



Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Terrorism and Peace intern Emily Spiwak ('14) presented her poster research "Destroying Buildings, Destroying Culture."

Interdisciplinary focus for peace

BY JAN GILLIS ('07)

Emily Spiwak ('14), an international affairs and interdisciplinary religion major with a concentration on the Middle East, is an intern at the Center for Interdisciplinary Study for Terrorism and Peace at JMU.

She analyzed the declassified CIA documents looking for evidence of deliberate targeting of religious structures and religiously dominated neighborhoods by various factions during the Bosnian conflict. "The CIA documents contain images of towns and cities with mixed populations of Muslims and Serbs or Croats. You can see instances of blatant targeting where only the Muslim houses and mosques were destroyed or only the Croat-Catholic church was destroyed. These images provide tangible evidence of genocide," she says.

Spiwak's research has brought her face-to-face with the grim after effects of the Bosnian conflict — centuries-old landmarks had disappeared; cultural memory was lost. Yet she retains a sense of optimism for the future, noting that the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Terrorism and Peace does not focus simply on violence and intimidation. "We're striving for peace. I really hope that looking at the Bosnian conflict moves us as a global society to reject genocide and ethnic cleansing as unacceptable," Spiwak says. "We need people in multiple fields to work together focusing on issues such as this. Taking a purely political standpoint or a purely religious standpoint won't get us anywhere; we need to work together."

While the progression of violence toward the Muslim population in Bosnia is easy to track, what is more difficult to understand is why neighbors who had lived side-by-side would descend to the level of genocide. It is an indisputable fact that Bosnia's cultural heritage was destroyed in a systematic and methodical fashion: religious monuments, libraries and other landmarks identified with various communities. The destruction of Bosnian Muslim heritage in particular was not a by-product of the war, but a deliberate policy that went hand in hand with an attempt to exterminate them. Scholars note that though mosques can be rebuilt cultural memory is gone forever.

EMILY SPIWAK ('14), international affairs and interdisciplinary religion major, CISTP intern

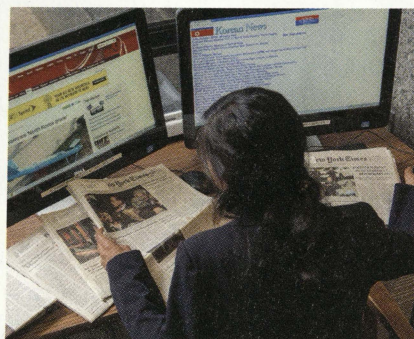
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Historically, economic sanctions have not worked as a tactic for diplomacy. When such sanctions are imposed on non-democratic nations, the sanctions end up hurting the general population, but they don't negatively affect the ruling coalition. Serbia seems to be one of the few historical cases where economic sanctions worked.

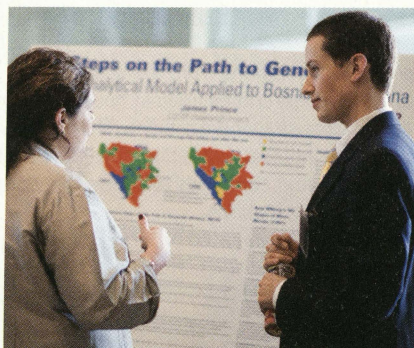
SRAVANTI "SHEVY" CHAGANTI ('14), on the "Economic Perspective of Serbian Compellence." Chaganti is an international relations and language major, economics minor, and research assistant for Bernd Kaussler, JMU professor of political science

Exposing our students to such accomplished practitioner-scholars is a hallmark here at Madison.

JONATHAN R. ALGER, JMU president



Sravanti "Shevy" Chaganti ('14), an international relations major, plans to work in the field of intelligence after graduation.



James Prince ('14) discusses his presentation with **Rhian McCoy**, a George Mason School of Conflict Analysis professor.

The past is not static; rather it is in constant conversation with the dynamic present ... a refusal to remember can achieve the perpetuation of conflict.

FRANCES FLANNERY, JMU professor of religion, director of The Center for Interdisciplinary Study of Terrorism and Peace

When you see a person merely as part of a group that you find offensive for some reason, it becomes much easier to brutalize, even kill that person. When you see each person as an individual, your conscience comes into play in your treatment of the individual.

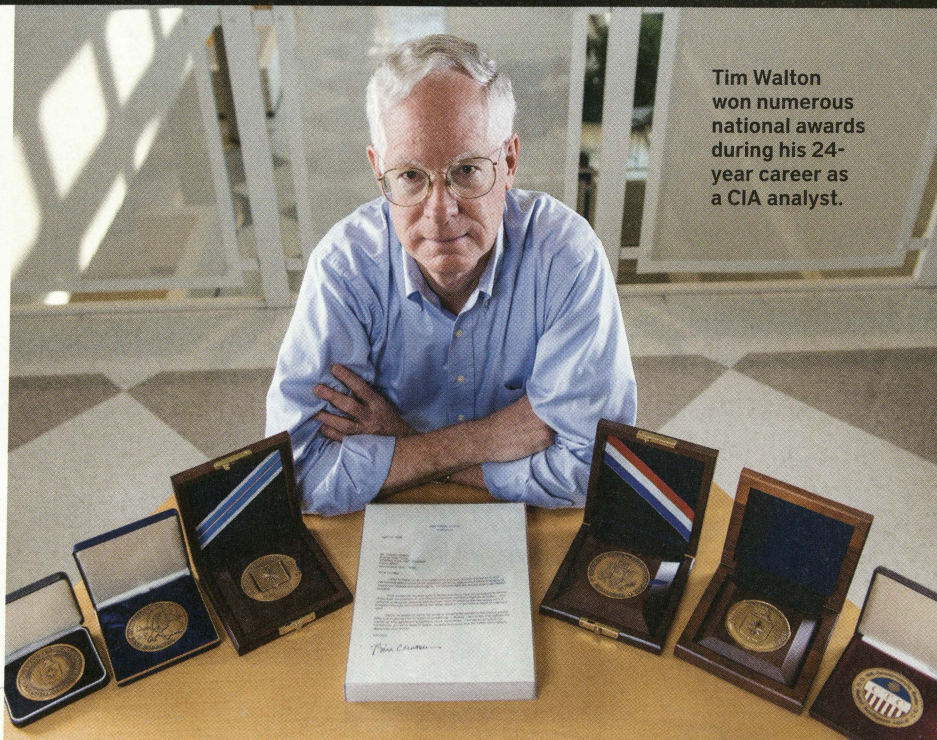
JAMES PRINCE ('14), religion and intelligence analysis major

This is the raw material of history.

TIMOTHY WALTON, JMU professor of intelligence analysis

Put simply, the way that America's role in the Bosnian conflict is remembered by the world and by the Bosnians themselves either opens or blocks pathways for Islamist extremism. This social memory also influences how Americans see their own past and potential future involvement in the affairs of 'Muslim countries.'

FRANCES FLANNERY, JMU professor of religion, director of the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Terrorism and Peace



Tim Walton won numerous national awards during his 24-year career as a CIA analyst.