

Hansard Alumni Newsletter

August/ September 2005

As a Hansard Scholar, you are a member of a huge network of Hansard Alumni which extends throughout the world. The Hansard Alumni Newsletter is for all those who have participated in our undergraduate and Research Scholars Programmes over the past 20 years. It is your source of news from the Hansard Society and it gives past Scholars a great opportunity to find out what former course-mates are up to.



Summer 2004
Research
Scholar,
Tihana
Bartulac (3rd
from right)
with Tony Blair

Autumn 2005 Programme Approaches

September 24th will see the arrival of the Autumn 2005 Hansard Scholars. The group will be made up of 17 US undergraduates and 12 postgraduate Research Scholars from countries including Singapore, Moldova, Uzbekistan and Belarus. We'll give you an update on their progress in the next edition of the Hansard Alumni Newsletter.

"I wonder what they're up to now?"

If you've lost contact with your fellow course-mates from the Hansard Society and would like to get in touch, drop us a line and we can put an "appeal" in the next edition of our newsletter.

Congratulations, Marijana!

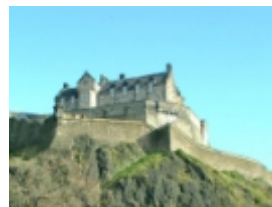
We would like to congratulate Marijana Petir (Research Scholar Summer '05), who was recently elected as Deputy Governor of Sisak-Moslavina County in Croatia. Marijana was formerly spokesperson for the Croatian President as well as being one of the two youngest MPs in the Croatian Parliament. Marijana took full advantage of her time on the Research Scholars Programme with a programme of high-profile meetings with political figures from both within and outside Parliament. We wish Marijana every success with her career in Croatian politics.

Scholars Programme Gets Thumbs Up

We're delighted to announce that the Hansard Society has met the British Government's rigorous new

standards for overseas education programmes. We are recognised as an official education provider by the Department for Education & Skills.

Summer Scholars Visit Edinburgh



The recently departed Summer 2005 Hansard Scholars took advantage of Westminster's recess to go on a political study visit to Edinburgh.

The group, comprising 16 undergraduate and postgraduate students from countries as diverse as Uruguay, Mongolia, Croatia and the USA, left London on the remarkably punctual Tuesday morning GNER train to Edinburgh.

After some free time to enjoy the wonders of the Scottish capital, Michael Clancy OBE, Director of the Law Society of Scotland hosted and kicked off Wednesday's seminars. He also treated the Scholars to a fascinating account of Scottish history - from marauding Vikings and William Wallace to the ever-so-slightly controversial Scottish Parliament. Two MSPs, Helen Eadie of the Scottish Labour Party and Jeremy Purvis of the Scottish Liberal Democrats followed this up with lively Q&A sessions on the aims, objectives and achievements of the Scottish Parliament.

The following morning started with visit to the Scottish Parliament building – a great opportunity for all the Scholars to see first hand what £431m buys you in Edinburgh! Parliamentary recess in Westminster, however, did not mean that Parliamentary recess in Edinburgh. The visit was a chance to watch the often heated debates in the Chamber and get a behind the scenes look at the Parliament building itself.

Edinburgh's European Parliament office was the final port of call on Thursday. Kenny Richmond of Scottish Enterprise was grilled on Scotland's economy and John Edward, Head of the European Parliament office and the host for the afternoon, rounded things up with a fascinating talk on the role of the EU in Scotland and the hugely controversial EU constitution referendums. Friday morning on the GNER back down to London was an opportunity for the Scholars to reflect on what they'd learnt and who they'd met over the past couple of days.

Elina Raask, a Research Scholar from Estonia felt that the political study visit offered "a great opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at an open, easily accessible,

transparent and accountable Parliament – it was surprising to see just how different the Scottish Parliament is from Westminster.”

“It would’ve been easy to learn about the Scottish Parliament from the classrooms in London,” added Will Bowling, a Public Policy undergraduate from Brown University, “but the study trip immersed us in Scottish politics and the whole devolution debate”

“Not only did we hear lectures on the structure of the Scottish Parliament and meet MSPs, but we toured the recently constructed Parliament building, strolled the Royal Mile, and met the people to whom devolution means the most – the Scottish people. This engaging approach to learning highlights the unique experience that is the Hansard Scholars Programme.”

Other News from the Hansard Society



HeadSup report on G8 forum

While heads of government met in Scotland and Live 8

concerts took place throughout the world, under-18s went online to make their voices heard in a HeadSup forum examining globalisation. The final report has been published and you can now view it at: www.hansardsociety.org.uk/programmes/citizenship_education/G8_Forum

Launch of Being Heard website

In June, three 13-year-old students from Whitgift School in Croydon were the winners in our Web Design Challenge competition. They are now working with us towards the launch of the new *Being Heard* website in September (www.beingheard.org.uk). The website will present political and current affairs in a way that will engage 11-14 year olds. Further info can be found at: www.hansardsociety.org.uk/programmes/citizenship_education/web_design_challenge

eDemocracy Conference

The date for your diary is November 9, 2005 – this will be the first annual e-Democracy conference in the UK, hosted jointly by Headstar, Voxpolitics and the Hansard Society. For more information, please contact edemocracy@hansard.lse.ac.uk

Women at the Top Conference

In 1990 the Hansard Society Commission on Women at the Top, chaired by Baroness Howe, examined the causes of women’s under-representation in public life. Fifteen years on, the Hansard Society will review the original Women at the Top Commission, assessing how far the situation has changed. Findings will be published at a conference planned for November 17, 2005. Speakers at the conference will include politicians, journalists, academics, representatives of the business community and other interested parties. Further details at:

www.hansardsociety.org.uk/programmes/parliament_and_government/key_projects/women_at_the_top

New Hansard Society Publications

Spinning the Web: Online Campaigning in the 2005 General Election

Edited by Professor Stephen Coleman and Dr Stephen Ward, this is the first analysis of the use of the internet and other information communication technologies in the 2005 general election. *Spinning the Web* contains a collection of essays examining the innovations and strategies which the digital media have brought into campaigns and assesses whether new technologies have had an impact on voters. From blogs to digital remixing of election material, the contributors cover all aspects of online campaigning during the 2005 general election.

For more information see:

www.hansardsociety.org.uk/publications/recent/spinning_the_web

Weblogs – a powerful voice for campaigns?

This pamphlet is the culmination of our recent work with Crisis (the homelessness charity) with whom we set up ‘*Jamie’s Big Voice*’ (www.jamiesbigvoice.com), a weblog commenting on election issues from the perspective of a former homeless person. The pamphlet looks at the concept of weblogs, and how they can be used effectively by the voluntary sector to give an alternative voice to their campaigns. For more information click onto www.hansardsociety.org.uk/programmes/e-democracy/Weblogs

Neglecting Democracy



This pamphlet examines the health of our representative Parliamentary democracy and rejects moves towards direct democracy. Authors, Declan McHugh and Philip Parvin, examine the social, economic and cultural changes which have left

increasing numbers of people feeling estranged from the political process. The link between the public and its political institutions is stretched to breaking point: MPs are seen as distant and uncaring while Parliament is perceived to be antiquated, remote, and increasingly powerless.

For further details on the Hansard Society’s publications, please see: www.hansardsociety.org.uk/publications/recent

We’re always delighted to hear from past Scholars. If you are in contact with any of your former course-mates, make sure you let them know about this newsletter. For further details on anything contained in this newsletter (or if you would like to be profiled in the next edition) please contact: study@hansard.lse.ac.uk.

For more information on the Hansard Scholars Programme, please visit:

www.hansardsociety.org.uk/programmes/study_programme