

#fail

Written by Dylan Kissane

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DYLAN KISSANE, JAN 29 2014

Yesterday I was alerted to this blog post by Steve Saideman on an ISA proposal that would deem blogging an unprofessional activity for ISA journal editors. Saideman explains:

As a member of the International Studies Association's Governing Council, I received the agenda today for this year's meeting. I am on the council this year as I am the President of the Foreign Policy Analysis section, so this is my one year to hang out with the ISA muckety-mucks. Anyhow, I was surprised to find a proposal that would force those who are involved in the editing of any of the various ISA journals to cease blogging. Why? Because it seems to be the case that blogging is inherently unprofessional.

Saideman includes the text of the proposal and engages in a reasonably fierce fisking explaining what he perceives to be the weaknesses in this proposal. In closing out his post he writes:

The real issue is not about blogging but responsibility. You want any editor to be professional and responsible, regardless of the media through which they choose to communicate. So rather than saying editors cannot blog, why not just ask them to be professional?

That's the crux of it, really. If the perceived problem is the airing of internal journal matters or politics to external audiences then this can be regulated in much the same way that all confidential material is regulated. You demand a certain standard of professionalism and confidentiality and people who cannot or will not respect this won't find themselves welcome on the journal board. Simple, non?

Targeting on particular medium of communication – blogging – seems to suggest that these unprofessional conversations would never take place on Facebook, via Twitter, in emails sent and then forwarded to a wider and wider audience, or even face-to-face at an ISA conference. Its nonsensical to imagine that the ISA would ask editors of their journals to take a physical, digital or social 'vow of silence', and equally nonsensical to ask them to quit blogging while serving the discipline, too.

As I understand, this is just a proposal at this point and if the reaction online is a guide, there's probably not much support for it being adopted as part of the code of conduct. Yet I temper this prediction with the knowledge that *of course* the reaction online is going to be running against the proposal...and that obviously not everyone on the ISA Governing Council feels the same way.

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Along with the rest of the E-IR site, this blog has had a facelift in the last couple of days. A new colour scheme, new style, and even a new name. *Political Business* is now officially 'old and busted' and the 'new hotness' is *The Ivory Tower*. I'll be sharing the blogging load with other academics who'll give some insights into their teaching, research, service and policy work, as well as inviting the odd student to reflect on the classroom experience from the other side of the desk, too. I hope you'll enjoy the content and posts we deliver in 2014 as we continue to provide a look at the other side of the IR lecture theatre, a real professors-eye-view of the world of international politics.

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