



AU Newsmakers

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Prepared by University Communications

Top Story

Avenging Osama bin Laden's Death



Akbar Ahmed, chair of Islamic studies, analyzed the discovery of pornography in Osama bin Laden's Pakistani hideout on [ABC's World News with Diane Sawyer](#) and [Nightline](#). "It is surprising that pornography was found because he was known to be a rather austere man, a rather religious man." Ahmed also discussed Al-Qaeda's retaliation attack in Pakistan to avenge bin Laden's killing on [BBC World News](#) and President Obama's speech on the Middle East and North Africa on [C-SPAN's Washington Journal](#). (5/13)

Additional Features

Change in Contrast Fools Your Brain



Our brains tend to group the objects we see based on common attributes but a new illusion created by psychology professor **Arthur Shapiro** and psychology PhD student **Erica Dixon** shows that these groupings can also be made based on changes in contrast.

The illusion won second prize in this year's Best Illusion of the Year Contest and [NewScientist.com](#) explained the illusion in a blog. A separate [NewScientist.com](#) entry featured a second illusion by Shapiro that was a contest finalist. (5/19, 5/17)

Resident, Author Wins SPJ Award for Latest Book



The [Kensington Patch](#) featured **W. Joseph Campbell**, professor of journalism, for winning the Society of Professional Journalists' Sigma

Delta Chi award, which honors the best in journalism research, for his 2010 book, *Getting it Wrong: Ten of the Greatest Misreported Stories in American Journalism*. (5/17)

Op-Eds/Editorials

Why Obama Was Happy to See Trump Drop Out of the 2012 Presidential Race



Richard Benedetto, professor of communication, analyzed Donald Trump's decision not to run for president in an op-ed for [FOXNews.com](#). "Chances are Obama would have beaten Trump easily, but a president constantly irked by an upstart would have added some much-needed spice to what is shaping up as a bland race," wrote Benedetto. (5/19)

Foreign Policy: After Scandal, Who Can Run The IMF?



David Bosco, professor of international service, wrote an editorial for [NPR.org](#) about the future of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) after managing director Dominique Strauss-Kahn's arrest for an alleged sexual assault. "Ultimately, Strauss-Kahn's legal problems will probably have

little impact on the immediate substantive work of the fund. But the leadership crisis occurs at a moment when there are myriad critical decisions pending," wrote Bosco. (5/16)

SCOTUS Needs and Ethics Code



Herman Schwartz, professor of law, wrote an op-ed for [Politico](#) explaining the need for an ethics code to create stricter limitations for Supreme Court justices. "Supreme Court justices are the closest thing we have to absolute monarchs. They have immense power

over our lives, are accountable to no one for their decisions and can stay in office for life," wrote Schwartz. (5/13)

Quotes

Pentagon: No Quick Review of Bin Laden Photos' Bid

AP Associated Press **Daniel Metcalfe**, professor of law, discussed the Defense Department's refusal to review a Freedom of Information Act request to release photos of Osama bin Laden's corpse with the [Associated Press](#). "It's hard to see how such a photo in and of itself could properly be classified, and with that decision ultimately sustained in court, on the basis of national security harm," said Metcalfe. More than 255 outlets including *USA Today*, *Newsday*, and *Forbes* republished the article. (5/14)

Do-Nothing Congress after Record Lawmaking Session Shows Budget Paralysis

Bloomberg **James Thurber**, director of the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies, discussed with [Bloomberg News](#) Congress' ability to make progress on other issues while debating the budget. "It's going to be hard to get that done, and it's hard to get them to focus on something outside of that. The politics of cutting the budget is really tough and it's very slow," said Thurber. (5/17)

Berkshire Purchases MasterCard Shares after Buffett Hires Combs

Bloomberg **Gerald Martin**, professor of finance, spoke to [Bloomberg News](#) about Warren Buffet's new money manager who is handling Buffett's stake in MasterCard. "He's going to get into the mix, and if he's had some success or a lot of knowledge on MasterCard, then he's bringing that to the table," said Martin. (5/17)

'Yes' Pile Will Bring D.C. \$127M in Revenue

The Washington Times **David Kautter**, managing director of the Kogod Tax Center, critiqued D.C. Mayor Vincent Gray's proposed tax increases to bridge the city's budget gap in the [Washington Times](#). "The one thing you cannot say is it is a pro-growth or pro-job series of proposals. You have to worry about the impact on small businesses and entrepreneurial business," said Kautter. (5/12)

Federal Gun Legislation Would Greatly Expand Who Qualifies as Mentally Ineligible from Owning a Gun

THE DAILY CALLER **Jeff Schaler**, assistant professor of justice, law and society, discussed proposed legislation expanding ineligibility for gun ownership due to mental health problems with the [Daily Caller](#). "People who are introducing and arguing for this legislation are essentially acting as if there is a post script at the bottom of the Bill of Rights that reads as follows: 'For mentally healthy people only,'" said Schaler. (5/13)

Republicans Scattered Over 2012 Elections



Leonard Steinhorn, professor of public communication, discussed the potential Republican candidate field on [WTTG-FOX5](#). "They may look underwhelming now, but the group in 1991 looked underwhelming when they were going to go after George Bush the first, no one thought they had a chance to win. In fact some of the big people dropped out and guess what happened? Bill Clinton, Democrat, won," said Steinhorn. (5/17)