

Remembrance: Dr. Robert Jervis, PhD (1940–2021)

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By Peter Clement

Dr. Robert Jervis, a renowned top scholar in the field of international relations and national security, passed away on December 9, 2021. Generations of Intelligence Community analysts were exposed to his seminal works, *The Logic of Images in International Relations* (1970) and *Perceptions and Misperception in International Politics* (1976), which remain relevant and influential today. Dr. Jervis, moreover, made significant contributions to the study of intelligence through his writing and his two decades of work with CIA's Historical Review Panel (HRP).

An external reviewer of sensitive, controversial CIA and IC analyses, Dr. Jervis subsequently published unclassified writings that provided a balanced and objective picture of the work of CIA and the IC. His book, *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War* (2010) offers a rare, unclassified accounting of his post-mortem on CIA analysis of the 1979 Iranian revolution; the book's chapters on the Iraq WMD National Intelligence Estimate are a superb assessment of the analytic/thinking problems that afflicted the NIE.

As a member of the HRP, Dr. Jervis brought his deep expertise on US national security issues to bear in CIA and US government deliberations about releasing historical materials. He believed strongly in the value of careful declassification to better inform the American people about US foreign policy and the intelligence world.

I first met Bob in 2005 when I was serving as CIA's associate deputy director of intelligence for analysis, when Bob was often at Langley to work on the Iraq WMD NIE review. As I quickly discovered, his low-key, unassuming presence cloaked a keen analytical mind and great intellectual curiosity. What I only came to know after several years at teaching at Columbia after my retirement, was just how revered Bob Jervis was because of his intellectual generosity with faculty and students alike. I often described Bob as the "energizer bunny," so boundless was his enthusiasm for intellectual discourse. Bob convened near-daily brown-bag lunch discussions as well as formal seminars to discuss recent articles from top scholarly journals. He also found time to talk to current IC analysts and craft insightful memos for former students—now policymakers—on everything from Iran to North Korea and, most recently, Russia and Ukraine.

Many students have said that what they remember most about Bob was his kind heart, humorous personality, and dedication to and love for students. One Columbia professor summed Bob up perfectly: "As great a scholar as Bob was, what I will remember most is what a good person he was. His brilliance gave him the right to be arrogant and aloof-but he was not. He was one of the kindest people I've ever met. And his influence made us all a little better."

—Peter Clement (Retired CIA Officer, Senior Research Fellow/Adjunct Professor Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University)