

CommentsV020712Baker

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Venice – 07 February 2012**

**Stewart Baker
Skating On Stilts: Technology and Terrorism**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Too much excess information. His technology got in his way. Keep current politics out of the lecture.

Difficult to follow. Too rambling. Good topic – a different presenter.

Too much irrelevant background and very little focus on solutions to the problem.

What can he say? More on what to do to help us be a safer nation.

History of the bicycle was irrelevant, but “cute” and took too much time from a valuable topic.

Speaker seemed primarily motivated to sell his book!

I'd like to hear more from other speakers although Mr. Baker was a fine speaker.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

Intro way too long – lost interest.

CommentsS020212Collins

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota - 02 February 2011**

**Chuck Collins
How America's Income and Wealth Divide
Undermines the Health of Our Communities**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

The presenter was too political and did not deal with feasible solutions.

The Q & A was great?

This was too simplistic, both substantively and in presentation. Citizen United ends the regulation of big money in politics except for disclosure. It (?) rates +/- deductions re income and estate tax.

Best speaker in past five years.

Very, very good. Chuck Collins was right on every point.

Excellent (three responses).

One of the best!

Unbelievable speaker and exceptional content! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Wonderful.

Outstanding.

Excellent speaker!

Best lecture in years!

The speaker was excellent! A much-needed view to counter Hofmeister and others.

Topic – timely. Collins one of the best presenters SILL has had. (I've been attending for 20 years!)

Great lecturer – Helps a lot if you agree with the lecturer tho' seems distant from the Republican message – particularly when Romney showed great strength in our areas of Florida.

Please ask him to come here next year for sure. He was superb and the subject is the most important I can think of to discuss and find an answer to change it.

Best speaker ever!!

Excellent speaker in an understandable, informative, interesting way. Definitely have him back.

Best speaker we had.

Remarkable speaker! Very eloquent. Fundamental ideals. I would like to hear in 2 years whether Obama is improving situation.

Best yet.

Terrific.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL Programs

Take his suggestions and do a program on offshore tax havens.

CommentsV013112Dominguez

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Venice 31 January 2012**

**Dr. Jorge Dominiguez
The United States and Latin America**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Not very realistic; omits impact of drug issues.

(Q & A) Got too long.

The speaker is very well informed and was able to convey this knowledge in a manner that was easily understood. Not an easy task!

CommentsV022402Friedman

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Venice – 24 February 2012**

**Dr. Allan Friedman
Understanding Cybersecurity Risks**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Use of words such as “sucks” objectionable.

The speaker’s voice seems to fall off at perhaps end of sentence. When an important word was key it wasn’t clearly understood.

Real smart guy – very good answers. Best definition of “the cloud” I have heard. Good at explaining complex issues.

Good speaker!!

Hard to hear; voice dropped.

Good job with tedious subject. Subject matter is dull, but important.

Slides would have enhanced presentation. Good information on passwords.

Walked around too much so you couldn’t hear him.

CommentsS011912Hofmeister

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 19 January 2012**

**John Hofmeister
Desperately Seeking 21st Century Energy Security**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Speaker was too political. Should not be partisan.

This is the first speaker I've heard here with a clear political bias. Which I do not share. His criticism was limited to Democrats, clearly.

I do not agree with this advocate. Lecturer is not a speaker but is an advocate. Citizens For Affordable Energy is another group pushing alternate energy. Solar and wind and tidal power are expensive poor ideas. In Ontario, Ontario the party in power seriously encouraged wind and solar sources, and this is, and will cost all in Ontario about 30% more and these inputs still require back up of the same electric power. A secret deal was made with Samsung to encourage production of solar equipment is still coming to "light." This direction is still expensive baloney. Also – according to the newspapers, very little US oil goes through the Straits of Hormuz.

Brain washing!

Biased oil man. No new info.

The speaker is an ideologue who harangued the audience effectively and articulately. A propagandist.

Way too right wing – too much politics vs info.

You should not have political speakers.

One sided message.

A brilliant, one-sided presentation on behalf of the oil-gas-energy industries.

It would have been better if been the details of his energy plans much sooner in the talk. Too much canned rah-rah.

I would appreciate more facts, planning issues, and ideas vs. political cheerleading format.

Superb delivery!

Great speaker!! Topic very well covered.

Dynamic speaker – scare tactics? Excellent presentation.

Speaker was too biased; his message was partisan.

He is the most effective and articulate speaker I have ever heard. He should be invited back for next season.

The most informative speaker in the last five years.

A brilliantly constructed talk.

Mesmerizing speaker.

Speaker was too political.

Excellent presenter.

Best speaker I heard/seen in the past seven years.

Have him back!

Excellent speaker – Covered all bases in the time allotted. Dramatic presentation.

Excellent! And without notes.

Great speaker. Very relevant! Invite him back.

CommentsV033012Jett

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Venice – 30 March 2012

Ambassador Dennis Jett

Why Politics No Longer Stops at the Water's Edge and Why It Should

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Most disorganized SILL lecture I've heard. Some interesting insights, but no coherent message. Much better in Q & A.

The speaker had little focus. His talk was more of consciousness chatter than factual or informative.

Not up to date on his topic.

Overall message was not sharp, distinct.

Nothing new, but well done anyway.

Very well done and entertaining.

Not a good subject, but a very good speaker. Invite him back on a better subject.

Great!

Probably the best speaker this year.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

In past years the selection of speakers was great. This year, many of the speakers relied on statistics far too much. Also, speakers should speak, not read their speeches. Q & A is so special. Please select those who not only know their subject, but are able to make it clear to all. Limit speakers' replies as well as the questioners.

It would be wonderful to have a dialogue presentation. Today's speaker spoke to my ideas, but would like to hear other side as well.

I would like to see a topic dealing with the breakdown or attempted breakdown, by the Christians, of the separation of church and state in US political system/politics. Thank you.

CommentsV030612Pollack

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Venice – 06 March 2012

Jonathan D. Pollack

China's Economic and Political Transformation

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Yes, invite this speaker to return.

Tons of material delivered very quickly.

Really excellent! Thank you!

The subject was interesting, but I could not follow his lecture. The speaker talked too fast.

Very knowledgeable. Delivery too fast!! Should slow delivery and pronounce all words.

Talks very fast – hard to understand. No attempt at humor. Informative, but not entertaining. Too professorial.

Lacked visuals.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

Echo of sound system adds to delivery problem. Too much movement!!

It is apparent that there is little racial diversity among attendees. How about trying to recruit an African American speaker?

The sound is not adequate. For some it was muffled. Questions from audience should be repeated by the moderator.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL Programs

CommentsS032212Roy

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 22 March 2012**

**Ambassador Stapleton Roy
China**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

In a year marked by excellence and shining stars, Ambassador Roy leads the pack. His presentation was a masterpiece and his Q & A was maximumally illuminating. Unlike most presenters, he answered every question directly and substantively. For the first time in the last few years I am optimistic about our future. With people like Amb. Roy in government the future can't be as bleak as our political climate indicates. I heartily thank and congratulate the SILL board for bringing us Amb. Roy and so many exceptional others. You have set a standard for program development rarely found elsewhere.

Exceptional speaker – Thank you.

Best lecture in series. Should return after election.

Bring him back !!

Excellent – well prepared and well delivered.

Probably the best this year.

Terrific (3).

Great lecture !

Have him return.

Excellent ! More like him.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

This year's speakers were not as good in total as I years past. Topics like Cyber are not appropriate for this audience. Also, although the audience tends to be liberal, perhaps an independent or conservative speaker might be interesting as most of them have been the same, liberal. Fun to mix it up.

Thursday lectures were only fair this year.

We think you could make some \$'s if you'd sell coffee before!!

I've been coming to the lectures for the last three years and the selection of speakers this season, with rare exception, has been awful! In most cases they simply regurgitated the issues which were already widely known and never gave any insight. The only speakers that I enjoyed were those that spoke on the oil/gas industry; comparison of views of political candidates on foreign policy.

Very disappointed in this years Thursday series. Speakers, in general, were bad. Lack of substance on their topics. Too general.

CommentsV012112Scheuer

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Venice 24 January 2012**

**Dr. Michael Scheuer
What Price Intervention**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Don't read the message. No matter how interesting the topic is it won't be interesting read.

Read his entire presentation. Anti U.S.

This speaker is a dangerous, bigoted, megalomaniac who presented his personal negative opinion re. present and past foreign policy. If you feel that you must provide a forum to a speaker whose views are extreme and bellicose then at least provide a speaker at the same event who can debate, refute, and inform the audience on the point's) of view that contrast with Dr. Scheuer's.

I do not care to be "read to" by a speaker. Very boring!!

Just another hysterical ex-CIA nut case.

Highly subjective – based on false assumptions – unsupported declarations. Seems to have an agenda first, then fits his views of history to his agenda.

Terrible presentation. He read his new book.

Speaker should avoid reading his lecture dissertation.

Could have stayed home and watched Fox News. Very biased. Lots of "Anti" remarks about Secretary of State. Did not care for this speaker.

Don't invite speakers who are going to read the material with little eye contact and who continuously misread the material in front of them!

If I wanted someone to read to me, I would have purchased a "book on tape."

Method of presentation, i.e., talking for an hour not as effective as breaking it up with visuals, etc.

He failed because reading his presentation with few explanations or examples of his point of view. He was boring because it was difficult to listen to him reading. He failed to engage us by reading.

I regret he read his entire speech!!

I was disappointed the speaker read his comments and did not talk to the audience as in his Q & A.

I don't care for speakers who read their remarks.

I like him, even if you don't agree with him. Yes, he is provocative!

I wish the speaker had not only read his speech. Perhaps auto-visual props would have helped.

Long, but relevant.

It would have been better if he did not read his speech.

Very provocative, and I disagreed with some of his points. Nonetheless, it was very thought-provoking. I'm glad I came.

Excellent – thought provoking.

Speaker's answer to questions changed my mind. He was excellent in his responses.

Excellent, provocative.

Excellent. Very concise and informative.

The speaker's use of his notes was very effective.

CommentsS031312Serafini

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 13 March 2012**

**John Serafini
Crime, Activism, Espionage, and War Cyberspace: The Challenge to
Governments and Corporations**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Speaker good, but too nervous. Must relax and avoid mentioning his investment “opportunity.” His Q & A was very good. When you are as informed and enthusiastic as he seems to be, he must work at avoiding his business model.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

(None)

CommentsS031512Smith

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 15 March 2012**

**Dr. Wayne Smith
Our Antiquated and Self-Defeating Cuba Policy**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

I found few revelatory insights in his presentation, which seemed “off the cuff” rather than “prepared.”

Basically he said “nothing” for such an expert!

The fellow is not sufficiently connected to current state of Cuban affairs.

Not enough on economy of Cuba: statistics, trends.

Amiable, and I agree with his view, but not very informative.

Not a good speaker. Not a lot of data to support his position. Quite general in nature.

Very poor.

Not forceful enough speaker. Not enough information given.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

We are having too many really old speakers who are way past their prime. Need more up to date, relevant reports.

This business of saving seats is ludicrous. 4, 5, 6, sheets of newspapers on contiguous seats. Sweaters, jackets, books. It's child-like and unfair. It should be: First come, first served. Mickey Fox

CommentsS012612Weinbaum

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 26 January 2012**

**Dr. Marvin Weinbaum
Is Pakistan Our Ally or Adversary for the End Game in Pakistan?**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Visual aids would have helped greatly to help locate the various areas that were spoken of. Much better when he came out from behind the podium.

Have him return only if the format is to answer questions – not lecture.

Too bad no graphics.

A very complex topic. A/V would help.

Not in the same league as John Hofmeister who did not speak from notes! Q and A was better than lecture!

Terrible speaker. Worthless presentation.

Speaker looked at notes too often – not interesting speaker even though subject matter could have been very interesting.

He is a very poor speaker.

Too much reading of speech.

No new information. No new approach. Poor res...? Of situation.

Nothing new!

The speaker was very poor. He spoke in a disjointed manner and did not convey anything clearly. He should not be invited back.

He's just not an interesting speaker.

Presentation was too detailed to be clear or to be absorbed. Conclusion didn't seem to be supported by the facts given.

This speaker is obviously bright and extremely knowledgeable on his topic. However, reading most of his talk is ineffective and a barrier to keeping and maintaining the

audience's attention. Some of his excellent points were muted by his delivery. (Q & A session more effective.

Everything he lectured was in the newspapers. The Q & A was much better.

He seemed ill-prepared for the lecture. Q & A was very much the best part. One suggestion by another listener – start with questions and forget the lecture!

Very confusing but relevant to U.S.

Much better when not using notes.

At times confused. Read and lost place too often. Too bad couldn't have his maps, etc.

It's very disconcerting when the speaker reads his presentation.

Reading script a negative.

He did much better when speaking without notes rather than when just reading his entire basic presentation.

I feel that his presentation would have been more effective if he hadn't done as much reading, as he initially did, and if he had some visuals. He lost many people in the audience as you looked around the theater. I am sure that his expertise would have been more appreciated if his delivery were presented in another way. Last week there were so few people who left at the Q & A. Not so today!

Again, we have a speaker with a wealth of info – but he insists on reading material – not effective at all. Yet, he answered questions in a forthright and assertive manner without notes!

Knows his subject; is better discussing rather than reading a speech.

Answers to questions too long.

How many of the audience have been at these lectures 5 years? I think 60%+. The speaker need not review what he has said before. Get to the present and the solutions as he did in the first time. But he know his subject

Lots of information, poor presentation. Too much reliance on notes. The map would have helped.

He is better in answering questions than in presenting material.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

Please get the microphone and visual systems into working order ASAP.

Introduction each session are far too long. We can all read the speakers' biography in the SILL booklet.

He alluded to having planned to use a map but that there was a problem w/audio-visuals mechanics at SILL. If this is a continuing issue with SILL it is the lack of dependability of the audio system. We cross our fingers or hold our breaths at each meeting as to what might go wrong this time! Surely there must be some way to assure a basic delivery system to a lecture series can be implemented and maintained.

Please! Ask people in control booth to be quiet!

CommentsS022212Whitehurst

**PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 22 February 2012**

**Dr. Russ Whitehurst
Teacher Quality and Student Achievement**

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Surprisingly interesting.

Best lecture I have ever heard.

Outstanding.

Presentation was slow and could have had more statistical views/trends in more issues. “Touchy” issues such as the cost of education, has risen faster than the cost of health care. Input of charter schools, etc., might have shown more trends to back up the teacher talent deficient issue. Next year, add input and analysis of charter schools and at-home teaching.

An educated parent does not make an effective educator capable of evaluating education professionally. Obviously the speaker had no experience teaching in elementary years!

Difficult topic to present (dates, statistics, research, and percentages). Q&A period much better: enthusiastic and stimulating.

Address next year from a different perspective such as new methods/approaches to education and as place-based education.

Boring.

He should be speaking to an age group that effects policy decisions. His speaking manner is sleep inducing.

Speaker has a monotonous voice and I bet he has never taught in public school, 4th thru 5th.

His talk was as memorable as his name. He droned on, sleep inducing. Statistics can be used to show whatever you want.

Parent perceptions of treat teachers are not always accurate. Some are popular because they have great PR skills but don’t teach the curriculum or have other problems. There are many factors that affect teacher performance such as teacher education (not similar (?) a many universities if the research was not dine there) teacher unions, teacher tenure,

inept school administrators, school board members with a different agenda from education, state politics that cut funding on successful programs, National Teacher Certification, etc. Having been a school principal, I understand there are excellent teachers who always rise to the occasion, but the above factors also have an affect on teacher performance and education. Lois Schaper, PhD.

Speaker relied on statistics too much and was boring.

He does not explain data in slides in a way that makes clear the point he states. He does not explain the graphs so that it is not clear how the data support his conclusion.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL Programs

The audience was very rude during Q&A – murmuring, leaving noisily – convener should have managed!