

The UK Defence Forum is delighted to announce that the winner of the 2010 Tim Garden Essay Competition is Rikke Haugegaard.

Rikke's essay, entitled 'Female power: the role of Afghan women in counter insurgency', is now published on the UK Defence Forum website www.ukdf.org.uk. She explores how local women can contribute to the fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan and how ISAF and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan can gain terrain by building alliances with local women.

Rikke Haugegaard holds a Master degree in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Copenhagen, and a PgCert in Information Operations from Cranfield University, Faculty of Defence and Security. Rikke is a Cultural Awareness instructor in the Danish Army and police, and has been conducting pre-deployment training of primarily CIMIC officers in Canada, Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Sweden. She has been doing research on Afghanistan for the Royal Danish Defence College, and her research interest is post-conflict reconstruction and the role of women in global security. Rikke Haugegaard is the owner of the consultancy firm Understanding Culture.

Two other entrants were highly commended:

James Clinch for 'Between change and continuity: Western cultural memory and 21st Century security.'

Ian Shields for 'Security or insecurity,'

Both have been published on Defence Viewpoints www.defenceviewpoints.co.uk.

James Clinch is studying for an MSc in International Relations at the LSE, and was previously awarded first class honours in Political Science from the University of Melbourne. Between graduating high school and starting university James took several years out to travel, and has explored many remote corners of Asia. In 2007 he did an internship with the International Crisis Group, in Pakistan, working on a report about madrassas in Karachi, and is currently an intern at the International Institute of Strategic Studies, London.

Ian Shields is a retired RAF Group Captain and is now studying for a doctorate in International Relations at Cambridge University where his thesis will be on the impact of Globalisation on Civil-Military Relations. He has lectured and been extensively published on Air and Space Power and in his final RAF tour he authored the 2009 Future Air and Space Operational Concept, looking forward 20 years; his other academic interest is in strategic thinking.

The chairman of the judging panel, Baroness Garden of Frognal, said:

"Tim once wrote 'corruption undermines the relationship between officialdom and the citizen, and is an attack on democracy. Thus when we claim a role in promoting democratic values

around the world we have a special responsibility to prevent corruption.'

"Rikke points out that in Afghanistan, corruption is widespread. Local women have only limited access to resources because they are not part of the drug trade network and associated corruption dominated by local warlords and the Taliban. Education of local women in good governance would help to move towards a society less dominated by corruption and the opium trade, thereby achieving the aims of a wide range of supporters of intervention, which has so far cost over 300 British, 1000 American and other allies' lives.

"Rikke has not only 'talked the talk' she is 'walking the walk' by training Danish forces who are serving alongside British forces in Helmand, both in Denmark and in Afghanistan.

"The standard of entries was very high, and the competition a close run thing – as witness the joint runners-up I highly commended. Entries from more than ten universities have encouraged us to start thinking about the 2011 essay competition already."