two of them you certainly had the western media's perception of what was happening in Beijing.

The centerpiece of the student network was posters pasted onto the walls in various parts of town. It's almost like an instant newspaper. Obviously, you've only got one copy, but events are transported from one part of the country rather rapidly through that system. Also a significant number of students were traveling to and from Beijing and giving eyewitness accounts of the events there, as were some faculty in our group. So we were getting quite a bit of information from those two sources.

PostScript: One of the points which the
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rience. So, in addition, to his regular job responsibilities, Casey took on an additional workload, this time in the office of one the Senate's most important members. "I began volunteering in Senator Sam Nunn's press office during the Tower affair," commented Casey. "It was a very hectic time for me—trying to get a job, free-lancing, and interning at night."

His willingness and dedication finally were rewarded, and he was offered the press aide position in Congressman Bruce's office. Now, he is in charge of ensuring that the constituents in the 19th district of Illinois are aware of how their elected representative is serving them. "The constituents need to think about the consequences of all the decisions my boss makes. My goal is to keep them informed about those decisions," he noted.

This is not Casey's first time to be involved in politics. While he was a full-time student at Ohio State, studying public relations, Casey worked for the presidential campaign of Governor Michael Dukakis. Early in the campaign season, he asked to volunteer for the Dukakis organization. "After a while, my responsibilities grew, and eventually I was drafting news releases, coordinating logistics and travel for the candidate."

What makes this accomplishment all the more impressive is the fact that he was working on a master's degree in journalism during the campaign. Casey, a native of Rocky River, Ohio, received his bachelor's degree in political science from Ohio State in 1988. He was awarded his master's in journalism in 1988.

Outside of his political involvement and education, Casey still managed to find the time to become an active participant in campus life at Ohio State. He won election to three terms to Undergraduate Student Government, wrote for The Lantern (Ohio State's student newspaper), and was active in Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity and the OSU Tae Kwon Do Club.

He is quick to note that his desire to become involved in political life was, in part, sparked by his education at Ohio State. "At OSU, I discovered that politics was what really interested me," Casey noted. "Herb Asher's class in campaign politics was a turning point for me; he helped me discover that politics was a profession."

Casey's drive to succeed benefited him not only in his Washington work experience but in his education, as well. Reflecting on his time spent in college, he stated, "I think Ohio State is often misperceived, seen as a football school. But I think the school really has solid programs." "Yes, it's huge," he continued, "but if you really want an excellent education, you can find it—you just have to look for it." Indeed, Casey's willingness to do just that has proven to be a successful formula. His dedication and desire to achieve have served him very well in college, in Ohio presidential politics, and now on Capitol Hill.

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American media emphasized was that the people in the United States were probably better informed about what was happening in China than were the people there. Would you say that that might be somewhat of an exaggeration?

Gunther: That's an exaggeration. What you were hearing was basically what could be seen out of the windows of Beijing hotels. Throughout this crisis, even the best of the news media, the BBC, for example, was saying, "We have no idea what's happening in the rest of China." Or periodically there would be one single phrase—"The bridge at Wuhan has been closed," or, "We've heard of demonstrations in ChengDu or Shanghai." But really the American media focused almost exclusively on events in Beijing. And that's for obvious reasons.

In the absence of an infrastructure to circulate news in China itself, you rely upon firsthand reports, and those are the ones you bump into in the streets. This gives rise to one significant kind of distortion in the news, and that is to extrapolate from Beijing to the rest of the country. I think that is a fundamental misread of what is happening in China. I really think you have to distinguish between three different kinds of publics in China.

One of them is the urban intelligentsia, in particular surrounding the University communities but also including journalists, artists, and sometimes business elites. Those are the kind of people that most Americans were in contact with. They represent an infinitesimally small segment of the Chinese population. Probably eighty percent of the population consists of a semi-literate or illiterate peasant mass which is politically inert.

I think you have to conclude that they may be concerned with local issues, how their farming enterprises are structured and things of that kind, but with regard to what's going on in Beijing or what's going on in the outside world, these people are largely inert. This was quite clear to me on the day of the massacre. We were driving around in the country on June 4, listening to the BBC all the time, fully tuned in to what was happening in Beijing. It was perfectly normal in the countryside; it was business as usual. Nothing at all was out of the ordinary. So I think if you're talking about sheer numbers, which is an erroneous way of looking at a society undergoing potentially revolutionary change, you'd certainly have to say the eighty percent of the population is just inactive and, I would imagine, easily manipulable by the government news media. These people don't have short-wave radios to listen to the BBC. They certainly don't speak English. They don't come across tourists with copies of Newsweek magazine or The Economist or the New York Times. They're isolated in the boonies of China, and they are dependent on local television which broadcasts the government's line.

But I think the really crucial segment of the population is that twenty percent of the population made up of the urban and suburban industrial and commercial working and incipient middle classes. These individuals are numerous enough and mobilizable enough to have some potential political significance. My hypothesis is that the reason for the extreme violence in Tiananmen Square, as well as the justification for certain aberrant forms of behavior we witnessed, is that the regime's main concern was to divide the students—who are numerically insignificant—from the workers—who did in fact pose a real threat to the support for the regime.

There were several instances which lead us to this kind of conclusion. One of them is that in these demonstrations that were going on in Wuhan, there were a couple of instances in which workers were separated from students in demonstrations...

PostScript: By whom?

Gunther: By the police. For example, there were three trucks that were heading off to one of the demonstrations on the bridge. The first two were from university campuses and the third was from the steel mill, containing workers. The police had blocked the road, and they let the first two trucks move through, but the third truck was filled with students that were going through. The third truck was filled with workers; the police ordered the workers out of the truck, and then beat the hell out of them.

PostScript: What do you suppose the government was trying to accomplish by doing that?

Gunther: I think what they were trying to do was show the workers that irresponsible students were leading them down a very dangerous path. And also to sow dissension between workers and students. If you let the students off scot-free and severely punish the workers, the workers might begin resenting the students as much as they resent the government's policies.

Note that all twenty-seven people who have been executed to this point have been workers. There has not been one student who has been executed. Why would you do something like that? The only thing that I can conclude on the basis of this is that the real threat to the regime was that posed by an alliance of workers and students which would constitute a majority of the politically active segment of the population. As a means of splitting this emerging alliance between
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workers and students, these kinds of acts were committed. Hence the extreme brutality in Tiananmen Square.

PostScript: Were you able to gain any special perspective on the events that perhaps we in the United States were not able to?

Gutheier: There's one thing that we were able to pick up that has still not been picked up the media, and I've corroborated this on two separate occasions: We heard through the student rumor mill that the troops that were sent into Tiananmen Square—of the Twenty-seventh Army—had been injected with amphetamines before they were sent in. That's interesting, because it would explain some of the bizarre behavior of these troops. Running over people with tanks is not something that ordinary soldiers do. Randomly shooting at buildings, moving down bicyclists a hundred yards away with machine gun fire—that's crazy behavior. Shooting up buildings and hospitals and embassy complexes—that's loony. But it's not loony if you conceive of these people of being drugged out of their minds.

This particular rumor, at least from my standpoint, has been definitively corroborated, first by the French Consul General in Hong Kong, who reported that same story. Then when I was recently in California, I met a friend who had just come back from Beijing that day. One of her friends had been giving birth in a hospital in Beijing on June fourth, and therefore she and her husband were right in the middle of this swirl of activity. As it happened, there were two soldiers who were wounded and brought into the hospital, one of whom was sedated and operated upon. Having taken blood tests, the doctors on the following morning asked him if he had been taking drugs. He said, "No, I've never taken drugs in my life. But just before we went into the square, they warned us that disease was rampant in the square, and they inoculated us with some injection against the disease." That appears to me to be sound corroboration.

Then another, an officer in the Twenty-seventh Army, was awakened from his anesthesia and told what his army unit had done. And as soon as he could regain consciousness, he grabbed his gun and killed himself. That's not the kind of thing that people who knew what they had been doing previously would do. This again fits with that overall interpretation. That might also explain much of the confusion and tension in Beijing, with stories of civil war looming and troops apparently facing off against each other. So, some of that may be relevant to the behavior of the troops.

Under no circumstances, however, is this any kind of apology for what the government did, because those who injected troops with amphetamines before sending them into the square clearly are guilty of murder—premeditated murder.

Nonetheless, I think what we saw was a tragic misfire of a democratization movement, one which was gaining enormous support and one which probably has now been set back by several years, if not a decade or more. That's really tragic at this point is that it has now shifted from violence in the streets to a purge of those centers of liberal bourgeois sedition who gave birth to the democratization movement in the first place, specifically, the universities. Also, journalism is being profoundly altered. Papers which earlier referred to the student protest activities as a patriotic movement now engage in total vilification of the students, their leaders, and everything that was behind them. That is dramatically setting back any kind of potential support for liberalization and democratization.

In large measure, I think we have to conclude that the students made several tragic miscalculations. There were several points where they could have and should have demobilized and didn't. As a result, I think they turned an opportunity for having some kind of positive impact into an excuse, a provocation or pretext, for repression that the hardliners were hoping for all along.

PostScript: Was there a point at which you realized that there might be a safety problem for you?

Gutheier: Very clearly, there was. It was the night we got back from the countryside. I was out about a hundred and fifty miles up river from Wuhan on a weekend tour with a couple of other "foreign experts." And in the country, everything was completely tranquil. There was no sign of anything amiss.

When we arrived back at Wuhan University, however, a friend came rushing over to our dorm as we were eating dinner, and he said, "Do you know that there are ten thousand students in the amphitheatre right outside my window having a memorial service, to be followed by a protest march? I was advised by every single one of my Chinese friends to stay away from there because they had been warned that the army was prepared to intervene on campus to break up that demonstration." That, coupled with the following day's reports on the BBC about civil war being a very real prospect, suggested that at that point, a little traveling music was in order. So we decided that we were going to try to get out of Wuhan as quickly as possible.

That's when we discovered the real problems involved with any form of transportation in China, let alone during a period of crisis. The airlines were completely booked up. You have to start with the realization that the only airline with landing rights at Wuhan airport is C.A.A.C.—which stands for Chinese Airplanes Always Cancel—and that's at the best of times. So we requested that the State Department authorize a charter flight to get these people out. Well, then we encountered unbelievable footdragging on the part of the State Department.

*One of the many closings of the bridge at Wuhan.*
1952
Allen G. Pease (M.A.) of Hollis Center, Maine, is partially retired and an independent contractor. He served for fourteen years in cabinet-level administrative work in Maine state government. He was also Administrative Assistant to the Governor for eight years and Director of the Maine State Planning Office for five years. From 1981 to 1983, he worked as a Senior Researcher at the University of Southern Maine.

1960
Stuart H. Levine (B.A.) of Roslyn Heights, New York, is a partner in the law firm of Chasin, Levine, and Ross, P.C.

1966
Ivan Brychta (Ph.D) of Millersville, Pennsylvania, is professor of political science at Millersville University of Pennsylvania.

Stephen C. Secaur (B.A.) of Shamokin, Pennsylvania, is serving as an Episcopal priest at the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church.

1968
David A. Funk (M.A.) of Indianapolis, Indiana, is professor of law at the Indiana University School of Law. His latest book, Group Dynamic Law: Exposition and Practice, is currently being edited and will soon be available from Law Arts Publishers.

1970
Dana G. Rinehart (B.A., J.D. 1973) of Columbus, Ohio, is serving as Mayor of the City of Columbus.

1971
Michael T. Burin (B.A.) of Cleveland, Ohio, was recently named Managing Director of the Bono Court Hotel in Cleveland.

1973
Douglas Boyd (M.A.) of Middletown, Ohio, is employed by Junior Achievement of Middletown, Ohio. He is currently serving as Vice-President and Executive Director.

1974
Larry Michael (B.A.) of Canal Winchester, Ohio, is Director of Construction and Engineering for the Nationwide Insurance Company in Columbus, Ohio. He was recently promoted from Facility Planning and Leasing Manager to his current position.

1975
Gregory C. Hamilton (B.A.) of Reston, Virginia, is serving as a Security Advisor at the United States Department of Defense at the Pentagon in Washington, DC.

1983
Saundra C. Ardrey (Ph.D) of Bowling Green, Kentucky is assistant professor in the Department of Government at Western Kentucky University. After moving to Kentucky, she founded the Bowling Green chapter of the National Organization of Women (NOW). She is teaching a course on attending the inauguration for the Washington Center in Washington, DC.

1986
Nancy C. Clark (M.A.) of Columbia, South Carolina is a professor in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina. She was recently given the Excellence in Teaching Award by the USC chapter of Mortar Board. She is one of only thirty-six on the University faculty so honored.

1988
Jean E. Less (B.A.) of Alexandria, Virginia, is serving as a secretary for an attorney at Chemical Manufacturers Association.

David K. Householder (B.A.) of Ashland, Ohio, is currently a law student at the University of Dayton School of Law in Dayton, Ohio.

Marie A. Pappalardo (B.A.) of Chardon, Ohio, served as Co-Coordinator of the Geauga County Democratic Headquarters during the general election last November. She is currently a waitress at the Bass Lake Tavern in Chardon.

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**POST SCRIPT**

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Faculty News

Professor Chadwick F. Alger is the author of "Toward the Construction of World Peace: What Have We Learned in the Twentieth Century?" forthcoming in the Journal of Peace Studies Association of Japan. He is also a contributor to a volume entitled The United Nations and a Just World Order, currently being published by Westview Press. His chapter in the volume deals with "Peace Studies at the Crossroads: Where Else?"


"Why Organized Interests Participate as Amici Curiae in the Supreme Court," was the focus of a paper presented by Professor Gregory A. Caldeira at the annual meeting of the Law and Society Association in Madison, Wisconsin in June. He is also serving on the editorial boards of the American Political Science Review and the Law and Society Review.

Professor Caldeira is also a member of the Executive Councils of the American Political Science Association and the APSA Section on Law, Courts, and Judicial Behavior.


In addition, Professor Gunther is Founder and Co-Chair of the Social Science Research Council's Subcommittee on Southern Europe. The Volkswagen Foundation recently announced that it will finance a six-year effort for the subcommittee to sponsor conferences, papers, and publications of edited volumes on the social, political, and economic transformation in southern Europe over the last two decades. Themes for upcoming conferences include "The Nature of Political Institutions in Newly Consolidated Democracies of Southern Europe: Political Institutions and Relationships," "The New Democratic Politics," "Public Policy and the Functions of the State," "Social and Economic Transformations in Southern Europe," and "Cultural Change."

Professor Samuel C. Patterson is the author of "The Persistence of State Parties," which appears in The State of the States, published by Congressional Quarterly Press. His article on "Understanding the British Parliament," recently appeared in the September issue of Political Studies. He is also a contributor to a volume entitled, Politics in the American States. His chapter focuses on "State Legislators and the Legislatures."

In addition, Professor Patterson's scholarship can be seen in Legislative Studies Quarterly. His article, "Party Leadership in the United States Senate," was published in the September issue. His "Comparative Study of Parliaments," is forthcoming.

"Does Trade Still Follow the Flag?" an article written by Professor Brian Pollins appeared in the June issue of the American Political Science Review. His study of "Conflict, Cooperation, and Commerce" will appear in the American Journal of Political Science in August.