

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Sarasota – 14 Jan 2015

Dr. Haleh Esfandiari

Religion and the Role of Women in the Islamic World

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Wonderfully relevant topic! Excellent presentation.

Obviously a remarkable person but she was hard to understand.

Could not understand her. Waste of time.

It was very difficult to understand her.

Informative, but accent and echo made it hard to understand!

Hard to understand but worth it.

Somewhat difficult to understand.

Accent difficult.

She had trouble with English.

Appreciated the personal story as well as the high level of research. One of the best speakers we have heard.

Excellent speaker. Difficult accent, but heartfelt!

Would like more of her personal history. How can we as women help?

The speaker had good information, but a monotone voice is speaking that make it hard to remain alert!

I went to both lectures and found them to be most informative; well prepared and objective. Having lived in a Muslim country for three years in the 1950's, I found her scholarships to be exciting and memorable. Thank you. This is my 22nd year with SILL.

A bit difficult to understand some of the words she was saying.

Difficult to understand due to accent.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

The lectures are wonderful! The acoustics are terrible! The previous theater was much better. My mother can not understand anything the speakers say here.

When a speaker will be referring to geography, a projected map of the region would be very good!

Glad to have the screens. It is difficult to understand because of echo

An overhead projector would help for her to write the difficult names on a cheat sheet ahead of time with spelling of separate groups.

Aside from lecture, parking is causing awful problems!

There is a lot of reverberation in the hall when the speaker spoke in the higher register. Could the base level be increased?

Acoustics are terrible!

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Venice – 16 Jan 2015

Jessica Lewis McFate
The Rebirth of Al Queda in Iraq

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Outstanding

Mazing. Bring her back soon.

Unable to hear some of her words. Seemed that she mumbled at times, but maybe this is more my issue than hers.

I'm furious. Professional speakers should learn how to speak.

Knows her stuff, poor presentation. Monotone, mumbles, speaks too fast, trails off. Slides too small for back of room. Too dependent on them

Spoke a little too fast.

Graphics need more legible labels and/or larger, full screen maps. Also voice tends to trail off.

Hard to pick up so much info. Maps helped. Terminology cheat she could help.

Excellent and knowledgeable. Top quality!

Very well organized and sharp.

Excellent speaker. Great projection.

I had difficulty hearing the speaker. Her voice dropped and she spoke quickly.

Difficult to understand at times.

She spoke too softly. Dropped her voice at end of sentences.

She speaks very quickly.

She spoke too fast in the beginning and continued to do so. Also, swallowed words. But certainly knew her topic well.

She needs to speak slower and project. When she answered the questions she spoke somewhat better.

Voice did not convey message (monotone and low).

Speak more slowly distinctly. Speaking into mike would improve hearing. It was interesting hearing her point of view, but I would like to hear the US/military position on all subjects.

While very knowledgeable she was somewhat difficult to follow. Also spoke too rapidly and swallowed her words at the end of a sentence.

Topic amazingly informative, but delivery was a bit too fast for amount of info. Assumed more knowledge in audience than many have so info needed to be presented a bit more slowly.

Spoke much too fast and spoke in far too much minute detail.
Talked too fast! Voice dropped at end of sentence.

The audio did not carry her voice and I did not understand much of what she said! What a shame! Great topic, poor delivery!!

Spoke too quickly. Needs help with communicating.

Speaker is very knowledgeable on her subject, but was hard to hear and understand. Possibly, she speaks too fast or perhaps it was the electrified speakers. I think the former. She tends to drop her voice at the end of a sentence or paragraph, making her even harder to understand. But she really knows her stuff!! Questions from the audience came through loud and clear, so it may have been the speaker system.

Speaker needs to project voice, not lower and swallow last words. Even using "loop."

My reaction and comments from others around me was the speaker assumed a higher level of knowledge from the audience and spoke in specific detail over the heads of many.

The speaker spoke rapidly, and it was somewhat difficult to understand some of what she said, especially the end of her sentences. She tended to drop her voice as she finished a thought. I missed some of the detail she included.

One of the best lectures to date.

She is a wonderful and effective speaker. I heard people around me state that they couldn't hear her but I heard her perfectly, although sometimes she dropped her voice at the end of sentences.

Great content! Great organization! Great slides. Tends to lower her voice at the end of her sentences.

I found the speaker hard to understand; too fast; too many asides.

Hard to understand.

Speaker spoke too quickly. Swallowed word here to understand. But, full control and knowledge of topic.

Her talk would be more effective if she spoke more slowly. Also, she should not speak in such details and should try to provide more of a larger overview. She was excellent in her knowledge, but could easily improve her delivery.

Hard to hear. She gets quieter at end of her sentences.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

The audio was so bad I could not understand most of the subject.

I could not understand a word she said. Way too fast. Disaster. The slides were not understandable.

Need to tweak the sound system for a speaker who speaks so quickly and has so much voice modulation. Part of her presentation, while overall excellent, sounded somewhat garbled. Perhaps it would help to just alert her to the limitations of the audio system so she speaks more distinctly. Sobering presentation to say the least! Excellent!!

SILL rep started on time and spoke briefly allowing max time for McKate. Many thanks.

CommentsV012715Lieber
Substitute for (originally scheduled) Amb Hussain Haqqani

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Venice – 27 Jan 2015

Dr. Robert Lieber
Why US Is Not Destined To Decline

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Good use of and sense of humor. Effective use of data from multiple valid sources. Concise and pointed presentation. Responded directly to substance of questions.

Invite him back.

He was the best speaker so far this year. He clearly made his points and was easy to understand.

Outstanding. Balanced.

It is rare that I rate presenters as I have here (5's). Thank you!

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

If someone is to aid in A/V, make sure they know how to use equipment.

Power Point difficult to read.

CommentsS021015Werner

PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 10 March 2015

Johannes Werner
Cuba: Slow But Steady

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Good use of visuals. Maps, graphs, etc., should be encouraged with all speakers on both screens.

Bring him back 2-3 years to see progress.

Having been to Cuba this past December I very much appreciate hearing the details of every day Cuban life. Resentments of young people; inertia of Cuban government. Q & A was especially poignant!

It is most helpful when the speaker has an on-screen presentation of key information. His presentation was well-organized.

Excellent & thorough analysis!

The speaker, having to look at the slide projection all the time was not a good idea. It was much better when he answered questions at the end.

This speaker's visuals were the best to date – by far. The slides provided text that reinforced the spoken lecture. It made it easy to follow the broader organization and the individual points of the talk. It would be so helpful if more speakers had such visuals. As a former professor I give this speaker an A+!

The speaker faced only a small percentage of the audience. He ignored a large portion of the audience for 90% of the time.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

Very clearly presented

Very informative. Presented per common man's interests, not political or bias.

I would really like to see at least 15 more minutes devoted to the lecture itself. It always feels a little rushed but I am grateful for the interesting and invigorating 45 minutes. Thanks for all the hard work it takes to put SILL together each season for us.

We would value some younger speakers.

Next we need a speaker with a US perspective on Cuba.

This is the second SILL presentation I have attended recently where the topic was not as originally advertised. The other was due to weather.

We don't like the parking situation

Slides are always very blurry, especially maps or charts, definitely effects enjoyment of lecture. Can it be fixed?

Return to the Players Theatre next year.

CommentsS022515Jay

PROGRAM COMMENTS
Sarasota – 25 March 2015

Baroness Margaret Jay
Growing Up in Europe and the U.S.A: What's the Difference?

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Too much lecturing. Use slides.

Hard time understanding her accent.

Unfortunately, her accent made her a little difficult to understand.

Failed to comment on dissatisfaction regarding Germany's power over other less economically relevant countries. Unfair comparison regarding UK citizens claiming payments in other Eurozone countries. Numbers not compared to the number in UK befitting nor those returning to home countries and still claiming.

New Information. Great!

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

The lectures are excellent, but I am thinking twice about next year because of the parking situation and the acoustics in the church are poor.

Need additional speakers on Middle East Issues: Israel, Iran, Egypt, Syria and ISIS.

Speakers should be provided with a glass. Some are obviously uncomfortable drinking from a bottle.

It would have been so great if there could have been a supplementary lecture and update on the Ukraine situation by Dr. B since it is such a very current and critical issue.

Can maps be printed off for audience to refer to or clearer and larger on screen all during talk when possible. This is my first season. I have enjoyed every speaker. They are well versed in their topic and give a no-spin view.

There should be speakers on current problems: Syria; Endangered species in Africa; Immigration problems in Mexico and Central America; Drug cartels in Mexico; Status of Vietnam in the 21st century.

Return SILL lectures to The Players Theatre!

The periphery countries of the EU might offer an interesting viewpoint concerning Britain's role in the EU. Portugal for instane.

CommentsV030615Jeffrey

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Venice – 06 March 2015

Ambassador James Jeffrey

Iraq: The Pottery Barn Rule, Are We Responsible For The Mess or Does It Matter?

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Outstanding

One of the best speakers.

One of the very best lecturers I've ever heard! Great speaker!

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

Sound system needs improvement – make clearer, please.

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Venice 03 March 2015

Roger Cohen

Global Shift: The Future of American Power in a Globalized World

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Well expressed and supported point of view.

Pleasant, open manner. Engaged well with the audience. Hood use of humor and anecdotes.

Looked like he enjoyed being here to present. Handled questions with courtesy and interest.

Very biased presentation. Sounded like another war monger. Foolish statements about “red line” “schoolyard bullies draw red lines,” “leader use force when all else is exhausted.” “Line in the sand” sounds like a cowboy movie.

Super, candid snapshot of the DC mess. Subject should be constantly updated and made current.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

The speakers are so wonderful. We would like to increase their speaking times. If necessary decrease the length of the question and answer session.

The introductions by the moderators are most redundant. All info about the speaker is printed and can be googled!! Much time is wasted and little time for questions. We came to hear the speaker – not the intro!

His strength came in the last 30 minutes of his talk Wouldn't it have been a pity if he had adhered to the 35 min + questions? In the past, SIULL's speakers spoke longer than 35 min + questions. Price of admission has increased and the time has decreased. I suggest you reevaluate the time speaker presents.

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Sarasota 18 March 2015

Cybernet Security Chaos

Dr. Lance Hoffman

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Terrible speaker. Did not cover subject well.

He may know his subject, but is a poor presenter. Too many uh's and ok's.

Turned constantly to look at not very helpful and sometimes illegible slides. No coherent point of view. Too general, anecdotal.

Too much advice to business. Who was his audience? Tomorrow's lecture he refers to should have been today's presentation. Too basic. Did he know this was a one-day event for most of us? He started offering us info, tips, etc., at the end. None useful.

Can he ask people to please stop for (?) period if they can? The questions and answers are always relevant and well-done.

Good for raising awareness, but he talked about a lot that we know already. I'd like to hear about what governments and corporations are doing now! We are in the early state of cybersecurity.

Starts to explore an idea then gets distracted and moves to another idea. Nothing new. Starts sentences which he does not complete. Little eye contact.

Far too simplistic.

Not a good speaker. Overheads poor. Not a smooth well-organized lecture with simple messages for a non-expert audience. Needs easily read bullet points to summarize talk. Tell us what you are going to tell, tell us, and then summarize.

Info was not news, has been disseminated across various media over the past year(s).

The last 15 minutes were most relevant and interesting to a personal level.

I would like to see some programs on politics next year (an election year.)

Excellent! Very personable.

Speaker used visuals – Wish more speakers did! Speaker included us – asking the audience questions. He acknowledged we were here.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

Please screen the professors for content. They are apt to be too theoretical, general, and abstract. And anecdotal and rambling.

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Sarasota 12 March 2015

Dr. Gary Fields

The Challenge of U.S. Economic Development in a Globalized World

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

Hard to read slides from the back.

His slides were not legible in the back. I like that he had slides.

Disappointment – a very skilled and very educated person ended his talk with no answers on how to improve the issues. Found it disconcerting to hear the end “I have no answer to these questions.” Who does?? Would like to hear from those speakers.

Don't be so elemental.

Seemed a bit dry. Not much new information. Too simple. Questions were the best part, more in depth.

Need better slides. If invited back, should explore a different topic, i.e., don't need same lecture twice.

Slide presentation was awful!!

Would have liked more suggestions on how to correct some of these problems.

The speaker articulated suggested policy changes to change things, but they were far too broad. Therefore, unsatisfactory to me. He lacked specifics. The devil is in the details.

I don't like slides during lecture.

Speaker came across as dull, but the subject is tricky and complex.

This is too elementary. We know this.

Answer is not more money , but bad political and social policies. Speaker showed bias on one side by referring an economic expert as “right wing Republican” while not referring to “left wing Democrats” social policies that destroy middle income people's wages and educational

prospects and their policies of open borders to poorly educated, cheap labor,, that tax our economic system. Robotics will eliminate low earner jobs and make highly indebted college students educations worthless. Why bring more of these people into country when Democrat , educators, and schools failed us.

Speaker's graphics were not large enough for back of audience space. Do you sine out guidelines for graphics? Do you review the graphics?

Bad slides, super bad

Too basic and lack of solutions.

Absolutely do no invite him back. He could not be understood, but this was his presentation, not the sound system.

Slides very poor design, legibility, operation. Should have been inspected by SILL Board.

Excellent speaker.

Dr. Fields is too technical. He should use slide data that is easier to visualize. He should discuss "free market" vs "socialism" and not beat around the bush.

He used our outline – what a concept! Thank you, Gary.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

This year's Thursday Global Issues very uneven. Excellent: Williamson, Pubantz, Walker
Superior: Dr. Milani Poor Lewis, Jeffrey.

Seats in the venue are very uncomfortable. Sound system works in back half of room. Sound bounces off of the mike. Seats at Church of the Palms mare comfortable. Please consider changing this venue.

This was not the talk that I expected. Either I mis-read the online schedule or the schedule was not up-to-date.

CommentsS031015Freeman

PROGRAM COMMENTS

Sarasota 10 March 2015

Ambassador Charles Freeman

Responding to Failure: Reorganizing U.S. Policies in the Middle East

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re Presenter

This is a speaker who challenged the facts many in the audience believe about Israel. Maybe this is a good thing. I'm not sure. Perhaps it will encourage people to examine their own beliefs.

Excellent. He stated facts!!!

Excellent!!

Poor slides. Excellent written talk. Would prefer more ad lib off-the-cuff.

I have found if one ever criticizes Israel policy one is called anti sematic. It was refreshing to hear a speaker with guts enough to speak truthfully.

Thanks for a great knowledgeable presentation.

This was the most knowledgeable informative lecture – brilliant. Thank you.

Yes! Work on mote in our own eye! Thanks for telling the trust! Dare we discuss that disapproval of Israel's actions as a nation is not anti-Semitism? We have been so afraid of being accused of the latter that we have neglected the former. Never before has such disrespect existed for our commander-in-chief!

Excellent!

A controversial, fact and knowledge experience-based lecture that really put the issues into an historic contest.

Bring him back.

Great.

Excellent. Have him back again.

He presented an honest and obviously unappealing (to some) series of facts. Good.

Very thought provoking.

Outstanding. Should be president.

Relied on script a bit too much. Dropped a few words in volume that I missed.

Slides difficult to read if can't magnify. Use of Doesh instead of ISIS. It might have been easier to understand if he kept ISIS. Doesh is harder to pick up in the text.

Too bad he read his speech. Not welcome. Way too long and detailed!

Very dry speaker. Graphic (maps) not helpful.

Very negative re Israel. Very one sided.

Reading his presentation was hard to follow because it read rather than extemporaneously. Mumbles words as he reads and it's hard to understand his words.

So much information. Almost too much for 45 minutes.

He appears to be incredibly biased and plays fast and loose with facts. His premises were bizarre given the world as we know it. I feel he was an awful choice to discuss his topic and should not be invited to return next year.

It was unfortunate that Ambassador Freeman read his address. He was far more interesting and much easier to follow in the Q&A when he spoke rather than read.

The slides were useless – a distraction. The talk was very one-sided. This subject is very important and needs balance, which is not this speaker.

This speaker is way to anti-Israel. He satisfied many anti-everything opinions.

The speaker used loaded language without explaining his accusation that Israel carried out "programs" was not defensible!

Read his talk which I feel is not very effective.

Failed to examine existing alternative options.

This speaker used his eloquence to rewrite and selectively display history. He needs to be debated by those with facts about the Middle East.

Very biased speaker. You should find out about a speaker's bias before asking him/her to speak.

Speaker was anti-Semitic! And against Israel.

Inflammatory in content. Not well thought out and does not consider the existential threat of Israel.

Hard to listen to someone so biased in his attitude against Israel.

I found him virulently anti-Israel, black and white, and totally one-sided. I feel he was here to make an anti-Israel diatribe and seems to have found a receptive audience. There are so many historical and current points that he ignored and chose to use only the most pejorative language and intentions for Israel.

Using "dahge" instead of an English term illustrates more pro-Arab attitude. Anti-Semite. Stilted. Knowledge of Israeli history. He speaks Arabic. Excellent! Does he speak Hebrew? Be that as it may, he is intolerant of Israel to the point of ignorance. I found him offensive, ignorant and dangerous. He seems to have no understanding of Muslim terrorists style of hiding amongst the population of a region. His use of adjectives and verbs is a propagandist's style of imposing his anti-Israel views.

A horrible anti-American, anti-Semitic speaker. I never use words like that. I would never come hear him again.

The man is violently anti-Semitic and anti-Israel. He and his similar thinking people is a major reason for the problems in the Middle East. Having him a format at SILL is a disgrace.

He is outrageously biased against Israel and makes no mention of Gaza's thousands of rockets into Israel for years and Iran's vow to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. If you invite him or anyone biased like him back I will no longer subscribe. He is just another anti-Semite blaming everything on Israel!

At best anti-Israel and probably an anti-Semite.

VERBATIM COMMENTS: Re SILL

Moderator needs to step in when an audience speaker expresses views instead of asking a brief question.

You should send each lecture up to Washington, DC for all our congressmen and legislators to hear. They sure could use a wider vision!

Sometimes tough to hear, understand.

It's hard to park.

Adjust speaker system. Too loud.

The acoustics are terrible. Does not work for speakers. I get 1/3 of text.

Audio was poor.

Difficult to hear at times.

Hard to understand due to echo thru mike. Lip reading helped. Floor mike did not seem to echo.

Using two microphones sort of garbles the voice quality. In the future use the hand microphone only – not bot together.

I had trouble understanding his words as he spoke so got nothing from his speech.