

# PASSPORT

THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS REVIEW

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## IN THIS ISSUE

A Roundtable on Charles Edel's *Nation Builder*  
Bethany Sharpe on Teaching on the Fringe  
Mitch Lerner on The Books We Read

AND MORE...

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THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS REVIEW



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Volume 46, Number 3, January 2016

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# CONGRATULATIONS!

The following colleagues were elected in the 2016 SHAFR election

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*Passport* would like to thank the 598 members of SHAFR who voted in the 2015 election, a near-record level of participation in our self-governance.



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**Passport 46/3 January 2016**

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# Presidential Message As the World Turns

David C. Engerman

As historians, we should be used to change over time, which we expound upon in articles, books, lectures, and beyond. Yet as SHAFR members, we have grown accustomed to a good deal more continuity than change in our organization. Presidents come and go, of course, but our organization has been on a very steady course thanks to executive director Peter Hahn. Peter guided some thirteen presidents, forty-plus council members, and countless committee chairs and prizewinners through large policy questions as well as small but important details. SHAFR grew dramatically under his watch; when he signed on as executive director in 2003, roughly three hundred scholars attended our conference at George Washington University, and our endowment stood at around \$900,000. In the summer of 2015, when Peter left his directorship to become divisional dean of Arts and Humanities at Ohio State, we were far larger and more prosperous: we had around sixteen hundred members; our conference drew almost six hundred registrants; and our endowment was about \$1.7 million. As the tributes from former presidents in the September issue of *Passport* indicate, Peter's departure is a huge loss for SHAFR.

To make matters worse, our brilliantly effective conference consultant, Jennifer Walton, also left SHAFR to take a full-time job. The success of SHAFR has been especially visible in its conferences, and the success of our conferences in turn owes a great debt to Jenn. For five years, she and each year's program committee co-chairs defined a broad vision of a good conference, not only intellectually but also socially. She took steps large and small to bring that vision to life, and she did it all with wisdom, calm, and efficiency.

Thus, SHAFR lost two people in quick succession who contributed so much to our recent growth. While at first I despaired about this rapid and unexpected turn of events, I quickly realized how fortunate we had been—and indeed still are. For one thing, we still have talented and experienced people in other important roles at *Diplomatic History*, *Passport*, and elsewhere. For another, Peter left us a legacy of an exceptionally well-run organization.

And then there is the depth of commitment to SHAFR among our membership. The news of Peter's and Jenn's



departures meant that I spent most of the 2015 SHAFR conference in Arlington (at least when I wasn't listening to terrific papers by everyone from SHAFR stalwarts to first-time participants) talking with SHAFR members and leaders about those jobs and about our organization's future. I came away from these conversations convinced that SHAFR was strong and would continue to thrive. Time after time after time I was impressed by a level of concern for and commitment to SHAFR that went well beyond even my highest hopes and expectations. It wasn't just past presidents but everyone, from SHAFR regulars

to first-timers, who offered to help the organization in whatever way they could. They nominated candidates to succeed Peter; they were ready to apply for the job; and in a few cases they even expressed a willingness to serve in an interim capacity. They shared their enthusiasm for SHAFR as well as their aspirations to improve it.

Two search committees to replace Jennifer and Peter swung into high gear after SHAFR. Special thanks go to Tim Borstelmann (who served on both committees), Mark Bradley, Petra Goedde, and Kristin Hoganson for their service. While the process of selecting from such a talented group of applicants was a difficult one, I'm thrilled to be working now with Julie Laut on the 2016 conference in San Diego and with Amy Sayward as our new executive director.

Amy is no SHAFR newbie; she is celebrating her twenty-fifth year as a member. She joined back in her graduate-student days at Ohio State, where she started as a student the same year that Peter Hahn joined the faculty there. As a graduate student, she worked on the editorial staff of *Diplomatic History* and won the Stuart L. Bernath Dissertation Research Grant. She gave her first conference paper at the 1995 SHAFR conference in Annapolis and has

been a constant presence since, attending almost all of the last twenty (!) meetings. She has presented papers, chaired sessions, organized panels, and served on a bevy of committees. In 2003 she received the Bernath Article Prize. Her first book, *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the World Health Organization Changed the World, 1945–1965*, was a pioneering account of development programs in intergovernmental



New SHAFR executive director Amy Sayward, Middle Tennessee State University

organizations and was the subject of a *Passport* roundtable. Even while serving as department chair at Middle Tennessee State University (2007–11), she managed to keep researching and writing; her next book, *The United Nations in International History*, will appear shortly in the Bloomsbury Academic Press series edited by former SHAFR president Tom Zeiler. Amy has already moved the SHAFR office to Tennessee and has everything up and running there. It's perhaps fitting that shortly after agreeing to become executive director, Amy departed for a two-week hike on the Appalachian Trail—thus starting two journeys this past summer.

Julie Laut, our new conference consultant, has similarly hit the ground running—a sign of her talents and also her familiarity with SHAFR; she presented a paper at our 2013 conference. Julie has just defended her dissertation,



*New SHAFR conference consultant Julie Laut*

"India at the United Nations: A Postcolonial State on the Global Stage," at the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign). But her dissertation was far from her first research project. As a fourth-grader, she already had the history bug; she co-produced "radio shows," including one in which a Johnny Carson-style host interviewed Queen Elizabeth I about her father. This experience may or may not help SHAFR expand our public history and podcast programs, but it definitely demonstrates the creativity and energy needed to organize a successful conference!

I know all of us will benefit (as I already have) from the fruits of Amy's and Julie's labors: a vibrant and exciting SHAFR that can handle change as well as continuity.



# A Roundtable on Charles N. Edel, *Nation Builder:* *John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic*

*Thomas W. Zeiler, Daniel J. Hulsebosch, Andrew Preston, William Inboden,  
Daniel Walker Howe, and Charles N. Edel*

## **Introductory Essay, Roundtable on Charles N. Edel, *Nation Builder: John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic***

Thomas W. Zeiler

**I**f your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader," John Quincy Adams proclaimed. That adage sounds like marketing for one of the trendy courses in leadership at my university. But consider it in conjunction with his most famous quote, "America does not go abroad in search of monsters to destroy," and one conclusion, surely in line with the argument in this superb book by Charles Edel, is that Adams thought profoundly, and on occasion inspirationally, about ensuring America's place, safety, and potential in the world. Deeply thoughtful and well researched, *Nation Builder* contends that Adams put forth a grand strategic philosophy for the United States that the young and vulnerable nation grew into over time.

The author believes that Adams was a statesman *par excellence*. I would go further to label John Quincy Adams a second-generation Founding Father. He was born too late to be one of the originals, but he was the next best thing: the son of a Founder, who went on to carve out his own vision for American greatness. The reviewers in this forum and the book's blurbers agree with Edel that Adams was one of the key strategists—and a mostly successful one at that—who built on the work of John Adams and the other half-dozen Founders and helped establish an independent, viable, and dynamic new nation. He had his failures (namely, his one-term presidency), and historians are wont to treat him more like a Herbert Hoover (as William Inboden notes here)—a brilliant, accomplished, and competent statesman who did not do as well in the political limelight of the nation's highest office as he might have been expected to. Yet put aside the presidency, and Adams, like many of the Founders, seemed the perfect mix for a statesman: he was a visionary who was also hard-headed and pragmatic, and a realist who was motivated to ponder and project in sweeping ideological terms and by and large succeeded in his mission.

Edel focuses on how this Founding Father Jr. set out

the doctrines that he believed should guide the country. He enmeshes the narrative in the complexities of Adams's thought and in the controversies of his times. Our four reviewers assert that he does a magnificent job of explaining Adams's thought and times, even though each of them disagrees with him and diverges from fellow commentators on occasion when assessing the consequences of Adams's overarching diplomatic strategy.

The book also shows that people matter, even though such a focus might not be in keeping with historiographical trends in our field. Edel enters Adams into the pantheon of great American leaders despite his political shortcomings. But his treatment of Adams is unique in that he places him in the pantheon as a towering statesman whose strategic outlook guided the young nation for decades, if not centuries. It is a positive treatment that also has sobering implications, as the panel of reviewers makes clear.

Despite his voluminous writings, Adams, we learn, never set out this grand strategy in explicit detail. Edel does that for us. It is clear that Adams sought national expansion, but without the sort of overextension that would ruin the democratic experiment. Thus, however grand his grand strategy was, Edel's Adams emerges as a realist, a cautious nation builder who envisioned the same goals of greatness and power for the country as did idealistic expansionists. He just got there in a different way. He did not seek monsters to destroy but rather urged neutrality *vis-à-vis* the big show in Europe and a turn inwards (at least toward the North American continent) to unite the nation in the common causes of security, prosperity, and democracy. That approach would result in the careful, step-by-step construction of a republican nation. The process minimized security risks and enabled the country to do the right thing morally.

The reviewers were uniformly captivated by Edel's treatment, and, on the whole, as impressed as the author by Adams himself, if not as awed. Upbringing counts, as Daniel Walker Howe notes, and Adams's seems to have been everything a New Englander could expect: a severe parental coldness coupled with stimulating intellectual pursuits. Howe also notes that Adams was no contented bureaucrat; his personal ambitions and presidential aspirations went hand in hand with his visionary outlook.

Yet Adams was both a man of his times and, perhaps most important, a man of the future. He predicted American greatness and dominance but also forecast problems with race, gender, and other social issues.

Andrew Preston compares Adams to later diplomats and strategists and likens him to a combination of Henry Kissinger, the brilliant strategist and supposed realist, and Dean Rusk, the modest, realist public servant. Like the other reviewers, Preston is taken by Edel's portrayal of Adams as a leader who might have erred in setting America on a course of destruction through expansionist policies that allowed for the spread of slavery. But more than the other panelists, Preston detects the legacy of the Founding Fathers in Adams. Like them, he was an energetic nationalist with confidence in the American federal project. Yes, such enthusiasm resulted in arrogance and a tendency to overreach and use power in untoward, exploitative ways. To be sure, there are contradictions in Adams that Preston is justified in pointing out and that Edel recognizes as well. Being a combination of Kissinger and Rusk does that to a person!

Daniel Hulsebosch and William Inboden wrestle with the notion of nation building, and specifically, the rational figure who lays out a strategy and follows it. Hulsebosch explores Edel's conceptualization of grand strategy and asks, what *is* grand strategy, and how do we distinguish between the ways Adams got to those goals and the goals themselves? Intriguingly, he does not question Edel's findings but instead examines the theory of grand strategy from a historiographical position. He wants to know precisely how and why grand strategists choose the projects they do. Do they take national politics into account when weighing what strategy to pursue? Hulsebosch argues that Adams's ill-fated presidency and his achievements as a congressman indicate that unless grand strategy can capture the political, it might not be able to explain presidential designs. Perhaps the answers lie in the politics of the era or, as Hulsebosch suggests, in an area neglected by Edel: the treaties and other legal guidelines that led Adams to interpret the events of the day, especially territorial issues, in a certain way. Edel responds to the critique of grand strategy as a framework and methodology in his rejoinder to the panelists.

For his part, Inboden targets the historical contexts in which Adams made his judgments and drew up his policies and finds that Adams gets high marks as a figure from the past and perhaps would do so today as well. He points both to the landmark Monroe Doctrine and the proscription against intervening willy-nilly abroad as particularly sage approaches that have withstood the test of time. Inboden does ask whether there was even more to Adams than Edel lets on. For instance, the interplay between his religion (as Preston notes, Adams had a messianic belief in the providential destiny of American greatness) and his nation-building efforts provides a potentially fruitful way to expand our understanding of grand strategy in a moral sense. After all, Adams did say that the "highest glory of the American Revolution was this: it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity." Still, Inboden points to what may be the essential Adams, who, rather than following fixed rules, adapted to various circumstances and contexts, using history as a guide, while maintaining his principles as best he could. Maybe that realistic balancing act is one reason that Adams can be considered even more than just the offspring of a Founding Father. Despite his political toils, he deserves recognition as a forward and far-reaching thinker. Charles Edel gives him his due.

## Review of Charles Edel, *Nation Builder: John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic*

Daniel J. Hulsebosch

Americans talk a lot about nation-building, but how do nations actually get built? And who does the building? Charles Edel's engrossing and strongly argued analysis of John Quincy Adams's long public career in early America makes the case that "grand strategy" is crucial to nation building and that Adams was the nation's first grand strategist. From his youthful diplomatic service abroad and his eight years as secretary of state under President James Monroe to his vexed single term as president, and even in his second career as a congressman and moral gadfly, Adams pursued what Edel calls the "twin strategies" of American geopolitics: union at home, neutrality abroad (62). Together, Adams believed, these strategies would allow the American states to flourish, expand, and enjoy security in all its dimensions: military, economic, and political.

More precisely, "union" for Adams meant not only preventing the country from fragmenting, but also spreading across the continent. Neutrality, in turn, meant formal or political impartiality in disputes between the European powers and between them and their American colonies. When it came to European designs on decolonized states or non-colonized territories in the Americas, on the other hand, the intellectual father of the Monroe Doctrine was famously more partial—while also brilliantly vague and noncommittal. The eighteenth-century ideal of the balance of powers sufficed for the founding generation; their nineteenth-century offspring, however, wanted freedom of action, and that meant eliminating competition in what they called their "neighborhood."<sup>1</sup> In short, Adams was centrally involved in developing and executing the grand strategy for America's republican empire: expansive on the continent, dominant in the hemisphere, and linked to the rest of the globe through private commerce rather than public commitment.

Edel's analytical premise is that *individuals* build nations. In particular, wise and shrewd statesmen can guide the process. Nations don't grow organically out of some mixture of natural resources and demography. They don't follow iron laws of economics. Nor are nations shaped only, or even primarily, by collective politics. Instead, the lesson seems to be, clear thinking by wise men at key moments of decision makes the difference between progress and merely muddling through, or worse.

It's a bracing theory. Faithful to his historical training, though, Edel generates a theory that is for the most part implicit rather than explicit. The same was apparently true of Adams's strategies. Edel concedes that Adams never laid down a coherent statement of his grand strategy. However, he gave many public speeches, penned countless memoranda, and wrote what arguably remains the greatest and certainly the longest diary of a public figure in the history of the republic (or possibly any state ever). So Adams did not hide the ball. He offered a lot of evidence about the sources and evolution of his decision-making, and much of it did aspire to grandeur—for his nation and himself.

Edel's rich book sparks all sorts of questions that could run far beyond the confines of a symposium. I pose three: one about the concept of grand strategy; another about the role of politics in Adams's conception of American strategy; and a third about the law of nations in Adams's diplomacy.

The first question is not, what was Adams's "grand strategy" historically? Instead it is, how we should treat the concept historiographically? The term comes from historians and theorists of international relations like Edel's own teachers, John Lewis Gaddis and Walter Russell Mead. They argue that national decision-makers should develop

comprehensive plans of action, stage the means efficiently, and make judgments informed by the collective wisdom of thinkers from Thucydides to George Kennan—and including John Quincy Adams.<sup>2</sup> Humane thinking, in other words, is a sounder guide for nation-builders than faddish theories from the social sciences or impulsive reactions in the face of a crisis. Case studies from the past are part of the training because they illustrate the difference between systematic and rash decision-making. There is much that is attractive here, especially for historians; at least, grand strategists could be new, eager, and influential audience for their scholarship. And there is appeal for historians in a method that emphasizes eclecticism, contingency, and learning over time rather than the timeless psychology of rational choice or even (lately) timeless irrationality.

The term “strategy,” however, possesses an ambiguity that might be useful for policymakers but is potentially confusing for historians because it can beg the question of ends. Strategy often suggests a plan that fits means to ends efficiently and well. The task, in this conception, is preordained. In the field of battle, for example, or in a game with predetermined rules for winning, strategy is the plan for achieving victory. But the goal is reasonably clear and uncontroversial. A nation-building strategist, then, might be akin to a general ordered to subdue a target, or a general contractor realizing the designs of an architect. Another characteristic of grand strategy is to appreciate the relationship between ends and to calculate how the resolution of one problem affects the attainment of another, seemingly disconnected one. Weighing the effects of multiple actions on various goals requires broad vision across narrow fields of responsibility, or departmental lines, something that was probably easier for Adams, whose State Department, Edel reminds us, functioned as both a Home Office and a Foreign Office.

The adjective “grand,” however, seems to connote more than scale and efficiency. It appears at times in Edel’s study to involve the development of ends as well as means—figuring out what goal should be pursued, not only how best to attain it. National ends, however, are subject to contestation and continual redefinition. That is the stuff of politics, high (as in, say, 1787) as well as low (ordinary elections and the legislative process), and politics plays a small role in Edel’s story of nation building.

I therefore wanted to learn more about the relationship between Adams’s development of grand strategy and the simultaneous political contestation of national ends—or the absence of such contestation. Part of the difficulty might lie in what counts as a strategic end. Edel writes that security was a central objective of early American state-builders. Adams learned, for example, that “without security, the nascent republican principles and institutions would not survive in a world dominated by militarized empires” (62). No doubt that was true. However, if security alone counted as an end, and grand strategy encompassed all the subordinate decision-making necessary to gain and retain security, then most of the hard work of defining what constituted security, and even identifying what needed to be secured, was passed to the managers of means: the strategists.

In bringing the reader along this path, Edel approaches a deep insight about national political culture in the so-called Era of Good Feelings:<sup>3</sup> namely, that in the absence of party competition, national politics coalesced around ends so abstract and consensual as to be almost banal. Ends so defined, or left so indefinite, necessarily pushed much meaningful decision-making down the chain of

sovereign command, whether into retail legislative politics or executive discretion. Wise decision-making against the backdrop of nonpartisan consensus was for generations an Adams family dream. For several years after the War of 1812 it seemed to be a reality. It is probably true that aspiring grand strategists like John Quincy Adams appreciated just this combination of open-ended principle and substantial delegation, and that modern democracies sometimes continue to define ends in empty terms and delegate specification to high-powered officials. Into that vacuum flow strategists of all shapes and sizes.

The second and related question therefore concerns politics. Adams avoided public politicking, except through the medium of the public address. Didactic rhetoric—in a public speech, pseudonymous essay, or publicized diplomatic missive—was his preferred tactic for managing the people writ large. But in his parlor, assisted by his charming and smart wife Louisa, he could wheel and deal with the best of them. He had to: Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay ate at his table. So Edel convincingly argues that it is wrong to characterize Adams as apolitical, for he was deeply political in high and low senses. On the

one hand, he inherited from his parents principled commitments to republican government, commercial probity, and individual liberty, including a hatred of slavery. On the other, he was hugely ambitious, set his sights early on the presidency, and, whether or not there was a “corrupt bargain” with Clay, was willing to engage in behavior that he himself considered dubious to get there (200–202). Yet once there he remained so obstinately committed to his vision of the republican empire and all its accoutrements—roads, canals, universities, naval ships, charts of the oceans, and maps of the firmament—that he could not find ways to get his program of internal improvements

through Congress. Stymied, he lost his reelection campaign in a landslide to the wildly popular Jackson.

Most of this political story is well known and, understandably, takes place off Edel’s main stage. Yet Adams’s disastrous presidency and the second party system that followed in its wake suggest that something other than grand strategy was at work in the definition of national ends. Oratory was not enough to persuade the people that Adams had the right ends in mind. The nation’s first grand strategist was also a political failure and spent his last two decades opposing many of the national parties’ new ends. Empire in America had long meant more than just territorial expansion; it also involved deep debates over the nature of self-government.<sup>4</sup> Those debates must also inform great strategy. The point is that unless grand strategy can capture the political, the history of grand strategy might not be able to reveal the designs behind the labors of nation builders.

My final question is piqued by an absence in Edel’s story and perhaps in grand strategy generally: is there a place in the history of grand strategy for law? Adams trained as a lawyer, though he practiced full-time only briefly in the 1790s and, as an attorney, is probably best remembered for defending African captives from re-enslavement in the *Amistad* case fifty years later. That case turned on the interpretation of treaties and the customary law of nations.<sup>5</sup> It was not, however, Adams’s first exposure to those fields. Legal training and practice in the early republic demanded mastery of the law of nations. For many Federalist lawyers, including the young Adams and his father, the law of nations was the object of serious study and debate, for they believed it set out guidelines for the behavior of civilized states—guidelines they hoped to comply with

A nation-building strategist, then, might be akin to a general ordered to subdue a target, or a general contractor realizing the designs of an architect. Another characteristic of grand strategy is to appreciate the relationship between ends and to calculate how the resolution of one problem affects the attainment of another, seemingly disconnected one.

and improve.<sup>6</sup> As the Napoleonic wars dragged on, and the warring nations asserted doubtful belligerent rights against neutrals like the United States, skepticism about the virtue and efficacy of the law of nations grew, especially among Republicans.<sup>7</sup>

In the nation-building years on which Edel focuses, Adams mixed his Federalism and Republicanism in law as he did elsewhere, with fascinating results. A good example is his reaction to Andrew Jackson's invasion of West Florida in early 1818. Ordered to police the border and pursue Native American attackers back into Spanish Florida, though not to engage Spanish troops, Jackson grabbed most of the colony, including some Spanish forts. Along the way, he tried and hanged two British subjects in a court martial for the alleged offense of inciting Indians to attack Americans. President Monroe and most members of his cabinet were horrified, feared war with Spain and/or Britain, panicked, and retroceded the territory to Spain.

Adams alone stayed cool. He advised the president to defend Jackson's actions, which he did, authorizing Adams to send a blistering defense to the American minister in Madrid. Edel praises Adams for seizing the opportunity to gain leverage with the ailing Spanish kingdom in long-standing negotiations over Florida and to show all Europe that the United States was "the dominant power on mainland North America" (153). That is how Adams saw the incident. Others, and not just Jackson's political enemies, interpreted it as illegal and unconstitutional: illegal because the military incursion into Spanish territory was not justified under the law of nations; unconstitutional because, as an act of war, the invasion of a foreign country required congressional approval.<sup>8</sup>

Adams tried to cover both those bases by claiming that Jackson had acted in national self-defense: it was necessary to retaliate against supposedly British-inspired Indian incursions, which violated both the Spanish-American Treaty of 1795 and the laws of neutrality that applied to Spain; and it was a response to an invasion. The president, as commander in chief, could order such a response without congressional approval. He made a hash of the doctrine of state sovereignty, the criteria and protocol for waging war, and the limits of martial law, falling back on the simple but powerful doctrine of self-defense. It was strategically—and politically—brilliant. However, as Edel notes, Spain had already decided to cede Florida to the United States, and Britain had its own reasons for looking the other way.<sup>9</sup> The primary audience of the diplomatic note was therefore domestic. Few could tar Adams as an Anglophilic, anti-expansionist New Englander after such an aggressive interpretation of the law of nations and executive power. Yet in the end the biggest winner was Jackson. His Democratic party would eventually build on Adams's strategic gambits to serve not only territorial expansion but also Indian removal and the spread of slavery.

Whether Adams's contribution to accustoming Americans to reductionist and self-interested interpretations of complex bodies of law was a wise strategy for building a nation, on a longer time horizon, is therefore a difficult question. Adams might very well have struggled with it when the Democrats stormed into Mexico twenty-five years later. Viewing that war as a boon for slavery, he criticized it as both illegal and unconstitutional, and he collapsed on the floor of Congress while a bill related to it was debated. He must have died knowing that he had helped build a nation—and an empire. Without competitors on the continent, it had only itself to fear.

Notes:

1. James E. Lewis Jr., *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783-1829* (Chapel Hill, 1998).
2. See, e.g., John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American*

*Experience* (Cambridge, MA, 2004); Walter Russell Mead, "American Grand Strategy in a World at Risk," *Orbis* 49 (Autumn 2005): 589–98.

3. See George Dangerfield, *The Era of Good Feelings* (London, 1953).
4. Daniel J. Hulsebosch, *Constituting Empire: New York and the Transformation of Constitutionalism in the Atlantic World, 1664–1830* (Chapel Hill, 2005).
5. *United States v. The Amistad*, 40 U.S. 518 (1841).
6. See Daniel J. Hulsebosch, "The Revolutionary Portfolio: Constitution-Making and the Wider World in the American Revolution," *Suffolk University Law Review* 47 (2014): 759–822; and David M. Golove and Daniel J. Hulsebosch, "'A Civilized Nation': The Early American Constitution, the Law of Nations, and the Pursuit of International Recognition," *New York University Law Review* 4 (October 2010): 923–1066.
7. For a suggestive argument, see Peter Onuf and Nicholas Onuf, *Federal Union, Modern World: The Law of Nations in an Age of Revolutions, 1776-1814* (Madison, WI, 1993).
8. Deborah Rosen examines the prominent public debate in *Border Law: The First Seminole War and American Nationhood* (Cambridge, MA, 2015). For a critical examination of Adams's role in the incident, see William E. Weeks, *John Quincy Adams and American Global Empire* (Lexington, KY, 1992).
9. Uncharacteristically, Edel here becomes mechanistic: "The United States' attractive power resembled a gravitational force field." Charles Edel, *Nation Builder: John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), 122.

### Review of Charles N. Edel, *Nation Builder: John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic*

Andrew Preston

There are many breeds of secretary of state, but what do you get when you cross a Dean Rusk with a Henry Kissinger? A John Quincy Adams, it would seem. Rusk, secretary of state to John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson in the 1960s, was known for his loyalty, discretion, and reticence. He saw himself first and foremost as a facilitator of the president's foreign policy, whatever it may be, and if he differed with the methods or objectives of that policy he said so only behind closed doors. Kissinger, secretary of state to Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford in the 1970s, was not as wary of the spotlight. He was a master strategist but also a master at self-promotion, so much so that many observers, at the time and ever since, have assumed that it was Kissinger, not Nixon or Ford, who actually made foreign policy. Kissinger saw the world as a three-dimensional chessboard, and he often played the game very well. But though he was not alone in playing it, he often took most or even all of the credit. When the Nobel Peace Prize committee decided to recognize America's withdrawal from Vietnam, for example, it honored Kissinger rather than Nixon. Rusk would never have accepted anything, not even a Nobel Peace Prize, that would have embarrassed or upstaged the president.

Adams, who served as James Monroe's secretary of state a century and a half before the era of Dean Rusk and Henry Kissinger, was an almost perfect blend of these two very different figures. Having lived and died long before either Rusk or Kissinger was born, Adams obviously did not model himself on them. But in a typology of diplomats, he would be a perfect blend of the complete opposites embodied by Rusk and Kissinger. This is at least the image one gets of Adams after reading Charles Edel's fluid, graceful, and insightful biography of the nation's sixth president and eighth secretary of state.

Like Rusk, Adams saw himself first and foremost as a servant of the president. "My place is subordinate," he wrote upon entering office in 1817; "my duty will

be to support, and not to counteract or oppose, the President's administration" (109). When he disagreed with the president, as he did during the internal debate that eventually produced the Monroe Doctrine, he did so privately, with candor but also the utmost discretion. This was not merely an expression of personal or partisan loyalty to Monroe; it was an expression of utter devotion to the United States, and thus by extension to its chief executive. As he explained to a frustrated supporter in 1824, when he refused to campaign for the presidency upon Monroe's retirement, "My business was to serve the public to the best of my abilities in the station assigned to me, and not to intrigue for further advancement" (193). Thurlow Weed, a politico from New York who despaired at Adams's apolitical tendencies, recalled in his memoirs that Adams "was able, enlightened, patriotic, and honest," yet "disregarded or overlooked . . . political organization and personal popularity" (236). With John Quincy Adams, the nation came first; everyone else, himself included, always came second.

Like Kissinger, however, and very much unlike Rusk, Adams was also a brilliant strategist, at least in terms of foreign policy (Edel concedes that Adams was hopeless at domestic politics). Adams viewed the anarchic realm of world politics with remarkable clarity; as a result, he advanced America's interests and safeguarded its security as well as, if not better than, anyone before—or since. Like Kissinger, Adams was enormously learned, particularly in history but also in literature and religion, and like Kissinger he based his geopolitical insights on this breadth and depth of knowledge.

Perhaps his dual nature, part Rusk and part Kissinger, explains Adams's unprecedented and also unequalled success as a diplomat. This is the main implication of Edel's deft portrait of Adams the statesman. To Edel, Adams was not simply an effective diplomat, but a grand strategist. The recent return of "grand strategy" to academic respectability has been remarkable, and nowhere is it more impressively deployed than in *Nation Builder*. According to Edel, grand strategy is not something that is all worked out ahead of time and then unfolds flawlessly according to some master plan. Effective grand strategy means pursuing a vision, being flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances, and linking a wide variety of means to an ultimate end. Adams did this with aplomb, achieving the three chief objectives—security, prosperity, and expansion—that Edel identifies as Adams's top national priorities.

Adams's grand strategy for protecting the republic and ensuring its growth consisted of three foreign policy goals that would be the means of achieving the ultimate end of national greatness: neutrality in Europe's quarrels, enhanced defensive capabilities for the United States, and continental expansion. Before Adams, American statesmen had conceived of these goals separately, but nobody before had interlinked them within a single overall plan. "Adams's grand strategy," Edel argues, "helps explain why America's rise from a confederation of revolutionary colonies to a continental power was not an inevitable result of resources and demographics, but rather the product of a deliberate pursuit"—that is, John Quincy Adams's deliberate pursuit (10). For this, he has earned Edel's honorific of "nation builder."

Edel's book is not a conventional biography. It certainly does follow John Quincy Adams from the cradle to the grave, and every major turning point in a life full of major turning points—including diplomatic service in several European

capitals, negotiations on the end of the War of 1812 with the Treaty of Ghent, five years as a U.S. senator, eight years as secretary of state, four years as president, and seventeen years as a member of the House of Representatives—receives due consideration. So do the major political and diplomatic issues that animated Adams's career as a public figure, from war and territorial expansion to slavery, economic development, and the appropriate scope of the federal government's role in managing the nation's affairs. But *Nation Builder* doesn't so much focus on the life and times of John Quincy Adams as it illustrates how Adams's life shaped his times. This is why the analytical prism of grand strategy is so critical to Edel's study: by integrating politics with economics, and foreign policy with internal development, Edel shows how Adams shaped the United States in an era when it could very well have fragmented into two or indeed several rival states decades before the Confederacy fired on Fort Sumter.

Adams was by no means flawless. His nationalism, which amounted to a quasi-religious faith in America's providential destiny, drove his expansionism, yet this very expansionism enabled the spread of slavery, which in turn nearly led to the destruction of the United States. His success in broadening the boundaries of the nation—principally through the 1819 Adams-Onís Treaty, which completed the conquest of Florida and extended the southern border of the United States all the way to the Pacific, but also through his

later support for the annexation of the Oregon Country—certainly strengthened the United States, but it also helped aggravate sectional tensions. Indeed, as Edel points out, at several points in the antebellum era Adams recognized that Americans might first have to undergo a trial by bloodshed in order to settle the sectional divide once and for all. Yet it is surprising that a grand strategist as adept as Adams could foresee no better solution to the dilemma between expansion and slavery than civil war.

Adams's expansionism also reflected the exuberant nationalism and unbridled confidence common to Americans in the early republic. Remarkably, this upstart nation-state, which many observers predicted would collapse under the weight of its own internal contradictions, believed itself to be powerful and constantly growing in power. "The influence of our example has unsettled all the ancient governments of Europe," Adams wrote in 1823. "It will overthrow them all without a single exception" (296–97). He declared in his first Annual Message to Congress (today's State of the Union address) that "liberty is power," which meant that before long, the United States would become "the most powerful nation upon earth" (191). Such arrogance must have raised an eyebrow or two in London and Paris.

For this reason, Adams's diagnosis of threats to American security should be treated with a good deal of skepticism, perhaps more than Edel shows here. Adams certainly did argue that the United States faced grave threats to its security, principally from the European powers. This was ironic, however, given that Adams's own diplomatic feats were what in large part ensured a nearly perfect, virtually threatless security environment for the United States. Beginning with the Treaty of Ghent, continuing with the 1818 and 1819 treaties with Britain and Spain, and culminating in the Adams-authored Monroe Doctrine of 1823, Adams made the United States the supreme power on the North American continent—indeed, in the entire Western Hemisphere.

As Edel shows, this rise to power was not incidental or accidental. Neither was the subsequent deployment of the nation's burgeoning power. As the United States expanded, it easily dispensed with almost anyone who stood in its path, usually with money or diplomacy or both, but by military force if necessary. If there was a source of North American insecurity, it did not emanate from Britain, Russia, Spain, or France, much less the territories that came to be called Mexico and Canada; instead, it came from Washington and the constituent states of the American republic. Native American tribes with whom the federal government had signed treaties; Spaniards in Florida; Mexicans who had sovereignty over Texas, California, and everything in between; Britons who claimed the Oregon Country—with the important exception of the British, all were dispensed with summarily and swiftly.

The British were an exception because they alone were powerful enough to make life difficult for the United States, as the sack of Washington in 1814 demonstrated. But after that war ended, British power in North America waned as that of the United States surged, and with each passing year after 1815 the balance of power shifted further and further away from London and towards Washington. The reality of American security and American power helps explain why the British government acquiesced to the Monroe Doctrine's impertinent unilateral declaration that east is east and west is west and never the twain shall meet; it also helps explain why Adams felt confident enough to draft the declaration in the first place.

The gravest threats to the United States gathered not in London, Paris, Madrid, or Mexico City, but in places such as Charleston, Atlanta, New Orleans, Hartford, and Boston. Adams recognized this reality, though it's surprising that he dealt with the external security environment so much more effectively than the internal one, and indeed exacerbated internal tensions with his success in external affairs. Adams was indeed a grand strategist, but perhaps his most successful short-term tactic, the exaggeration of external insecurity so as to enable the federal government to bolster its own role in the nation's political and economic development, turned out to be a long-term disaster. Perhaps the nation builder of the 1820s paved the way for the nation destroyers of the 1860s.

Regardless, John Quincy Adams's contributions to American statecraft are as clear as they are enduring. There was nothing inevitable about the United States; it had to be forged, through diplomatic skill and sometimes raw power, by individuals like Adams. Edel's achievement is to explore Adams the individual, warts and all, and reveal his role in forging a modern nation-state.

**Review of Charles Edel, *Nation Builder: John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic***

William Inboden

John Quincy Adams stands in one of the more curious pantheons in American history. Along with Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Herbert Hoover, and perhaps one or two others such as Ulysses S. Grant, he was an American president whose term at the White House was undistinguished if not an outright failure, but who did great good for his country outside his presidency. Charles Edel's singular new book illuminates this Adams in a fresh

new way. Attempting to bring intellectual coherence to the span of Adams's remarkable life is a daunting challenge, yet one that Edel deals with ably. In Edel's persuasive telling, the unifying themes that shaped the arc of Adams's career came together in his "grand strategy aimed at reducing security risks to the republic and vindicating republicanism as the form of government best suited to promote human progress and liberty. Each was an end unto itself, but those two great goals supported each other" (8). While protecting the inchoate nation's security and defending its values may sound like platitudes—could any American leader, after all, be opposed to such things?—Edel fleshes these concepts out in considerable detail and shows the particular policies that Adams pursued under the rubric of this strategy.

This son of a Founding Father is little remembered in the popular mind today, but Adams is one of the most accomplished Americans ever to have lived and perhaps the most accomplished member of his own family, itself one of America's most distinguished. Even two centuries later, the list of positions that Adams held is arresting: ambassador to several strategic countries, senator, congressman, secretary of state, president. And the sequence of these positions is equally fascinating: Adams' roles increased in power and importance until seeming to culminate in the White House. But then, after one term, Adams was ignominiously defeated by Andrew Jackson, only to return to Washington to serve in the House of Representatives for seventeen years until his death. The job description that cuts across these various roles is encapsulated in the book's title: "nation builder."

In Edel's artful portrayal, Adams emerges as an infinitely complex man of many paradoxes: the skilled and subtle diplomat who was also an inept and ham-handed politician; the man consumed by ambition who was disdainful of the steps necessary for career advancement; the leader with a lifetime of preparation for the presidency who was largely a failure as a one-term president; a deliberate architect of increased national power who often misunderstood or failed to wield the power at his own disposal; a proponent of the universal values of the Declaration of Independence who counseled against supporting liberty movements abroad; an advocate for the humane treatment of Native Americans who was also the arch-apostle of the American expansionism that annexed Indian lands. While there are certain consistent themes in Adams's life, the man himself replete with inconsistencies. As are many other great people.

This book is also a welcome addition to the growing but still limited scholarship on grand strategy. Just about every aspect of grand strategy remains contested by scholars, from its definition to its desirability, its feasibility, its successes and failures, and its very existence. Edel will by no means resolve these debates, but he nonetheless offers an important contribution to the literature (especially since most studies of American grand strategy concentrate on the twentieth century, while most scholarship on nineteenth-century grand strategy focuses on familiar European leaders such as Napoleon, Metternich, Castlereagh, and Bismarck). In framing Adams as a grand strategist, Edel expands the nineteenth-century study of the field geographically and its twentieth-century study chronologically.

Edel lays out his definition of grand strategy as "a comprehensive and integrated plan of action, based on the calculated relationship of means to ends" (5). He contends that while other leaders of the incipient United States had already developed policy traditions—such as avoiding the entanglement of alliances and the endless

*This book is a welcome addition to the growing but still limited scholarship on grand strategy. Just about every aspect of grand strategy remains contested by scholars, from its definition to its desirability, its feasibility, its successes and failures, and its very existence. Edel will by no means resolve these debates, but he nonetheless offers an important contribution to the literature.*

conflicts of Europe or gaining security by expanding on the North American continent—Adams was instrumental in developing these traditions into a coherent grand strategy. The distinctive measures that he employed in this task were an appreciation for context, a focus on the proper sequencing of American actions, and an astute alignment of the young nation's available resources with its strategic goals. If it is possible for an individual leader to develop a grand strategy, Edel persuasively argues that John Quincy Adams did just that.

Not all readers of this book seem to agree. In another review, a rather querulous Andrew Bacevich questions whether Adams did in fact possess a grand strategy. Bacevich vituperatively contends that “by pasting together what Adams said on this occasion and did on that one, Edel infers that strategy. This is a bit like divining the philosophy of Homer by taking bits and pieces from episodes of the Simpsons—a clever enough trick but not to be taken too seriously. The same can be said of Edel's efforts at divination. . . . It is difficult to avoid the impression that rather than an explication of Adams's thinking, this is an exercise in ventriloquism.”<sup>1</sup>

Juvenile insults and gratuitous snark aside, this criticism seems to accuse Edel of nothing more than . . . engaging in the craft of historical scholarship. After all, what do we historians do but mine the archives, assess the evidence we find there in the light of prevailing events, suggest our interpretations of cause and effect, influence and outcomes, meaning and significance—in short, try to explain what it all means? Bacevich's critique also seems to hold both John Quincy Adams and Charles Edel to a virtually impossible standard, since very few of history's great strategists (at least those not named George Kennan) ever wrote down an entire grand strategy in a tidy ten-page memo or *Foreign Affairs* article. Rather, the grand strategies of most leaders are embedded in their words and actions over the span of their careers. Having read almost every word that the prolific Adams ever penned, Edel judiciously attends to the record of Adams's life and thought while mapping it onto the transformative years of the early nineteenth-century United States.

In describing the early years of his subject, Edel observes that “reading history would stand at the heart of Adams's education.” He goes on to explore the many works of history that shaped the young Adams, especially Thucydides (18). With a statecraft shaped by a historical sensibility, Adams developed a particular appreciation for what he saw as the constants of human nature as well as the particular contexts in which events played out and the importance of timing and sequence in the affairs of state. In a similar way, Edel helpfully locates Adams in the historical context of other American leaders. He describes Adams as the intellectual heir to many of his predecessors' ideas, citing Washington on avoiding European conflicts; Jefferson on continental expansion and the preservation of liberty; Madison on the accountability wrought by competing interests; Hamilton on state finance; and, of course, Adams's father on so many issues. Edel likewise identifies Adams as an important intellectual progenitor for Lincoln, particularly on how the Declaration of Independence stood not just chronologically but also philosophically prior to the Constitution and how the latter needed to be interpreted through the former.

If history shaped Adams's approach to strategy and policy, should the historical insights offered by Adams's career in turn inform policymakers today? Edel tentatively suggests that they should in his conclusion, but he does

not develop the thought any further. From my observation, insofar as Adams is invoked at all in contemporary policy discussions, it is in reference to one of two written works: the Monroe Doctrine and the 1821 Fourth of July speech warning that America “goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy.” As contested as it continues to be on a normative level, the Monroe Doctrine also seems to stand as an objective description of the fact of America's hemispheric strategic posture over the past two centuries. It is still relevant because it is still reality.

Somewhat more elusive in its potential application today is the “monsters to destroy” speech. In Edel's telling, while Adams did indeed believe at the time that the United States could best serve its own interests just by being an example to other nations and while he opposed zealous interventions in the internal affairs of other nations, he should not be crudely misappropriated by today's proponents of the foreign policy variously called isolationism, non-interventionism, or restraint. Rather, the Adams portrayed by Edel is a more sophisticated and complex figure who combined abiding convictions with policy preferences that shifted according to need, circumstance, and context. So the same Adams who counseled his young and vulnerable nation against foreign entanglements in 1821 would urge more support just a few years later, in 1826, for the spread of republicanism and for formal commitments to some South American nations through the Panama Congress. Adams revised his prescription because he believed the global context and America's capabilities had both changed. As Edel writes, “No longer vulnerable, and growing into its financial and industrial power, the United States, Adams believed, . . . needed to play a more active role stewarding hemispheric affairs” (218).

There are, to be sure, areas in the book where one would have liked to have seen Edel develop his arguments further. For example, he hints at but never fully explores Adams's spiritual life and theological convictions. A daily reader of the Bible, Adams also served as vice president of the American Bible Society; and he brought religious conviction to much of his statecraft, especially the fight against slavery that consumed much of his final career in Congress. Additionally, Edel perhaps stretches the meaning of “grand strategy” rather too far when he describes the “personal level” and “moral level” (which Edel summarizes as “How do I justify all of this to God?”) of grand strategy in Adams's life, especially since that angle is so little explored in the book (6).

But such quibbles should not detract from what is in the main a very impressive achievement by Edel, especially for a first book. In it he has brought the enigmatic John Quincy Adams back to life for the twenty-first-century United States, and he has reminded us of just how much early twenty-first-century America owes to its early nineteenth-century nation builder.

Note:

1. Andrew Bacevich, “In Search of John Quincy Adams,” *The National Interest*, November–December 2014.

Review of Charles N. Edel, *Nation Builder: John Quincy Adams and the Grand Strategy of the Republic*

Daniel Walker Howe

In this excellent biography of the sixth president, Charles N. Edel traces how John Quincy Adams “conceived of his own and the nation’s rise to power,” studies his successes and his failures in the context of their times, and goes on to examine “the contemporary applicability of Adams’s thinking” (5). Here he shows himself to be a scrupulous historical biographer. His linkage of Adams’s and the nation’s rise to power is a particularly appropriate and insightful conjunction; the two were indeed linked, intensely and passionately, in Adams’s mind and spirit.

Edel’s first chapter (cleverly entitled “The Education of John Quincy Adams,” invoking Adams’s grandson’s autobiography, *The Education of Henry Adams*) does a fascinating job of explaining the psyche of his subject in terms of his upbringing. The elder Adamses, Abigail and John, were relentlessly demanding of their eldest son. They insisted he be politically successful, but at the same time they taught him to despise the arts by which people court popularity. Abigail’s large role in this dominating style of parenting has not always been fully recognized until now. It produced in their brilliant son a combination of patriotic ambition and gruff, often surly, manners, so tellingly described here.

Adams’s demanding personality inflicted heavy costs on his wife and sons, Edel points out. Louisa Catherine complained even during their courtship, when most people would be on their best behavior, that his manners were “so severe, so cold, and so peremptory” that they hurt her (104). Contrary to Louisa’s wishes, Adams replicated the psychologically coercive parenting he had received. Of their three sons, the eldest committed suicide and the next became an alcoholic. Only the youngest, the scholar Charles Francis Adams, who was elected to his late father’s former congressional seat and went on to become Lincoln’s ambassador to Britain, achieved what his father would have considered success in life.

Edel recognizes both consistencies and changes across Adams’s long career. In his youth he was a Federalist, appointed to diplomatic posts by each of the two Federalist presidents in turn. Washington chose him as minister to the Netherlands and Portugal; his father John Adams made him minister to Prussia. (The United States did not call its diplomatic envoys ambassadors until the 1890s.) Returning home after Jefferson became president, Adams was elected a Federalist senator from Massachusetts.

Again, however, foreign affairs intervened in his life. In June 1807 the British warship HMS *Leopard* attacked the USS *Chesapeake* when her commander refused to allow the Royal Navy to search her for deserters. (There were in fact three deserters on board the *Chesapeake*, and British authorities knew this.) The *Chesapeake* was completely unprepared for combat and eventually surrendered. The British boarded her and took four men off. Britain and Napoleonic France were at war at the time, and the British were desperate for naval manpower.

The American public was outraged, but New England Federalists were reluctant to protest too strongly lest their merchants lose their profitable transatlantic trade, which the Royal Navy had the power to interdict. Senator Adams sided with the Jeffersonian Republicans in forcefully condemning the *Leopard*’s attack as intolerable, and changed his party affiliation. With Adams’s cooperation, the Jefferson administration went on to enact the Embargo of 1807, hoping that both the British government and

Napoleon would make concessions in order to regain American trade. Neither country did so, though Edel does not dwell on this policy failure. Jefferson’s Embargo wiped out the international trade of coastal New England, ruining its economy and destroying Adams’s popularity with his constituents. At first glance, it would seem that Adams had sacrificed his political career to his judgment of the nation’s interests. Time would show, however, that Adams’s change of party improved his political opportunities. The Federalist Party went into terminal decline and never regained the presidency.

Edel follows Adams through a series of diplomatic positions and traces his consistent twin commitments to advancing his own career and to serving the interests of his weak new nation on the fringe of European power politics. Thomas Jefferson’s Democratic-Republican presidential successor, James Madison, acknowledged Adams’s diplomatic skills and experience by appointing him minister to tsarist Russia in 1809. Russia was an ally of Napoleon until 1812, when the megalomaniac betrayed Russian confidence by invading the country (as another doomed megalomaniac would do in 1941). In June of 1812, President Madison was persuaded to support a declaration of war against Britain. I was surprised that Edel does not mention the two most important causes of that declaration: the British Orders in Council restricting American trade and the impressment of American seamen into the Royal Navy (99).

Now that he was fighting Napoleon for his country’s survival, Tsar Alexander wanted to bring about peace between Britain and the United States and offered to arbitrate their differences. The British declined the offer, perhaps because they knew Adams enjoyed good relations with Alexander. By August of 1814, however, the two belligerents opened direct negotiations for peace at Ghent. With Napoleon defeated (for the time being), the key issues that had given rise to the war seemed moot. Madison designated Adams to head the American delegation meeting with the British. The treaty that the parties agreed to and signed on Christmas Eve, 1814, ignored the issue of impressment but avoided loss of U.S. territory to Canada in the northern theater of operations, where American arms had been generally unsuccessful. Most important, the British tacitly abandoned their Native American allies to the not-so-tender mercies of the United States. I felt Edel could have enhanced his account of the negotiations by engaging with that of Troy Bickham in *The Weight of Vengeance: The United States, the British Empire, and the War of 1812* (Oxford, 2012), chapter 8, especially pp. 229–31. The treaty was welcomed in the United States and served both Adams’s career and the national interest. Madison rewarded Adams with the most important posting in American diplomacy: minister to Great Britain. Anglo-American relations thereupon entered a new phase of cordiality, with Adams facilitating it.

Adams earned additional recognition in December 1816, when President-elect James Monroe designated him secretary of state. Henry Clay of Kentucky was disappointed, but there was no denying that Adams had the stronger claim to the office. As secretary of state, Adams engaged a series of major issues, beginning with Andrew Jackson’s invasion of Spanish Florida in 1818. The Monroe administration sent Jackson into Florida to retaliate against Seminole Indians and escaped slaves, who had fought with U.S. Army troops on the Georgia side of what was then an international boundary. Jackson, exceeding his orders, not only waged war on the blacks and their Seminole friends, but captured Spanish forts and even the Spanish governor of Florida, whom he then sent packing to Havana, Cuba.

When news of all this finally reached Washington there was an uproar. Both the cabinet and Congress debated whether to punish Jackson for waging an unauthorized war.



Secretary of War John C. Calhoun and Speaker of the House Clay were for court-martialing the general, but Secretary of State Adams stood by him. He wanted to use Jackson's demonstration of the weakness of Spanish authority to press Spain into ceding both East and West Florida to the United States. President Monroe took his advice. Adams went on to negotiate a momentous transcontinental treaty with Spain that not only obtained the Floridas but also defined the border between the United States and Mexico (then "New Spain") all the way from the Gulf Coast to the Pacific. Spain turned over its claims in the Oregon Country to the United States, which thereby acquired an acknowledged West Coast. Adams had proved himself a tough negotiator.

The most famous achievement of Secretary of State John Quincy Adams was of course the Monroe Doctrine. This unilateral presidential pronouncement was directed against threats of European incursion into the Western Hemisphere. One threat came from Russia, which sought to expand its Alaskan presence further into North America; the other came from the reactionary Holy Alliance, which, having restored the Bourbon monarchy in France and intervened in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, was considering helping Spain recover its lost colonies in Latin America. British Foreign Minister George Canning proposed that Britain and the United States issue a joint statement opposing such an intervention. Most of President Monroe's advisors (including his predecessors, Jefferson and Madison) and cabinet members counseled him to accept Canning's offer.

But the secretary of state preferred to have the United States make such an announcement on its own. The late Ernest R. May, diplomatic historian at Harvard, suggested that Adams's stand in this case was influenced by his career ambitions: he was looking forward to running for president and wanted to establish a record as a firm American nationalist. May's interpretation fits nicely within Edel's broad thesis that Adams is best understood as combining his nationalism with a concern for his personal political advancement. Once again, President Monroe followed, broadly, Adams's advice, incorporating it into his annual message to Congress of 1823. Edel's explanations are lucid; and his presentation regarding the Monroe Doctrine includes information not often provided, such as exactly how Adams contrived to address both of the European issues at the same time. The Monroe Doctrine, as it became known, proved immediately redundant, since by the time of Monroe's address Russia and the other continental powers had already decided against New World adventurism. But it remained a long-term tenet of U.S. policy to defend a hemisphere of influence against outside interference, while avoiding (until the First World War) involvement in European power politics.

The election campaign of 1824 provided Adams the opportunity to realize his lifelong ambition to become president, just as his father had. He had a temperamental aversion to campaigning, which he had elevated into a high principle. (Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century, candidates generally obeyed the unwritten rule that persons running for the presidency should not openly campaign, but leave that to their followers; exceptions were Stephen Douglas in 1860 and William Jennings Bryan in 1896.) Adams started out by carrying that principle to an extreme, frustrating his supporters. But Edel shows us how, as the campaign evolved, Adams inevitably compromised his private principle bit by bit.

It is too bad that Edel did not have available to him when he was doing his research the new book by Donald Ratcliffe, *The Five Horse Race: The Presidential Election of 1824* (University Press of Kansas, 2015). Ratcliffe's work confirms Edel's: Adams did come around to campaign actively (especially after the election moved from the Electoral College to the House of Representatives). It also demonstrates that Adams enjoyed more popular support

than is usually recognized. Ratcliffe has found ways to estimate popular support in states that did not hold a popular vote for electors in 1824 and uses these findings to argue, surprisingly but persuasively, that Adams actually had more popular support than Jackson. Ratcliffe also shows that the issues of internal improvements, slavery expansion, and Indian Removal were already relevant, recognized, and influencing voters in the 1824 campaign. And of course he agrees with Edel that Henry Clay's ultimate support for Adams in the House of Representatives was entirely logical and legitimate, not at all the "corrupt bargain" Jackson and his followers condemned. (Jackson himself likened Clay to Judas Iscariot.)

Edel detects another significant change in Adams's generally consistent political career after he became president. Adams moved beyond his earlier focus on protecting American interests from outside interference to promoting the national interest in positive ways. For example, he supported U.S. participation in the Pan-American Conference of 1826. Adams and his secretary of state, Henry Clay, hoped participation would promote trade with Latin America, but the opposition delayed congressional approval for so long that the U.S. delegates never made it to the event. Another initiative that Adams promoted involved a national program of "internal improvements" (transportation infrastructure, including highways, canals, lighthouses, and the dredging of rivers to make them navigable). While not agreeing on any comprehensive plan, Adams's Congress did enact more individual internal improvement projects than ever before. But the president's advocacy of a national university and federal support for applied science was largely ignored.

The midterm elections of 1826-7 (in those days each state scheduled its own congressional elections) deprived the Adams administration of control in Congress. Led by Martin Van Buren of New York, Adams's opponents rallied around Andrew Jackson. Ironically, the old general, who owed so much to Adams for supporting his invasion of Florida, drove his former patron from the presidency in the election of 1828.

Adams's career now entered its last and in some ways most appealing phase. The ex-president consented to stand for election to the House of Representatives from his Massachusetts home district in 1830 and won overwhelmingly. ("My election as President of the United States was not half so gratifying," he confided to his diary.) For the rest of his life, he remained in the House, where he found that much of his time was taken up by the issue of slavery. He had long been privately critical of slavery, but when occupying positions that demanded service to the national government, he had kept such criticisms out of his public life. Now he came to see that slavery stained America's moral character and that America's westward expansion (which he himself had promoted repeatedly) threatened to expand its power, contrary to the hope which so many thoughtful Americans had entertained for its gradual diminution and elimination.

In 1835, Edel explains, the American Anti-Slavery Society undertook a direct mail campaign to win over prominent southerners. Contrary to federal law, but with encouragement from the Jackson administration, postmasters throughout the South refused to deliver this mail. The society then shifted its efforts to encouraging petitions to Congress. Southerners reacted with the "Gag Rule" forbidding discussion of these petitions in the House of Representatives. Adams made himself famous for challenging and evading the Gag Rule, employing his mastery of parliamentary procedure. In 1842 a censure motion was filed against him for presenting a particularly extreme antislavery petition. "Old Man Eloquent" (as he was called) defended himself successfully against censure and then toured the North, having made himself

a popular hero in the cause of free expression. In 1844 the House finally repealed the Gag Rule, which had become an embarrassment. So strongly had the slavery issue come to dominate Adams's policy decisions that it affected his support for U.S. expansion. He backed the acquisition of all of the Oregon Country (including what is now British Columbia) but opposed Texas annexation and the Mexican War.

When Adams died in 1848, his funeral was a national occasion. Edel describes it beautifully. He then proceeds to an evaluation of his subject's career and its lessons for us today. The principles Adams advocated should remind us that our nation's power is finite, and we should carefully define when and where to project it, lest we dissipate our attention and energy. Adams struggled to define the extent to which morality should guide policymakers. He never fully resolved the issue, but in practice he seems to have felt that morality provided a more compelling foundation for domestic than for international affairs. Edel concludes that Adams was wiser as a statesman devising grand strategic goals than as a politician trying to implement them.

I find Edel's conclusions just, but I was sorry that he did not expand his focus to make more use of the lessons we can take from Adams the congressman. In an age when private rights and freedom of expression are under challenge from a variety of sources, Adams's persistent defense of the right to ask questions and challenge the way things are done sets an example for us. To an age as sensitive to gender rights as our own, it should be worth noting that Abigail Adams's son defended the right of women as well as men to petition Congress. Nor have we moved so far away from the race issue as to render Adams's courage and insights on that matter irrelevant.

*Nation Builder* is a credit to Charles N. Edel, to Harvard University Press, and to its eminent subject, whose wisdom and lifelong service to the American nation remain instructive and inspirational today.

### Roundtable Response

Charles N. Edel

**I**t is a great honor to receive such thoughtful feedback from a group of historians whose work I have long admired. For their perceptive readings and incisive comments on my book, I would like to thank Daniel Walker Howe, William Inboden, Andrew Preston, and Daniel Hulsebosch. Thanks also to Tom Zeiler for his introduction, and a special thanks to Andrew Johns for proposing this roundtable.

What makes responding to these generous reviews so interesting, and so challenging, is that each reviewer focuses on different questions, themes, and historical periods for comment. Since my book attempts to bridge several different fields—historical biography, foreign policy, and grand strategy—I chose to focus by necessity and design on episodes of great strategic consequence, inevitably giving less emphasis to other areas and subjects that were equally fascinating. Therefore I would like to respond to several points these reviewers highlight in order both to explain my editorial choices and to engage some of the larger conceptual points that are raised.

As William Inboden and Andrew Preston note, the study of grand strategy is an exciting and rapidly growing field of scholarship, even if it is hardly a new subject. In fact it is one of the oldest fields of study, as it is effectively the study of statecraft at the broadest level. And as Inboden writes, at least part of what makes grand strategy such a dynamic field is that nearly every aspect of it—its definition,

its utility, its feasibility, and its very existence—is debated among historians, political scientists, and policymakers.<sup>1</sup>

Tocqueville once observed that “an abstract word is like a box with a false bottom; you can put in any ideas you please, and take them out again without anyone being the wiser.”<sup>2</sup> For that very reason, definitions are important, especially with a contested term. I attempt to trace the evolution of the term *grand strategy* from its origins in the sphere of military endeavor into the larger and more complicated world of statecraft. The definition I have found most helpful is John Lewis Gaddis's; he describes grand strategy as a comprehensive and integrated plan of action based on the calculated relationship of means to large ends.<sup>3</sup>

But Daniel Hulsebosch correctly points out that grand strategy is something more than an efficient plan on a large scale. As I argue in the introduction of my book, useful employment of the term requires both the conceptualization of those large ends *and* optimal use of the means available to achieve them. Conception and execution are equally important here, and any examination of grand strategy must focus on both. Bereft of vision, grand strategy becomes merely a list of accomplishments and failures without regard to how goals were chosen, prioritized, and sequenced. Without execution, grand strategy merely traces the evolution of ideas with little regard to their impact on events. Successful grand strategy requires vision and dexterity, with objectives reevaluated as circumstances change.

Perhaps the best depiction of this balancing act and of the confusion that the term *grand strategy* engenders comes from Michael Morgan's review of James Wilson's *The Triumph of Improvisation* in these pages. Morgan explains that strategy can be understood as either a computer program or a compass. “If strategy is a computer program,” he writes, “it should tell a leader exactly what to do in any given situation and provide an answer for every question. It must set everything out in advance and allow nothing to chance.... If strategy is a compass, however, it only needs to point in the right direction.”<sup>4</sup> The latter demands decisions of leaders but attempts to locate the logic of those decisions in a larger framework.

So how then to proceed methodologically? The question is especially germane if one makes the argument, as I do, that Adams's grand strategy is an implicit one whose shape emerges not in a single document, but cumulatively and comprehensively across his entire career. The word *implicit* is key here, because it is not as if John Quincy Adams ever sat down and recorded his worldview and grand strategy in a summary form. Rather, it is only in reading his immense documentary record that a consistent conception of his objectives emerges..

Moving beyond the vision, which is after all only the first step for a strategist, I then examine how Adams executed the vision: how he identified threats to those interests and formulated responses in light of those threats. Executing a vision means not only doing what one would want, but also having a realistic understanding of shifting circumstances. However intellectually and indeed emotionally unsatisfying it may be, effective execution also requires prioritization and choice and occasionally produces unwanted results. As the political philosopher Isaiah Berlin observed, if “the ends of men are many, and not all of them are in principle compatible with each other, then the possibility of conflict—and of tragedy—can never wholly be eliminated from human life, either personal or social.”<sup>5</sup>

To my mind, a proper assessment of Adams's evolving strategy thus entails charting his consistencies and inconsistencies, his successes, internal tensions, failures, and the unintended consequences of his actions. I therefore proceed chronologically and focus on a number of episodes that are meant to highlight both the broad vision Adams

developed and his ability—and, at times, inability—to translate that vision into policy.

Adams is of course well known for his role in devising the Monroe Doctrine. I was particularly gratified that Daniel Walker Howe highlights my efforts to explain that this famous policy statement was not simply a unilateral public pronouncement. Rather, it was part of Adams's efforts to respond simultaneously to several concerns: Russia's determination to suppress republican regimes, possible plans for a military intervention in South America by the Holy Alliance, and British offers to declare a bilateral security agreement with America in the Western Hemisphere. Adams's private diplomatic response to the Russians was issued in conjunction with the public presidential address that has come to be remembered as the Monroe Doctrine; together the two were meant to be, in Adams's words, "parts of a combined system of policy and adapted to each other."<sup>6</sup> In fact, it was his private response to the Russians that he considered "the most important paper that ever went from my hands."

The letter to the Russians laid out several points, but most interesting, in my view, was Adams's suggestion that the United States could work with authoritarian states but would also seek to contain the growth of authoritarian regimes *within* the Western Hemisphere. As I suggest, the Monroe Doctrine and the letter to the Russians should be read in tandem; the latter as a fuller exposition of the broad principles espoused in the former. The Monroe Doctrine is usually seen as a unilateral pronouncement of American power, but what the cabinet meetings and official state correspondence reveal is something quite different. Under Adams's guidance the Monroe Doctrine was less a projection of power and more a statement of principles, an announcement about expectations of future growth, and perhaps most important, a declaration about simultaneously limiting activity abroad and expanding American interests.

Howe also notes that I show Adams focusing initially on efforts to protect American interests and, as his career progressed, shifting toward promoting the national interest in positive ways. This is true in terms of both his foreign and domestic policies, although I would add that both of these impulses were present from the start for Adams. Adams's grand strategy was aimed at both reducing security risks to the republic and vindicating republicanism as the form of government best suited to promoting human progress and liberty. He believed that each objective was an end unto itself but that these two great goals supported each other. Without security, the nascent republican principles and institutions would not survive in a world dominated by militarized empires. Without a moral component, America could not offer the world anything better than the monarchies of the old world could.

Adams's movement on these issues is best understood as a product of circumstance and sequencing. He had a clear sense of the stages of development a rising power must go through—securing the nation against foreign attacks; strengthening its ability to defend itself; developing its resources and capacities; and gradually aligning its ideals to its actions. But he also recognized that certain events demanded immediate responses, while others could be put on the back burner. Distinguishing among these allowed Adams not only to prioritize but also to act on events in the proper order.

Finally, Howe underscores that Adams struggled to define the extent to which morality should guide policymakers. The question of whether nations should be

guided by the same principles as private morality, or if the dictates of the national interest required a separate set of rules, ceaselessly troubled Adams. While he preferred that the nation act in a moral fashion, he admitted that the principles of private morality did not always serve the national interest best. Additionally, Adams often thought that moral behavior meant one thing inside the law-based realm of the United States, but another in the anarchic international world. For the realist, this view appears to provide evidence that Adams was cold-eyed and dispassionate about the country's interest. But Adams is a much more complex figure than that particular view suggests. For it was also his belief that it was the unique duty of the American statesman to guide the nation to

power while keeping it on a course towards justice. Throughout his career, Adams argued that changed circumstances—and particularly a change in capabilities—altered what was possible. As American resources grew and the nation became more capable of influencing the rest of the world, the limits of his vision become harder to discern, but they certainly seem less a product of restraint than of ambition.

On this point, Inboden raises two particularly insightful questions. First, drawing on his experience as both a scholar and a policymaker, he ponders the contemporary relevance of Adams's career and asks if historical insights from that career could inform policymaking today. He focuses on Adams's most famous phrase—"America goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy"—and suggests that Adams should "not be crudely misappropriated by today's proponents of the foreign policy variously called isolationism, non-interventionism, or restraint." I am in complete agreement with him here. Adams himself would be the first to concur that changing circumstances and contexts must mean changing policies. In multiple instances, he declared that precedent should not become a policy straightjacket; the nation needed to keep in mind the changing nature of American power and the shifting international environment. What made sense when the nation was a small power on the edge of the world might not make as much sense to the nation's ambitions when it became larger and more secure.

Inboden also suggests that I could have undertaken a fuller exploration of Adams's spiritual life and theological convictions. While I do discuss John and Abigail's belief that their children's education should revolve around history, Christian ethics, and civic virtues, and I examine the general Adams creed that the personal morality of Christianity and the public virtues of civic duty were meant to be mutually reinforcing, more on this subject would have been a worthy addition to the book.

I do devote some time to analyzing the religious aspects of Adams's views on slavery. During his post-presidential career, Adams held that abolishing slavery was a Christian duty that would bring the country closer to fulfilling its religious mission. He saw a reflection of Christianity's most basic and important beliefs in the principles set out in the Declaration of Independence, and he believed that what was unique about America was that it had, for the first time in human history, institutionalized the gospel truth of the equality of man as a government's first principle. America was founded, he thought, on an appeal to certain universal human rights that superseded all human law, and its morality came not from its actions, but from its realization of Christianity's humane and just principles. What gave the American sense of mission such moral weight was its conversion of these *universal* rights to political principles.

Adams's movement on these issues is best understood as a product of circumstance and sequencing. He had a clear sense of the stages of development a rising power must go through—securing the nation against foreign attacks; strengthening its ability to defend itself; developing its resources and capacities; and gradually aligning its ideals to its actions.

Except, of course, when it didn't. From the outset, many believed that slavery would eventually wither, if not disappear, as the country grew. And if it did not disappear, many thought it would at least be geographically circumscribed. But with the advent of the cotton gin and the westward expansion of the country, the institution of slavery, instead of withering, became much more deeply interwoven into the nation's fabric. For Adams, the United States of the 1840s, with its aggressive pursuit of new territory and concomitant expansion of slavery, was a perversion of the nation whose mission was supposed to be the expansion of the realm of liberty. The transformed, debauched country was now a "colonizing, slave-tainted monarchy...[that] extinguished freedom."<sup>7</sup> It was to remedy this outrage that Adams turned on slavery with increasing ferocity during his congressional career.

The irony here, as Preston points out, is that Adams did more than most to create the conditions that allowed for slavery's expansion. It is tragic that Adams's early efforts to ensure America's hegemony on the North American continent also ensured the extension of slavery into new lands. Preston finds it surprising that, as adept a grand strategist as Adams was, he could not find a better solution to the dilemma posed by slavery and expansion than civil war. Adams himself acknowledged that he was unable to solve the problem as early as the Missouri Crisis of 1819–20, when he wrote that he believed that the abolition of slavery was possible but that it would come only through "a reorganization of the Union" that would follow the country's dissolution.<sup>8</sup> It is a fair critique of the portrayal of Adams as a grand strategist that it was only when Adams saw that expansion of federal territory and power meant the growth rather than the dilution of the South's political clout that he reassessed his and the country's priorities. Increasingly, the most important challenge the nation faced was how to rid itself of slavery now that it was sufficiently powerful to avoid being cannibalized by outside powers.

On this final point, Preston suggests that Adams's exaggeration of an external security threat may have been to blame for the debacle that followed. "Perhaps the nation builder of the 1820s," he writes, "paved the way for the nation destroyers of the 1860s." While I think that Preston underrates the multiple ideological, military, and commercial threats posed to the United States in the post-Ghent years by looking retrospectively at the dominant position the United States occupied in the Western Hemisphere, he correctly observes that Adams believed that the country—if it misplayed its hand, if it overextended its capacities, if it dissipated its energy with unnecessary wars of choice, or if its own internal problems led to fracture—posed as great a threat to its future as any foreign power did.

In his perceptive review, Hulsebosch raises two related points about the danger the nation posed to itself. First, he probes the relationship between national politics and grand strategy. He also questions to what extent law might have a role in grand strategy and whether or not Adams's highhanded use of it in the 1820s set the nation on a dangerous course in the 1840s. On the former point, Hulsebosch suggests that "unless grand strategy can capture the political, the history of grand strategy might not be able to reveal the designs in which nation builders labor." I wholeheartedly agree. Adams's evolving politics are a central theme of my book, as are the larger debates on foreign policy, political economy, slavery, and expansion.

Grand strategy does indeed involve the conceptualization of ends as well as the tactical employment of means. But because grand strategy requires constant rebalancing act between means and ends, the reformulation, reassessment, and reconceptualization of those ends is a necessary part of it. John Quincy Adams *regularly* reassessed the strategic environment of the republic, judging which objectives

most critically required action at any given moment and which means were best suited for those ends. One need only look at his anti-slavery statements of the 1830s and 1840s to understand just how much he had recalibrated the country's most pressing needs.

But equally important here is the ability to tell which means to employ and when. Hulsebosch asks whether there is a place in grand strategy for law. Adams's career suggests that there is. He spent much of his post-presidential life developing various legal arguments attacking slavery. In this effort, he wielded the law as a weapon to advance a particular objective, much as he had done in defending Jackson's invasion of Florida. From our vantage point, using the law to attack slavery seems more righteous than using it to justify dubious land grabs. But in both cases, the law became a useful and effective tool to promote a particular policy.

Hulsebosch suggests that the very legal arguments that Adams used in defense of America's expansionist extension into Florida were ones he would later oppose when the United States incited a war with Mexico for similar purposes. Here he is on firm ground, as Adams himself bemoaned the policies of President Polk and must have found it particularly galling that Polk claimed he was simply acting in line with the Monroe Doctrine.

As Preston underscores in his comments, grand strategy does not need to be worked out in advance or executed flawlessly. Such a standard is neither realistic nor useful. Arguing that Adams consistently pursued a grand strategy for himself and for the nation does not mean that he had all the issues fully worked out from the start. Nor does it mean that his ideas remained static. Nor does it even mean that he had to be wholly successful (surely he was not in his lifetime) for his strategy to be judged a success. If Adams excelled in articulating what was in the nation's interests, he had more trouble translating his vision into policy. But even brilliant strategic minds cannot always rise above their times. It would take an enormously bloody civil war to enable a much more nimble politician to institutionalize Adams's vision for the nation in concrete policy terms.

#### Notes:

1. For a particularly good discussion of the parameters and polarizing nature of this debate, see the H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable, Volume VII, no. 2 (2014) on Hal Brands's excellent *What Good is Grand Strategy: Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* at <https://networks.h-net.org/node/28443/discussions/48938/issf-roundtable-7-2-what-good-grand-strategy-power-and-purpose>.
2. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York, 2004), 553.
3. John Lewis Gaddis, "What is Grand Strategy?" Karl Von Der Heyden Distinguished Lecture, Duke University, February 26, 2009, at <http://tiss-nc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/KEY-NOTE.Gaddis50thAniv2009.pdf>.
4. Michael Cotey Morgan, *Passport* 45, no. 2 (September 2014): 40.
5. Isaiah Berlin, *The Proper Study of Mankind: An Anthology of Essays*, ed. Henry Hardy and Roger Housheer (London, 1997), 239.
6. John Quincy Adams, Diary 34, November 28, 1823, 179 [electronic edition]. *The Diaries of John Quincy Adams: A Digital Collection* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2005), at <http://www.masshist.org/jqadiaries/php/>.
7. *Ibid.*, Diary 44, June 10, 1844, 352.
8. *Ibid.*, Diary 31, March 3, 1820, 275.

# Diplomacy or War: Reflections on U.S. Negotiations with Iran in 2015 and Japan in 1941

*David L. Anderson*

Today, large areas of the Middle East and Africa are incurring devastating human costs as the result of military violence. Both regions are plagued by high death tolls and massive economic losses. Explosive border tensions exist in Eastern Europe, Korea, South Asia, the South China Sea, and elsewhere. In 1941, international security was in an equally perilous position. War gripped much of Europe and Asia. The United States may not have been the singular world power then that it is today, but its leaders had decisions to make about America's role in maintaining global stability for the sake of all nations and for the security of the United States itself. To control one of the major international threats—the power and ambition of Japan—U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull negotiated for weeks with Kichisaburo Nomura, Japan's ambassador to the United States, seeking to avoid war and to reestablish some form of working relationship between their countries. Diplomacy failed and war resulted in 1941. Can that experience inform today's challenge?

The current arguments for and against the Iran nuclear deal often present a choice between diplomacy and war. Administration spokesmen, including the president and secretary of state, argue that negotiating with hardened Iranian adversaries reduces threats and paves the way for continued dialogue on still intractable issues. Their critics argue that the threat or actual use of military force, which could mean war, is the only real safeguard of U.S. and global security. Both sides introduce the prospect of war into the equation. The administration sees the danger of war as reason for compromise, and its opponents see the threat of war as a U.S. advantage.

These tools—diplomacy and military force—are always in the kit of policymakers. Diplomacy is the classic approach to finding working and durable solutions to conflicts, and the administration is presenting this deal in that ancient and honorable tradition. Skeptics of diplomacy often characterize it, however, not as a process but a product. That is, it can be a time-buying or propaganda device to avoid compromise and not a true path toward resolution of a conflict. Military force can be the threat that backs up diplomatic proposals, or it can deter renegeing on diplomatic agreements. Often, however, resort to military action or war is defended as the most decisive means to conclude a dispute on terms favorable to the more powerful side. The Joint Chiefs of Staff current joint operations guidance affirms this view as the rationale for maintenance of America's massive military establishment.

The choice between war and diplomacy has been manifest over the past decade in the contrasts between the Bush and Obama administrations. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, George W. Bush and his security team dismissed patience and compromise as effete and rushed to warfare, which they labeled preemptive or preventive, without trying any form of diplomacy—be it bilateral approaches, coalition building, or international organizations. After the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan became quagmires with mounting

costs and frustrations, the national political climate began to favor diplomatic approaches again, and Barack Obama set out to build international cooperation and alliances. That direction has also been difficult to sustain, but the choice between diplomacy and war remains ever present in the nation's foreign policy deliberations.

Historians readily acknowledge that the past does not provide a precise guide for current decisions, but they contend that knowledge of the past has value in warning against expecting consistent behavior. They advise policymakers to be prepared for unforeseen and unmanageable consequences. Counterfactuals are problematic for historians, who like to study what happened in the past as a result of actual decisions, instead of what would have happened with different decisions. Policymakers, however, make choices all the time while trying to frame their decisions to account for what may result from one choice or another. In the Iran debate today, each side is offering its own prediction of what will happen, and neither knows for sure. The president's critics often seek to incite fear about the future, but commentators on this tactic point out historical examples in which fears used as debating points never materialized. Disastrous consequences did not attend the Sputnik launch, for example, or the missile gap, or even the growing economic power of Japan. Proponents of a diplomatic solution, including President Obama, have drawn comparisons between today's nuclear negotiations and successful arms talks with the Soviet Union—the dangerous Cold War enemy—conducted by every president from John F. Kennedy to Ronald Reagan.

Contemporary pundits and policymakers often draw upon World War II for historical examples. One of the hardest of the historical chestnuts is the Munich Conference of September 1938, and even today some see the Iranian supreme leader as a contemporary Adolph Hitler and the U.S. president as British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. It is fairly obvious that Iran is not Nazi Germany. Iran is a regional, not a continental power; its conventional military capability is limited and it is surrounded on all sides by hostile neighbors. In addition, it is no longer evident to historians that Munich was simple appeasement. Chamberlain's decision may have been a defensible strategic effort to buy time, since Germany was ready for a fight in 1938 while Britain and its allies were not.

The extended U.S. negotiations with Japan in 1941 in the months before Pearl Harbor are a more useful World War II historical case study of diplomacy versus armed force. In that case, the United States abandoned diplomacy knowing, in part from intercepts of Japanese diplomatic communications, that the alternative to a deal was likely armed conflict involving two nations that possessed the most powerful strategic weapons of the day: battleships and aircraft carriers.

Diplomacy failed because both sides took doctrinaire positions. Secretary of State Hull was an ardent Wilsonian

who opposed aggression on principle and demanded respect for international law. Ambassador Nomura, aided by Ambassador Saburo Kuru, appealed to longstanding realist arguments in defense of the sovereign rights of nations to determine and defend their own interests. The United States insisted that Japan give up its aggression in East Asia, and Japan asserted that it had an undeniable right to determine its relationship with China and its neighbors with its own power and without interference.

In these bilateral talks, there was a third-party observer with its own existential interest in the U.S.-Japan confrontation: the Republic of China. Its president, Chiang Kai-shek, not only took every opportunity to remind Americans and their leaders of the close relationship between his government and the United States, but he appealed directly for greater U.S. military and material support to counter the threat posed to China by Japan. China had its own powerful lobby in the United States, backed by media mogul Henry Luce, and after the U.S. entry into the war, Chiang's charismatic English-speaking wife appeared before Congress to rally support. The similarities between Israel and China are evident in the recent appeals to the president and Congress by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and American organizations that support Israel.

Economic sanctions played a major role in 1941, as they have in 2015. Washington froze Japanese assets in the United States, placing strong pressure on Tokyo. Also, the outcome of U.S. talks with Japan involved the interests of other nations (the USSR, Britain, France, Holland, and China). In another parallel between then and now, the viability of international governance was at stake. Most affected before World War II were the League of Nations and various international conventions; in 2015 it was the European Union, the United Nations, and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In the months before Pearl Harbor, the domestic politics of both sides were central to the debate over diplomacy and force. U.S. leaders wanted to avoid resorting to military action because isolationism remained a popular sentiment, even though it was waning. Americans had a strong sense of justice; they opposed aggression and identified with friends like Britain and China that were under attack. For its part, Japan had patriotic moderates who did not want war, but it also had extremists who glorified the heroic use of force in defense of the nation and its culture. Citing ancient samurai ideals, these radicals characterized Japan as sacred and its enemies as weak and degenerate.

Like Secretary of State John Kerry, who engaged in lengthy negotiations with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, Secretary Hull conducted weeks of discussions with Ambassador Nomura, during which potential compromises emerged. In contrast to 2015, nothing was signed in 1941, but the diplomats arrived at documents in the negotiating rooms that could have constituted an agreement. The last modus vivendi on the table was an offer from Japan to pull back in Indochina and make some reassurances about limiting its commitments to the Axis powers in return for U.S. restoration of trade with Japan. Tokyo continued to refuse to withdraw forces from China. Not yet prepared for war and concerned about Europe, the U.S. side could have accepted something along these lines as a tactical step, if not a settlement.

Just as the 2015 negotiations were focused on nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and Iran's intentions to build a bomb, any agreement reached in 1941 would have been narrowly confined to one issue: Japan's military offensive on the Asian mainland. A deal on that key point would have avoided a U.S.-Japan clash in the short run but likely would have left unresolved the problem of Japan's alliance with Germany and Italy and even the future of Manchukuo, the Japanese puppet state in Manchuria militarily occupied in 1931 and recognized only by Tokyo as independent of

China. There is a parallel in the differences between the United States and Iran over Iran's relations with violent radical groups throughout the Middle East. Both the 1941 and the 2015 negotiations avoided some significant topics.

In 1941, the Roosevelt administration refused to accept the final modus vivendi that could have pulled the two nations back from the brink of war. Washington held to a Wilsonian condemnation of aggression and was bolstered by wishful thinking among the public and some members of Congress that the United States, through its geographic distance from Asia, its own resources, and its righteousness, could avoid fighting or compromising. Accepting the final diplomatic compromise would have left many—perhaps even most—issues unresolved, but it would have provided goodwill and some time for cooler heads to prevail. Instead, Japan attacked the U.S. fleet by surprise—perhaps the equivalent of Iran proceeding with weapons development unilaterally today—and President Roosevelt and Congress responded with a declaration of war. The massive and costly Pacific War ensued. It was a historical aberration, sandwiched between two eras of peaceful commerce and diplomacy between the two nations.

It could be argued that the Pacific War was costly but that in the end American principles and power prevailed. Such self-congratulation begs the question, however, as it assumes that victory was worth the cost and that no other less costly options were worth following.

In the case of Nazi Germany, it can be argued that no amount of diplomacy would have deterred Hitler; he believed his enemies were weak and pitiful and not to be feared. Some today would have us believe that the ayatollahs in Iran are similarly out of touch with reality and stoppable only by force. There is, however, considerable evidence that the Iranian leadership and particularly the Iranian people are not monolithic or irrational. The historical model may well be closer to 1930s Japan. A Japanese extremist faction gained ascendance, at times by assassinating democratically chosen prime ministers. In making the assumption that these extremists were the real Japan, not only did the Americans give force preference over negotiation in dealing with them, but U.S. reaction to Japan strengthened the hand of the militants and weakened the moderates inside the country. War became in some sense a self-fulfilling prophecy. Would a rejection of diplomacy today resemble that scenario? The militants in Japan did not want a compromise. They made themselves so frightening that they got well-meaning Americans, who stuck to their own principles, to give them the war they wanted and believed they could win.

Ironically, the war that the negotiators had labored to avoid led to the only military use of nuclear weapons to date. Ever since, and particularly in the context of the current debate, the world has lived with the destabilizing and destructive danger of nuclear war. The big and unknowable counterfactual is what if Washington and Tokyo had chosen diplomacy over war in 1941? A war between the two nations might have occurred eventually, but the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor would probably not have happened when and how it did. Could war in the Pacific have been avoided entirely—and could we have thus also avoided the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? The use of nuclear weapons as a foreign policy tool was no longer unthinkable after those bombings. If their use had remained unthinkable, would the world be where it is today, struggling with nonproliferation?

The historical record cannot tell us what would have happened with an alternate outcome in 1941, but historical perspective on the failure to stick with diplomacy does provide a clear warning of what can happen when compromise is abandoned and trust is placed in coercion.

# A Roundtable on William B. McAllister, *Toward “Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable”*: A History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series

*Justin Hart, Warren F. Kimball, Lori Clune, Thomas C. Field, Jr., and William B. McAllister*

**Introduction to Passport Roundtable on McAllister, et. al., *Toward “Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable”***

Justin Hart

**B**ureaucratic history is hard to write, if one is concerned about readability and attracting a broad audience. So it is particularly impressive that the commentaries in this roundtable each commend William B. McAllister and his team of authors from the State Department Historical Office (Joshua Botts, Peter Cozzens, and Aaron W. Marrs) for crafting a compelling narrative about the principles guiding the State Department’s publication of the monumental *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)* series over the last 150 years. In considering what makes for good bureaucratic history, I would argue that the key is treating internal wrangling as intellectual history, rather than a recitation of policy arcana. To this end, each chapter of *Toward “Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable”* explains how the programmatic decisions the State Department made about the publication of *FRUS* were enmeshed in larger ideological debates over issues such as republicanism, transparency, democratic accountability, public relations, and public diplomacy, among others.

The main story that emerges in this volume and in these reviews is the perpetual quest for what the authors describe as “responsible transparency (2).” The vigorous disagreements over the definition and implementation of that goal—both behind closed doors and in public—provide the driving force behind the book’s narrative. From the beginning of the *FRUS* series, which was conceived in the midst of the Civil War, Department officials struggled to weigh the benefits of the appearance of transparency against the need to withhold materials that might make the conduct of present and future foreign policymaking more difficult. Unsurprisingly, Department assessments of how to strike that balance varied greatly over time.

From the initial goal of providing a real-time accounting of the conduct of U.S. foreign policy, published more for Congress than anyone else, the series gradually evolved to emphasize comprehensiveness over timeliness (moving toward the decades-long lag time to which we have become accustomed). Concomitantly, the purpose of documenting history surpassed the desire to shape current debates. Critical turning points included the first significant publication lag, during the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War; the concern with divulging too much information about the Versailles Peace Conference at the end of World War I; the professionalization of the selection and publication process during the 1920s; the increasing emphasis on secrecy over transparency during the Cold

War; and the messy public push back against secrecy as a default position—a battle that culminated in the 1991 legislation that officially defined the *FRUS* mandate as “thorough, accurate, and reliable.”

The participants in this roundtable believe that the authors have generally succeeded in the very difficult task of objectively writing about the role of the State Department Historical Office in compiling and publishing modern-era (i.e. post-1925) *FRUS* volumes, when they are themselves members of that office. However, as Thomas Field points out, a “Whiggish” tone that portrays Department historians as valiant, though often frustrated, advocates for greater transparency occasionally creeps in. Nevertheless, the authors make a compelling overall case for the argument finally spelled out in the conclusion:

The historical evidence this book presents indicates that the most significant negative repercussions attributable to the *FRUS* series have not involved damaging releases of potentially-sensitive national security or intelligence information. Rather, the reputation of the U.S. Government has suffered primarily from failures of the series to document significant historical events or acknowledge past actions. *FRUS* realizes its promise when it fulfills global expectations for openness that promote democracy and encourage freedom (329).

This quote is indicative of one of the book’s greatest strengths: throughout, the authors strive for objectivity, but not neutrality. Like any good historians, they present the evidence and then draw (often strong) conclusions about that evidence.

The authors are particularly unsparing in documenting the clashes during the 1970s and 1980s between advocates of greater secrecy and indefinite classification, on the one hand, and the Department’s Historical Advisory Committee of academic historians, on the other. (The members of the Historical Office were frequently caught in the middle of this clash.) Complicating this equation was the fact that, beginning in the Cold War, the complexity of modern U.S. foreign policy increasingly involved actors outside the State Department, such as the CIA and the Defense Department. These agencies tended to have an extremely restrictive vision about which of their activities should be publicly acknowledged, much less documented.

The most infamous examples of this penchant for secrecy came with the back-to-back publication of volumes on mid-1950s U.S. foreign policy in Guatemala and Iran that completely failed to document the CIA’s well-known

role in overthrowing leftist governments in favor of pro-American, right-wing dictators in those two countries. In response to the Iran volume, Warren Cohen, the Chair of the Historical Advisory Committee, publicly resigned, blasting the State Department for signing off on the publication of a deeply censored official record of U.S. foreign policy. In this roundtable, Warren Kimball, who chaired the Historical Advisory Committee for a number of years during the 1990s, explains that the embarrassment over this dustup then led Congress to step in and pass the landmark 1991 legislation that redefined the *FRUS* mission. Never again, Kimball concludes, did the State Department, “challenge the authority of the [Historical Advisory Committee] to advise on implementation of the law.”

One important aspect of the book that the reviewers in this roundtable choose not to emphasize is the extent to which the *FRUS* series, from the very beginning, played a critical role in furthering State Department objectives in public diplomacy and public affairs. During the Civil War, the series was designed at least in part to legitimize the actions of the federal government before the world at a time when the government’s very existence was under direct assault. As the series evolved, it became a vehicle for advertising American exceptionalism. The Department repeatedly portrayed *FRUS* as a beacon of the U.S. government’s commitment to principles of democratic accountability. Given the intentional withholding of relevant documentation over the last century, it would be easy to conclude that claims of transparency and comprehensiveness were more propaganda than a reflection of reality. At the very least, one could argue that the Department’s public relations strategy did not represent the whole truth (which is not exactly a revelation, of course).

All in all, the reviewers agree, McAllister and his team have unearthed and presented us with a fascinating tale full of unexpected twists and turns—a story of undeniable significance in documenting the evolution of the State Department’s thinking about how to present its history to the American people and to the world. In his public presentations on *Toward “Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable”*, McAllister has joked about the reader who commented that this volume is “not quite a page-turner, but a lot more interesting than I thought it would be.” And that is absolutely true.

**The Transparency Games: A Review of William B. McAllister, Joshua Botts, Peter Cozzens, and Aaron W. Marrs, *Toward “Thorough, Accurate and Reliable”: A History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2015)**

Warren F. Kimball

As I began writing this review, the USPS delivered *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977–1980, vol. I: Foundations of Foreign Policy*. Having just read, in the book under review, about Gaillard Hunt’s proposals in the 1920s for volumes on World War I that combined documents with commentary, I was reminded that his concept had been implemented—but initially, just with documents of the era.<sup>1</sup> In the *Foundations* volume I received, speeches, memorandums, briefings, congressional testimony, and even some classic embassy-to-secretary-of-state cables are pulled together (sometimes within text-size editorial notes), enabling the reader to understand better the “policy

positions and the assumptions of administration officials.”<sup>2</sup> Wonderful. A concept first suggested by Hunt, then refined by the 2003 proposals for reform from the Historical Advisory Committee (HAC), and implemented in excellent fashion by the Office of the Historian (HO).

How the *FRUS* series got to (or rather, returned to) that point is a fascinating story, superbly told in *Toward “Thorough, Accurate and Reliable.”* The *FRUS* series began in 1861, but its roots lay in both the separation of powers in the Constitution and the ideological principles of early republican thought. Congress asked President George Washington for information about foreign policy decisions; he generally complied, establishing a precedent, but occasionally withheld information, adding another precedent. Founding principles asserted transparency as fundamental to democracy so as to ensure a well-informed public, but Congress and the president agreed that “public interest” could legitimize exceptions. Both avoided appeals to the judicial branch—another key precedent.

In the early decades of the series, volumes were published quickly, frequently just a few months after the end of each year. That age of “immediate accountability,” as the authors deftly label it, lasted until the volumes for the First World War era. Through the early twentieth century, the fundamental purpose of the series remained to help Congress keep an eye on the president’s actions and to inform the general public (a task that came to include public relations aimed at the citizenry; see, for example, James Blaine and the war between Peru and Chile).<sup>3</sup> Congress supported the volumes, but diplomats often touted their value too, although their assessments depended largely on how public disclosure affected each immediate diplomatic mission.

A growing lag between events and the publication of documents made for a slow, evolutionary change. Much of that growing gap came from limitations on resources and diminishing congressional pressure and support. Between 1909 and 1930, the delay grew from three to twelve years. Even three years lapsed time took publication off the radar of most in Congress. The distractions of World War I slowed production, as did professionalization of the *FRUS* process and standards. In the early 1920s, for reasons not made entirely clear in the book, the State Department hired a professional academic historian with a Ph.D., Tyler Dennett, to reinvigorate the series. His recommendations made their way into an order from Secretary of State Frank Kellogg that set “objectivity” as the goal. Objectivity implied completeness, and completeness implied use of foreign government information. Completeness required more and deeper research, which, combined with negotiations with foreign governments for release of their documents, led to greater publication delays. Increasingly, objections popped up about disclosures of sensitive information, but only later would those become a cause of significant delay.

By the 1930s, Congress had largely lost interest in the series, and professional/academic historians had become its primary constituency. Franklin Roosevelt, as ever choosing practicality over inconvenient principles, offered little help, claiming that minutes of secret meetings not only should not be published, they should not have been taken. He was quite comfortable with various “white papers” that focused on legitimizing U.S. pre-war policies. They looked like *FRUS* volumes but did not meet Kellogg’s standards.

Sometimes this book takes on the tone of a lecture to the U.S. government about the long-term ineffectualness of secrecy and knee-jerk redactions—and good for the authors, because it is an effective lecture based on solid evidence.



Part II of the book is titled “Negotiating Responsible Historical Transparency, 1920s to Early 2000s.” For much of that time, the effort to reach an agreement on document releases seemed more like a war than a negotiation, with the word “responsible” meaning vastly different things to different people. It was a clash of cultures, a confrontation between the sometimes naive ideals of transparency and honest concerns caught up in a fabric of distortion and evasion. The chapters after 1945 offer a classic study in the development and nature of a bureaucratic culture—in this case the Cold War culture—that violated Kellogg’s mandate and delayed release and publication of government information. The delays were exacerbated by the expansion and restructuring of the national security state, which forced the HO to obtain relevant documents from a myriad of reluctant and sometimes obstructive agencies outside of the State Department. This section of the book could serve as a textbook in a sociology seminar.

The chastening story of how the *FRUS* statute came about in 1991 and how it was implemented should be read (certainly by every student of diplomatic history) as a case study in the workings of our nation’s political process. In an orchestrated series of events, the chair of the then not-empowered HAC resigned, publicly and noisily, accusing the State Department of renegeing on promises of empowerment. (In the national security state of that era, “empowerment” for the HAC meant security clearances and a legal “need to know,” allowing its members and HO historians access to information withheld by the State Department and other agencies.) His resignation attracted press coverage. The alliance that was essential to passage of the statute paired the very liberal Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-RI) with the stridently conservative Sen. Jesse Helms (R-SC), who reputedly said that the homosexuals and communists in the State Department shouldn’t have any secrets anyway; the heavy lifting, of course, was done by their staffs. In the words of this book’s authors, “the law’s edict for *FRUS* to provide a ‘thorough, accurate, and reliable record’ settled—decisively—debate over the mission of the *Foreign Relations* series.”<sup>4</sup> Never again did the State Department challenge the authority of the HAC to advise on implementation of the law. Equally important, the statute required systematic declassification of information related to U.S. foreign policy, even if that information was not being published in a *FRUS* volume.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the implementation of the statute is the degree to which history is the prisoner of history. In the 1990s and after, despite the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire, *FRUS* volumes covering the post-Second World War era remained constricted by declassification arguments over documents *thirty years old and older* (something this history should have emphasized far more strongly!). Why the hassle? Perhaps what George Kennan told a CIA conference on assessments of Soviet intentions and capabilities, 1945–50, suggests one answer to the question: “I find the assessments in some respects inadequate because of what seems to have been a blanket ruling-out of any critical reference to our own policies and actions.”<sup>6</sup>

Having been “present at the creation” (to steal a phrase) of the 1991 *Foreign Relations* statute and for the first dozen years of the newly empowered advisory committee, I can attest to the accuracy and thoroughness of the final chapters of this book. My classic story involves the records manager for one government agency (unnamed as a spiritual work of mercy), who told the HO historians and the HAC members

they would gain access to his agency’s records only “over my dead body.” That despite the clause in the statute that specifically stated that HO and the HAC had a defined “need to know.” He paid no attention and marched out, head held high. A few months later, after some phone calls and memos, his live body marched back in, and, somewhat shamefacedly, he explained how access would be arranged. Similarly, a CIA records manager looked us in the eye and said that he was hired to keep secrets, not give them away. He dragged his feet and threw up false barriers (e.g., the CIA doesn’t have good records of its own records). He was soon moved on to other pastures.

In the wake of the 1991 *Foreign Relations* statute, the key purpose and mission of the series shifted (or should have) from providing the public with documents researched and compiled by State Department historians to being a lever used to pry open a far greater volume of the information lying in government files. *Access* became the most important product of the series, although this book does not state it quite that way. Perhaps HO historians were a bit uncomfortable with anything that threatened to diminish

the value of the individual volumes, the “books” they work so hard to produce. But whatever the underlying fears, the footnotes in the *FRUS* volumes have, if anything, become more voluminous and valuable to researchers trying to dig through vast piles of records and data. Moreover, HO historians “open up” files, forcing declassification reviews that make them publicly available.

The role that the series plays in creating access will become even more critical as the government moves, with wasteful and painful indecisiveness, toward establishing an effective and mandatory system

for preserving historically significant electronic records, a system that should include initial classification of electronic information so that we can avoid decades-long delays while individual declassifiers wallow through it all. Nor will (or should) digitized records ever make the *FRUS* series obsolete. HO historians are much more than compilers; they make historical choices based on research in the full record. The published volumes offer an invaluable roadmap for subsequent research, just as they provide a key tool for quality teaching and education.

No book is perfect, although this one comes closer than most. In this book’s assessment of the various defenders of the series, the work of the press is underemphasized, despite obvious evidence to the contrary in the footnotes. For example, in a discussion about the release of documents regarding U.S. policy toward the 1917 Russian Revolution, nine newspaper articles about release of the information are cited, including one that is not even from the *New York Times*!<sup>7</sup> A similar press campaign accompanied passage of the *Foreign Relations* statute.

This unexpectedly fascinating history of a documentary series does have two unhappy documentary omissions—most likely the result of “it’s too long already.” Secretary of State Frank Kellogg’s charter (1925) for the series is discussed, but not printed. Equally crucial is the missing text of Public Law 102-138, Title IV, Sections 401-407, October 28, 1991—the *Foreign Relations of the United States* statute! Come on, (wo)man!

One state-of-the-hassle observation. Chapter 12, “Implementing the *FRUS* Statute,” starts off with a depressing footnote: “To avoid a lengthy declassification review, this chapter relies on previously released sources.” How inefficient, even pathetic, that Congress (funding), the State Department (priorities), and the securo-crats of

the national security state can combine effectively to limit the research for and narrative of a timely history of the Department's "gold standard," the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series, which can hardly be a threat.

There is a wonderful irony in the productive effects on transparency of our "adversarial state." Nor is that a new phenomenon. From George Washington's time to the present, political factions/parties tried to embarrass their rivals by releasing or forcing the release of documents. The best example, the early release of records of the Yalta Conference (fully discussed in the book), only proved that diplomats are smarter than politicians. The documents apportioned neither blame nor praise, just provided information; and the public and its historians were better informed. The Yalta Papers, released only ten years after the famous conference, demonstrated that mechanical, arbitrary time delays (now thirty years) on the grounds of protecting sensitive/classified material are unnecessary.

Finally, the quality of the research and writing of this book demonstrate that some of our finest historians inhabit the State Department's Historical Office, to our everlasting benefit.

Notes:

1. William B. McAllister, Joshua Botts, Peter Cozzens, and Aaron Marrs, *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable": A History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series* (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 2014), 124–5.
2. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977–1980*, Vol. I: *Foundations of Foreign Policy*, ed. Kristin Ahlberg (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 2014).
3. McAllister, et. al., *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable,"* 91–3.
4. *Ibid.*, 304.
5. One reaction to the new law is too pointed and ludicrous not to be recounted. A few weeks after the *FRUS* statute became law, the top professional secret-keeper in the State Department wondered if the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs was prepared to explain to reporters about "this new 'treason' within State, particularly in the Historical Office: 'Is Felix Bloch back on the payroll? Has the staff [in various country desks] defected . . . ? The possibilities are limitless.'" McAllister, et. al., *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable,"* 303.
6. Kennan's comment is courtesy of Lloyd Gardner.
7. McAllister, et. al., *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable,"* 136n44.

**"In the Matter of Foreign Relations": A Review of William B. McAllister, Joshua Botts, Peter Cozzens, and Aaron W. Marrs, *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable": A History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2015)**

Lori Clune

For many diplomatic historians, the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series represents the starting place for research and teaching. Whether they are looking through dusty volumes lining library shelves or accessing digital documents to search and browse, scholars are likely to be rewarded with treasures to further their research and expand their minds and the minds of their students. Little did I know that the backstories of these volumes would be just as fascinating as the documents. Like the origin stories of mirrors or the paperclip, they are appealing as the history of something we use all the time and perhaps take for granted.

William B. McAllister, Joshua Botts, Peter Cozzens, and Aaron W. Marrs, Office of the Historian staff members, have provided a great service. They set out to tell the messy and often maddening history of the documents that constitute

the history of U.S. foreign relations, and they succeeded. *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable"* is meticulously researched and amazingly comprehensive in approach. Footnotes allow the reader, at a glance, to marvel at the depth and breadth of research involved in telling that story of what is in *FRUS*, what was excluded, and the domestic and overseas response to it all.

The precedent for disclosing executive branch foreign policy documents to the legislative branch borrows from English parliamentary procedure and dates back to the Washington administration. But it was never an easy task. Even in the late eighteenth century, State Department employees—all seventeen of them—grappled with balancing national security and the public's right to know (12). They strove to make openness and transparency the order of the day.

A more systematic release of documents emerged with the first volume of *FRUS* in 1861. In spite of being embroiled in the initial months of the American Civil War, the State Department pushed forward with the series and paved the way for the solidification of a checks and balances system between the legislative and executive branches concerning foreign policy—a system that embraced "responsible transparency" (327). These early volumes demonstrated inclusion of diplomatic documents "with an eye to both domestic and overseas audiences" (17). With a lag time of just a year, Congress could engage in real-time oversight of foreign policy, and administration officials could emphasize what they wanted Americans to know about U.S. diplomacy.

These Civil War documents detail the centrality of the issue of slavery in causing the war and show the diplomatic efforts made to dissuade allies from legitimizing the South by recognizing the Confederacy as a separate nation. In acknowledgement of the tremendous global response to the assassination of Lincoln, officials also produced a *FRUS* volume dedicated solely to the flood of condolences the government received. Congress required that a copy of the volume be sent "to every government and non-governmental association whose tributes were included in the volume" (40). The printing office produced a record 28,500 copies.

*FRUS* experienced many challenges with timely publication during the Reconstruction years but rebounded to publish diplomatic documents within a year. From the perspective of 2015, when we routinely face a thirty-year delay in publication, it is easy to be envious of this era of "Contemporaneous *FRUS*" (66). Each volume's release was met with press and public scrutiny and typified the intent that *FRUS* be open and timely to educate the citizenry of the democracy. When production slipped to an eighteen-month lag in the late nineteenth century, the *New York Times* "dismissed the 1873 volume as stale," while the *Chicago Daily Tribune* claimed the volumes were "deferred so long they are the quality of last year's bird nests" (86–87).

After the twentieth century's first decade, *FRUS*'s release would never hit the twelve-month mark again. "Deadline creep"—a three-year lag in 1922, fifteen-year delays by the mid-1930s, and twenty-year intervals by the late 1950s—challenged the purpose and intent of the series (116). Because of these increasing and by all accounts inevitable lags, "the rationale for the series's existence shifted from an immediate public accountability tool to a longer-term investment in presenting a comprehensive account of past actions" (118). In pondering the international ramifications of this change, McAllister argues that if *FRUS* had been "publishing on a schedule five or ten years closer to the present than was actually the case, those [foreign] governments might have been inclined to implement more liberal policies [regarding transparency of documents] as well. It is conceivable to posit that a more timely *Foreign Relations* series could have produced greater transparency

expectations for governments and peoples outside the United States" (118).

In 1924 a historian joined the department's Division of Publications, and shortly afterward, the secretary of state issued a new mandate for historical "objectivity" in *FRUS* (122). Previously neglected "new constituencies" became the prime beneficiaries of the series, particularly professional historians (123). Increasing obstacles—namely money, personnel, time, security, and clearance difficulties within the federal government—forced *FRUS* to adapt. One way to survive was to embrace foreign policy communications that originated beyond just the State Department files.

The complexities of the 1930s and the outbreak of World War II increasingly challenged department historians, who were tasked with "balancing transparency and national security" (146). While practicality had dictated moving to longer and longer lag times, security concerns meant that *FRUS* would never return to a quick year or two before the release of sensitive foreign policy materials. The series served less as a means of congressional oversight and was increasingly used by administrations—particularly that of FDR—to "mobilize public opinion" (149).

Reporting on the post-1945 years, with the Cold War and the entrenchment of the national security state, necessitated more changes; *FRUS* compilers could no longer rely solely on State Department records. Officials working with the Central Intelligence Agency, Department of Defense, National Security Council, and United Nations supplemented the department's diminished role. Series historians reached out to relevant manuscript collections of pertinent individuals, grappled with how much military information to include and how to manage documents that remained classified, and turned to presidential libraries to fill in when CIA and Joint Chiefs of Staff collections were less than forthcoming. Challenges included an ever-increasing amount of material to be reviewed and greater resistance among officials both in the United States and abroad to the release of sensitive documents.

Historians in the 1970s, whose voices were heard through the Historical Advisory Committee and the Office of the Historian, moved "toward a new vision for the series" (178). Adjusting to increasing obstacles to access, *FRUS* shifted away from "diplomatic correspondence incorporating final policy decisions" and instead "focused on U.S. Government decisionmaking," which could be covered more thoroughly (178).

Under a 1991 statute, the legislative branch had a say for the first time regarding declassification of foreign policy documents. Long the purview of executive order, Congress directed the State Department to continue to produce *FRUS* as "a thorough, accurate, and reliable documentary record of major United States foreign policy decisions and significant United States diplomatic activity" (301). As agencies addressed how to implement the statute, challenges—including resources, personnel, and access to documents—continued to plague the process.

Compelling dramas—such as Secretary of State James G. Blaine's interruption of *FRUS* publication in 1881; the August 1914 "death knell" for transparency; the well-publicized complexity of publishing the Yalta Papers during the Cold War tensions of 1954; the attempt at a triennial format to meet Nixon's directive to publish the series on

a twenty-year deadline; the time consuming re-review of 1980, which included the Classification/Declassification Center's contentious re-evaluation of the Guatemala chapter in the 1952–1954 *American Republics* volume; and the NSC's shift from clearing *FRUS* documents in 1987 to addressing the declassification of Iran-Contra scandal materials—are present throughout the volume and make for riveting reading.

As the authors remind us, whether used in classrooms across the country or by historians around the world, the *FRUS* series "is valuable . . . not only for its content, but also for the process it represents" (327). This volume rightly celebrates the "effort to systematically publish 'comprehensive documentation of [a government's] major foreign policy decisions and actions'" (329). It also reminds us of the appeal of transparency—and the continual reach for it—in a democracy. If foreign policy is central to the American experience, then the documentation of that policy is a crucial component of U.S. history. Keeping that documentation accessible and transparent, even

with the necessary lag times, allows citizens to hold their government accountable. This remains as worthy an effort today as it was in 1861, for, as historian Kathryn Olmsted has cautioned, "it is the secret actions of the government that are the real enemies of democracy."

**Declassification and People Power: A Review of William B. McAllister, Joshua Botts, Peter Cozzens, and Aaron W. Marrs, *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable": A History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2015)**

Thomas C. Field Jr.

On September 16, 2015, CIA Director John Brennan announced to great fanfare that the federal government had declassified 2,500 Presidential Daily Briefs (PDBs) from the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. "The release of these documents affirms that the world's greatest democracy does not keep secrets merely for secrecy's sake," Brennan proclaimed, adding that "[t]he PDB is among the most highly classified and sensitive documents in all of government."<sup>1</sup> As the author of a recent book on both administrations' policies in Bolivia, I rushed to my computer only to find that the PDBs for Bolivia made no reference to the many covert operations documented in my book, which uses sources declassified in the early 2000s at the Kennedy and Johnson presidential libraries and the National Archives. Even the records of the United States Agency for International Development contain more direct references to covert action than the high-redacted PDBs.<sup>2</sup>

Around the same time, I received a response to a Freedom of Information Request on U.S. policy in the lead-up to Bolivia's 1971 *coup d'état*, which netted a blank twelve-page embassy cable entitled "The Torres Government." Cross-referencing the stated reasons for the excisions with Executive Order 13526 and the Freedom of Information Act (5 US Code 552) (b)(1), I learned that the executive branch could delete references to anything that might "impair the effectiveness of an intelligence method currently in use, available for use, or under development" or information that could "cause serious harm to relations between the

United States and a foreign government, or to ongoing diplomatic activities of the United States." As if these reasons were not vague enough, it is still possible that these were "extraordinary cases" in which an agency head had "propose[d] to exempt specific information" indefinitely, for reasons that do not have to be disclosed.<sup>3</sup> Many Bolivians already assume that the United States has been behind most of the country's *coup d'état*. As I recently explained to the National Declassification Center, not releasing information lets imaginations run wild.<sup>4</sup>

As this excellent history of the State Department's *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)* series demonstrates, my argument that openness might actually serve the national interest goes back to *FRUS*'s origins in the 1860s. When U.S. Minister Charles Francis Adams complained to Secretary of State William Seward in 1864 that publishing his diplomatic communications only a few months after he wrote them could damage his ongoing diplomatic activities in London, Seward responded that "the question which had called out this dispatch had been for a time put at rest" and that *not* releasing it "would have seemed to imply a confession that it was improper in itself" (19).

A hundred years later, the State Department's Historical Advisory Committee (HAC) also posited that "the national interest would be well served by publishing the record long before the 20-year lapse. . . . In some cases American foreign policy would not be embarrassed—it would be positively assisted—by publication of the record" (194). In 1980, the director of the State Department Historian's Office, David Trask, added that "even if on some future occasion a row materializes" with a foreign country upset about released documents, "we have to weigh some slight evanescent inconvenience against our responsibility to report the truth at an appropriate time without fear or favor" (221). Columbia University Professor of International Law John Bassett Moore put it even more dramatically in 1942, when he wrote that "[n]othing could more clearly exemplify our descent into the nether regions of dictatorial and irresponsible government than the progressive suppression in recent years of the publication of our diplomatic correspondence" (115).

This authorized history of *FRUS*, which revolves around the theme of government secrecy and transparency, was written by members of the State Department Historian's Office and is hardly an impartial account. In fact, the book's power lies precisely its unequivocal call for ensuring that the department's 150-year-old document publication program "fulfills global expectations for openness that promote democracy and encourage freedom" (329). Co-author Joshua Botts, whose Part II covers 1920 to 2002, is particularly effective in his scathing critique of those instances in which *FRUS* failed to live up to its billing, such as the 1989 "Iran volume debacle," when the State Department's "self-censorship" effectively "eviscerated" the *FRUS* publication on U.S. foreign policy during the lead-up to Iran's 1953 *coup d'état* (267).

Although the other State Department co-authors strike a less critical and ultimately more whiggish tone, there is no mistaking the book's heroes. From the 1791 indigenous victory at the Wabash River to the 1869 *FRUS* hiatus, and from the 1945 Yalta Summit to the 1960s U.S. defeat in Vietnam, the American people and their representatives in Congress have successfully forced the executive branch to come clean, leading to the release of reams of documentation on foreign (and "Indian") affairs for public review. For

bureaucratic history, this makes for surprisingly dramatic reading. It culminates in the country coming to the precipice of a constitutional crisis in 1990, with the Justice Department warning Congress that its impending demand for bulk declassification "trenches on the President's constitutional authority to protect state secrets . . . [and] intrudes upon the deliberative privilege for communications within the Executive Branch" (289). The Supreme Court had ruled in 1953 that the derived State Secrets Privilege "is not to be likely invoked,"<sup>5</sup> and there was a very real possibility, as the Cold War wound to a close, that the highest court would again have to intervene to resolve a growing enmity between the other two branches of government. As Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan complained in June of that year, "we are poisoning the wells of our historical memory . . . the secrecy system has gone loony" (275).

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Readers of *Passport* will be pleased to learn that diplomatic historians also come in for generous praise for their dogged commitment to historical transparency against the "unaccountable...excessive secrecy" that made it impossible for the HAC to "assure the credibility of the Department's publication" (250, 277). The book contains a steady buildup to the 1990 climax, whose catalysts were none other than the diplomatic historians who dominated the HAC in the 1980s. With State's Near Eastern Affairs branch refusing to clear any documents for the Iran volume that met the broad categories of "intelligence sources, methods, plans, or operations," HAC member John Lewis Gaddis inquired "if it would go

the way of the [1983] Guatemala volume," which made no acknowledgment of the 1954 CIA-organized coup that undermined the leftist government of Jacobo Arbenz. When the State Department released a volume for Iran in 1989 that omitted documentation on covert operations, HAC Chair Warren Cohen publicly resigned, charging the department with "Historygate," which he defined as the "publishing [of] obviously misleading accounts" of U.S. foreign policy. As Botts writes, "Cohen's resignation and criticism of the Iran volume garnered more public attention for *FRUS* than the series had received since the release of the Yalta Papers in 1955" (263–65, 268, 272–73).

Since the book clearly demonstrates that greater public involvement leads to a significantly more open government, it should come as no surprise that the HAC brouhaha produced significant reform in the declassification process. Interestingly enough, however, the denouement reveals a negotiated settlement, in which the State Department closed ranks to empower the Historian's Office, clip the wings of "advocates of security...[who] could still hobble *FRUS*," and stave off an aggressive (and possibly unconstitutional) congressional action to force mass declassification (317). This unexpected page-turner may strike a populist tone, but its finale lies distinctly within the realm of the state.

The book would have been strengthened by a brief mention of concurrent publishing programs of diplomatic papers elsewhere in the world. Its favorable presentation of the *FRUS* series occasionally has an air of American exceptionalism: *FRUS* "testifies to the power of an ideal it represents and upholds—of the need for transparency and accountability in a democratic system" (V). Similarly, Peter Cozzens writes in his chapter on the late nineteenth century that "[t]he nation expected *FRUS* to be 'honest' and with few exceptions, [secretaries of state] took heed" (65). By implicitly highlighting the American roots of foreign relations transparency, the authors (again, aside from Botts) downplay the fact that Washington's competitors often set the standard for diplomatic openness, including in the late

nineteenth century, in the wake of World War I, and at the end of the Cold War (80, 83, 130, 272).

Lay readers will also be disappointed that the book's narrative ends in 2002, prior to the most pertinent debates regarding the State Secrets Privilege and the 2009 Executive Order 13526. By refraining from making a statement regarding current issues, the Historian's Office is keeping its powder dry for ongoing battles that are undoubtedly taking place within the department. The book's abrupt end, however, will undoubtedly lessen its impact outside of academic circles.

In the book's final chapter, CIA declassification reviewer Richard Kinsman is cited as having made an emotional internal plea in the months before September 11, 2001. Demanding that the agency be excised almost entirely from official publications on the history of U.S. foreign relations, Kinsman echoed decades of CIA claims that no amount of time is sufficient to "desensitize" some types of "information regarding intelligence agencies and their activities" (216). Claiming that *FRUS* volumes represent "increasingly frequent and deadly serious assaults on [Director of Central Intelligence] authorities and responsibility," Kinsman complained that State Department historians insisted on

citing [the] CIA by name . . . [which] constituted de facto admission of a CIA presence abroad, a direct contradiction of current policy. . . . [This] increased [the] sensitivity and awareness of the dangers inherent in a CIA presence . . . transl[ati]ng into increased counterintelligence and/or terrorist activity directed against the real or imagined CIA presence, making [the Clandestine Service's] job more difficult and risky, and occasionally life-threatening (318).

For advocates of historical transparency, including this book's State Department authors and many readers of *Passport*, Kinsman's logic represents a challenge. If the CIA requires the maximum ability to practice deception abroad, it is indeed possible that routine declassification of its near-constant past activities could complicate its present and future role. As the agency prepares to turn seventy years old, however, there is no other choice if the United States wants to remain a vibrant democracy. One can only hope that any diplomatic tensions that result from declassification will be, in the words of former State Historian David Trask, little more than "slight evanescent inconvenience[s]," outweighed by the friendship that comes from historical transparency, which is "one of our strong and undeniable assets in dealing with the rest of the world and informing our own people" (221–22).

Notes:

1. CIA, "Brennan Delivers Keynote at President's Daily Brief Public Release Event," 16 September 2015, <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2015-speeches-testimony/brennan-delivers-keynote-at-presidents-daily-brief-public-release-event.html>.

2. The excised PDBs, for example, make no mention of covert paramilitary and psychological operations that were being reported to the White House through separate channels. See Smith to McHugh, 20 July 1963; and State to Bundy, 20 July 1963, "Bolivia, General, 4/63-7/63," box 10A, National Security Files—Countries, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. The Smith Memorandum still contains numerous redactions, but most of them can be filled in using material from the memorandum to Bundy. See Thomas C. Field Jr., *From Development to Dictatorship: Bolivia and the Alliance for Progress in the Kennedy Era* (Ithaca, 2014), 92. My book documents several additional covert operations that do not appear in the PDBs. See pages 76, 86, 99, 132, 153–56, and 168.

3. According to EO 13526, some of these exemptions are meant to expire after fifty years, but the PDBs in question were already fifty-two years old when redacted versions were declassified last

month.

4. In late 2015, for example, Bolivian Presidency Minister Juan Ramón Quintana charged the United States with participating in destabilization and assassination plots against President Evo Morales during a civilian coup attempt in September 2008. Because of U.S. government secrecy, Minister Quintana's only source is the very patchy coverage provided by the documents leaked by U.S. Army Private First Class Bradley Manning in 2010. See Carlos Corz, "EEUU reportó en 2008 riesgos de magnicidio y de golpe contra Evo," *La Razon* (La Paz, Bolivia), October 4, 2015.

5. See *United States v. Reynolds*, 345 U.S. 1 (1953).

### Response to the roundtable on *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable"*

William B. McAllister

I speak for my co-authors and the entire Office of the Historian in thanking the reviewers for taking the time to produce such incisive commentaries on our text. The work of reviewing is an essential and often under-appreciated foundation for the robust exchange of ideas among academics and practitioners. We are glad that professors Clune, Field, and Kimball find the story we painstakingly uncovered a contribution to the field and also that they believe, as do we, that the book illuminates themes of fundamental import for an engaged citizenry. Rather than respond to each review individually, I opt here to utilize their comments as a springboard to highlight certain themes, clarify a few issues, and suggest future trajectories of inquiry for *Passport* readers.

The reviewers have correctly discerned that the story of *FRUS* is as much about process as it is about content. Any individual volume should be read not only as a collection of documents, but also as the reconciliation at a given moment of continually contested values. The repeated disputes between what we term "guardians of security" and "advocates of openness" illuminate the perennial debate about the nature and practice of responsible government. At the level of principle, all parties agree: too much secrecy imperils accountability while too much transparency jeopardizes safety. Yet the pages ultimately published in *FRUS* illustrate how differing positions about implementing those competing imperatives must be resolved on a document-by-document, line-by-line, and even word-by-word basis. It is important to note in this regard what we have all taught our students: no corporate entity is monolithic in its approach to such questions. For example, every federal agency houses both transparency advocates and security guardians. This is just as true of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense, or the National Security Council as it is of the Department of State or the National Archives. The book uncovers allies of openness in unexpected places as well as safety-conscious officials where one might normally assume more appreciation for transparency. Individuals must continually interpret policies and implement evolving procedures to decide what information merits release.

Indeed, our research illustrates that the formally-trained diplomatic historians who have compiled *FRUS* for almost a century, as well as their proto-professional 19<sup>th</sup> century progenitors, also operate in this process-content nexus. For example, as compiler of the 1973-1976 *Global Issues and United Nations Affairs* volumes, I did not object when a combination of Departmental and external offices charged with protection of national security interests excised certain passages from some of the documents I selected for publication. After due consideration, I concurred with their risk-reward calculation; the potential harm that might be caused by releasing select information outweighed the value likely to accrue from publication. In other cases, however, I coordinated with our in-house declassification specialists to successfully argue

for release of information initially redacted by security reviewers. Finally, in some instances I lodged objections to withholdings I thought unwarranted, but to no avail. We certainly view ourselves, and our HO forebears, as openness advocates on the “inside,” but appropriately tempered by a deeply-grounded understanding of the precedents we inherit. For the modern (i.e. post-World War I) *FRUS*, multifaceted interests, sometimes including the sensibilities of foreign governments, must be considered when effecting responsible transparency.

This admixture of process and content is not a simple story of “good guys” and “bad guys,” but rather a complex negotiation, increasingly bureaucratized over the last century, that reflects the inherent difficulty of balancing how to inform the citizenry without unduly exposing (some of) them to danger. Ultimately, gatekeepers and gatekeeping processes suffuse these always-evolving calculations that necessarily include unprovable counterfactual considerations. The legitimacy of the government depends on structures and procedures that produce credibly accountable results.

When an interested constituency perceives that the outcome is invalid or dishonest or irresponsible they will object, and another iterative dialectic then ensues. If readers of *Toward “Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable”* find themselves contemplating at a deeper level the multifaceted pathway to release as they read *FRUS* (or other formerly classified information), we shall have succeeded in one of our principal objectives.

In this regard we feel it appropriate to note that whatever deficits some may perceive in the U.S. process and product, as far as we are aware *FRUS* stands as the only official government documentary foreign policy publication that incorporates intelligence-related material. The book details the painstaking movement within the U.S. government beginning in the 1960s that eventually generated a normative expectation that Intelligence Community agencies must share their records when requested by *FRUS* compliers. In turn, those agencies retain the right to protect their equities in the declassification process to which all *FRUS* volumes are subject. One need not have access to secret records to imagine how explaining in foreign capitals even this circumscribed level of openness might necessitate the expenditure of considerable diplomatic capital.

As project director, I made the decision to eschew any significant infusion of international comparative perspective into the book for practical reasons, but also with an eye toward future research opportunities open to anyone in the community. The task of domestic research required more effort than we anticipated. The paucity of pre-1920 documentation necessitated extraordinary measures to uncover sufficient information to construct a credible narrative. Conversely, Joshua Botts encountered an unexpected overabundance of post-Great War records that consumed his attention much longer than planned. In light of those developments, and understanding the demands of multinational archival work from my first book on the history of international drug control, I concluded that we would have our hands full simply telling the U.S. story. I reconnoitered the U.K. archives sufficiently to determine that an interesting and substantial transnational element remains to be exploited, and decided that it would be best to pursue more integrated treatments at a later date. Since publication of *Toward “Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable,”* I have spoken on previously under-examined aspects of 19th

century official foreign policy documentary publication,<sup>1</sup> and I presented a comparative analysis of the U.K. and U.S. approaches to documentary editing as part of a panel about the historical development of official diplomatic document publication programs at the 2015 International Conference of Editors of Diplomatic Documents.<sup>2</sup> A much larger story remains to be told, and *Passport* readers are well-positioned to contribute to that dialogue.

My own thumbnail assessment is that since at least the Glorious Revolution of 1688 that signaled the English Parliament’s ascendancy, polities have wrestled with the balance between the purse-string accountability progressively exercised by legislatures and the executive functions that require some modicum of secrecy to operate.

To generate support in an atmosphere that increasingly acceded to the principle of popular sovereignty, governments resorted to release of official documents; sometimes governments published voluntarily and sometimes to placate legislative demand. Information about foreign policy matters featured very prominently in this trend. The

evolving practice of disseminating formerly restricted information quickly raised profound credibility issues that are of no less concern today. Who decides what information should be released? How does the public—to which the government is ultimately accountable—know the documents are “honest”? Have the records been selectively published to give a false impression, or doctored, or even faked altogether?

As nation-state building swept 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe, newly-minted polities such as Greece and Italy immediately launched official foreign policy document publication programs. Those initiatives helped forge domestic national consciousness as well as bolstered

their case for recognition and legitimacy abroad. The U.S. government inaugurated *FRUS* for similar reasons at the onset of civil war in 1861. The same phenomenon has occurred more recently in post-Soviet era Eastern Europe; Poland and Romania launched fledgling official foreign policy document publication programs because “That’s what democracies do.”<sup>3</sup> After 1918, many judged unsatisfactory the publication of official narrative pre-war accounts produced by diplomatic historians with special archival access. Consequently, an arms race-type competition to publish appropriately edited foreign policy documents developed among several governments.

All such publications also fell, to a greater or lesser extent, under suspicion, but each new tome spurred others to “tell our side of the story” through the release of original material to the public. The gradual introduction of more open archival policies and freedom of information laws after World War II accelerated transnational initiatives both to release and to protect information, which profoundly impacted official documentary publishing programs. The advent of digital communications and recordkeeping beginning in the early 1970s has heightened concerns about information retention, control and dissemination. Abundant opportunities for investigating this multifaceted and important international phenomenon await scholarly attention.

Finally, with regard to the “when to stop” question that historians often encounter, I endorsed the conclusion of principal author Joshua Botts that we should end the narrative in 2002. Most importantly, as of that year all the essential organizational, procedural, and interagency elements that currently animate operations under the 1991

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statute were in place; since then the fundamental parameters of the *FRUS* production regime are little changed. Readers should not underestimate the extra-ordinary measures required to declassify sufficient material of such recent vintage necessary to convey coherently this near-contemporary story.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, some minimal perspective is necessary to write good history; I anticipate that in a decade or two adequate time will have elapsed to produce a subsequent chapter of substance.

In the meantime, I urge *Passport* readers to consider the rich research and teaching possibilities our work helps to illuminate. We at the Historian's Office must focus primarily on the people's business that we are uniquely situated to accomplish, and a fascinating, longstanding transnational dialogue about government accountability and responsibility that speaks to today's world is ripe for recovery.

Notes:

1. "Staging American Values: The Foreign Relations of the United States Series as Representational Vehicle," Culture and International History Conference V, JFK Institute, Free University of Berlin, April 2014; SHAFR 2015 Annual Meeting, Panel 88: "Nation Branding and Diplomatic History: A Roundtable Discussion".
2. <http://diplomatic-documents.org/washington-2015>. See the April 17, 2015, 10:00-11:30 session.
3. Excerpt from a conversation with a member of the Polish delegation to the 2009 ICEDD conference.
4. See, reference to Joint Historian Dr. Michael McCoyer in *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable,"* Acknowledgments, p. 331.

# The Books We Read

Mitchell Lerner

The idea for this article originated at the 2015 SHAFR Summer Institute in Columbus. I was running a session dedicated to the concept of regionalism and American diplomacy, and I began the conversation (as I begin pretty much every conversation, which probably explains why no one wants to sit next to me at dinner parties) by talking about Texas populism and its impact on LBJ. In an offhand remark, I mentioned how much my understanding of populism had been shaped by Lawrence Goodwyn's wonderful book *Democratic Promise*, and added that for me, Goodwyn's work was one of those four or five books that we all recall from our graduate school careers that truly inspired us and shaped our subsequent perspectives as historians. I regretted the sentence as soon as it came out of my mouth, because immediately everyone sitting around the table completely tuned me out (if they hadn't done so already) and started mentally composing their own personal list of formative books. At the other end of table, in fact, was my good friend and seminar co-leader Ken Osgood, whose eyes glazed over as his mental focus obviously shifted from the topic at hand to those halcyon days from forty years ago when he was in graduate school. At that point, I knew I was in trouble. Ken usually hangs on every word I say (I'm kind of like a god to him, honestly), so clearly, I had struck some sort of mental chord with everyone.

After the session ended, Ken and I chatted about my comment, and agreed that it made for an interesting point of discussion. So interesting, in fact, that it might be worthy of a conversation in the pages of *Passport*. We have, after all, all had those moments early in our careers when literary lightning bolts flashed across our mental maps; when something we read so engaged and moved and challenged us that it permanently seared a methodological imprint into our consciousness; when a single paragraph could move us to leap to our feet in rapture and scream: "Yes! That's it, that's exactly it" (only to then apologize to the other people at the pub who are trying to watch the game and really don't share your enthusiasm for the ability of American slaves to resist subjugation). So, it seemed to me, it might be of interest to SHAFR members to get a sense of which books had indeed moved us to such a degree.

With the approval of *Passport* editor Andy Johns, I decided to reach out to a hundred members of SHAFR. I sought a diverse group that ranged across all ranks, backgrounds, methodological approaches, and favorite Grateful Dead song (unless it was *Touch of Grey* which was of course grounds for immediate expulsion). Roughly forty people responded. Well, technically, almost everyone responded with enthusiasm for the idea and a promise to send a list soon, and then about forty of them actually did, which is a higher turnout than most SHAFR presidential elections, and which may demonstrate something of significance that a quantitative sociologist could explain to us if we really needed a nap. So as to not influence anyone's response, I provided little in the way of guidance beyond asking everyone to provide a list of the 3-5 books that had

truly influenced them and a few words of explanation as to why they selected those specific works. I have compiled them here in the exact order in which they were returned to me. I hope that you enjoy reading through them, although I will caution that the bookshelf that you have designated for "Books That I Really Do Plan To Read Soon And This Time I Mean It" is about to get dangerously overloaded, if it isn't already.

There are undoubtedly many aspects of these responses that people will find noteworthy. To help set the stage, and because Andy Johns assured me I was being paid by the word, I would like to offer just a few very quick thoughts off the top of my head.

First, SHAFR members are extraordinarily well-read beyond the field of diplomatic history. In fact, the number of our favorite works that are not from our own field is truly striking. We love books about California fishermen, about Moslem women in central Asia, about childbirth in Africa, and more. We love books by Reinhold Niebuhr and books about Reinhold Niebuhr and we really like to read about Woodrow Wilson. Mostly, we seem to love books about African American civil rights, about gender, and about the founding of the United States. Regardless, though, it is an amazingly diverse and impressive list, and one that I think speaks to the methodological diversity and vibrancy that characterizes SHAFR today.

Second, it is striking to see how many different books, regardless of topic, appear on these lists. There are few repeat selections. My quick and likely imperfect tally finds only four books that appeared on three separate lists: Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom*; LaFeber's *The New Empire*; Westad's *Global Cold War*; and May's *Homeward Bound*. Only two books garnered more than three nominations: Gaddis' *Strategies of Containment* (4) and Williams' *Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (5). I would like to say something meaningful here about Gaddis and Williams leading the list, about it being symbolic or revealing or ironic or something, but I can't really get a handle on what I mean, so I will just say that it strikes me as pretty cool.

Third, if we can draw any ideas about "the next big thing" in the field, it would probably be religion. Books that incorporated religion into diplomacy appeared reasonably frequently but almost exclusively from the lists of the younger generation (or from Andrew Preston, who is obviously in denial about his age). Granted, this is a small sample size so it might not mean anything. But of all the approaches that struck me as "generational" in one way or another, religion seemed to have the most noticeable division.

Fourth, I was quite surprised by the dearth of literature on the origins of the Cold War. When I entered graduate school in the 1990s, that was the debate on everyone's mind. With absolutely no evidence to support this claim, I would speculate that if we had run this same poll twenty years ago, we would have had better representation from Leffler's *A Preponderance of Power* (1 vote), Gaddis' *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (0), Lloyd Gardner's *Architects of*



*Illusion* (0), or other of the central works within this debate. I have no doubt that everyone is still reading those terrific books, all of which should appear of graduate student reading lists everywhere. But it seems revealing to me to note that the field, at least based on this very small sample, is less focused on that debate than it was a few decades earlier.

Fifth, SHAFR members still prefer books that focus on Europe. Technically, the total tally of European-focused works is actually not substantially higher than those devoted to Asia, but these ratios are skewed by the large number of works about Vietnam. Overall, our list of formative books is more devoted to Western Europe than anywhere else, and Asia seems to lag particularly far behind. Based on this list, we seem to have largely rejected the Obama administration's call for a pivot to Asia. Of course, so has the Obama administration.

Finally, everyone who didn't include *American Slavery, American Freedom* on their list is just wrong. Not as wrong as those who like *Touch of Grey*, but pretty close.



### Andrew Rotter

Charles A. Dana Professor of History  
Colgate University

Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*: I was captivated by Morgan's argument, which emphasized the importance of labor to the creation of American slavery, and made its invention something far more interesting (and distressing) than a racialized *deus ex machina*. Even in 1976, I recognized that Morgan's argument might be wrong, but if so it was brilliantly wrong, and I have always preferred books that are interesting and perhaps wrong to those that are surely right and utterly ho-hum. The book is also beautifully written.

Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire*: LaFeber was my undergraduate adviser, so I read this book during the summer between my sophomore and junior years at Cornell. (He would never have assigned it.) More than any other book, it made me want to go to graduate school in history. It brought everything into focus, including the Vietnam War. The United States an empire? And for economic reasons? The evidence LaFeber unearthed said, emphatically, yes.

Studs Terkel, *Working*: I read *Working* for my qualifying exams, and it taught me a great deal about how people feel about their jobs, and have always felt about them. It was my first experience with oral history, and it was a lot of fun. (I read the book to take breaks between reading Stanley Aronowitz and various articles on electrical workers in the journal *Labor History*, so Terkel no doubt acquired a sort of halo effect.) I wrote in my orals notebook that I thought *Working* should be performed as a play, and years later it happened.

Frances FitzGerald, *Fire in the Lake*: Certain members of my graduate seminar in Chinese history came down hard on FitzGerald's thesis that the U.S. failure in Vietnam was the result of cultural differences between Americans and Vietnamese; they may even have used the word "essentialist," though it would have been pretty early for that concept. But I loved the book. It was the first time I'd seen anthropological thinking applied to foreign relations history. *Fire in the Lake* may have been another case of brilliant wrongheadedness, but after forty years, and having worked in the field a little myself, I still find FitzGerald's argument compelling.

Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*: Okay, a couple of qualifications here. First, I read this book after I'd finished my degree and was already teaching. Second, it's a novel. But it haunts me to this day. I assign novels occasionally, and I think one way to understand the past is to imagine the future, especially exciting if it's a utopian or dystopian one. *The Handmaid's Tale* is probably the scariest version of the latter I have ever read. The last time I assigned it, to my "History Workshop" (methods) course, most of the students shrugged it off as paranoid fantasy. I suppose that is encouraging.



### Jeremi Suri

Mack Brown Distinguished Chair for Leadership in Global Affairs  
University of Texas

Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*

Carl Schorske, *Fin de Siecle Vienna*

Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*

John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*

Arno Mayer, *Wilson versus Lenin*

These five very different books shaped my thinking about the historian as researcher, thinker, and writer. Each of the authors interrogates the intersection between ideas about power and the institutions that shape policy. Each of the authors probes larger-than-life personalities, their actions, and their limitations. Each of the authors constructs a compelling narrative that is big international history grounded in the actions of specific individuals. I remain moved by the creativity, the imagination, and the enduring insights drawn from these books on power and policy-making. The diversity in these books displays the wonderful eclecticism that keeps our profession, and our subfield, vibrant.



### Ryan Irwin

Assistant Professor  
University at Albany-SUNY

Paul Kennedy's *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, Fred Cooper's *Colonialism in Question*, and Kevin Boyle's *Arc of Justice*.

My first love was *Rise and Fall*. The book found me in high school, and while my ideas have changed a lot, the book's takeaways haven't: writing is an art and you can't make a good argument without a good question. Later in life Paul gave me a third insight: don't be afraid.

Fred's book found me in graduate school. It opened my eyes to a new way of seeing the past, and taught me to distrust my own clichés about writing, questions, and argumentation. This job should be hard – and you can't do it well without theory.

I worked with Kevin at Ohio State, so I struggle to separate *Arc of Justice* from the years I spent as his TA and advisee. Kevin reminded me that we tell stories. It's hard, yes, but not that complex – and it should be beautiful.



**Tim Borstelmann**

*E.N. and Katherine Thompson Professor of Modern World History  
University of Nebraska*

Gary Nash, *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution* (1986). In exquisite detail, with carefully but relentlessly compiled masses of evidence, Nash proved beyond a doubt the centrality of class conflict to the coming of American independence from Great Britain. The unabridged edition was even better than the abridged edition, in this regard: the evidence was so overwhelming, and presented in such a non-ideological manner, that it forced honest readers to reconsider what other aspects of the American past had also been shaped by class conflict.

William Minter, *King Solomon's Mines Revisited: Western Interests and the Burdened History of Southern Africa* (1986). At a time when the anti-apartheid struggle was building into its final, successful wave—but also a time when few Americans knew much about the region, and when President Reagan was promoting close ties with South Africa's apartheid regime—Minter provided a panoramic overview of the long, troubling history of U.S. and British engagement with southern Africa. This was an epic tale of the complicated dance of race, labor, capital, and international relations.

James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (1972). In this earnest and provocative autobiography, a central figure in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) provided a searing account of both living as a black man in America and helping make social change happen. Forman was older than most of his colleagues in SNCC, so his tale offered an early version of what historians would, much later, call “the long civil rights movement.”



**Andrew Preston**

*Professor of American History and a Fellow of Clare College  
University of Cambridge*

David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*: My favorite book. It holds up extremely well, both in terms of style and substance, more than forty years after it was first published. It basically invented the historiography of the war and still casts a long shadow. It's also one of the most gripping non-fiction reads I've ever encountered. It's what first made me want to study the Vietnam War, and I return to it regularly.

Michael Herr, *Dispatches*: a journalist's riveting memoir of Vietnam that captures the contradictions and logical absurdities of the war better than any other piece of writing. And it became the basis for two of my favorite films, *Apocalypse Now* and *Full Metal Jacket*.

John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*: reading this taught me more about the craft of writing scholarly history than anything in any grad workshop or seminar. Statistically and empirically a tour de force, it also holds up remarkably well historiographically.

Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad*: despite its problems, it showed me the possibilities of linking religion to culture, politics, and society, thanks to a chance reading in grad school. Its deliberate deemphasis of spirituality, which I thought was limited, led me to think harder about

the role of religion in American public life.

Gore Vidal, *Narratives of Empire*: this is cheating a bit, as the *Narratives* series consists of seven historical novels, but I'm including it as a single entry because it should be read as a single piece in seven parts. An iconoclastic history of the United States from the 1770s to the 1950s that was ahead of its time historiographically. Two of the novels in the series, *Burr* and *Lincoln*, are among the best I've ever read.



**Laura Belmonte**

*Professor and Department Chair  
Oklahoma State University*

Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War* (UNC Press, 1994). Wagnleitner's book and an essay of his in Lary May's *Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Cold War* collection were hugely instrumental in my decision to pursue work on cultural diplomacy. Wagnleitner eloquently and persuasively writes about the political impact of culture on policymakers and mass audiences alike.

Emily Rosenberg's *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (Hill and Wang, 1982). Pathbreakers like Rosenberg, Frank Costigliola, and Frank Ninkovich created the historiographic foundation for an entire generation of specialists on culture and U.S. foreign relations. Their ability to limn formerly overlooked records of the Department of State for germane materials and to situate culture as an element of U.S. foreign policy that must be taken as seriously as economics, politics, and security profoundly shaped my notions of power and the state.

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (Basic Books, 1988, rev ed. 2008). Essential in helping me begin to integrate insights I drew from courses in U.S. Women's History into my early foreign relations training. May's work – and May herself – greatly encouraged me to explore interconnections between gender and the family and the promotion of the American way of life abroad.

Graham Greene, *The Quiet American* (1955). An analysis of this novel that I wrote for a graduate readings course in International Relations Theory was a pivotal moment of my training, one where I finally understood how theory and fiction could be used concurrently as tools in evaluating diplomatic history. Novels have been part of my course readings lists ever since and students unfailingly connect to them quite differently than other primary sources.

Edward Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* (Oxford, 1992). On a whim, I took Dr. Ayers's readings course on the 19th Century American South and we workshopped this manuscript just before he submitted it for final production. At the instigation of three classmates who have all become distinguished scholars, we pushed Ayers to consider connections between lynching and sexuality, a topic that has subsequently sparked a body of amazing scholarship. The session was simply electric, the highest of many highlights of my years at UVa. The course taught me an enormous amount about how an exceptional historian produces a national prize-winning masterwork. This book sets a gold standard for writing history in approachable, engaging prose rivaling fine literature.

**Kyle Longley**

*Snell Family Dean's Distinguished Professor, School of  
Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies  
Arizona State University*

Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States and Central America* (1983, 2nd edition 1993). This book reflects LaFeber's brilliance at anticipating important topics in the American political discourse (like his works on the Panama Canal, China, and globalization). It used history to inform contemporary events by educating people. And, it caused me to want to learn more about the ongoing events in Central America and guided me further into the field (hence, my first two books on U.S.-Latin American relations and a continuing interest in the subject).

James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (1987). This important anthropological book on peasants in Southeast Asia asked essential questions on how smaller, less powerful people adapt to existing socio-economic structures. To me, grafting the concepts on international relations between great powers and the non-industrial world including Latin America and Asia (where I had subfields of study in graduate school) made perfect sense.

Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (1976). Along with Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, this book and several of Wallerstein's others pushed me to think about global issues, empire, and interconnectedness over the longue durée. Terms like core and periphery entered my consciousness and shaped my thinking on U.S. foreign relations.

Carlos Fuentes, *The Death of Artemio Cruz* (1964). This classic novel examines nationalism and imperialism within Mexico (primarily the Mexican Revolution of 1910) by using literature (as he did also in his *The Old Gringo*). Along with Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, I found these books highlighted real feelings about Latin America (especially among intellectuals) and its relationship with world, especially the United States. It also provided a classic model for examining life from the end to the beginning rather than vice versa (strongly shaped by Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane") with the use of flashbacks, rotating narratives, and montage (I am writing a LBJ biography using the format). I learned about it working on my MA minor in comparative literature.

Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretations of Culture* (1977). While not a classic for post-modernists like those interested in Michel Foucault, Geertz asks questions on culture including symbolism and material values that shaped my viewpoints on foreign relations and politics, particularly in Latin America and Asia. Like Scott, the anthropologists underscored for me that human relations (emotions, concern for economic well-being, etc.) fundamentally shape international relations.



**Andrew Kirkendall**

*Professor of History  
Texas A&M University*

José Murilo de Carvalho, *Os Bestializados: O Rio de Janeiro e a República Que Não Foi* [Translation: *The 'Beastialized Ones': Rio de Janeiro and the Republic that Wasn't.*] São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1987.

This book examines the original sin of Brazil's founding as a republic: the lack of popular participation. It inspired me to examine the history of political classes and citizenship, and to examine the processes of depoliticization which inhibited the development of an active citizenry.

Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

I have always regarded this as a prime example of the historian's art. It illustrates the fundamental rule that one has to follow the evidence where it leads us, even when it makes us feel uncomfortable.

Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

I used this book in my first 20th-century world history course at Texas A&M University back in 1997. There are rich insights on every page. Every now and then I reread it and feel a bit abashed to rediscover where so many of "my ideas" come from.



**Catherine Forslund**

*Professor of History and Department Chair  
Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities  
Rockford University*

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*. While not really history books, these two books greatly shaped much of my youthful *weltanschauung*, making me want to understand more of the world that was reflected in them. What made the south racist? What made politicians send young men off to war? It was a quest to answer such questions that cemented my desire to study history.

Catherine Drinker Bowen, *Miracle at Philadelphia*. A non-traditional history book yes, but her ability to bring the men and actions of the Constitutional Convention to life drove my desire to learn as much history as I could. This book also made me realize the power of the story to the writing and telling of history.

Neill MacAulay, *The Sandino Affair* and Stephen Schlesinger, *Bitter Fruit*. These two texts, read very early in grad school, were instrumental in awakening my interest in diplomatic history. So much of the history I had studied as an undergrad did not include these perspectives and they were as illuminating of American 20th century international activism as they were for explaining how the rest of the world sees the U.S. and why.

Alfred Chandler, Jr., *The Visible Hand* and William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. Without both of these volumes, the power of economics

for driving foreign policy would have been much harder to grasp. Even though that is not Chandler's focus, the clarity with which he explained the role of economics in history helped clarify Williams' arguments. As an "academic granddaughter" of Williams, reading his work clarified for me why he is so seminal to diplomatic history.



**Carol Anderson**

*Associate Professor of African American Studies and History  
Emory University*

Dan T. Carter, *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South*. This book was a descent into a Kafkaesque world where, in a court of law, evidence, guilt, and innocence didn't matter at all. Where those sworn to uphold the law – judges, prosecutors, sheriffs – were more than willing to send eight teenagers to the infamous electric chair, "Old Sparky," and force the twelve year old to serve the rest of his natural life in an Alabama prison for a crime that never happened. I had studied the Soviet Union for years. I had spent multiple semesters on the Nazis. This is the book where I stepped back and said "what is American democracy?" And, not in juxtaposition to an external competing ideology but to its own self-professed creed. I realized, as well, that Carter had managed to do this because *Scottsboro* was beautifully written, with clarity, flair, and judiciousness. It was so smooth that before you knew it, you were in hell. Wow!

Michael Hunt, *Ideologies and US Foreign Policy*. I loved how he stepped back from his research on Sino-American relations and asked a question about the tectonic plates moving U.S. foreign policy. What drives this thing? I was intrigued with the way he used editorial cartoons, speeches, as well as policies for his evidentiary base. It opened up for me the range of sources historians could use to ask and answer questions about not just what happened but *why* it happened. Of course, it got to the point where I would preface doggone near every comment in the diplomatic history readings course with "as Michael Hunt said," until Professor Hogan finally asked, barely holding back a laugh, "you want to be a Hunt student?" I could only smile.

Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963*. Epic. Powerful storytelling. You never forgot, especially with the engrossing way he brought to life the heroes, villains, bystanders, and the conflicted, that history is about people. How they cope, shape, interpret, fight against, maneuver around, acquiesce, and sometimes succumb to political, social, and economic systems. That is the stuff of great storymaking. The stuff of great history.

Charles Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilization in France, Germany, and Italy in the Decade After World War I*. I remember Toby in our program would talk about "multi-archival research, multi-archival research, multi-archival research." I gave the newbie grad student "nod," which supposedly meant, "oh, yeah I get it" but really meant "huh?" Then I read Maier's work and was just floored by the depth of research in archive after archive, and how he had to tunnel down into the intricacies of party politics to make sense of the larger movements fighting for control. "Oh," I thought, "so *that's* multi-archival research!" For me he set the standard.

John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. He saw what many others had seen but didn't recognize. This was my first "a-ha" moment that what was supposedly well-known and well-researched could

actually be unexamined and unquestioned. He looked at the Second World War and asked a powerful question – why was the war in the Pacific so much more lethal than the one in Europe. There were stark differences in POW mortality rates, military deaths, and civilians killed. Why? The array of resources he amassed was impressive and innovative. And then how he interrogated those artifacts to grapple with the ways that racial supremacy peeks out, not just in policy, but culturally – music, shows, cartoons, etc. – to create the non-human other and the conditions for unspeakable brutality was just beautifully done. In my War Crimes and Genocide class, I often point my students to this book.



**Sarah B. Snyder**

*Assistant Professor  
American University's School of International Service*

Thomas J. Sugrue. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Sugrue's book deepened my awareness of structural racism in the urban north, and I was captivated by his examination of the informal networks that denied employment opportunities to African-Americans. At the heart of *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* is the tension between structure and agency; his work was the first that challenged me to think deeply about the opportunities for and limits on meaningful historical change.

Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995.

In contrast to Sugrue's book, Payne's extensive history of the "community organizing" tradition of civil rights groups shaped my thinking about the potential for ordinary men and women to develop into leaders. My own work on human rights activism has been influenced by his argument that the success of the civil rights movement of the 1960s was founded on an earlier generation of activism that was "socially invisible."

Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2000.

Most influential for me was the web of human connections that Daniel Rodgers mapped in *Atlantic Crossing* as he demonstrated the existence of a transnational, North Atlantic community that stretched from Berlin to San Francisco. It is possible this was the first time I encountered the term transnational, and his book shaped my thinking about the challenges and benefits of such a methodological approach.

George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1880-1940*. New York: Basic Books, 1995.

Chauncey's book was important for me as a demonstration of sexuality as a social or cultural construct; I was particularly struck by his examination of men who participated in homosexual acts but did not identify themselves as gay. I also appreciated Chauncey's clear agenda of dispelling the myths of an isolated, invisible gay community that had internalized the dominant culture's negative view of them by painting a richly textured picture of gay life in New York.

Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945-1949*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1995.

In *The Russians in Germany*, Naimark emphasizes the extent to which the Soviets turned potential friends into enemies, which shaped my thinking about the unintended consequences of state policies. More significantly, his book was the first I encountered that addressed rape and sexual assault as a subject warranting historical research; his inclusion of a chapter on rape shaped my conviction that human rights abuses shaped international relations or put another way that what were considered “soft” issues had a meaningful impact on the Cold War.



**Marilyn Young**  
Professor of History  
New York University

The first history book that had a real impact on me (after a steady diet of Howard Fast) was a novel, John Hersey’s fictionalized account of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, *The Wall*. I was 13 when I read it and it shaped my imagination of resistance, heroism, the nature of courage and the reality of evil -- all of which have figured in my work as an historian ever since. Three books shaped my understanding of revolution, imperialism and America in (and/of/over) the world: Dana Gardner Munro’s account of *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, Gregory Massell’s *The Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia, 1919-1929* and Gerald Linderman’s *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War*. Munro’s book seemed to me when I read it shortly after finishing my thesis (it was first published in 1964) gave me a sense of how the American Empire operated on the ground; Massell, published when I was well launched on a teaching career, gave me a handle on the contradictions of revolutionary reform; and Linderman, whom I read as I was working on my own book on the Vietnam war, was the single best book I’d yet read on the experience of war and the role of the home front. Linderman’s book on WWII, *The World Within War: America’s Combat Experience in World War II*, is equally important and I learned a great deal from it -- but it was the Civil War book that I read first and had the most effect on the way I thought about war.

Finally, Lu Xun, the great Chinese essayist and short story writer, whom I started reading in graduate school and have used in classes ever since, taught me about the experience of imperialism from the inside.



**Michael Brenes**  
Adjunct Assistant Professor  
Hunter College, City University of New York

Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1865-1877* (New York: Harper Collins, 1988)

I confess that I first encountered *Reconstruction* as a freshman undergraduate. When Foner’s book was referenced in the very first lecture of my very first history course, I went to the library and read the sections on black suffrage and

the political mobilization of the black community after the Civil War—subjects which at that time were completely new to me. When I read Foner’s book in its entirety in graduate school, it inspired me to want to write history that is synthetic; history that unites various subfields to answer big questions on the inherent dilemmas of American democracy. When I teach the history of Reconstruction, I can attest that Foner’s book (as I was years ago) inspires and guides interest in history among students who are consistently surprised that the civil rights movement first happened in the 1870s.

Melvyn P. Leffer, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992)

When I finished Leffler’s tome my first year in graduate school, I felt (and still feel) it offered the best resolution to the debate over the origins of the Cold War. I appreciated that Leffler avoided the familiar tropes in the literature: whether the Cold War was Stalin’s or Truman’s fault; whether imperial capitalism or imperial communism ignited the conflict. While I was more inclined to give weight to economic pressures rather than ideological imperatives in the creation of the Cold War, Leffler demonstrates that one cannot discount them. Personal agency matters, but even very powerful figures like Stalin and Truman were limited by the structures of global and domestic politics that predated them. Indeed, I often invoke Leffler’s book in the classroom when I tell students how the competing “lessons of history” among Stalin and Truman led to the Cold War.

Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2003)

Suri’s book gave me a framework for understanding the relationship between the local and the global and the ways “ordinary” people can influence the course of international politics. Suri also provided me with an understanding of how the decisions of policy makers are intertwined with actions at the grassroots or “street” level. As much as I was impressed with Suri’s multi-archival approach to international history, I was equally taken with his conclusions that policy makers cannot divorce themselves from domestic considerations, nor can they disaggregate the domestic from the international.

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995)

Sugrue’s book rejuvenated my interest in the history of racial and economic inequality in the United States, subjects that first brought me to graduate school. *Origins* answered the gnawing question of why the economic fortunes of African Americans had not markedly improved after the civil rights movement. Sugrue also revealed how segregation could be just as systemic in the North as it was in the Jim Crow South, as local, state, and federal governments embedded racism in policies that ensured racial disparities in housing and employment. Sugrue’s case study is also invaluable for teaching twentieth-century American history in New York City. I have referenced *Origins* in conversations with students over how Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant, and Crown Heights became predominantly black neighborhoods—information that is powerful in my classrooms where students of color can comprise the majority of the population.

Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the 1970s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010)

I was in Professor Stein's seminar in "U.S. Political Economy since 1973" when her book was in its final stages of editing. When it was published the following semester, along with works by Matthew Lassiter, Jefferson Cowie, Bruce Miroff, and David Harvey, *Pivotal Decade* helped me understand why the Democratic Party, especially after President Obama's election in 2008, largely ignored working-class issues and failed to remedy economic inequality in the United States. Until I read her book, I believed the New Right (through decades of organization and activism) displaced liberalism with Ronald Reagan's election in 1980. *Pivotal Decade* told a different tale, one where the Left was complicit in the rise of the Right after liberals in the 1970s abandoned the New Deal social compact that brought massive economic growth to the working-class. In tackling inflation rather than unemployment, and by embracing finance as a post-structuralist panacea to the manufacturing crisis, the Democratic Party turned away from its working-class base and opened opportunities for the Republican Party to create a new coalition. Stein therefore forced me to rethink the relationship between economic inequality and political realignment in ways that continue to shape my research and teaching of American history.



**Andrew Johns**  
Associate Professor  
Brigham Young University

John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*  
George Herring, *America's Longest War*  
Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*  
David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*  
Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*

I guess the common thread with the first three books is that they are extremely well written, compel the reader to engage their ideas, and they each forced me to work harder as a historian...because I realized how far I had to go in order to get in the same galaxy as these historians were professionally. *The Prince* and *The Best and the Brightest* influenced the way that I viewed power, politics, and leadership. And, in retrospect, all of them have held up extraordinarily well over time—Machiavelli, obviously, but historiographical time is like dog years, which makes the longevity of influence for each of the other four titles remarkable.

I think that if I made this list again tomorrow or next week or in a month from now that I could come up with ten different titles every time—whether history or political science or fiction—but these seemed most relevant today as I think about this question.



**Kate Epstein**  
Associate Professor of History  
Rutgers University

Two books that I read in graduate school shaped me most as a scholar: Jon Sumida's *In Defence of Naval Supremacy* and Nicholas Lambert's *Sir John Fisher's Naval Revolution*. Their work redefined for me what archival mastery and careful relation of argument to evidence look like. David Edgerton's concept of "liberal militarism," as elaborated in *England and the Aeroplane and Warfare State*, which I first encountered while working on my master's thesis, has deeply influenced how I think about the relationship between war and liberalism. Shortly after completing my Ph.D., I read Andrew Shankman's book *Crucible of Democracy*, which, along with his other work, has reshaped how I understand and teach U.S. political economy.



**Mark Atwood Lawrence**  
Associate Professor of History and Senior Fellow at the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law  
University of Texas

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound*. For a young diplomatic historian like me, this book was a revelation -- a wonderful study of the ways in which international affairs plays out at the personal level. The book made a huge impact on my teaching of Cold War history and has informed my writing about the 50s and 60s.

John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*. This one may be a no-brainer, but it definitely merits a top-four billing for me. The book helped me develop a framework for thinking about the long history of the Cold War and helped me think about how to situate my research at key points of transition between different notions of containment.

Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*. This book opened up whole new ways of thinking about the factors that feed into decisions for war and peace. Hoganson's approach is now well established, but it was a blockbuster, at least in my mind, when it was first published. It's made a deep impression on my teaching as well as my writing.

C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. This book stands out to me as a model for outstanding history writing. It takes on a specific and important problem and advances a tightly focused argument with remarkable eloquence and concision. If only more works of history were like this.



**Lauren Frances Turek**  
Assistant Professor of History  
Trinity University

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War*

Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East Since 1945*

Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy*

Sarah Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network*

Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*

These five books have shaped my thinking about the past as well as my methodological approach to my work (which explores the ways in which domestic religious groups functioned as transnational actors and exerted an influence on U.S. foreign relations during the twentieth century). Perhaps more than any other book that I read during graduate school, Westad's *The Global Cold War* impressed upon me the importance of conducting multiarchival research. Westad's prodigious source base, wide-ranging case studies, and attention to the significance of ideology in international relations sheds new light on the Cold War as well as contemporary global politics, and has provided me with a model for writing compelling international history. Sarah Snyder's book, which traces the rise of transnational human rights advocacy networks after the Helsinki Final Act and illuminates how these groups contributed to ending the Cold War, encouraged me to study transnational activists and affirmed the power of discourse, particularly human rights discourse, to effect superpower relations and decision-making. Elaine Tyler May's *Homeward Bound* and Melani McAlister's *Epic Encounters* inspired me to examine the cultural and domestic factors that shaped foreign policy while remaining attentive to how events abroad played into politics at home during the Cold War. I actually first read May's book as an undergraduate, and her innovative use of sources and lively narrative about postwar family life and domestic containment contributed to my desire to be a historian of the Cold War. McAlister's book, which employs the tools of cultural analysis to show that Americans identified and understood their interests in the Middle East through popular culture, racial politics, and religious beliefs, has been instrumental in my thinking about how religion, ideology, and domestic political considerations help to define American foreign policy and national security interests. Finally, Andrew Preston's *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith* brought together a tremendous amount of material on the history of America's diverse religious groups and their interactions with U.S. foreign relations, identifying enduring themes as well as novel developments in his sweeping and synthetic overview. His work has helped me set the religious groups that I study in a broader historical context and has also uncovered exciting avenues for future research on this topic in the process.



**David Prentice**

Lecturer

University of Arkansas—Fort Smith

Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (1999). I read *Choosing War* the summer before I began graduate school, and it was this book that introduced me to historiography and diplomatic history. As Logevall explained President Lyndon Johnson's decision to escalate and Americanize the Vietnam War in "The Long 1964," I knew I had found my discipline and methodology. I was astounded by how much we could know about an event based on historical research. I loved the idea of using both domestic and international sources to develop the context that framed key decisions. And of course there was *contingency*. Structural forces made for

hard, not impossible, choices. For a young scholar about to enter the historical profession, *Choosing War* was a powerful first read.

J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832: Religion, Ideology, and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (2nd ed., 2000). Fredrik Logevall introduced me to contingency, continuity, and counterfactuals; J.C.D. Clark deepened my appreciation. I would not have discovered Clark had it not been for my doctoral fourth field, America and the West. A testament to the inestimable value of reading outside one's specialty, Clark's book on the continued role of monarchy, aristocracy, and religion during "the long eighteenth century" fundamentally changed not only how I understood the period but also how I approached our discipline. His withering scrutiny of anachronism, prolepsis, and teleology informs my reading, research, writing, and teaching. I am at a loss to find another book on my office shelves that has had as much of an intellectual and professional impact as *English Society*.



**Mitch Lerner**

Associate Professor

The Ohio State University

Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*  
William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*  
Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*  
Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest*  
Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*

As I look over my list of books, I see that—at least to some very small extent—they are all the same book. Williams might be a bit of an outlier, but it was the one that made me a diplomatic historian. I started my career in an American Studies Ph.D program, planning to study domestic political culture. In my first seminar, the professor wanted us to write a historiographical paper on a topic related to our central focus but not exactly on point, and he suggested I turn to American diplomacy. I still remember the conversation. "You know who Robert Divine is, of course, right?" he asked me. I had never heard of Robert Divine, but I nodded knowingly. "He has an office downstairs. Go and talk to him about what you should read." I met with Bob Divine to develop a book list. "Do you know who William Appleman Williams is," he asked me. I had never heard of William Appleman Williams, but I nodded knowingly. At Bob's suggestion, I started reading *Tragedy* as the first book for my paper. And I haven't stopped thinking about it since. It challenged everything I had learned before graduate school (which frankly wasn't that much since I never went to class as an undergraduate). Every page had a new revelation. About empire. About the domestic wellsprings of American foreign policy. About political economy. About ideas and ideology. About class and race and capitalism. I realized quickly during the course of that semester that I read and talked with Bob that *Tragedy* had its flaws and its limits. Still, it was the book above all others that sent me down the path to where I am today. (It is also the book I read to my wife's stomach while she was pregnant with my daughter Julia. Julia is now a raging leftist, a member of the young socialist club at the University of Maryland, and a volunteer for the Bernie Sanders campaign. Go figure, right?).

The other four books address similar themes, even while

they range across a few centuries. Goodwyn perhaps most of all made me think about the way that culture could shape political ideologies and led me to start asking questions about how that culture was created and whose interests it served. Morgan reinforced those questions, and showed me how they connected to race and social construction in ways that astonished me. I don't always agree with the conclusions of the books on my list; in fact, my own work on Texas populism explicitly rejects the overly romanticized picture that Goodwin provides. Still, all of the authors here challenged me to think about social movements and political protest and the extent to which both have to interact with (and often overcome) fundamental cultural norms that needed to be examined in more depth and in different ways than I had ever considered.



**Frank Costigliola**  
*Professor*  
*University of Connecticut*

Which particular books influenced me most in my early graduate career reflects the peculiar circumstances of the time. I started graduate school at Cornell in 1968-69 as an act of faith. Determined to send me off to Vietnam to fight, my local draft board looked askance at my application for conscientious objector (CO) status. (The selective service had canceled deferments for graduate school.) In checking books out of Olin library, I took comfort from the due date 4 months hence: here, I told myself, was tangible evidence that I could perhaps stave off the draft a bit longer. Not only did I want desperately to stay in grad school; I also found that first year intellectually mind-blowing. Historiographically naïve as an undergraduate, I encountered New Left revisionism at its height and the brilliance of Walter LaFeber, who taught a demanding seminar with me and just one other student. With the Vietnam War looming over my personal life, I discovered the larger perspective: the war was only the latest expression of the Open Door policy and the fundamentally flawed assumptions of Wilsonian liberalism.

In this context, I devoured LaFeber's *The New Empire*, William Appleman Williams's *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* and *The Contours of American History*; N. Gordon Levin's *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics*, and Barton Bernstein's edited volume, *Towards a New Past*.

Though there was not much in these books about culture or emotion, all five remain intellectual touchstones nearly a half-century later. As for the draft, I finally got CO status on appeal to the state board, and as alternate service I spent 2 of my 4 years at Cornell helping set up and then living in a halfway house for former mental patients.



**Carol Chin**  
*Acting Principal, Woodsworth College*  
*Associate Professor, Dept. of History*

1) Frank Costigliola, *France and the United States*. I was the in-house editor for this book, which included early attempts to use gendered analysis in diplomatic history. This and other

books in Twayne's international history series influenced my decision to quit my job in publishing and go to grad school.

The next three together — 2) Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream* 3) Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny*, and 4) Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood* showed me the rich possibilities of using cultural, intellectual, and gender approaches, which had only been hinted at in Frank's 1992 book. 5) Leila Rupp, *Worlds of Women*: I initially signed up for Leila's graduate seminar for the classic undergraduate reason of "it fits into my schedule," but the seminar papers I wrote for that class became two of the core chapters of my book.



**Barbara Keys**  
*Associate Professor of U.S. and International History*  
*University of Melbourne*

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (1990)

Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (1971)

Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (1999)

Frank Crowley et al., general eds., *Australians: A Historical Library*, 11 vols. (1987)

Jonathan D. Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (1996)

As a counterpoint to the ideas-based approach I am guessing most of my colleagues will take, I have chosen works that shaped my views of history as a craft—books that have influenced how I approach the everyday tasks of finding and reading the fragmentary sources history has left us and of bringing meaning to them as I set my own words to paper. The first three books left deep impressions on me as works of extraordinary historical imagination that use unusual and/or difficult sources in breathtakingly insightful and creative ways. Ulrich's Pulitzer Prize-winning study develops a world of meaning from a terse, cryptic diary. It's a classic example of Mark Kishlansky's dictum: "squeeze, don't stretch" the evidence. One need only look at the excerpts from the diary that preface the chapters to grasp what Ulrich has achieved. Yates's attempt to rewrite the history of the Renaissance, though criticized by some scholars for stretching the evidence, introduced me to the range of tools that could be brought to the study of history. Using what she called "Warburgian history," she combined the history of ideas with the history of science and art and attention to images, symbols, and close reading of words and phrases. Hunt's examination of the "social life of objects" such as bicycles and forceps and her almost playful use of the idea of "lexicon" to frame her study still inspire me to keep probing how I think about words and objects and the circulation of meaning. The Australian bicentennial history project, which Bernard Bailyn assigned in a historical theory seminar, included four volumes that sought to avoid presentism by dividing history into arbitrarily chosen "slices"—portraits of Australia in 1788, 1838, 1888, and 1938—without regard to change over time or lasting effects. It is, in my view, a failed experiment, but a fascinating one that makes me ask: how might this



history that I'm writing look different if I approached it as a slice? Last on the list is an inspirational piece of historical reconstruction. The first chapter of Spence's brilliant and brilliantly written book is one of the best ever to open a work of history; like the best fiction, it transports you to another world.



**Kurk Dorsey**  
Professor  
University of New Hampshire

- 1) Thomas Paterson, et al., *American Foreign Relations* way back when I was an undergrad, which had half a sentence about the Migratory Bird Treaty. There was diplomacy about birds?
- 2) Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire*, which sparked an amazing debate in my first graduate seminar, and it was 25 years old already.
- 3) Arthur McEvoy, *The Fisherman's Problem* was the first work of environmental history I read, and it showed how to balance law, culture, and ecology. Maybe some day I'll figure out how to do the same.
- 4) William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis* probably needs no explanation.
- 5) Andrew Hurley, *Environmental Inequalities* taught me a lot about nuanced thinking, in this case about the environmental movement and pollution in Gary, IN.



**Vanessa Walker**  
Zerbib Assistant Professor of History  
Amherst College

Part of his excellent trilogy, "Memory Box of Pinochet's Chile," Steve Stern's, *Battling for Hearts and Minds: Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988* is one of the most elegant uses of theory and memory studies I've read. Rather than being abstracted from the lived experiences of people, Stern shows how memory struggles play out in the daily interactions of Chileans. His concept of "memory knots"—moments that expose power dynamics, political stakes, and lived assumptions—is one that has influenced how I approach my own work. His creative presentation of counter-narratives in his short "Afterword" chapters reminds me to be more innovative in structuring my own writing. Moreover, anyone who has had the privilege of watching Stern teach knows that this book's narrative technique is an outgrowth of his teaching...or perhaps his teaching is an outgrowth of his writing. Either way, this book is a testament to the ways that that research and writing can make us better teachers, and visa-versa. Like Stern's work, Ada Ferrer's *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898*, encouraged me to think about how multiple stories and perspectives shape the meaning of historical events. I almost always assign Ferrer in my U.S. Foreign Relations class, and sit back and watch students grapple with how this reshapes their understanding of the "Splendid Little War." Moreover, Ferrer's work reveals how subversive concepts like "racelessness" can be both

empowering and hegemonic. Lynn Hunt's *Inventing Human Rights* reinforced for me the power of definition and malleability of seemingly self-evident concepts. J.R. McNeill's *Mosquito Empires* is an exemplar of how truly sophisticated arguments can also be remarkably clear and direct; how can you not love an introduction entitled, "The Argument (and Its Limits) in Brief"? Finally, the summer after finishing my comprehensive exams, I decided I needed to recapture my love of fiction (and reading). My good friend and fellow historian Jennifer Miller urged me to read Kazuo Ishiguro's *Remains of the Day*, saying "I wish I could read it again for the first time." It is an incomparable work of historical fiction, beautifully unfolding universal questions within a deeply personal and local story. Ishiguro's Stevens reminds us that we are all limited in our ability to perceive the historical forces at work in our own lives. The full implications of our actions often only become discernible with hindsight, and even then, the deeper meaning can remain elusive. Reading fiction has made me a better thinker and writer, and—as per Lynn Hunt—more empathetic with the individuals I study.



**Gretchen Heefner**  
Assistant Professor  
Northeastern University

When I was first asked about what books influenced me most as a graduate student, I immediately went back to my oral exam lists. Cronon and Dudziak jumped out for the lengthy conversations they generated across fields and classes. The others I include because of their beautiful and compelling storytelling.

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*

Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*

Laura Wexler, *Fire in the Cane Break*

John McPhee, *Oranges*

Wallace Stegner, *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian*



**Thomas Field**  
Associate Professor  
Embry-Riddle College of Security and Intelligence in Prescott,  
Arizona

Frank Ninkovich - *The Wilsonian Century* (1999). I read this book right after I read John Lewis Gaddis's *Strategies of Containment*, which just missed this list. Judging from the copious marginalia of an eager graduate student, Ninkovich's book blew me away at that time. Through a sophisticated deconstruction of realist foreign policy discourse, Ninkovich brings to life the deeper ideological motivations that drive U.S. foreign policy. Depicting foreign policymaking as an exercise in discursive and ideological creativity, Ninkovich's scholarship helped to lift diplomatic history out of what Michael Hunt called its "long crisis" of poor theory and provincial debates.

Piero Gleijeses - *Shattered Hope* (1991). This book made me want become a foreign policy historian. Taking place almost entirely on the ground in Guatemala, Gleijeses's work demonstrates the timeless possibilities that lie within old fashioned archival work, complimented by journalistic attention to oral histories and press reporting. More importantly, Gleijeses took local agency seriously before it was trendy, and the book is a model for cross-checking U.S. documents with local sources. I also give points for style, and Gleijeses's novelistic aplomb makes this book a genuine pleasure to read.

Odd Arne Westad - *The Global Cold War* (2005). With this book, Westad achieved two things. First, he raised the profile of large swaths of past and future literature on the history of the Global South, incorporating the Third World as an integral aspect of contemporary international history. At the same time, Westad appears to have convinced an entire generation of scholars that conflicts over the meaning of development and modernization were not just relics of the 1960s, but rather that they have been (and remain) the key ideological constructs of the world's most important political struggles since World War II.

James Ferguson - *The Anti-Politics Machine* (1990). When analyzing vast foreign policy bureaucracies, specific authorship can be exceedingly difficult to locate. As an intricate anthropological exegesis on World Bank programs in 1980s Lesotho, Ferguson's book pushed me to think deeper about the underlying bureaucratic logic behind these enormous international development efforts. There is no better example of critical development studies.

Bradley Simpson - *Economists with Guns* (2008). Until Simpson's book, I was not totally convinced by the new literature on modernization theory by Michael Latham (2000) and Nils Gilman (2003). (I am now.) By focusing on one country, Indonesia, where U.S. development programs helped to fuel an authoritarian turn in the 1960s, Simpson work made the subfield of development studies more recognizable to international historians. It also provided a much-needed compliment to the extensive foreign policy literature on development and authoritarianism in southern and South Vietnam.



**Dan Hummel**  
Ph.D. candidate  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Fox, Richard. *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography*.

Brown, David S. *Beyond the Frontier: The Midwestern Voice in American Historical Writing*.

Marsden, George M. *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism*.

Bender, Thomas, Thomas L. Haskell, John Ashworth, and David Brion Davis. *The Antislavery Debate: Capitalism and Abolitionism as a Problem in Historical Interpretation*.

Besides *The Antislavery Debate* (which is an unforgettable exemplar of academic debate), I read each of these for the first time during the 6-month marathon of preliminary examinations in the first half of 2012. One indicator that they shaped me is that each managed to rise above the memory-

haze of dozens of monographs on religious or intellectual or diplomatic history. I remember finishing Marsden's book and thinking: "Now *that* was an institutional history done right!" and at the end of Fox's thinking the same about biography. I remember reading Brown's insightful portraits of Turner, Williams, and Lasch and feeling the allure of the Midwestern voice. I realized through these books that effective writing is not just accurate and convincing (though it must be both) but it also must be conveyed with pathos. Each of these authors, in all their work, writes with the stakes of the project evident on every page. The realization has also affected me as a writer, pushing me to be concise, clear, and to cut the passive voice.



**Justin Hart**  
Associate Professor and Associate Chair of the History  
Department  
Texas Tech University

William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*: When doing my doctorate at Rutgers with Lloyd Gardner, who was one of Williams's first Ph.D. students at Wisconsin, to read *Tragedy* was to identify my roots as a historian of U.S foreign policy. I've read it probably a dozen times now and each time I find something new.

Richard Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*: When I read this book in 1996, I couldn't believe how well his 40-year old judgments about the Progressive Era and the New Deal held up. (His material on Populism, though interesting and fresh, are more subject to debate.) Hofstadter is also one of the most elegant historical essayists of the 20th Century.

Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery American Freedom*: Probably the finest book I have ever read on any aspect of American history. It is riveting, it reads like a novel, and its central insight--that slavery was not a contradiction to freedom, but constitutive of it--shaped my understanding of how race has worked throughout U.S. history.

Eric Foner, *Reconstruction*: Has there ever been a book that so completely redefined the historiography of an entire field? Certainly not very many. Foner's book was so definitive that it basically ended debate on Reconstruction for a generation.

(tie) Graham Green, *The Quiet American* and Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*: Dean Acheson famously said that his job was to make things clearer than the truth and I have always thought that great historical novels did the same. *The Quiet American* captured the dangers of liberal developmentalist ideology before most people were even aware that those ideas were about to take over--and through the fictional character of Alden Pyle Greene nailed the essence of that ideology better than any historian ever could. *The Things They Carried* transformed my understanding of the historical craft, making me think about which stories we choose to tell and how we decide what constitutes "truth" in history.



**Amanda Bundy**  
Ph.D. candidate  
The Ohio State University

In early graduate school, I have clear memories of a few books that made a significant impact on me: *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (Marion Kaplan), *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (Leon F. Litwack), *Civilization Without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1917-1927* (Mary Louise Roberts), and *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Elizabeth Borgwardt). The first three books influenced my interest in seeking out personal stories that reflect and shape history, while the last book inspired my interest in human rights and humanitarianism in the post-World War II era.



**Mark Stoler**  
Professor Emeritus  
University of Vermont

William Appleman Williams: *Tragedy of American Diplomacy* and *The Contours of American History*

George Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology* and *The Culture of Western Europe*

Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* and *The Nature and Destiny of Man*

I actually read Kennan's *American Diplomacy* as an undergraduate (1962-66), and it profoundly influenced my views of American foreign policy and history in general. But then a few years later in graduate school at Wisconsin (1966-71), I took courses from both Williams and Mosse and read many of their works. It is difficult if not impossible for me to separate the influence of their extraordinary lectures on me from the influence of their published works, but since we are dealing here with published works, I've included both *Tragedy* and *Contours* for Williams, which influenced me even more than Kennan's work, and *German Ideology* and *Culture of Western Europe* for Mosse, which gave me an interpretation of modern European thought in general and Nazism in particular that changed my view of European history as much as Williams' work changed my view of U.S. history. Niebuhr's works perhaps should not be included, as I read them a decade later, when I had already been teaching for more than a few years. But they influenced me at that time in my life (mid 30s) as much as Williams and Mosse had in my early and mid 20s.



**Zach Fredman**  
Ph.D. candidate  
Boston University

Peter Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*.

Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*.

David Reynolds, *Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain, 1942-1945*.

Andrew Bacevich, *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*.

Alice Miller, *Prisoners of Childhood: The Drama of the Gifted Child and the Search for the True Self*.

*China Marches West* and the *Irony of American History* have shaped my understanding of Chinese and American foreign relations history more than any other books. Perdue demolishes two of China's most cherished nationalist myths by showing that Taiwan and Xinjiang are the imperial spoils of Qing conquest. Niebuhr does likewise in addressing American exceptionalism and delusions about managing the course of history. *The Limits of Power*, meanwhile, inspired me to go to graduate school, *Rich Relations* led me to my dissertation topic, and *Prisoners of Childhood* keeps me grinding away through the hardest writing days.



**David Hadley**  
Post-doctoral fellow  
Office of the Secretary of Defense

*The Search for Order, 1877-1920* by Robert H. Wiebe  
One of the earliest books I read for a field in U.S. history, Wiebe's book made me consider for the first time how the apparatus of a state develops, and how the American state in particular began to change in the Twentieth Century. It has become an important part of how I teach my introductory class in Modern U.S. history.

*The Well-Ordered Police State* by Marc Raeff  
In a similar vein to Wiebe, Raeff's book is an excellent, early, and still-timely examination of state development in the German territories and Russia, from 1600 to 1800. Raeff makes an effective argument for understanding how institutions develop and adapt to their particular cultures. The book is also an effective demonstration of the difficulties in transplanting institutions to places with a different social and cultural tradition.

*The Gulag Archipelago* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn  
There is not much to say about this work that has not already been said, except that reading it was a deeply moving reminder of the actual affect momentous historical events have on the individuals living through them.

*The Mighty Wurlitzer* by Hugh Wilford  
This book, examining the CIA's various secret relationships with various types of private organization, is both a well-told story and an impressive look at the cultural front of the Cold War.

1989 by Mary Sarotte  
This book was one of the first I read to make me think deeply about an event that occurred in my lifetime (albeit when I was very young). Having grown up in a post-Cold War United States, I never considered alternatives to what had actually happened in 1989 and 1990 in Europe.



**Nicole M. Phelps**  
Associate Professor  
University of Vermont

Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*.

Rodgers pushed scholars to think about connections, rather than comparisons, helping form the field of transnational history. In addition, the actors in the book combined private and state activity, which I think is essential to understanding how Americans engaged with the wider world in the long nineteenth century; if you only look at official actions, the United States looks more isolationist than it really was.

Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club*.

I adore this book for many reasons, but, in terms of my scholarship, its most important lesson is that specific individuals and places matter. Persuasive analysis and clear prose demand precision in agency, and Menand names names, convincingly demonstrating how major intellectual and social changes hinged on the specific interactions of small numbers of individuals in particular places.

James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier*.

This book confirmed my interest in the day-to-day activities that constitute diplomacy. It also cemented for me very early in my training that Native Americans were part of US diplomatic history, and Merrell's accessible writing means that I've been able to use the book to convince skeptical students of that fact, too.

Pieter Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914*.

I've become pretty firmly convinced that stories have at least three sides—definitely not just two!—and while that idea has been brought home to me through a variety of cultural artifacts, from Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods* to *The Pirates of the Caribbean*, Judson's book helped me see how that idea could be applied to serious academic history. (And, to keep with the *Into the Woods* connection, one can see that "nice is different than good.") It is also a book that helps bring the Habsburg Empire into scholarly conversations about "the West," breaking down cold war and academic barriers.

Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848*.

I'm enthusiastic about just about everything Schroeder has written, in large part because his grounding in Habsburg history leads him to more nuanced and balanced accounts than those who focus exclusively on Britain, France, and Germany. His scholarship has often been at the intersection of History and Political Science, frequently reminding political scientists that historians produce interpretations, not data points. *Transformation* was so powerful for me because it is compatible with constructivist theories, rather than emphasizing the balance of power or rational choice, and that constructivism is, to my mind, more consistent with sound historical practice.

**Simon Miles**

Ph.D. candidate, University of Texas  
Visiting Fellow at the Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary  
International History, University of Toronto

Akira Kurosawa's *Rashōmon* may not be a book, but I think few works capture the importance of perception as well as this masterful film. Kurosawa's period drama tells the story of one crime using four successive, mutually contradictory accounts. Historical events are shaped by perception, and Kurosawa offers a master class in its vagaries.

Odd Arne Westad's *The Global Cold War* introduced me to the concept and promise of international history in a serious way. Westad illustrates the value of telling more sides to a story than may seem obvious — and indeed of being open-minded about who actually has a side in said story. In it, I found encouragement to be ambitious in my research program and not to shy away from telling the biggest story I could.

Vladislav Zubok's *A Failed Empire* sparked my interest in history as an undergraduate. Its strengths as a synthetic account of the Soviet Union in the Cold War introduced me to the richness of Soviet history and the myriad questions to be asked regarding US-Soviet relations. One weakness, a gap in the narrative from 1980 to 1985 which jumps from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to the storied Reagan-Gorbachev relationship, inspired my current research project.

Thomas Schelling's *Arms and Influence* advances a theory of the "diplomacy of violence," explaining the importance of coercion, deterrence, and intimidation — rather than actually inflicting violence on an enemy — in international relations. It armed me with valuable insight into the role and utility of nuclear weapons in the international system; and it influenced me to begin a series of conversations with my colleagues in political science which have helped me to think about history in valuable new ways.



# The Wiley-Blackwell Companions to American History

Peter Coveney

This large and long-running series is engaged with many areas of U.S. and global history and has enjoyed and continues to benefit greatly from a strong relationship with U.S. diplomatic history and many members of SHAFR. A little background:

The first title in this series, *A Companion to the American Revolution*, edited by Jack Greene and J.R. Pole, appeared in April of 2000; the series itself had its genesis in the early 1990s. Greene and Pole's Companion was a revision of their *Blackwell Encyclopedia of the American Revolution* (1991). At that time Blackwell, with offices in the United States and the UK, had already been publishing a number of popular Companions in Philosophy, and these were so successful that the idea was picked up and adapted by Blackwell editors in several other subject areas, among them Literature, Classics, and History. So the first effort in inaugurating a Companions series in American history was to revise and expand the Greene and Pole encyclopedia, then build out a series of books that followed the themes and chronology of the American history curriculum, while the history editor in the UK did roughly the same for European and British history and world history more broadly.

It was clear almost from the beginning that in order to differentiate these from both standard textbooks and readers from other publishers, the content would need to be distinctive in some way. In order to avoid mere summary-type overviews of various fields and subfields, editors were encouraged to commission essays that were mainly historiographic. Those essays in fact became the signature aspect of the Companions, distinguishing the series over the years, and probably the main reason for their reputation, popularity and utility. With a plan in place, in the late 1990s the two history editors began lining up authors and issuing contracts, and the rest of the titles in the series soon began to appear. By the end of 2003 we had published some fourteen additional Companions, eight of them in American history, including Marilyn Young and Bob Buzzanco's *Companion to the Vietnam War* (2002) and Bob Schulzinger's *Companion to American Foreign Relations* (2003).

The *Companions* all followed the same physical specifications and had the same cover design. As the number of *Companions* in each major area reached critical mass, it became clear that we needed a way to easily distinguish the titles in world history from those in European, British, and American history, while at the same time making it clear visually that the books were a series and belonged in a set. We did this by using distinctive color bars along the tops of the jackets: green for European history; blue for American history; aqua for world history, red for British history.

By the time I joined Blackwell in early 2005, the first eleven American history *Companions* were out and we had just begun to issue the first of these in paperback. I immediately saw that these books were very popular when we exhibited at various history conventions throughout the year. Among the many groups who seemed drawn to them were graduate students, who purchased them in paperback to study for their comprehensive exams. I also used the lists of contributors in the *Companions* as a sort of guide to recruiting authors of new books. Because I was already acquainted with a number of the contributors to the

Schulzinger and Young *Companions* and because Blackwell was the publisher of the journal *Diplomatic History* during that period, we regularly exhibited at SHAFR, and I spent many hours in the company of historians of U.S. foreign relations, many of whom ended up writing books for me.

In 2007, with the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln still two years off, I began to think it would be a great idea to commission a *Companion to Lincoln*, to be published in time for the many observances that were to take place during 2009. The only trouble was that everyone I asked to edit the volume was by that time already committed to doing two or three projects related to Lincoln, all aiming for that 2009 publication date. I spoke with many people in an effort to find someone to do a volume and invariably received a polite rebuff. Many people added that the world probably did not need yet another book on Lincoln, but what was really lacking was a good *Companion to FDR* (or *Washington*, or *Jefferson*, or *LBJ*, or *Woodrow Wilson*; i.e., name your favorite president). That started me thinking about the possibility of a series on American presidents, a subseries within the American History Companions. Eventually I put together a plan to cover forty presidents—Washington through Reagan—in twenty volumes (some would obviously have to include more than one president). Capping these will be a large volume covering every First Lady from Martha to Michelle (to appear in 2016).

Because a good many of the essays in Presidential Companions cover political and diplomatic history, it was natural for me to turn once again to SHAFR to recruit volume editors, and of the twenty people who accepted, at least a dozen are SHAFR members (you know who you are). The first of the volumes to appear was the *FDR Companion* in April 2011; in the four years since then, we have published fifteen other *Presidential Companions*, most recently Andy Johns's volume on *Reagan* (April 2015). Scott Kaufman's volume on *Ford and Carter* is scheduled for December 2015, and Katie Sibley's *A Companion to First Ladies* is due in April 2016.

Along with the presidential series, I have continued to commission Companions in many other areas, from legal history, sports history, and environmental history to the Civil War, World War Two, and the Meuse Argonne Offensive. In American history we now have more than fifty titles either published, in production, or under contract; in the other history areas (world, British, European) that number is over thirty.

I had for many years cherished the idea of doing a *Companion to the American Secretaries of State*, and in mid-2013 I set about doing background research and contacting various scholars about the feasibility of the project. Enough people responded positively that I then set out to recruit someone to act as the general editor for the volume. In April 2015 we signed a contract with *Christopher Dietrich* at Fordham to do what we are calling for now simply *A Companion to U.S. Foreign Policy, 1776 to the Present*. It will be three volumes (1776–1877; 1877–1945; 1945–Present); and its sixty-seven proposed chapters will include coverage of individual secretaries as well as broader-gauged essays that provide in unprecedented detail an accounting of the contexts, events, people, policies, and politics that have

shaped U.S. diplomacy from the founding until the present day.

*The Blackwell Companions* are now called the *Wiley Blackwell Companions*, reflecting the purchase of Blackwell in 2007 by John Wiley & Sons. Thanks to our partnership with many members of SHAFR and with other top scholars in diverse areas of U.S. and global history, the Wiley Blackwell Companions series continues to grow and to enjoy a reputation for high-quality scholarship and excellent resources, and its many titles are used by scholars around the world.

## **Call for Proposals Host the 2018 SHAFR Annual Conference!**

Every other year, SHAFR holds its annual meeting in a location other than the Washington, D.C. area. The SHAFR Council would like to hear from members interested in hosting the conference in their home cities in late June 2018.

The Council requires a brief statement of purpose from any interested party. Please submit a document of no more than four pages with the following information:

1. The location and its attractiveness as a conference destination. What facilities and attractions make it a good place for a SHAFR conference? What research facilities are nearby? Does it offer frequent and affordable airline service? etc.
  
2. Arrangements for hosting. Will the conference take place entirely in a hotel (as many/most recent SHAFR conferences have)? If not, what will the transportation arrangements be like? Would sufficient conference rooms be available? What arrangements for catering? Are hotel rooms available in sufficient quantity and at a reasonable price? What facilities (restaurants, public transit, etc.) are available in the vicinity of the conference location(s)?
  
3. Organizational details. Explain who you are and who might help you host, including colleagues, graduate students and staff. What opportunities for cosponsorship might be available from your institution or other institutions in the area?

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Potential applicants are advised to seek additional information from SHAFR Executive Director Amy Sayward (Amy.Sayward@shafrr.org) or SHAFR Conference Consultant Julie Laut (conference@shafrr.org) well in advance of the deadline. Please send proposals by **APRIL 1, 2016** to Amy Sayward at Amy.Sayward@shafrr.org

# Domestic Politics and U.S. Foreign Relations: A Roundtable

*Robert David Johnson, Hideaki Kami, Tizoc Chavez, Michael Brenes, David L. Prentice, Autumn C. Lass, Chris Foss, Daniel G. Hummel, Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard, and Andrew Johnstone*

**Editor's note:** *The essays that follow derive from the work of many of the participants in the 2015 SHAFR Summer Institute in Columbus, OH. Passport would like to thank guest editor Dan Hummel for suggesting and organizing this roundtable. AJ*

## Introductory Comments

Robert David Johnson

When I went on the job market in 1994, I encountered around a dozen openings in U.S. diplomatic history, all at reputable liberal arts colleges or research universities. (Needless to say, such a range of offerings would be inconceivable today.) The University of New Hampshire advertised a diplomatic history position, but with a strong preference for people who had conducted research in foreign archives. For someone like me, with a dissertation that discussed the foreign policy positions of members of the 1910s and 1920s Congress, this criterion rendered it rather unlikely that I would wind up in Durham.

In the last two decades, the field has continued to transform, with increasing emphasis on international and (in more recent) years transnational perspectives. These approaches open up new questions for historians to explore. Redefining diplomatic history through an international lens might also have a positive effect on employment opportunities by allowing candidates to escape the influence of U.S. history faculty contingents increasingly oriented toward the race/class/gender trinity.

But defining the field according to the sources that historians use has an inherently limiting effect (as I discovered with the University of New Hampshire). It forecloses questions for which using foreign or even non-governmental sources would be of little or no assistance. This limiting effect is especially problematic in the study of U.S. foreign policy. As Thomas Alan Schwartz observed in his 2008 SHAFR presidential address, "Domestic partisan politics, the struggle for power at home, has played, and no doubt continues to play, a substantial role in the making and direction of American foreign policy." Accordingly, he issued "a plea for recognizing the ongoing importance of politics in our work and perhaps acknowledging that more traditional political explanations may explain more about American foreign relations than some of the more recent and trendier undertakings in our field."<sup>1</sup>

Schwartz's request, alas, seems to have had little effect. But in differing ways, the eight essays in this *Passport* roundtable provide a reminder of why scholars who analyze U.S. diplomatic history can profitably consider domestic politics, governmental structure, and societal forces.

The essays all stand on their own, but they raise several issues of importance to the broader study of diplomatic

history.

First, and most important, the roundtable illustrates the many types of questions for which an international or transnational approach will provide scant (or no) answers. For a document from the eighteenth-century world, the Constitution conferred upon the legislature an unprecedented degree of power over foreign affairs. Obviously, subsequent history has not shown Congress to be the dominant branch. Yet the legislature still possesses enormous potential power, and at various times—the 1850s, the 1920s, the late 1960s and 1970s—has used it. Chris Foss's essay examines Congress, the study of which requires an intensive examination of U.S. sources, often from the member's home state or university. Diplomatic historians who want to focus on Congress have more than their share of obstacles. Quite beyond diplomatic history's turn away from examining how domestic politics has affected the development of U.S. foreign policy, what Mark Leff a generation ago celebrated as the "re-visioning" of U.S. political history has decimated congressional history and led to a dramatic de-emphasis on the sort of traditional congressional biographies that once served as building blocks for broader studies, including my own, of the legislature.<sup>2</sup>

Despite their U.S.-based nature, congressional sources are critical for exploring the intersection between foreign policy, domestic politics, and domestic economic development. Michael Brenes's essay provides one example of just how essential those sources are, as he analyzes the policy and ideological connections between the conservative movement, the defense industry, and U.S. foreign relations in the Cold War era.

Focusing on Congress also provides at least a small opportunity for enhancing diversity in the study of U.S. diplomatic history. Until recently, women and minorities had far greater representation in Congress than in executive branch agencies devoted to international affairs. Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard observes in his contribution that non-governmental actors, refugees, ethnic and racial groups, and religious organizations have also been key players in the human rights debate. The role played by the Congressional Black Caucus in 1970s and 1980s policy toward Africa is a good illustration of this point. That said, for most of American history, all or virtually all important foreign policy players in Congress were white males. Diversity, in terms of congressional history, had its limits.

A domestic focus need not involve detailed study of policymakers or, indeed, of government actors at all. The essay from Autumn Lass discusses how governmental promotion of "traditional" American values like family, gender roles, political ideals, religiosity, and nationalism in turn affected the choices that the U.S. government could make abroad. Daniel Hummel explores the manner

in which one specific domestic force—religion—has affected U.S. conduct internationally and urges that diplomatic historians pay more attention to religious institutions, focusing “on the nexus between religion and power.” Jonathan Rosenberg’s work on race, civil rights organizations, and American foreign relations and much of the new work on environmental activists and foreign policy provide other models of how the analysis of domestic forces can enrich our understanding of foreign policy, even if the bulk (or all) of the sources in such studies come from the United States.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the roundtable essays offer a roadmap for those who wish to navigate the field’s increasingly prevalent international/transnational focus while still retaining coverage of the domestic front. Foreign policy lobbies (the subject of Hideaki Kami’s essay) by their very nature involve interaction between the foreign and the domestic. Though they operate primarily in the domestic context, seeking to influence not only the administration but also (and perhaps especially) Congress and public opinion, the lobbies also have international constituencies to satisfy. At times—as in the case of the Dominican or the Nicaraguan lobbies—they simply operate at the behest of a foreign government. The more effective of such lobbies—such as the China lobby in the early Cold War or the pro-Israel lobby from the early 1980s until recent years—enjoyed wide popular support, but still had to navigate the domestic politics of another nation. In all these cases, telling the full story of the lobby would require accessing foreign sources and bringing in both the U.S. and the international perspective.

Foreign sources also can provide increased insight into American policymaking and domestic developments. David Prentice cites his experience working on the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, noting that he found “innumerable British memos and cables on the importance of domestic politics and Congress in shaping, if not defining, that decision.” In this respect, as his essay points out, there need not be any disconnect between an international research base and a focus on domestic politics. But (as with the strategy of using Congress to enhance diversity in the study of foreign policy) there are obvious limits to this approach. I suspect that international sources would be less valuable for early twentieth-century U.S. foreign policy. Nor would British diplomatic sources provide a better understanding of U.S. foreign policy choices than (say) news analysis or foreign policy commentary in the Cold War era from the *New York Times* or the *Washington Star*.

One of the most amusing (and unintentionally revealing) selections from the Lyndon Johnson telephone conversations came from December 20, 1963, when the president called up Texas congressman Jack Brooks. The duo commiserated after Louisiana congressman Otto Passman, chair of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, had outmaneuvered the administration on a key funding vote for the foreign aid program, slashing the program’s total appropriation by around a third. Johnson termed himself “humiliated” that even though he had a friendly congressional leadership, “Otto Passman is king.” The president looked to the future, telling Brooks that “someday we’ll get our way, and if I ever walk up in the cold of night and a rattlesnake’s out there and about ready to get him, I

ain’t going to pull him off—I’ll tell you that.” As for the five Texas congressmen whose last-minute vote switches gave Passman his narrow margin of victory, Johnson remarked that “I want to put those sons of bitches in uniform . . . Let them go fight the Communists for a while. They like to talk a big game . . . but they don’t want to do a damn thing about it.”<sup>4</sup>

For historians seeking to understand the early 1960s foreign aid program, understanding the role of Passman—and his allies in Congress—is essential. Historians can only avoid a domestic focus, therefore, if they refuse to explore the question at hand. At the most basic level, the essays in this roundtable ask fellow historians of U.S. foreign relations not to avoid critical questions simply because of the type of sources required to address the issue.

Notes:

1. Thomas Alan Schwartz, “‘Henry, . . . Winning an Election Is Terribly Important’: Partisan Politics in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations,” *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 2 (April 2009): 173–90.
2. Mark Lefk, “Re-Visioning U.S. Political History,” *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 3 (June 1995): 829–53.
3. Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land? World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (Princeton, 2005).
4. President Johnson and Jack Brooks, 20 December 1963; for audio and transcript, see <http://allthewaywithlbj.com/the-politics-of-legislation/>.

## Migrant Politics and U.S. Foreign Policy

Hideaki Kami

The analysis of migrant politics—which rarely stop at the water’s edge—inevitably tends to go beyond the territorial boundaries of nation states. But migrant politics, or any kind of transnational politics, also are open to influences from conflicts between and negotiations among nation states. Diplomatic historians, political scientists, and migration historians have much to learn from each other as they set out to explore the complex relations between diplomacy and migration.

For a long time, historians of U.S. foreign relations seeking to explore the domestic sources of U.S. foreign policy have recognized that ethnic groups play a role in the creation of that policy.

According to Melvin Small’s *Democracy and Diplomacy*, the ethno-racially diverse, multicultural population at home was a key domestic determinant of U.S. foreign policy. U.S. presidents had to conduct diplomacy while dealing with “the cacophony of voices from electorally powerful ethnic groups.” Small believes that these “unassimilated groups” should “participate in the debate over foreign policy with their own interests subservient to the national interest,” and he laments that such has not always been the case.<sup>1</sup>

Using more cautious language, many other distinguished historians have joined Small to underline the influence of ethnic groups on U.S. foreign policy. In a *Diplomatic History* article, Jussi Hanhimäki refers to ethnic influences but declares that they would “defy easy explanations as a force influencing U.S. foreign policy.”<sup>2</sup> In his synthetic history, George Herring writes that “huge influxes of immigrants have flooded the United States at various times in its



history and produced ethnic constituencies that . . . have sought to sway the government to adopt policies favoring their countries of origin, sometimes producing initiatives that run counter to broader U.S. interests."<sup>3</sup> Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, in *America's Cold War*, agree with Hanhimäki and Herring. They even go so far as to state that "it would be foolish to deny that [such interest groups] influenced policy to a significant degree."<sup>4</sup>

Scholars frequently cite Alexander DeConde's *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy*. Based on secondary sources, many of which are the products of political scientists, DeConde's account concludes that ethno-racial factors are significant but decisive "only in specific circumstances." According to him, even well-organized ethnic groups have not succeeded in altering the fundamental direction of American foreign policy set by the Anglo-American elite.<sup>5</sup> Most diplomatic historians have accepted DeConde's argument that ethnic influences are "significant," albeit not determinative.

Yet for many, the "elusive character of the research material," which includes media reports, congressional sources, and presidential papers, still poses an obstacle in measuring ethnic influences.<sup>6</sup> The question of to what degree ethnic influences might have been "significant" remains open to varying interpretations of available sources, which are critically scarce in some important case studies. In the absence of a definitive answer, numerous political scientists tend to engage in normative debate over whether ethnic groups make healthy contributions to U.S. foreign policy.<sup>7</sup> As demonstrated by the well-known controversy over John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt's *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, the debate over ethnic influences seems ephemeral yet never-ending.<sup>8</sup>

Diplomatic historians nonetheless have a unique advantage in obtaining, exploring, and assessing sources. One work that exploits this advantage to good effect is Peter Hahn's *Caught in the Middle East*, which sheds light on the Israeli lobbies. Unlike those who recycle media reports and secondary sources, Hahn relies on previously untapped primary sources in the United States and Israel. These historical sources help him to situate the ethnic interest group's activities within the broader context of U.S.-Israeli relations. Particularly insightful is his finding that the Israeli lobbies confronted an "influence dilemma": yesterday's success, they learned, may lead to tomorrow's failures. The book shows how the wielding of influence alienated key policymakers and invited backlash from them and from a disgruntled public. By revealing the ebb and flow of the influence of the Israeli lobbies, Hahn's work also illuminates Washington's struggle to create a unified U.S. foreign policy.<sup>9</sup>

Michael L. Krenn's *Black Diplomacy* is another interesting work that deserves to be highlighted. All too often, political scientists emphasize the oversize influence of ethnic groups on the making of foreign policy. But what if the "national interest" did not address a specific ethno-racial group's interest at all? Krenn focuses on the conflict-ridden relationship between African Americans and the State Department and uses it to examine foreign policy elites' racism and elitism.<sup>10</sup> The use of nongovernmental sources, particularly those commonly employed by students of history of race and ethnicity, allows us to see through the eyes of minorities rather than policymaking elites. Once we see foreign relations from the perspective of the opposite side, frustration, rather than aggressiveness, may emerge as the chief motif of the literature.

As these works imply, the analysis of historical sources helps scholars to critically reexamine the construction of "national interest"—too often unexamined in studies of U.S. foreign policy. Ethnic groups and policymakers constantly engage in power negotiations. The game is not necessarily a zero-sum one, as some people may claim.

Verbs like "overwhelm" and "distort" and phrases like "seize control of policy" may fall prey to misinterpretation. "Successful" lobbies often achieve only parts of their agenda, and "unsuccessful" lobbies may at least buy time. Full assessment of ethnic groups and U.S. foreign policy may await the availability of the records of both policymakers and activists of various ethno-racial origins. Historical studies of the roles that ethnic groups play, along with other domestic determinants, will surely enrich our understanding of the connection between domestic politics and U.S. foreign policy.

Certainly, scholars of foreign relations do not need to limit their discussion to the assessment of ethnic influences, however significant this topic may be. Of particular importance to the broader subject of migrant politics is the "transnational" (or "global") turn in migration history. Rather than depicting immigrants' incorporation into U.S. society as a linear, progressive, and inevitable process, the recent migration history scholarship emphasizes the ongoing influence and the mixture of politics and culture in both the sending and receiving nations. Practitioners of this approach have already started to incorporate the question of state and power into their inquiries, or at least have included it on the peripheries of their studies of migrant lives and migration control.<sup>11</sup> By drawing on their works, diplomatic historians who challenge the assumption of the centrality of states and power in our field may further expand the scope of "foreign relations."

In light of the growing volume of remittances, travel, communications, and cultural engagements, diverse transnational forms of political and nonpolitical activities are ripe for further scholarly examination by diplomatic historians. As long as migrants reside in the United States, their transnational activities will as a matter of course have some interaction with discussions and debates among policymakers in the White House and Congress as well as foreign governments—discussions and debates whose analysis requires intensive archival and non-archival research.<sup>12</sup>

#### Notes:

1. Melvin Small, *Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789–1994* (Baltimore, MD, 1996), xvi–xvii.
2. Jussi Hanhimäki, "Global Visions and Parochial Politics: The Persistent Dilemma of the 'American Century,'" *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 4 (September 2003): 429–31.
3. George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (Oxford, 2008), 7.
4. Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, MA, 2009), 363–64.
5. Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy: A History* (Boston, 1992), x. For earlier works by political scientists, see Louis L. Gerson, *The Hyphenate in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy* (Lawrence, KS, 1964). For the anthologies, see Abdul Aziz Said, ed., *Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York, 1977); Hélène Christol and Serge Ricard, eds., *Hyphenated Diplomacy: European Immigration and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1914–1984* (Aix-en-Provence, 1985); and Mohammed E. Ahrari, ed., *Ethnic Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Westport, CT, 1987).
6. Christol and Ricard, eds., *Hyphenated Diplomacy*, 11.
7. For the debate, see esp. Yossi Shain, "Multicultural Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy* 95, no. 100 (1995): 69–87; and Samuel Huntington, "The Erosion of American National Interests," *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 5 (1997): 28–49. For the most recent contributions, see Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA, 2000); and Rodolfo O. de la Garza and Harry P. Pachon, eds., *Latinos and U.S. Foreign Policy: Representing the "Homeland"?* (Lanham, MD, 2000). See also Thomas Ambrosio, "Ethnic Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy," in *Ethnic Identity Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy*, ed. Thomas Ambrosio (Westport, CT, 2002), 1–19; Eric M. Uslaner, "American Interests in the Balance? Do Ethnic Groups Dominate Foreign Policy Making?" in *Interest Group Politics*, 7th ed., ed. Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis (Washington DC,

2007); David M. Paul and Rachel A. Paul, *Ethnic Lobbies and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Boulder, CO, 2009); and Henriette M. Rytz, *Ethnic Interest Groups in U.S. Foreign Policy-Making: A Cuban-American Story of Success and Failure* (New York, 2013).

8. John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York, 2007). See also John Newhouse, "Diplomacy, Inc.," *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 3 (May–June 2009): 73–92.

9. Peter L. Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945–1961* (Chapel Hill, 2004).

10. Michael L. Krenn, *Black Diplomacy: African Americans and the State Department, 1945–1969* (Armonk, NY, 1999), 5.

11. For a historiography of immigration history, see Mae E. Ngai, "Immigration and Ethnic History," in *American History Now*, ed. Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr (Philadelphia, 2011), 358–75. For works by migration historians who address transnationalism, see, for example, Donna R. Gabaccia, *Foreign Relations: American Immigration in Global Perspective* (Princeton, 2012); Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York, 2011); Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen: History and Political Identity in Twentieth-Century New York City* (Chicago, 2010); Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York, 2005); Dorothy B. Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919–1941* (Berkeley, 2003); and Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish, and Jewish Immigrants in the United States* (Cambridge, MA, 1995). For advocacy for greater attention to these works, see Kristin Hoganson, "Hop off the Bandwagon! It's a Mass Movement, Not a Parade," *Journal of American History* 95 (March 2009): 1087–91.

12. For a case study of Cuban Americans and U.S. policy toward Cuba, see Hideaki Kami, "The Limits of Dialogue: Washington, Havana, and Miami, 1977–1980," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, forthcoming, 2015. For a significant work by a diplomatic historian who analyzes migration as a tool of diplomacy, see Meredith Oylen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-Chinese Relations in the Cold War* (Ithaca, 2015). For a similar work in international relations, see Kelly M. Greenhill, *Weapons of Mass Migration: Forced Displacement, Coercion, and Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, 2010).

## The Domestic Politics of Personal Diplomacy

Tizoc Chavez

In 2014 the George W. Bush Presidential Center featured an exhibition called "The Art of Leadership: A President's Personal Diplomacy." This showcase featured thirty portraits of world leaders painted by the former president. Most people were amused by the amateur paintings and some surprised by the quality. Many critics, however, saw the exhibition as blatant attempt to portray his presidency in a more positive light. While noting that the former president was a "decent amateur," an art reviewer for the *New York Times* wrote that he had "painted a world of smiles and friendship that can rarely be taken as the whole story. The show reflects an attempt both to burnish the Bush presidency and distract us from its failures."<sup>1</sup> While the use of oil paintings was novel, Bush's use of personal diplomacy to enhance his public image was not. In the second half of the twentieth century, presidents frequently sought to exploit their contacts with foreign leaders for domestic advantage.

A year ago, Andrew Johnstone reaffirmed the value of domestic politics in the analysis of U.S. foreign relations.<sup>2</sup> In calling for more works in this vein, he urged scholars to focus on connecting domestic politics with foreign relations and the broader political culture. As Bush's paintings show, the personal diplomacy of presidents can connect to the domestic sphere in interesting ways. Often seen strictly through the lens of traditional high politics, it should instead be viewed broadly, both as a process that goes beyond mere conversations and high-level meetings

and as a public matter with a domestic component rather than a private affair that shapes the international sphere. It operates on two levels: while presidents often use their contacts with world leaders to influence opinion at home, domestic issues can affect those efforts at the same time. Thus, personal diplomacy can connect to various aspects of domestic life, swaying opinion and influencing emotions, for example; and examining that interaction can further our understanding of the nexus between domestic politics and U.S. foreign relations.<sup>3</sup>

This essay seeks to broaden our view of personal diplomacy and illuminate new aspects of its relationship to the domestic sphere. Literature specifically on this topic is limited, but numerous works note the connection or deal with it indirectly. By surveying a variety of studies and providing various examples of personal diplomacy at work, I hope to show the utility of this overlooked practice and the possibilities it presents for expanding our appreciation of the links between the domestic and the foreign.<sup>4</sup>

The most prolific scholar on presidential interaction with foreign leaders was Elmer Plischke. A political scientist, he published extensively on the subject, but his most thorough meditation on it was *Diplomat in Chief*. In that work he described in detail the various methods of presidential diplomacy, such as correspondence, face-to-face meetings, and the use of envoys. Though not particularly analytical, the book was attuned to the role that personal diplomacy played domestically. Plischke described numerous instances when presidents sought to leverage their interactions with foreign leaders for political gain at home, as well as times when those interactions posed domestic problems. Overall a cautious proponent of the practice, he was critical of "its overuse and misuse—for propaganda, domestic political advantage, ego satisfaction, or image building," which he deemed "questionable and risky."<sup>5</sup> But personal diplomacy has been used for those very reasons. For example, Dwight Eisenhower used the Geneva Summit in 1955 to influence public opinion at home and abroad rather than as an opportunity to negotiate seriously with Soviet leaders.<sup>6</sup> The same could be said of his Soviet correspondence, which, according to Plischke, "became an element of 'public enlightenment' if not of outright Cold War propaganda" rather than a fruitful exchange.<sup>7</sup>

The actual impact of high-level diplomacy on the public is an area in which political scientists have done much work. Numerous studies have found that a president's approval rating generally rises from foreign travel and meetings with world leaders, but it is usually a modest increase that is short-lived.<sup>8</sup> These activities, however, were not always politically acceptable. As presidential scholar Richard Ellis argues, it was once an "ironclad custom" not to go abroad. That custom was rooted in republican fears of the Old World. The decadent royal courts of Europe might tempt and corrupt the president, thus "republican simplicity and American exceptionalism were best preserved if presidents stayed at home."<sup>9</sup>

Ironically, the pomp and ceremony of personal diplomacy became an asset in the years following WWII. The fear of looking monarchical was replaced by a desire to appear statesmanlike. The growth of television helped facilitate this shift and gave rise to a staged and theatrical form of international relations where symbolism and pageantry became increasingly important elements in influencing public opinion. Andreas Daum illustrates this development in his study of John F. Kennedy's 1963 trip to Berlin. He argues that JFK's trip was "a political performance aimed at winning public consensus through symbolic acts." Though more focused on German public opinion than American, Daum shows the role of emotion and the nexus between politics, culture, and public opinion that can manifest itself in personal diplomacy.<sup>10</sup> Richard Nixon's 1972 trip to China is another example of a political performance replete with

symbolism. As Margaret MacMillan shows, Nixon sought to maximize positive news coverage to improve his image and reelection prospects, as well as convey to the American public that relations between Cold War adversaries were changing.<sup>11</sup> The trip to China became so embedded in American political and popular culture that it spawned an opera and was referenced in a 1991 *Star Trek* film.<sup>12</sup>

But there are limits and risks. Woodrow Wilson learned this all too well, as his dealings at Versailles led to a bitter treaty fight at home that wounded him politically and physically. The agreements Franklin Roosevelt reached with Joseph Stalin at Yalta during WWII came under vicious attack in the McCarthy era.<sup>13</sup> Both experiences illustrate that the formal ending of a conference or summit does not necessarily mean it is over. The domestic consequences of personal diplomacy can linger. In the midst of Watergate, Nixon tried to bolster his crumbling domestic position with foreign travel and a summit with the Soviets, but he found that such actions could not perform miracles.<sup>14</sup> Jimmy Carter's personal diplomacy in the Middle East operated at the nexus between the foreign and domestic and frequently provoked the wrath of Congress and the American Jewish community, which influenced his interactions. As Daniel Strieff argues, "The overlapping advice Carter received from his political and foreign policy advisers merged with societal pressures that constrained his diplomatic flexibility and damaged him politically."<sup>15</sup>

The nexus between personal diplomacy and the domestic sphere is present in other less obvious ways as well. As Mitch Lerner has shown, when Lyndon Johnson went abroad he often acted as if he were on the campaign trail back home. Foreign policy elites and members of the press thought such behavior indecent, but it was often successful with foreign audiences.<sup>16</sup> Philip Muehlenbeck's *Betting on Africans* explores the connection between JFK's attempts to build relationships with African leaders and the civil rights movement. Muehlenbeck argues that Kennedy's "desire to befriend African nationalist leaders accelerated his crusade for civil rights in America," and his push for civil rights helped him curry favor with African leaders. His approach had further domestic overtones, as he courted African leaders "in the same way a politician in a close election expends energy on undecided voters."<sup>17</sup> Domestic notions of masculinity could also play a role in diplomacy, as Kennedy's meeting with Nikita Khrushchev at the Vienna summit in 1961 demonstrates.<sup>18</sup>

Additional examples abound. In *Power & Protest*, Jeremi Suri argues that détente was a reaction against the domestic unrest of the 1960s. To maintain power, world leaders conspired "to stabilize their societies and preserve their authority." One part of their strategy was "to bolster their respective images. The summits and agreements of the period made the leaders appear indispensable."<sup>19</sup> Though Seth Jacobs did not intend his study of America's relationship with Ngo Dinh Diem to be an examination of personal diplomacy, he shows how American racial and religious assumptions influenced the Eisenhower administration's decision to back Diem in Vietnam and played a role in selling him to the American public.<sup>20</sup>

As this brief essay has shown, personal diplomacy has manifested itself domestically in numerous ways. By expanding our view of the practice from an elite interaction to a process connected to a broader American political culture, we further our understanding of the relationship

between the domestic sphere and U.S. foreign relations. The practice has held both promise and peril for American presidents, but it is part of a larger process in which the struggle for power and prestige at home and abroad have become irrevocably entangled. The connection has not been lost on occupants of the White House.

Notes:

1. Roberta Smith, "The Faces of Power, From the Portraitist in Chief: George W. Bush's Art Exhibition at Presidential Center," *New York Times*, April 6, 2014.

2. Andrew Johnstone, "Before the Water's Edge: Domestic Politics and U.S. Foreign Relations," *Passport* 45, no. 3 (January 2015): 25–29.

3. Exploring public opinion, emotion, psychology, and the role of television has led me, in my own work, to take an expansive view of personal diplomacy. It is a far-reaching activity that is about more than leaders forming relationships. Presidents have used personal diplomacy as a tool not only to advance foreign policy, but for domestic image-making and education. And since it is a tool congressional leaders cannot use as effectively as the head of state can, it has enabled presidents to augment their foreign policy power. Overall, I see the boundaries of personal diplomacy extending beyond leaders' interactions. It is a process that begins long before and ends long after contact.

4. While this essay focuses on American presidents, it should be noted that the use of personal diplomacy is a global practice, and world leaders often encounter the same domestic influences as American

presidents.

5. Elmer Plischke, *Diplomat in Chief: The President at the Summit* (New York, 1986), 437. Numerous examples of personal diplomacy playing an electoral role are documented in Robert Divine, *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections*, 2 vols. (New York, 1974).

6. Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS, 2006), 181–213. The propaganda value of Geneva is a theme in Günter Bischof and Saki Dockrill, eds., *Cold War Respite: The Geneva Summit of 1955* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2000).

7. Plischke, "Eisenhower's 'Correspondence Diplomacy' with the Kremlin—Case Study in Summit Diplomacy," *Journal of Politics* 30, no. 1 (February 1968): 139.

8. For example, see Plischke, "The President's Image as Diplomat in Chief," *Review of Politics* 47, no. 4 (October 1985): 544–65; Robert E. Darcy and Alvin Richman, "Presidential Travel and Public Opinion," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 85–90; Dennis M. Simon and Charles W. Ostrom Jr., "The Impact of Televised Speeches and Foreign Travel on Presidential Approval," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 58–82; Paul Brace and Barbara Hinckley, "Presidential Activities from Truman through Reagan: Timing and Impact," *Journal of Politics* 55, no. 2 (May 1993): 382–98; Agnes Simon, "The Political and Economic Consequences of the Summit Diplomatic Activity of the U.S. President," (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri, July 2012).

9. Richard J. Ellis, *Presidential Travel: The Journey from George Washington to George W. Bush* (Lawrence, KS, 2008), 168. For more on debates over presidents going abroad, see Plischke, "The President's Right to Go Abroad," *ORBIS* 15 (Fall 1971): 755–83. For the growth of presidential travel, see Brendan J. Doherty, "POTUS on the Road: International and Domestic Presidential Travel, 1977–2005," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (June 2009): 322–46.

10. Andreas W. Daum, *Kennedy in Berlin* (Cambridge, UK, 2008), 5. Though not specifically focused on domestic politics, Frank Costigliola's examination of Big Three diplomacy during WWII and how those personal interactions shaped the Cold War is another example of a work on personal diplomacy that examines emotion and culture. See Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ, 2012).

11. Margaret MacMillan, *Nixon and Mao: The Week That Changed The World* (New York, 2007). For how Nixon worked to craft the

image of a statesman, see David Greenberg, *Nixon's Shadow: The History of an Image* (New York, 2003), 270–303. King George VI's state visit to the United States in 1939 also illustrates the importance of symbolism and its influence on the public. See David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s* (Oxford, 2006), 137–47. See also Reynolds's work on the subject of summitry, *Summits: Six Meetings That Shaped the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2007). For more on state visits, including the role symbolism and domestic politics play, see Erik Goldstein, "The Politics of the State Visit," *Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 3 (2008): 153–78.

12. Composer John Adams' opera *Nixon in China* premiered in 1987 and is still performed today. In *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*, Spock repeats a "Vulcan proverb" to Captain Kirk, who is frustrated by his mission to the hated Klingons: "Only Nixon could go to China."

13. Wilson's treaty fight has attracted much attention. For a relatively recent account, see John Milton Cooper Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations* (Cambridge, UK, 2001). For domestic debates on Yalta, the classic remains Athan G. Theoharis, *The Yalta Myths: An Issue in U.S. Politics, 1945–1955* (Columbia, MO, 1970).

14. Stephen W. Stathis, "Nixon, Watergate, and American Foreign Policy," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1983): 129–47; Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York, 2007). While Dallek does not break any new interpretive ground, he is quite attuned to Nixon's use of personal diplomacy for domestic gain. For attempts to use personal diplomacy during Watergate, see pp. 489–90, 494, 574, 587–90, 592–98.

15. Daniel Strieff, *Jimmy Carter and the Middle East: The Politics of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York, 2015), 4. See also William B. Quandt, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics* (Washington DC, 1986).

16. Mitchell Lerner, "A Big Tree of Peace and Justice: The Vice Presidential Travels of Lyndon Johnson," *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 2 (April 2010): 357–93, and "Conquering the Hearts of the People: Lyndon Johnson, C. Vann Woodward, and 'The Irony of Southern History,'" *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 115, no. 2 (October 2011): 154–71. Though both center on Johnson's personal diplomacy as vice president, he would act similarly as president. Lerner also makes an argument for domestic regionalism, arguing that LBJ's southern heritage influenced his outlook and behavior abroad.

17. Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy's Courting of African Nationalist Leaders* (Oxford, 2012), 195, xviii.

18. Jennifer Lynn Walton, "Moral Masculinity: Gender, Power, and the Kennedy-Khrushchev Relationship," in *The Vienna Summit and Its Importance in International History*, ed. Günter Bischof, Stefan Karner, and Barbara Stelzl-Marx (Lanham, MD, 2014), 311–27. From that same volume, see also Ingrid Bauer, "Summit Ladies: Gender Arrangements, Media Staging, and Symbolic Scenes of the 1961 Vienna Summit Talks," 297–310. For more on JFK and issues of gender, see Robert D. Dean, "Masculinity as Ideology: John F. Kennedy and the Domestic Politics of Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 29–62.

19. Jeremi Suri, *Power & Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, MA, 2003), 261.

20. Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950–1957* (Durham, NC, 2004). See pp. 217–62 for Diem's 1957 state visit.

## American Foreign Relations and the "New" History of Capitalism

Michael Brenes

After the Great Recession wreaked havoc upon middle and working-class communities throughout the United States—and indeed, the world—interest in the history of capitalism surged among scholars and the public. In 2014, reporters from the *New York Times* interviewed historians such as Bethany Moreton, Stephen Mihm, and Sven Beckert to discuss the renewed attention

to economic and business history among historians. The "new" history of capitalism, which merged "economic analysis with the insights of social and cultural history," achieved traction within the academy, the paper reported, because the "events of 2008 and their long aftermath have given urgency to the scholarly realization that it really is the economy, stupid." One year later, Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* reached number one on the *New York Times* bestseller list, despite its jargon-laden prose and dense quantitative data, and remained on the list for weeks thereafter. Capitalism's discontents, in particular income inequality and financial rapacity among corporate executives, also animate the forthcoming presidential election.<sup>1</sup>

While literature on the "new" history of capitalism abounds, diplomatic historians have contributed little to this burgeoning field. This is startling, considering the nature of capitalism as an economic force. By design and purpose, capitalism is not contained by geographic restrictions; it desires to transcend them. With the internationalist turn in the history of U.S. foreign relations, diplomatic historians therefore have much to offer scholars seeking to understand the international and transnational dimensions of capital. Moreover, the history of capitalism offers scholars of the "intermestic" new opportunities to reshape the field.<sup>2</sup> Business figures, lobbyists, special interest groups, and politicians of both major political parties have played major roles in the projection of American power abroad during the twentieth century. Studies of these subjects, however, do not fall within the paradigm of "transnational" history.

As a subfield, the history of capitalism thus offers new scholars the ability to push against the trend to internationalize all subjects related to U.S. foreign relations. As Andrew Johnstone has noted in these pages, domestic factors still influence American foreign policy, even while diplomatic historians have largely neglected their importance in recent years.<sup>3</sup> This essay is therefore a call to arms, one that requests more scholarship on the interrelationship between capitalism and U.S. foreign affairs, and in turn, more inclusiveness of historians working on the relationship between domestic politics and U.S. foreign policy.

Discussions of capitalism have of course occupied diplomatic historians for decades. In the postwar period, William Appleman Williams's 1959 classic, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, turned a revisionist lens on the origins of the Cold War and generated serious debate about how much American foreign policy should be viewed as the history of economic exploitation. Works by Lloyd Gardner, Thomas McCormick, and Walter LaFeber (all students of Williams) followed.<sup>4</sup> This scholarship expanded the revisionist historiography and furthered scholars' understanding of economic motives in the conduct of American foreign policy in ways that indelibly shaped the field. And as evidenced by the recent forum in *Diplomatic History* on Perry Anderson's provocative new book, *American Foreign Policy and Its Thinkers*, the revisionist school still has scholarly merit.<sup>5</sup>

Critiques of revisionists have persisted, however. The most significant argument against the revisionist school is that it is reductionist in its conclusions. Revisionists subsume all factors—ideology, culture, personal politics—under the umbrella of economics. Moreover, as Melvyn Leffler notes in his response to Anderson's book, there is much discussion of the "general interest of capital" among revisionists, but there has not been a significant attempt to

“analyze the views of the investment bankers and venture capitalists, the new titans of the digital age, or the architects of the communications revolution and the new social media.”<sup>6</sup>

In short, diplomatic historians interested in how economic factors shaped U.S. foreign policy are more concerned with explaining a capitalist system than with examining capitalism as a system. The difference is subtle, yet important. The capitalist system is generally described as having a preexisting set of interests that are fixed and defined and are thus all-consuming and controlling in their permanence. Little can be done to change the profit motive and its reach. To a certain extent this characterization is accurate. Alternatively, however, capitalism can be viewed as an indistinct system that has not yet been (and never will be) pinned down, that is subject to consistent and invariable change, that is often surrounded—and defined—by limitations, and that can be reconstructed and reinvigorated by various figures and forces. Viewed in this way, capitalism is more powerful because it is more durable and because it is capable of operating within a variety of historical contexts, temporal frameworks, and spatial landscapes. This is how historians of capitalism are studying their subject.

The history of capitalism therefore answers the largest critiques of revisionists by moving a discussion of capitalism away from a focus on superstructure to a view that includes its base. Scholars of the new history of capitalism seek to demonstrate its contingency, to show how malleable and adaptable it is, to confirm that it is not a totalizing, unchanging entity. Methodologically, this approach appears in studies that consider capitalism, to use Louis Hyman’s phrase, “from the bottom up, all the way to the top.”<sup>7</sup> It fits well within the transformations that have occurred in diplomatic history in the past thirty years, as the field has tried to recognize the role of non-state actors in shaping foreign policy while remaining attentive to what U.S. diplomatic historians do best: keeping the state at the center of their inquiries.<sup>8</sup> Thomas Zeiler repeated this point in his 2012 SHAFR presidential address, even as he encouraged diplomatic historians to focus more on economic class, a topic they have “largely ignored.”<sup>9</sup>

Some historians have answered Zeiler. Daniel Sargent’s excellent new book, *A Superpower Transformed*, demonstrates how globalization, deregulation, rising oil prices, and neoliberalism molded international diplomacy in unanticipated ways during the 1970s. And Sargent has many colleagues. Jason Colby looks at the United Fruit Company to understand how the corporation’s exploitative labor practices in the Caribbean furthered the American empire. Dustin Walcher considers how institutions such as the IMF engendered anti-Americanism in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s. Christopher Dietrich questions the efficacy of the Cold War in explaining the rise of the global South by examining oil and energy policies toward the third world.<sup>10</sup> These works all point to a strong and persistent effort by new scholars to recognize “capitalism as ‘the thing,’ whose existence needs to be explained,” in the words of historian Julia Ott.<sup>11</sup>

Yet historians of capitalism recognize few of these works as contributions to the history of capitalism, at least not yet. This problem is partly due to the fuzzy contours

of the field, which is presently America-centric. But here is where scholars of the intermestic have vital roles to play. Given the nature of their projects, such scholars are more eager to reach across disciplines, bringing “new” historians of capitalism into conversation with scholars of U.S. foreign relations. In this exchange, they can prove their relevance to the field because they are attuned to the largest capitalist power in the world after 1945: the United States.

Indeed, because of the de-centering of the United States within the profession, diplomatic historians know very little about how domestic figures act on the world stage for capitalist ends, through either direct or indirect means. In what specific ways did U.S. corporations influence Cold War foreign policy? Have lobbyists for the defense industry—

which grew significantly after the 1970s—played a role in maintaining the size of the military-industrial complex throughout the world? In what ways has economic austerity at home reconfigured the priorities of American military power? Have the political contributions and the sheer financial power of capitalist titans like George Soros, Charles and David Koch, and Rupert Murdoch had an impact on foreign policy decision-making? These intriguing questions have no answers yet. We also lack a knowledge of how Congress maintains the national security state to suit its constituents’ economic interests and how such arrangements then influence international affairs.<sup>12</sup>

Because of the internationalist trend, historians of domestic politics and U.S. foreign policy must look both inward and outward with new perspectives. The relationship between the domestic and the international can no longer be studied in a one-sided fashion. This

is a good thing. Internationalizing U.S. history has forced scholars to reexamine the meaning of “domestic” and the ways historians used to employ the term.<sup>13</sup> But the domestic, with all its restrictions and connotations, is still worth studying. As this roundtable indicates, rather than being resigned to the methodological margins of our discipline, historians of U.S. foreign relations and domestic politics are reconceptualizing their purpose in an international age. The history of capitalism has much to offer this project. By self-identifying as historians of capitalism as well as historians of American foreign relations, scholars who simultaneously occupy both fields will improve the historical profession as a whole.

#### Notes:

1. “In History Departments, It’s Up with Capitalism,” *New York Times*, April 6, 2013; Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA, 2014).

2. The term “intermestic” is encountered in Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America’s Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, MA, 2009).

3. Andrew Johnstone, “Before the Water’s Edge: Domestic Politics and U.S. Foreign Relations,” *Passport* 45, no. 3 (January 2015): 25–29. See also Fredrik Logevall, “Politics and Foreign Relations,” *Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (March 2009): 1074–78; Thomas Schwartz, “‘Henry...Winning an Election Is Terribly Important’: Partisan Politics in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations,” *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 2 (April 2009): 173–90.

4. As it did for many, revisionist scholarship on the Cold War furthered my interest in the subject and greatly informed my early views on capitalism and empire. See William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York, 1959); Lloyd Gardner, *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American*

*Foreign Policy* (Chicago, 1970); Thomas J. McCormick, *America's Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore, 1990); Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945–2006*, 10th ed. (Boston, 2006).

5. "Forum: American Foreign Policy and its Thinkers," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 2 (April 2015): 359–409.

6. Melvyn Leffler, "Revisiting the Imperium," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 2 (April 2015): 382. Leffler's concerns were shared at least to some extent by Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman and Wilson D. Miscamble in the same forum.

7. "Interchange: The History of Capitalism," *Journal of American History* 101, no. 2 (September 2014): 504. For a few examples, see Stephen Mihm, *A Nation of Counterfeiters: Capitalists, Con Men, and the Making of the United States* (Cambridge, MA, 2007); Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore, 2009); Shane Hamilton, *Trucking Country: The Road to America's Wal-Mart Economy* (Princeton, 2008); Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA, 2009); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York, 2014).

8. On this point, see Thomas W. Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (March 2009): 1053–73.

9. Thomas W. Zeiler, "Requiem for the Common Man: Class, the Nixon Shock, and the Perils of Globalization," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 1 (January 2013): 1–23.

10. Daniel J. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s* (New York, 2015); Dustin Walcher, "Petroleum Pitfalls: The United States, Argentine Nationalism, and the 1963 Oil Crisis," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 1 (January 2013): 24–57; Jason Colby, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* (Ithaca, 2011); Christopher R.W. Dietrich, "'Arab Oil Belongs to the Arabs': Natural Resource Sovereignty, Cold War Boundaries, and the Nationalization of the Iraq Petroleum Company, 1967–1972," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 22, no. 3 (September 2011): 450–79; Christopher R.W. Dietrich, "Oil Power and Economic Theologies: The United States and the Third World in the Wake of the Energy Crisis," *Diplomatic History* (forthcoming). Forthcoming work by Megan Black and dissertation projects by Fritz Bartel and Patrick Chung also promise new insights into how global finance and capitalist production interact and interfere with international affairs and wartime diplomacy.

11. "Interchange: The History of Capitalism," *Journal of American History* 101, no. 2 (September 2014): 506.

12. There are some exceptions to the scholarship on Congress. See Robert David Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (New York, 2005); Mary Dudziak, *Wartime: An Idea, its History, its Consequences* (New York, 2012). My own work has tried to include Congress in exploring the relationship between U.S. foreign affairs, the political economy of the Cold War, and electoral politics since World War II. See Michael Brenes, "For Right and Might: The Militarization of the Cold War and the Remaking of American Democracy" (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2014).

13. The point is apparent in Lien-Hang Nguyen's recent Bernath Lecture. Lien-Hang Nguyen, "Revolutionary Circuits: Toward Internationalizing America in the World," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 3 (June 2015): 411–22.

## The Water's Edge from a Distant Shore: The Transnational Turn, Domestic Politics, and U.S. Foreign Relations

David L. Prentice

Andrew Johnstone's essay, "Before the Water's Edge," reminds historians that the cultural and transnational turns have provided historians with a richer understanding of the sources, context, and impact of U.S. foreign relations both at home and abroad. But these methodological innovations, as Johnstone points out, have overlooked the role of domestic politics in the origins and execution of American foreign relations. In particular, the transnational turn deliberately sought to look beyond internal economic and political determinants of U.S. foreign

policy.

I believe the continued internationalization of our field need not preclude domestic politics. Rather, it may in fact reveal the prominence of U.S. political considerations in foreign policy calculations both within the United States and abroad. In looking through international sources, I have found that foreign diplomats, government officials, and their public audiences weighed the influence of the U.S. domestic front and found it a significant—and at times determinative—factor in shaping America's role in the world.

Thanks in large part to the discipline's cultural and transnational turns, diplomatic history has undergone a revival in recent years even as studies of the political aspects of U.S. foreign policy have fallen by the wayside.<sup>1</sup> The cultural turn delivered fresh insights into the construction of personal and collective identities as well as the motivations behind individual behavior. By transcending the nation-state, transnational scholarship has excelled at placing U.S. foreign relations in its global context and connecting American actors to broader movements and ideas. As the subfield adopted these approaches and the wider discipline became interested in global narratives, diplomatic history seemingly became "the next big thing."<sup>2</sup> But as Jussi Hanhimäki has noted, "There is a tendency as we search for new perspectives to ignore the old ones."<sup>3</sup>

In particular, Hanhimäki argues that a generation of transnational historians risks losing sight of "the significance—at times, the primacy—of domestic politics in the making of American and other countries' foreign policy."<sup>4</sup> In numerous forums, other notable scholars have called for returning domestic politics to prominence in the hierarchy of things historians consider.<sup>5</sup> The plea is not to distill every foreign policy decision down to politics but to reconsider its utility alongside culture and transnationalism. Of course, if domestic motivations better explain American foreign relations, why conduct multi-archival research to study the water's edge on distant shores?

International research and perspectives can shed new light on old tales. Part of the initial impetus for adding foreign research was to test Washington's views, assumptions, and decisions against those of the rest of the world.<sup>6</sup> Yet this internationalization may also prove a means to test *historians'* assumptions, since most (and perhaps all) foreign archives have significant holdings devoted to U.S. politics and American political culture. In a recent *American Historical Review* forum, Matthew Pratt Guterl observed that viewing sources and moments from a "transnational dimension" can produce "an 'a-ha!' intervention, dramatically altering the telling of a well-rehearsed story."<sup>7</sup> I have found this to be true.

I discovered the primacy of U.S. domestic politics in the Public Records Office in Kew. I was looking to establish the international and strategic context of America's contingent decision to get out of the Vietnam War; what I found were innumerable British memos and cables on the importance of domestic politics and Congress in shaping, if not defining, that decision. I found the same emphasis in other foreign archives and sources. Although Americans may be loath to admit that politics does not stop at the water's edge, foreign policymakers have no trouble here. Of course, if their observations and analysis ended here, this internationalization might be little better than the old scholarship that was castigated for being little more than "what one clerk said to another." But their interest and their political reporting did not stop there.

To be clear, American politics matters to people and policymakers worldwide.<sup>8</sup> As Fredrik Logevall has rightly argued, "The United States is not merely one power among many and has not been for a very long time."<sup>9</sup> Other nations appreciate this power imbalance, recognize that America's internal politics can greatly change U.S. foreign policy,

and can gear their foreign policies to anticipated shifts in U.S. public opinion and politics. As Hanhimäki puts it, "Since the beginning of the Cold War, American domestic politics have become international politics." Episodes like the McCarthyism of the 1950s gravely worried U.S. allies, and elections have the potential to dramatically change America's role in the world. In a journal issue devoted to U.S. internationalism and isolationism, Simon Rofe notes that when new presidents are elected, people abroad typically ask if they will "turn inward and focus on domestic priorities, or will they embrace the United States' role in the world?" In that same issue, Andrew Johnstone makes it very clear that the isolationism/internationalism dichotomy provided an overly simplistic view of U.S. foreign relations but that it remains the predominant narrative in the popular mind. Borrowing Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher's phrase, I would argue that it remains predominant in the "official mind" as well.<sup>10</sup>

In looking at and ranking the determinants of U.S. foreign relations, policymakers worldwide placed partisanship and the American political context near the top. During the Cold War, there were frequent fears that the U.S. electorate would shift back towards interwar isolationism. Isolationism was a simplistic Cold War specter and a politically useful accusation, yet foreign officials took it seriously and paid more attention to U.S. politics because of it.

Indeed, internationalization can not only determine how foreign actors perceive American politics and its bearing on U.S. foreign relations, it can also reveal how they sought to shape U.S. politics and policy. In particular, election years were opportunities for U.S. allies and enemies to gauge the political and foreign policy winds and, at times, attempt to harness them for their own interests. As President Lyndon Johnson lamented of foreign actors and the presidential candidates in 1968, "Everybody is trading on y'all's campaigning and foreign policy." This lobbying was especially common during those elections when U.S. foreign policy or internationalism appeared to be in transition. The 1968 election was one such election; it saw the Vietnamese and Soviets trying to sway administration policy and the candidates' campaign positions, while other nations simply sought to follow events and hoped for the best.

Beyond election cycles, U.S. politics can have at least three other international ramifications. First, foreign governments often perceive America's political travails as being indicative of an incipient shift in U.S. foreign policy and so begin altering their grand strategies accordingly. Julian Zelizer notes that the magnitude of President Richard Nixon's political and congressional support necessitated Cold War retrenchment and détente.<sup>11</sup> Watching and interpreting American politics, U.S. allies began changing their policies well before Nixon's inauguration. Second, world leaders, particularly those heading key allies like France and Britain, recognize that their rhetoric and positions can have political effects in America and may repress their doubts about U.S. foreign policy when they recognize that presidents face difficult political situations at home. Again, the 1960s is instructive. Charles de Gaulle's criticisms of Lyndon Johnson's policies emboldened LBJ's domestic critics, whereas Britain's Harold Wilson muted his criticism of the Vietnam War to avoid doing the same. Finally, foreign leaders understand that partisan debates in the United States can affect not only their national security but their political standing as well. A state visit to the United States or a presidential trip abroad may provide a political

boost, while political opponents may use American politics and foreign policies against incumbents. Moreover, the surprise foreign policy breakthrough intended to shore up a president's political position can shock foreign allies and create political embarrassment for them. U.S. policymakers seldom consider such repercussions. As Jason Parker noted in 2011, "We historians should be mindful of how 'politics' ebbs and flows in multiple directions over and across the water's edge."<sup>12</sup>

In short, historians interested in the role of U.S. politics in foreign policy and open to conducting multi-archival, international research should seek out and consider those boxes in foreign archives devoted to U.S. politics. Once declassified, innocuous-sounding folders like "U.S. Political—Congress" can reveal fascinating stories of the "intermestic."<sup>13</sup> When, without any U.S. prodding, the Australian government in 1970 exhorted its embassies abroad not to entertain congressional fact-finding missions lest these "itinerant scavengers" find political ammunition to use against the White House and challenge American Cold War internationalism (and hence Australia's national security), we have evidence of U.S. politics washing up overseas.

Looking at the water's edge from a distant shore may help historians understand what the "United States in the world" means at home and abroad. A foreign vantage point may enable us to better grasp the contingency, the political coalitions, the partisanship, and the politics that limit and shape U.S. foreign relations. In moments of transition, American engagement can convey frailty and contingency rather than the confident diffidence or triumphalism that Americans like to think they project. Such a perspective will certainly help scholars and students of U.S. foreign relations appreciate how American politics is interpreted, received, and acted upon by the world. International research confirms this is not a passive process. Bodies of water are not obstacles but conduits.

#### Notes:

1. Erez Manela and Lynn Hunt provide two of the best overviews of the cultural and transnational turns. See Manela, "The United States in the World," in *American History Now*, ed. Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr (Philadelphia, 2011); and Lynn, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York, 2014).
2. Michael Hogan, "The 'Next Big Thing': The Future of Diplomatic History in a Global Age," *Diplomatic History* 28, no. 1 (January 2004): 1–21; and Thomas Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (March 2009): 1053–91.
3. Jussi Hanhimäki, "Global Visions and Parochial Politics: The Persistent Dilemma of the 'American Century,'" *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 4 (September 2003), 425.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Fredrik Logevall, "Politics and Foreign Relations," *Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (March 2009): 1074–78; Thomas Schwartz, "Henry...Winning an Election Is Terribly Important': Partisan Politics in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 2 (April 2009): 173–90; and Jason Parker, "On Such a Full Sea Are We Now Afloat: Politics and U.S. Foreign Relations History across the Water's Edge," *Perspectives on History* (May 2011).
6. Robert McMahon, "Toward a Pluralist Vision: The Study of American Foreign Relations as International History and National History," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael Hogan and Thomas Paterson, 2nd ed. (New York, 2004), 39–40.
7. Matthew Pratt Guterl, "Comment: The Futures of Transnational History," *American Historical Review* 118, no. 1 (February 2013), 132.
8. For a contemporary perspective on U.S. global leadership that also discusses the role of domestic politics, see Andrew John-

stone, "A View from Overseas: Drift, Not Mastery," *Passport* 42, no. 3 (January 2012): 17–18.

9. Logevall, "Politics and Foreign Relations," 1076. See also Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity*, (Cambridge, MA, 2009).

10. Hanhimäki, "Global Visions and Parochial Politics," 441–46; Simon Rofe, "Introduction: Isolationism and Internationalism in Transatlantic Affairs," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 9, no. 1 (March 2011): 1; and Andrew Johnstone, "Isolationism and Internationalism in American Foreign Relations," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 9, no. 1 (March 2011): 7–9.

11. Julian Zelizer, "Détente and Domestic Politics," *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 4 (September 2009): 656.

12. Parker, "'On Such a Full Sea Are We Now Afloat.'"

13. The term "intermestic" goes back to at least the 1970s (see Bayless Manning, "The Congress, the Executive and Intermestic Affairs: Three Proposals," *Foreign Affairs* 55, no. 2 [January 1977]: 306–24), but scholars interested in the role of domestic politics have found it useful (see Melvin Small, *Democracy & Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789–1994* [Baltimore, 1996], 148). Campbell and Craig define "intermestic" as "the international-domestic, whereby the two are dynamically intertwined" (*America's Cold War*, 10).

## What about "U.S.": American Public Opinion & Public Diplomacy

Autumn C. Lass

Public opinion and its relationship with U.S. foreign policy is an incredibly complex topic, and one that is much debated within the field of U.S. foreign relations. Some argue that it has little influence over the development of U.S. foreign policy, while others argue that it is one of the most essential components in the creation of U.S. foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> Recent historiographical trends have relegated the study of American public opinion and its role in U.S. foreign policy to a second tier of scholarship. Studies in U.S. foreign relations are now predominantly outward-focused. Even works on U.S. public diplomacy focus primarily on external audiences and very rarely turn their examinations inward. Works ranging from specific propaganda institutions like the Voice of America and the USIA to cultural and ideological exportation have provided the foundation for examining public diplomacy.<sup>2</sup> But while these studies demonstrate the lengths that the U.S. government, particularly during the twentieth century, has been willing to go to influence, manipulate, and control overseas public opinion, they neglect the government's attempts to control Americans' opinions as well as the ways in which domestic public opinion shaped the development of U.S. foreign policy.

Nicholas Cull describes five major components of public diplomacy: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and international broadcasting.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, if one considers these components from a domestic perspective, it becomes clear that the U.S. government did not reserve such tactics just for foreign audiences. It employed them on the American people as well. Using Cull's components of public diplomacy as parameters, this essay will illustrate the various ways in which scholars have approached studying the U.S. government's attempts to manage and control domestic opinions on foreign relations. It will then conclude with a discussion of possible avenues for future research into the field of domestic public diplomacy.

The first major component of public diplomacy is listening, which Cull defines as "research, analysis, and feedback" of public opinion.<sup>4</sup> As in the international context, the U.S. government carefully listened to and sought feedback from the American public. Using polling data, and working through a variety of government offices,

policymakers eagerly monitored U.S. public opinion to gauge reaction to policies and determine how to overcome misunderstandings and disagreements over foreign policies. This fact alone illustrates the importance of U.S. public opinion to U.S. foreign policymakers.

Some historians have already shown that the U.S. government did indeed listen to domestic public opinion. For example, Steven Casey's works, *Cautious Crusade* and *Selling the Korean War*, both illustrate how the Roosevelt and Truman administrations carefully listened to the public and adjusted their approaches to selling war based on public opinion data.<sup>5</sup> In both works, Casey examines how public opinion dictated the ways in which the administrations decided to sell the wars at home. Policymakers have always researched and analyzed American public opinion, because domestic approval was required not only for the long-term sustainability of their policies but also to ensure their own re-election.<sup>6</sup> In other words, policymakers had to listen to the American public in order to ensure the success of their policies and their careers.

Cull defines the second element, advocacy, as "the creation and dissemination of information materials to build understanding of a policy, issue, and facet of life of significance to the actor."<sup>7</sup> The U.S. government used advocacy methods in a variety of ways to encourage public support for policies. Prior to the Cold War, advocacy methods were much more obvious. During the world wars, Wilson and Roosevelt overtly disseminated information materials to the American public to build and encourage wartime support. James Kimble's excellent work, *Mobilizing the Home Front*, shows how the U.S. government dispersed materials to gain public support for World War II.<sup>8</sup> Kimble argues that selling war bonds was only one of many methods the Roosevelt administration used to disseminate wartime information to build and maintain public consent for the war.

After World War II and the passage of the Smith-Mundt Act, the government could no longer distribute informational materials to the public on a massive scale, so it used more indirect methods.<sup>9</sup> For example, Daniel Lykins examines how the Truman administration encouraged the Advertising Council to promote internationalism at home through its advertising programs.<sup>10</sup> While advocacy methods before and after World War II looked very different, the United States government continued to actively distribute materials meant to encourage domestic support and understanding for U.S. foreign policy throughout the twentieth century.<sup>11</sup>

U.S. policymakers also used cultural and ideological values to pressure the American public into supporting foreign policies.<sup>12</sup> Elaine Tyler May illustrates how public policy and political rhetoric pressured Americans to adhere to traditional "family values" and "gender roles" as a way to win the Cold War.<sup>13</sup> The government promoted political ideals, religiosity, and nationalism, using cultural values as a weapon to wage the Cold War both abroad and at home. It also encouraged the adoption of certain ideological perspectives. For example, John Fousek argues that Truman administration worked closely with the media to sell Cold War ideologies such as globalism, nationalism, and anticommunism to the American public to create a domestic consensus.<sup>14</sup> These messages were often used to quell dissent and to create a domestic image of the United States that matched the international image being proclaimed by the government.<sup>15</sup>

While Cull's fourth component, exchange diplomacy, is traditionally considered the exchange of people across international borders through government platforms such as the Fulbright Program, it can encompass the government's use of third-party groups and individuals to interact with the American public. This version of exchange diplomacy features private organizations and non-governmental



actors who work with and for the government to reach out to the American public. As with foreign exchange, these groups provide an indirect link to the American public.

Historians have recently begun to focus their attention on the role these organizations have played in the promotion of American foreign policy at home.<sup>16</sup> They have looked primarily at the role national organizations played in helping to create the Cold War consensus. On the whole, they differ on the level of cooperation between these groups and the U.S. government. Some argue that these groups were mouthpieces for the government; some believe that, in their eagerness to help, they were taken advantage of by the government; and some assert that they simply agreed with the overall evolution of American foreign policy from isolationism to internationalism.<sup>17</sup> In reality, all three of these assertions are at least partly true. Working as the middleman between the federal government and the average American, such private organizations projected and promoted U.S. foreign policy agendas and goals. They often acted as representatives of the U.S. government in much the same way students and tourists did when traveling overseas—only they were serving as delegates for the federal government at home.

Finally, the U.S. government utilized broadcasting techniques to influence the American public. One work that examines how the government used the radio to broadcast its World War II messages is Gerd Horten's *Radio Goes To War*.<sup>18</sup> Horten argues that the radio was used to recruit for the war and transmit messages of government propaganda to the public in order to create a unified front during the war.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Nancy Bernhard's *Cold War Television* traces the "partnership between government information offices and network news producers to report and sell the Cold War to the American public."<sup>20</sup> According to Bernhard, Americans turned to the news for objective coverage of the Cold War and instead received "truth" that served to promote national interests and the Cold War.<sup>21</sup> Both works show the government using broadcasting mediums as vehicles to influence Americans to support foreign policy agendas.<sup>22</sup>

The government used public diplomacy tactics throughout the twentieth century to influence and at times manipulate the American public into supporting foreign policy agendas. American public opinion was just as important to U.S. foreign policy as international opinion was. And since it played such an important part in the creation and approval of foreign policy, it should not be neglected in studies of U.S. foreign relations. Even with existing scholarship on domestic public diplomacy, there are at least three areas where much work must be done if we are to truly grasp the importance of the field.

First, government attempts to manage and control public opinion after the Eisenhower administration are ripe for historical examination. Scholars should explain how these tactics were used on the American public during the second half of the Cold War.<sup>23</sup> Second, American public opinion has always played some role in foreign policymaking. Therefore, scholars should stretch their analysis farther back and examine how policymakers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries worked to manage public opinion. While communicating with the general public certainly became easier for policymakers in the twentieth century, government officials as far back as President Washington sought to control how the public understood foreign affairs. Such scholarship would show how American public opinion has always been closely linked to U.S. foreign

policy. Finally, scholars should examine how the evolution of technology has affected the power of American public opinion in U.S. foreign policymaking to assess how much twenty-four hour news, the Internet, and social media have increased the power and presence of public opinion in American foreign policy.<sup>24</sup>

By including cultural and ideological perspectives, public diplomacy has greatly expanded the field of U.S. foreign relations. Yet public diplomacy studies focus to a great degree on foreign publics and neglect the people with the most influence over U.S. foreign policy—the American public. While scholars of U.S. foreign relations should continue to study the international aspects of U.S. foreign affairs, that focus should not come at the expense of the American public. If the United States government has never ignored its role, why should scholars?

Notes:

1. For a more thorough discussion of the public's role in foreign policy see Thomas Bailey, *The Man In the Street: The Impact of American Public Opinion on Foreign Policy* (New York, 1948); Adam Berinsky, *In Time of War: Understanding America Public Opinion from World War II to Iraq* (Chicago, 2009); Andrew Johnstone and Helen Laville, eds., *The U.S. Public and American Foreign Policy* (New York, 2010); Ralph Levering, *The Public and American Foreign Policy, 1918–1978* (New York, 1978); Melvin Small, *Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789–1994* (Baltimore, 1996).
2. On the U.S. overseas propaganda and public diplomacy, see Laura Belmonte, *Selling the American War: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia, 2008); Nicholas Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989* (Cambridge, UK, 2008); Justin Hart, *Empire of Ideas: The Origins of Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York, 2013); Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York, 1997); David Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945–1963* (Columbia, MO, 2000); Scott Lucas, *Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union* (New York, 1999); Frank Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: U.S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938–1950* (New York, 1981); Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS, 2006).
3. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, xv.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War Against Nazi Germany* (New York, 2001); and *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950–1953* (New York, 2008).
6. For more on how the U.S. government listened to American public opinion, see Douglas Foyle, *Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy* (New York, 1999); Ole Holsti, *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2004); Michael Leigh, *Mobilizing Consent: Public Opinion and Foreign Policy, 1937–1947* (Westport, CT, 1976); Kenneth Osgood and Andrew Frank, *Selling War in a Media Age: The Presidency and Public Opinion in the American Century* (Gainesville, FL, 2010).
7. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, xv.
8. James Kimble, *Mobilizing the Home Front: War Bonds and Domestic Propaganda* (College Station, TX, 2006).
9. Section 2, "United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948," U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy Library, United States Department of State. <http://www.state.gov/pdcommission/library/177362.htm>.
10. Daniel Lykins, *From Total War to Total Diplomacy: The Advertising Council and the Construction of the Cold War Consensus* (Westport, CT, 2003).
11. There is overlap between advocacy and exchange diplomacy, because third-party groups were one of the more popular indirect methods of promoting foreign policies. See the exchange

diplomacy endnote for more works on the relationship of private organizations with domestic public diplomacy.

12. Cull defines cultural diplomacy as “dissemination of cultural practices as a mechanism to promote the interests of the actor.” Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, xv.

13. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, 1988).

14. John Fousek, *To Lead The Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Raleigh, NC, 2000).

15. See Susan Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (New York, 2009).

16. For examples of studies on state-private relationships prior to the Cold War, see Andrew Johnstone, *Against Immediate Evils: American Internationalists and the Four Freedoms on the Eve of World War II* (Ithaca, NY, 2014); Inderjeet Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy: A Comparative Study on the Role and Influence of the Council of Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939–1945* (London, 2004); Dorothy Robins, *Experiment in Democracy: The Story of U.S. Citizen Organizations in Forging the Charter of the United Nations* (New York, 1971).

17. For examples of historians who analyze the state-private relationship during the Cold War, see Michael Wala, *The Council of Foreign Relations and American Foreign Policy in the Early Cold War* (Providence, RI, 1994); Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford, eds., *The U.S. Government, Citizen Groups, and the Cold War: The State-Private Network* (New York, 2006); Helen Laville, *Cold War Women: The International Activities of American Women's Organizations* (Manchester, UK, 2009); Andrew Johnstone, *Dilemmas of Internationalism: The American Association for the United Nations and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1941–1948* (Surrey, UK, 2009).

18. Gerd Horten, *Radio Goes to War: The Cultural Politics of Propaganda During World War II* (Berkeley, 2003).

19. Horten, *Radio Goes to War*, 3.

20. Nancy Bernhard, *U.S. Television News and Cold War Propaganda, 1947–1960* (New York, 1999), 2.

21. Bernhard, *U.S. Television News*, 178–79.

22. For more examples of studies that examine U.S. government's use of broadcasting techniques on the American public, see Thomas Doherty, *Projections of War: Hollywood, American Culture, and World War II* (New York, 1993); Clayton Koppes and Gregory Black, *Hollywood Goes to War: How Politics, Profits, and Propaganda Shaped World War II Movies* (Berkeley, 1990); Tony Shaw, *Hollywood's Cold War* (Edinburgh, 2007).

23. On public opinion and foreign policy after 1950, see Richard Sobel, *The Impact of Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy since Vietnam: Constraining the Colossus* (New York, 2001).

24. Much of the scholarship on public opinion and U.S. foreign relations in the late twentieth century has been in political science and communications. See, for example, Matthew Baum, *Soft News Goes to War: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy in the New Media Age* (Princeton, 2005); Lance Bennett and David Paletz, *Taken By Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War* (Chicago, 1994); and Robert Entman, *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Chicago, 2003).

## Congress and the History of U.S. Foreign Relations

Chris Foss

When the modern federal government was created with the signing of the United States Constitution in 1787, the legislative branch was given power as a co-equal in federal authority with the executive branch. Crucially, albeit vaguely, this co-equality extended to matters of U.S. foreign policymaking. Since then, the actions of Congress have dramatically affected U.S. foreign relations. The treaties following the Spanish-American War and World War I depended upon congressional consultation with the president. Congress kept the nation

from direct engagement in European affairs through the Neutrality Acts during the Great Depression and had to be cajoled to undo those acts prior to U.S. entry into World War II. Postwar U.S. trade, foreign aid, and human rights policies have largely been shaped by Congress. In spite of the clear advantage the president possesses on military, security, and diplomatic matters, Congress still acts as a sounding board, putting pressure on the executive branch and serving as a proxy for public opinion.

So why haven't more of us studied Congress? Robert David Johnson's 2001 article and 2006 book on the Cold War Congress should have represented a turn in the study of Congress relative to the history of U.S. foreign relations. Johnson shatters the persistent myth that the forces driving U.S. Cold War foreign policy were shaped exclusively, or even largely, by the executive branch of the government.<sup>1</sup> Despite Johnson's excellent work, however, no slew of books by U.S. foreign relations historians responding to, challenging, or even expanding upon his methodology has yet appeared.

As Johnson himself acknowledges, congressional history is more challenging to research than presidential history.<sup>2</sup> Studying Congress involves expanding the archival base to university manuscript collections, historical societies, and private collections. Many papers of representatives and senators are closed, sometimes necessitating creative workarounds like oral histories, voluminous newspaper clippings, and the records of their colleagues. It is, without a doubt, a daunting task.<sup>3</sup> But such

research is possible for U.S. foreign relations historians and will further the vibrancy of the field.

The most fundamental reason that U.S. foreign relations historians should at least consult congressional sources in their work, even if Congress is not central to their work, relates to the centrality of governmental power to historical study. Thomas Zeiler's 2009 article and forum in the *Journal of American History* demonstrates the need for projects in this field—even those with a social/cultural methodological focus—to come to terms with state power.<sup>4</sup> Studying Congress threatens to swing the pendulum back toward

a focus on top-down history and on the actions of elderly white men, but only to a degree. Congress has had to be more responsive to constituents of varying socioeconomic backgrounds (particularly in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries) than have presidents and the federal government bureaucracy traditionally studied by diplomatic historians.

By the latter half of the twentieth century, furthermore, there were more women and ethnic minorities in Congress, and they often played key roles in passing the era's major domestic (and foreign) policy achievements.<sup>5</sup> U.S. foreign policy was no longer dominated by a small group of realists and conducted only in a black box; it was often conducted out in the open and involved matters like trade, immigration, foreign aid, and defense appropriations. Indeed, if one considers foreign policy on a broader scale than just diplomatic, state-to-state, president-to-president relations, U.S. foreign policy is more than just executive in nature. Congress matters, and it matters considerably.

A small group of foreign relations scholars have put not only domestic politics, but indeed Congress, at the center of their work. Melvin Small posits that the constitutional overlap of foreign policymaking responsibilities between the executive and legislative branches creates confusion that is often exploited with partisan electioneering in mind.<sup>6</sup> Reading Small helps us understand that Republican

opposition to Barack Obama's nuclear deal with Iran is far from extraordinary. Indeed, Small shows that partisanship largely lay behind Republican rejection of the Versailles Treaty, as well as the GOP attempt to reject amendments to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1994. Ominously for Obama, Republicans rode the aftermath of both treaty fights to majorities in Congress in succeeding elections.

Partisanship is also paramount in Julian Zelizer's work on interactions between Congress and the executive in the development of the national security state. He points out that while executive reach has greatly expanded, Congress has investigatory power that often drives national discourse on foreign policy. Legislators themselves, however, self-interestedly pursue the theory that presidents unilaterally escalate military conflicts, obscuring what Zelizer argues is the reality that "partisan strategy rather than blind allegiance to the president is the reason for congressional decisions to use military force."<sup>7</sup>

The Vietnam War is often seen as a time of blurring partisan lines, whether in congressional efforts to support the war during the Johnson administration or in attempts to cut off funds during the Nixon administration. Andy Fry argues that while some prominent Democrats, led by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair J. William Fulbright, questioned the war, others, led by Senate Armed Services Committee member John Stennis, sought to expand it. Ultimately the Johnson administration resisted efforts by Congress to shape the war outside of the parameters set by the executive branch. Fry, however, shows that the hearings were important not because they failed, but because they got Congress to begin debating and trying to affect foreign policy. Congressional leaders argued about fundamental Cold War dogma, and, for the first time in the modern television era, had a forum to regularly reach Americans in their homes.<sup>8</sup>

While Fry focused on Democrats, recent work on the intersections between Vietnam, Congress, and U.S. foreign relations by Andrew Johns targets the GOP. Like Fry, Johns challenges conventional narratives and methodological approaches in Vietnam War studies that center the executive branch. Ironically, Johns undermines the notion that Vietnam triggered an era of congressional re-assertiveness on foreign policy. Congress mattered, he argues, because it failed in its task to end the Vietnam War singlehandedly, despite the pressure Republican senators and representatives put on the Johnson and Nixon administrations, and despite the theory that Congress is co-equal with the executive branch in foreign policy. Johns's work, then, is a cautionary tale for those seeking to challenge executive authority in contemporary U.S. foreign policymaking.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the stellar scholarship and path-breaking approaches they feature, analyses of Congress and U.S. foreign relations often seem dependent upon methodologies that measure it against the executive branch. Biographical approaches can be too narrow, parochial, or even hagiographic.<sup>10</sup> Studies that avoid the executive branch, however, ignore at their own peril the prevailing theory that the executive is where power in the federal government is most concentrated.<sup>11</sup> Future scholars must find a way to carve out a new path credibly de-centering the executive branch.<sup>12</sup>

I believe there are three keys to the future of this field of study. We have to challenge and question the works

of recent scholars; we have to consider new approaches to draw in a broader group of foreign relations scholars to study congressional history; and we have to devise new ways to entice scholars to study an array of archival material that is diffuse geographically and variable in terms of its quality. The first task involves building upon the excellent works of Johnson, Zelizer, and others who study the relationship between Congress and U.S. foreign relations. The common thread among these scholars is that they argue that Congress matters, maybe a little more than most of us believe, but a little less than its critics think it does. Johns is to be credited for narrowing his scope more than Johnson or Zelizer, who attempt to cover the entire Cold War. Still more specific studies could be the wave of

the future, however, and Johns is embarking down this path in his pending work on Senator John Sherman Cooper. Biographies of senators and representatives are often written by popular biographers or political scientists and can be overly laudatory. Johns's forthcoming book should provide a new direction in terms of academic rigor.

Part of the second task is to examine the intersection of gender, Congress, and U.S. foreign relations, especially since the number of women in Congress has steadily grown. One under-examined female congressional

staffer is Dorothy Fosdick, foreign policy aide to Senate Armed Services Committee member Senator Henry Jackson from 1954 until his death in 1983. A full-length book on Fosdick has yet to be written by a historian.<sup>13</sup>

Studies of the fight for women to gain a meaningful voice in Congress could be enhanced by focusing on foreign relations. Representatives Edith Green and Julia Butler Hansen, for example, fought sexual discrimination while working for the Pacific Northwest on vital trade issues and, particularly in Green's case, protesting the Vietnam War and overweening executive power. Aside from an old dissertation, we have no comprehensive treatment of these women.<sup>14</sup> How did they pave the way for the later breakthrough of women into Congress? Did their work on foreign relations serve as an obstacle to gaining respect, or did it help them stand shoulder to shoulder with the members of the world's biggest boys' club? Although Janann Sherman's biography of Margaret Chase Smith aims in the right direction, these and other questions have yet to be explored in detail in our field.<sup>15</sup>

Once armed with a topic, scholars must be very strongly motivated to look at congressional archives, as it can be a daunting task. Representatives and senators have dozens of archives scattered across the country. Further work on the scale of Robert David Johnson's book seems impractical for the vast majority of scholars. Until the utopian day when digital archiving can be undertaken on a vast scale, studies of Congress and U.S. foreign relations may be generally regional and/or biographical in nature.

Most of the congressional archives I consulted are housed by universities having some connection with the senator, representative, or staff aide in question. The papers of Senators Henry Jackson and Warren Magnuson, for example, are at the University of Washington, near their homes in Everett and Seattle, respectively. A few centers for congressional study have sprouted up around the country, but even these tend to concentrate narrowly on one or two individuals. Two major examples are the Dirksen Congressional Center in Illinois, focused on Senator Everett Dirksen; and the Carl Albert Congressional Research and

Studies Center at the University of Oklahoma, based on the papers of Albert, a former Speaker of the House. If these centers were to pool resources with the smaller repositories and universities around the country, the study of Congress could be greatly facilitated.

Much work can be done from the comfort of one's home university. Interlibrary loan can yield offsite primary sources, including unpublished congressional oral histories, diaries, and memoirs. Unpublished dissertations and theses can also prove useful, once unearthed with the help of dedicated university librarians. Congressional documents are also becoming available online. Committee hearings and the *Congressional Record* are now just a few clicks away, with keyword searches eliminating daunting forays into the dusty basements of official U.S. government repositories. Ultimately, however, given the primacy of hands-on archival research, a Congress-U.S. foreign relations topic might be determined by what archival material is available at the historian's home or nearby university.

The biggest help congressional scholars can receive is in terms of methodology and funding. Scholars of Congress and U.S. foreign relations must work with their advisers to devise a research plan that is reasonable, yet also path-breaking; advisers must help their graduate students do work that is fulfilling but also helps them get the coveted tenure-track job. Also, congressional archives need to entice scholars monetarily to come and do research. Most of the NARA presidential archives have competitive research grants. The Dirksen Center, to its credit, has offered grants to scholars for decades. The Oregon Historical Society has a fellowship to support a multi-week residency. More universities and historical societies should step up and help scholars, and not just scholars of congressional history.

The money is not going to appear overnight, of course. But whether or not we are able to get financial assistance to go to congressional archives, we should consider it doing it anyway, as it should be apparent to us now that Congress matters. We have the tools to be able to access at least some congressional records relevant to our projects. Let's go and do the work.

#### Notes:

1. Robert David Johnson, "Congress and the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 3, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 76–100; Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (New York, 2006).
2. Johnson, "Congress and the Cold War," 78.
3. For example, the papers of noteworthy Republican senators Mark Hatfield, Robert Packwood, and Slade Gorton remain closed to the public.
4. Thomas W. Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (March 2009): 1053–73.
5. For examples, see Matthew A. Wasniewski, ed., *Women in Congress, 1917–2006* (Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007); and "Women in Congress," <http://history.house.gov/Exhibition-and-Publications/WIC/Women-in-Congress/> (September 12, 2015).
6. Melvin Small, *Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789–1994* (Baltimore, 1996).
7. Julian Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York, 2010), 3.
8. Joseph A. Fry, *Debating Vietnam: Fulbright, Stennis, and Their Senate Hearings* (Lanham, MD, 2006), viii.
9. Andrew L. Johns, *Vietnam's Second Front: Domestic Politics, The Republican Party, and the War* (Lexington, KY, 2010).
10. See, for example: LeRoy Ashby and Rod Gramer, *Fighting the Odds: The Life of Senator Frank Church* (Pullman, WA, 1994); Shelby Scates, Warren G. Magnuson and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century America (Seattle, 1997); Jeffrey R. Biggs and Thomas S. Foley, *Honor in the House: Speaker Tom Foley* (Pullman, WA, 1999).
11. For a persuasive argument along this line, see Barbara Hinckley, *Less Than Meets the Eye: Foreign Policy Making and the Myth of an Assertive Congress* (Chicago, 1994).

12. One recent work that does this well is Guangqiu Xu, *Congress and the U.S.-China Relationship, 1949–1979* (Akron, 2007).

13. Fosdick's work can, however, be useful to Jackson scholars: see Dorothy Fosdick, ed., *Henry M. Jackson and World Affairs: Selected Speeches, 1953–1983* (Seattle, 1983); Dorothy Fosdick, *Staying the Course: Henry M. Jackson and National Security* (Seattle, 1987).

14. Marie B. Rosenberg-Dishman, "Women In Politics: A Comparative Study of Congresswomen Edith Green and Julia Butler Hansen" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1973).

15. Janann Sherman, *No Place For a Woman: A Life of Senator Margaret Chase Smith* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2000). Notably, Smith served on the House Naval Affairs Committee during World War II and on the Senate Armed Services Committee during the Vietnam War.

## Religion as Domestic Politics in American Foreign Relations

Daniel G. Hummel

While the role of religion in the twentieth-century American foreign affairs has been the subject of a slew of studies in the past decade, the role of religion in domestic politics has received less direct attention. Treating religion as part of politics casts light on the more pragmatic dimensions of religion in American foreign policy: the influence of religio-political coalitions in elections, the role of party platforms and grassroots organizations in shaping policy agendas, and the role of the media in shaping perspectives on American religion.

Andrew Preston's recent survey on religion and foreign affairs provides some insights into how religion's role in domestic politics might play a more prominent part in the field. As he writes in the introduction to *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*, politics has historically been the arena where "popular religion and elite diplomacy" meet. "Religious communities and elites spoke to each other in a continual effort to try to convince one another of what should be done in U.S. foreign policy. The religious influence [in foreign policy], then, was the product of continual dialogue. It was at heart a political process."<sup>1</sup> Viewing religious influence as a political process highlights the structural power of the United States' largest religious communities (for much of the twentieth century Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish), which have been enduring fixtures of American politics and foreign affairs. It also expands the scope of the analysis of religion, taking us beyond the religious language that bolstered manifest destiny, beyond the religious imagery of American exceptionalism, and beyond discussions of how religious beliefs influenced particular policymakers.

Preston's original call in 2005 for historians to "bridge the gap" between religion and American foreign relations and "to take religion seriously" was succeeded by a robust body of literature.<sup>2</sup> This new literature builds upon the work of an influential group of scholars who had been exploring themes of religion in American foreign affairs for a long time.<sup>3</sup> But as Preston observes, the way these diplomatic historians understand religion and religious motivation varies. For some, religion approximates a sort of ideology rooted in beliefs, while for others it dictates social structures and cultural patterns. This central problem of definition has made its role in the study of domestic politics and foreign affairs more difficult to assess.

For many diplomatic historians, religion has functioned primarily as a source of American idealism.<sup>4</sup> Periods of intense nationalist sentiment—World War I, the first two decades of the Cold War, the Vietnam War—have proven fertile ground for the study of religion in American foreign affairs.<sup>5</sup> Much of the recent boom in the study of religion and foreign affairs has likewise centered on how the beliefs of individual policymakers (such as Woodrow Wilson) or more abstract notions of civil religion and American exceptionalism have shaped American policy.<sup>6</sup> Recent works by William Inboden, Seth Jacobs, and Melani

McAlister have demonstrated the ideological linkage between religious understandings of the world and views on American foreign affairs.<sup>7</sup>

The difficulty of linking the issue of religion in politics to diplomatic history is at least twofold. First is the basic problem of the role of religious convictions in shaping American attitudes toward foreign affairs. One important insight from scholars of religion is that the link between religious beliefs and political action is constantly contested.<sup>8</sup> When there is a link, it has to be constructed, as religious actors themselves often lament.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, as Kenneth D. Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown show in a recent sociological study, religious affiliation cannot reliably predict public opinion of foreign policy.<sup>10</sup> In some specific cases, such as President Bush's handling of the Iraq War, evangelicals and Latter-day Saints were more supportive than other religious groups. But on other issues, such as the ideal level of defense spending, there were no statistically significant differences between Catholics, evangelicals, and Jews. Thus, it is hard to link the mass of data available on American religious affiliation to voting preferences, and it is even harder to trace alleged linkages as they filter through foreign policymakers' calculations of their importance.

The second difficulty is understanding the precise ways in which policymakers and elected officials respond to religiously motivated politics. As with all domestic issues, election cycles, party coalitions, and media coverage can directly influence how an official or policymaker responds to religious lobbying. This fluidity is especially acute when it comes to the roles of domestic lobbying groups. Important questions arise over how the domestic politics of religion have influenced U.S. policy toward the state of Israel, for example, or Palestinians, or Arab states. Historians outside of diplomatic history have offered convincing cultural arguments for the enduring American interest in the concept of Israel. Yet for the most part these cultural approaches do not address domestic politics or policymaking.<sup>11</sup>

Diplomatic historians, on the other hand, have largely avoided forays into the beliefs of religious actors not directly involved in policymaking.<sup>12</sup> Even among policymakers, religious conviction is usually treated only as a supporting factor.<sup>13</sup> The difficulty in assessing what role domestic politics played in President Truman's decision to recognize Israel in 1948, for example, is compounded by the difficulty of establishing, as I have already mentioned, the actual role of religious convictions in shaping political attitudes.

These problems are in many ways integral to the study of religion and probably deter a number of scholars and graduate students from studying the intersection of religion, domestic politics, and foreign affairs. Even so, there is much potential in the treatment of religion as a domestic political factor that has influenced—sometimes decisively—the direction of American foreign affairs. Recent works by Markku Ruotsila, Paul Chamberlin, and Caitlin Carenen provide some important examples. These diplomatic historians have found religio-political issues with powerful domestic implications at the center of debates over key American policies.<sup>14</sup>

A number of historians in the field of American religious history have also explained more general American foreign policy attitudes by emphasizing religious beliefs. Matthew Sutton emphasizes the role of prophecy belief in anti-fascist and anti-communist politics among conservative Protestants in the 1930s.<sup>15</sup> Axel Schäfer shows how the politics of the Cold War led conservative evangelicals to

embrace public funding for religious institutions.<sup>16</sup> Mark Edwards finds the traditional “liberal” and “conservative” political labels to be unsatisfactory in explaining the appeal of Christian Realism to the Protestant establishment in the 1940s and 1950s, and instead focuses on intellectual and theological discourse.<sup>17</sup>

These works in diplomatic history (and the more unfamiliar religious history) point to a research agenda for approaching the role of religion in politics. By focusing on religious institutions (and anchoring studies in their archives), historians can chart the fluid relationship between policymakers and religious institutions. Indeed, by focusing on the nexus of religion and power—a focus of religious history that has recently been revitalized in studies on the Protestant establishment—we may better understand how religious institutions factor into domestic political calculations and why their influence fluctuates so widely.<sup>18</sup>

Complementing this institutional focus is our growing understanding of “bottom-up” and grassroots political activism in the United States. Consider, for example, the religious right and the late twentieth-century culture wars. While the culture wars are rarely discussed in the context of diplomatic history, their relevance can be seen in such issues as Reagan's military build-up in the 1980s or American responses to 9/11.<sup>19</sup> Insofar as the GOP has become “God's Own Party” and a stronghold for conservative Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish thinkers, the growing influence of religious coalitions in shaping and influencing the parameters of debate or the policies of the U.S. government promises to be a rich area of study.<sup>20</sup> In addition, as Mark Edwards has recently observed, with all the scholarly

attention to religious beliefs and foreign policy, the notably secular basis for most American foreign policymaking in the twentieth century becomes an interesting question in and of itself.<sup>21</sup> How does the political influence of religion at the grassroots level become dispersed at the policymaking level? Hopefully, addressing such questions will produce new methodological approaches in the field.

The new prominence of religious topics in SHAFR provides an unprecedented opportunity to advance our knowledge of religion in domestic politics. Although serious research and methodological limitations will always exist, and although historians should always guard against the risk of overloading one factor in explaining U.S. foreign affairs, recent works show the promise of treating religion as part of domestic politics. Especially in an era of growing religious pluralism, questions about the roles of religio-political coalitions in foreign policymaking need answers.

#### Notes:

1. Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York, 2012), 9–10.
2. Andrew Preston, “Bridging the Gap between the Sacred and the Secular in the History of American Foreign Relations,” *Diplomatic History* 30, no. 5 (November 2006): 788.
3. See, for example, Andrew J. Rotter, “Christians, Muslims, and Hindus: Religion and U.S.-South Asian Relations, 1947–1954,” *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 4 (January 2000): 593–613.
4. This view goes back at least to Michael Hunt, who places religion alongside other forces shaping American ideology. See *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, 2009).
5. See, for example, Andrew Preston, “To Make the World Saved: American Religion and the Great War,” *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 4 (September 2014): 813–25; Jonathan P. Herzog, *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: America's Religious Battle against Communism in*

Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard

Recent historical research on the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy has examined a broad range of actors inside and outside government. As is evident in this roundtable, these actors have engaged an even broader range of policy issues, one of which is human rights. This essay surveys recent historical research on the role of human rights in American foreign policy—research that directly or indirectly addresses the role of domestic politics. It shows that historians have already benefited from adopting a domestic perspective in the examination of the role of human rights in American foreign policy and argues that this is an avenue that should be pursued further.

In recent years the study of human rights has emerged as a thriving subfield within the historical discipline.<sup>1</sup> Part of this subfield has been devoted to the role of human rights in American foreign policy, making human rights a buzzword within the field of U.S. diplomatic history. Sarah Snyder's review essay in the April 2013 edition of *Passport*, "Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Relations: A Historiographical Review," demonstrates this development. In her review Snyder notes that after having long been neglected by historians of America foreign relations, human rights has now "finally arrived."<sup>2</sup> If proof of the validity of that statement is necessary, one need only look at the program for this year's SHAFR meeting, which contained a myriad of panels dealing with human rights. In fact, the phrase 'human rights' figured no less than eighteen times in the program. The role of human rights in American foreign relations is thus clearly a historiographical topic that animates the SHAFR community.<sup>3</sup>

The human rights policies of presidential administrations have naturally received significant attention from diplomatic historians. Elizabeth Borgwardt contends that the international human rights regime came about as an American attempt to globalize the New Deal ideas rooted in Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Four Freedoms.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, several historians have taken advantage of the declassification of archives to examine the human rights policies of Jimmy Carter and, to a lesser extent, Ronald Reagan.<sup>5</sup> This scholarship indicates a clear domestic component to presidential human rights policy. For both Carter and Reagan the use of human rights language offered a way to mobilize public support for foreign policy agendas.<sup>6</sup>

However, when the dissonance between rhetoric and policy became too great, human rights could also become a public relations problem. As the American public became increasingly more concerned with human rights issues, it became necessary for presidents to at least appear to support human rights. Reagan, for example, met with a massive public outcry when he attempted to downgrade human rights early in his administration.<sup>7</sup> The examination of human rights, therefore, can offer insights into the relationship between domestic public opinion and foreign policy. In turn, looking at the relationship between public opinion and presidents can enhance our understanding of U.S. human rights policy.

An approach to the study of human rights policy that is arguably even more directly domestic can be found in the scholarship examining Congress. This research confirms that Congress forced human rights onto the political agenda in the 1970s through its hearings and passed legislation that tied foreign assistance to the human rights records of recipient countries and institutionalized human rights concerns in the State Department.<sup>8</sup> Once established, this human rights infrastructure proved remarkably

the Early Cold War (New York, 2011); David Settje, *Faith and War: How Christians Debated the Cold and Vietnam Wars* (New York, 2011); T. Jeremy Gunn, *Spiritual Weapons: The Cold War and the Forging of an American National Religion* (Westport, CT, 2008).

6. Milan Babik, *Statecraft and Salvation: Wilsonian Liberal Internationalism as Secularized Eschatology* (Waco, TX, 2013); Mark Benbow, *Leading Them to the Promised Land: Woodrow Wilson, Covenant Theology, and the Mexican Revolution, 1913–1915* (Kent, OH, 2010); Malcolm Magee, *What the World Should Be: Woodrow Wilson and the Crafting of a Faith-Based Foreign Policy* (Waco, TX, 2008).

7. William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945–1960: The Soul of Containment* (Cambridge, UK, 2008); Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950–1957* (Durham, NC, 2004); Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945–2000* (Berkeley, 2001).

8. One classic formulation is Wilfred Smith's distinction between "belief" and "faith." Smith sought to disabuse contemporaries of the idea that certain beliefs would necessarily elicit certain behaviors—perhaps a more specialized debate among scholars of religion, but one that has methodological relevance for diplomatic historians trying to understand the link between religion and politics. See Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Faith and Belief* (Princeton, 1979), 12.

9. One recent example was provided by the Christian Zionist leader John Hagee. "I often hear pastors, evangelists, and Christians say, 'I really like Israel' or 'I like the Jewish people,'" he wrote. "Jesus couldn't care less what you like or don't like; He's looking for action." John Hagee, *Four Blood Moons: Something Is About to Change* (Brentwood, TN, 2013), 10.

10. Kenneth D. Wald and Allison Calhoun-Brown, *Religion and Politics in the United States* (Lanham, MD, 2014), 200–202.

11. Michelle Mart, *Eye on Israel: How America Came to View the Jewish State as an Ally* (Albany, 2006); Paul S. Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Cambridge, MA, 1994).

12. Peter Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945–1961* (Chapel Hill, 2004); William B. Quandt, *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*, 3rd. ed. (Washington, DC, 2005).

13. On Truman's religious beliefs about Israel, especially as they crystallized after 1948, see Ronald Radosh and Allis Radosh, *A Safe Haven: Harry S. Truman and the Founding of Israel* (New York, 2009), 344–45.

14. Markku Ruotsila, *The Origins of Christian Anti-Internationalism: Conservative Evangelicals and the League of Nations* (Washington, DC, 2008); Paul Chamberlin, "A World Restored: Religion, Counterrevolution, and the Search for Order in the Middle East," *Diplomatic History* 32, no. 3 (May 2008): 441–69; Caitlin Carenen, *The Ferocious Embrace: Liberal Protestants, Evangelicals, and Israel* (New York, 2012).

15. Matthew Avery Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism* (Cambridge, MA, 2014).

16. Axel R. Schäfer, "The Cold War State and the Resurgence of Evangelicalism: A Study of the Public Funding of Religion Since 1945," *Radical History Review* 2007, no. 99 (September 21, 2007): 19–50.

17. Mark Thomas Edwards, *The Right of the Protestant Left God's Totalitarianism* (New York, 2012).

18. Elesha J. Coffman, *The Christian Century and the Rise of the Protestant Mainline* (Oxford, UK, 2013); David A. Hollinger, *After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History* (Princeton, 2013).

19. David T. Courtwright, *No Right Turn: Conservative Politics in a Liberal America* (Cambridge, MA, 2010); Matthew Avery Sutton, "Reagan, Religion, and the Culture Wars of the 1980s," in *A Companion to Ronald Reagan*, ed. Andrew L. Johns (Hoboken, NJ, 2015), 204–20; Melani McAlister, "Prophecy, Politics, and the Popular: The 'Left Behind' Series and Christian Fundamentalism's New World Order," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 102, no. 4 (Fall 2003): 773–98.

20. Daniel Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (Oxford, UK, 2010). See also Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York, 2010).

21. Mark Edwards, "The Secularization of American Foreign Policy," Religion in American History blog, June 24, 2014, <http://usreligion.blogspot.com/2014/06/the-secularization-of-american-foreign.html>.

uncompromising and secured Congress significant influence on human rights policy. Kathryn Sikkink shows how a human rights policy towards Latin America resulted from domestic political interactions between Congress, the executive branch, NGOs and the American public.<sup>9</sup> Sarah Snyder explains how Congress also played an integral role in U.S. human rights policy within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe through the so-called Helsinki Commission.<sup>10</sup> Such scholarship demonstrates that Congress was the initial driver of American human rights policy and used human rights to assert its influence on foreign policy. Still, more could be done to investigate the role of key actors in Congress, including committees, caucuses, and prominent individuals concerned with human rights, especially after the breakthrough in the 1970s. Clearly, in order to understand American human rights policy properly, we need to look at the role of Congress.

In addition, historians of human rights in American foreign relations are increasingly examining actors outside of government. Part of this scholarship investigates the human rights advocacy of non-governmental organizations and private groups. In her book on the human rights revolution of the 1970s, *Reclaiming American Virtue*, Barbara Keys examines the role of Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) as part of the human rights lobby. Keys shows how AIUSA worked a two-pronged strategy, lobbying policymakers and seeking to engage ordinary Americans in letter-writing campaigns for “prisoners of conscience.”<sup>11</sup> Mark Phillip Bradley examines the work of one local AIUSA group in New York City to argue for the emergence of a global human rights imagination in the United States.<sup>12</sup> Other researchers have examined the role of NGOs in Cold War diplomacy. In *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War*, Sarah Snyder demonstrates how the U.S.-based NGO Helsinki Watch played a key role in promoting human rights issues within the Helsinki process, arguing that at times it wielded greater influence than the participating states.<sup>13</sup>

The scholarship on NGOs and private groups also reflects the ideological division over human rights during the Cold War. In his examination of Freedom House in the 1970s and 1980s, Carl Bon Tempo shows how that NGO contributed to the conservative human rights policy of the Reagan administration, which was focused on political and civil rights and anti-communism.<sup>14</sup> In his highly critical examination of the relationship between Washington and the human rights movement in *Ideal Illusions*, James Peck argues that Washington has effectively manipulated the concept of human rights to promote its foreign policy. According to Peck, both Washington and the majority of American NGOs interpret human rights primarily as the civil and political rights of the individual within a rights-based legalism. This vision downplays the right to social and economic equality associated with anti-colonialism and with collective means of struggle, such as labor unions and revolutions.<sup>15</sup> Again, as Peck’s research would suggest, American human rights policy needs to be understood within its domestic context. NGOs clearly played an important role in shaping American human rights policy, but more research is needed to determine the nature of their relationship with government. Given that the archives of NGOs are less restrictive than government archives, they

are useful sources for historians concerned with recent human rights history.

In a similar vein, historians of American human rights policy have started to examine the role of religious groups in the United States. In his examination of the role of religion in American foreign policy, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*, Andrew Preston shows how domestic religious groups have been highly influential in advancing human rights in American foreign relations. Among the many groups Preston mentions are the nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries who created the first human rights NGO and the religious organizations that provided information on human rights abuses to NGOs seeking to end Reagan’s Central America policy.<sup>16</sup> Religious groups, however, also used religion to argue in favor of support for repressive regimes. In a recent article in *Diplomatic History*, Lauren Turek demonstrates how in 1982, Christian evangelicals played an important role in fostering U.S. support for Guatemala’s repressive evangelical dictator, Ríos Montt, referring to his Christian faith as a guarantee of human rights improvements.<sup>17</sup> These examples show how religious groups have been engaged with the role of human rights across time and space, but with different policy implications. Still, more work remains to be done on the relationship between domestic religious groups and human rights in American foreign affairs. It is therefore encouraging to see that at least two works on religion and human rights have been published recently: Samuel Moyn’s *Christian Human Rights* and Anna Su’s *Exporting Freedom: Religious Liberty and American Power*.<sup>18</sup>

Ethnic groups that seek to influence policy towards their homelands or other countries or regions to which they feel a special relationship have added an element of regionalism to American human rights policy. Yet only a few historians have examined the role ethnic groups have played in shaping American human rights policy. Among those that have is Simon Stevens, whose article on the Carter administration’s policy towards South African apartheid demonstrates how African-Americans, working through the Congressional Black Caucus and NGOs like TransAfrica, pushed hard for stronger measures against the South African government.<sup>19</sup> Scholarship on other policy issues has shown how highly motivated ethnic groups have influenced American foreign policy. Stevens’s work indicates that their influence on human rights policy can also be a profitable subject for study.

The study of refugees offers yet another domestic perspective on the role of human rights in American foreign relations. The preeminent work on this subject is Carl Bon Tempo’s *Americans at the Gate*, which traces American refugee policies and their implementation in the post-World War II world. Bon Tempo shows how American refugee laws and policies were the product of interactions between foreign policy concerns and domestic political, cultural and economic considerations. He contends that since the 1970s, the belief that the protection of universal human rights is integral to American national identity has been a key influence on American refugee policy.<sup>20</sup>

It is apparent from the scholarship surveyed here that a broad range of actors inside and outside government has contributed to the shaping of American human rights policy and that diplomatic historians have benefited from

adopting a domestic perspective for their examination of the role of human rights in American foreign relations. However, more work lies ahead if we are to fully appreciate the domestic aspects of American human rights policy. Both the quality of the existing scholarship and the insights it has provided indicate that this is a task well worth undertaking. Clearly, a domestic perspective will enhance our understanding of American human rights policy, but it also constitutes a promising lens through which to explore the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy.

#### Notes:

1. For a review on the general scholarship on human rights see Samuel Moyn, "Substance, Scale, and Salience: The Recent Historiography of Human Rights," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 8 (2012); and Devin O. Pendas, "Toward a New Politics? On the Recent Historiography of Human Rights," *Contemporary European History* 21, no. 1 (February 2012).
2. Sarah B. Snyder, "Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Relations: A Historiographical Review," *Passport* 44, no. 1 (April 2013).
3. The historical research on human rights in American foreign policy has become so extensive that this essay will inevitably fall short of covering every work with a domestic perspective.
4. Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA, 2005).
5. David F. Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, "Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: The Development of a Post-Cold War Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 28, no. 1 (January 2004); Christian Philip Peterson, "'Confronting' Moscow: The Reagan Administration, Human Rights, and the Final Act," *Historian* 74, no. 1 (Spring 2012); William Michael Schmidli, *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere: Human Rights and U.S. Cold War Policy toward Argentina* (Ithaca, NY, 2013).
6. For Carter the human rights issue offered a way to create a foreign policy that enabled Americans to reinvent their perception of their role in the world after the debacle of Vietnam. Reagan profited from Soviet human rights abuses to rally public support against the Soviet Union, but he failed when he tried to employ human rights language to obtain public support for his Central America policy.
7. See, among others, Sarah B. Snyder, "The Defeat of Ernest Lefever's Nomination: Keeping Human Rights on the United States Foreign Policy Agenda," in *Challenging U.S. Foreign Policy: America and the World*, ed. Bevan Sewell and Scott Lucas (Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK, 2011).
8. Barbara J. Keys, "Congress, Kissinger, and the Origins of Human Rights Diplomacy," *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 5 (November 2010); Sarah B. Snyder, "'A Call for U.S. Leadership': Congressional Activism on Human Rights," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 2 (April 2013). Although not the prime focus of the book, congressional human rights activism is also examined in Robert David Johnson's *Congress and the Cold War* (New York, 2006); see especially pages 190–241.
9. Kathryn Sikkink, *Mixed Signals: U.S. Human Rights Policy and Latin America* (Ithaca, NY, 2004).
10. Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York, 2011), 38–52.
11. Barbara J. Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), 178–213.
12. Mark Philip Bradley, "American Vernaculars: The United States and the Global Human Rights Imagination," *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 1 (January 2014).
13. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism*, 115–34.
14. Carl J. Bon Tempo, "From the Center-Right: Freedom House and Human Rights in the 1970s and 1980s," in *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, ed. Petra Goedde and William Hitchcock (New York, 2012), 223–44.
15. James Peck, *Ideal Illusions: How the U.S. Government Co-Opted Human Rights* (New York, 2010). Daniel Sargent has also pointed out that domestic preferences for individual liberalism influenced the nature of the human rights movement in the 1970s. See Daniel Sargent, "Oasis in the Desert? America's Human Rights Rediscovery," in *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in The 1970s*, ed. Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn (Philadelphia, 2014).
16. Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York, 2012).

17. Lauren Frances Turek, "To Support a 'Brother in Christ': Evangelical Groups and U.S.-Guatemalan Relations During the Ríos Montt Regime," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 4 (September 2015).
18. Samuel Moyn, *Christian Human Rights* (Philadelphia, 2015); Anna Su, *Exporting Freedom: Religious Liberty and American Power* (Cambridge, MA, 2016).
19. Simon Stevens, "'From the Viewpoint of a Southern Governor': The Carter Administration and Apartheid, 1977–81," *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 5 (November 2012).
20. Carl J. Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees During the Cold War* (Princeton, 2008).

### Commentary (or Beyond "Before the Water's Edge")

Andrew Johnstone

When I wrote my historiographical survey on domestic politics and U.S. foreign relations for *Passport* last year, I had to make a decision about the scope of the piece. After all, I had only five thousand words to play with. That limit ultimately meant that for the purposes of the essay I had to define domestic politics rather narrowly. I focused largely on Washington, through Congress, elections, and public opinion. However, I concluded with a plea for greater consideration of other domestic determinants that make up a broader political culture. I was unable to address the recent work done on those determinants myself, but I am very happy to see a number of them examined here in eight essays that do an excellent job of highlighting the role of domestic forces in the history of U.S. foreign relations as well as suggesting directions for future research.

The first essay, from Hideaki Kami, examines migrant politics and the role of ethnic groups in the construction of U.S. foreign policy. It opens by considering whether ethnic constituencies have historically influenced U.S. foreign policy, before moving on to consider a more complex question regarding the role of ethnic groups and their relationship to the "national interest." While Kami's notes are detailed, many works cited here are from political scientists, suggesting that a considerable amount of work is still needed in this area from historians. Indeed, historians appear far more often in the notes of Kami's final section on migration history, revealing how popular recent transnational trends have been while at the same time offering a potential way into debates about migrant politics.

Next, Tizoc Chavez introduces the concept of "personal diplomacy" in an essay that focuses on the importance and significance of presidential diplomatic meetings (in the broadest sense of the term). He uses numerous examples to highlight the historically complicated relationship between presidential activity on the world stage and domestic politics. Chavez's observation that the diplomatic relationship clearly goes both ways is an interesting addition; while most of these essays look at the influence of domestic forces on foreign policy, there is an acknowledgment here of the influence of foreign policy activity on domestic politics. A tighter definition of personal diplomacy would have been useful, but the concept has the potential to go far beyond more conventional studies of presidential visits abroad.

Michael Brenes looks at a domestic determinant that has long been a consideration of historians of U.S. foreign relations but has rarely appeared under the banner of domestic politics: economics. In particular, he looks at the "new" history of capitalism that links economics with cultural and social history. He offers a necessary call to arms, urging historians of U.S. foreign relations to do more to reconsider capitalism in their work and to integrate those considerations with domestic politics. A number of recent works by foreign relations historians that attempt to broaden the field are highlighted, but few deal explicitly with domestic politics. In fact, when it comes to domestic



politics, Brenes raises far more questions than answers, but his questions about the roles of corporations, lobbyists, and individuals are ones that historians urgently need to address.

David L. Prentice offers a creative way to invigorate the study of U.S. domestic politics through the increasing internationalization of the study of U.S. foreign relations. Using his own experience researching at the National Archives in London as an example, he highlights the way overseas archives can illuminate the role of domestic politics in the United States. Of course, while looking back at the water's edge from a distant shore can offer new perspectives, there are potential difficulties to bear in mind as well. Foreign assessments of American motivations may be skewed or even fundamentally flawed, and not all overseas archives can offer comparable detail on every issue. But there is no doubt internationalization has the potential to enhance the analysis of domestic political considerations.

In the fifth essay Autumn Lass addresses the role of the American public in the creation of U.S. foreign policy. Lass uses a public diplomacy framework to illustrate the different ways scholars have approached the subject, focusing on how the U.S. government has utilized listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and broadcasting in engaging with the American people. She argues that scholars have neglected the role of the public and that these categories offer effective ways to focus future scholarship on that topic. I am not entirely convinced that referring to the role of the public as "domestic public diplomacy" is the way forward (despite some overlap between the expressions, the U.S. government has usually described its domestic work as public affairs, with the term public diplomacy reserved for overseas activity), but the framework remains effective whatever the title, and the broader point about the importance of the public stands. Most importantly, the suggestions here offer a qualitative way forward for dealing with public opinion, a subject too easily dismissed by historians as a quantitative subject for political scientists.

The American people's representatives in Congress are the focus of Chris Foss, who asks why consideration of the congressional role in foreign policymaking has been so limited. Given the constitutional power vested in Congress, it seems surprising that Congress itself has received so little attention and that only a few congressional leaders have been singled out for study. Foss concedes that part of the problem here is methodological scale, along with the logistical challenge of researching numerous congressional figures at once. However, another challenge is historiographical fashion: the task of making congressional research popular at a time when top-down studies of elite (and largely) white males are not in vogue will be difficult, whatever the importance of the subject matter.

In contrast, historiographical fashion is very much on the side of Daniel G. Hummel, who focuses on religion. His footnotes reveal the rich literature of the past decade and a half on religion and foreign relations, although he concedes that there are problems with measuring religious influence and assessing exactly what role religion plays in decision-making processes. Yet while the effort required to examine "religion as politics" may be significant, now may prove the perfect time to try, given the current historiographical interest.

Another hot historiographical trend addressed here is the issue of human rights. In his essay, Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard emphasizes the many domestic forces that have driven the development of human rights policy. "Human rights" is arguably not a domestic force in itself, although NGOs like Amnesty International USA may fall under that rubric. Any effort to examine "human rights as politics" may thus prove even more challenging than similar efforts to study religion and will require a broader consideration of national ideology. However, in addition to highlighting the role of NGOs, Søndergaard reveals the numerous ways in which domestic forces—including many of those addressed in the previous essays, such as the public, Congress, and religious and ethnic groups—can push for particular policies. In doing so, he shows the importance of a wide variety of domestic political factors in shaping human rights policy.

Historiographical fashion is clearly a key issue running through many of these essays. A few essays take a slightly defensive tone about the relative marginalization of domestic politics as a theme. More generally, however, there is a positive approach to finding ways to bring the study of domestic politics more in line with current historiographical trends and to highlight new areas where domestic political factors have strong explanatory power. This emphasis makes sense, given the academic need for novelty in approach as well as in basic subject matter, not to mention the difficulties of swimming stubbornly against prevailing tides. The authors have all tried to find ways to engage with broader trends without losing sight of the domestic essence of their subjects. Such creativity will be essential in developing future research on domestic political themes.

Another key issue raised by these essays is the question of proof and the challenge of finding evidence for domestic political influences. As Thomas Schwartz has written, "It is not easy to document the impact of domestic politics."<sup>1</sup> Few politicians are willing to admit that they were pressured into action by an upcoming election, an ethnic lobby, or private economic forces. This issue is not likely to go away. The opening section of Hideaki Kami's essay outlining the ongoing

debate over the influence of ethnic groups illustrates the difficulty of measuring the extent of influence. Yet the challenge of finding convincing evidence to support an argument is not one exclusive to scholars of domestic influences on U.S. foreign relations. "Smoking guns" are not that common in any area of historical enquiry, and even when they do seem to appear, they hardly end historical debate. There are methodological challenges for historians of domestic politics, but those challenges are no reason to stop searching for answers.

Collectively, these essays reveal just how much great work is taking place on domestic political determinants. Both the essays themselves and the footnotes within them point the way forward. New questions are being asked that approach what might be seen as traditional issues—the role of Congress, economic forces, and public opinion, for example—in new and different ways. The focus on qualitative rather than quantitative research here reflects the influence of cultural history and represents a positive movement away from a preoccupation with measuring influence. The internationalization of the field is opening up new perspectives on American domestic politics, and the work that has resulted reflects a wider creativity

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with archives and source materials. And themes such as ethnicity, human rights, and religion offer a way of directly connecting politics with cultural issues while simultaneously expanding the definition of domestic politics.

There may be some who argue that the concept of domestic politics has been expanded too broadly here, and that defining the concept in such terms represents a move away from traditional considerations of domestic political power. There is an element of truth to this, as some of these essays are interested in a broader definition of politics than others, and others are less interested in domestic politics in itself and more interested in how it can illuminate other issues. However, there is room for further analysis of Congress and elections alongside assessments of economics and ethnicity, and there is always the possibility of combining them all. After all, as we can see from the essays here (notably those on religion and human rights), foreign relations historians have proven themselves to be particularly skilled at making connections between non-state actors and the American political system.

What these essays prove is that domestic determinants must not be forgotten, as they can continue to enrich the field much as growing internationalization does. When we study "the U.S. in the World," we need to examine what drove the United States to act the way it did in the world, and those driving forces were frequently domestic. A focus on domestic factors does not mean that wider international factors don't matter; nor does it equate to the promotion of American exceptionalism. It simply represents an acknowledgment that domestic politics still matter in the history of U.S. foreign relations.

Note:

1. Thomas A. Schwartz, "'Henry, . . . Winning an Election Is Terribly Important': Partisan Politics in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 2 (April 2009): 178.

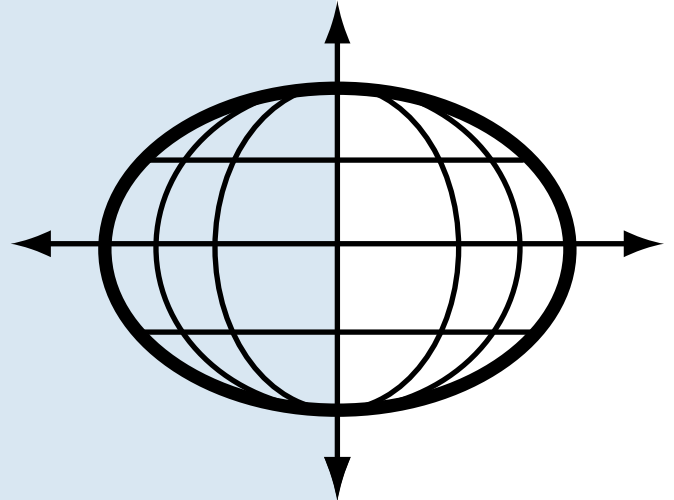
## **In the next issue of *Passport***

**\* A roundtable on Meredith Oyen's *The Diplomacy of Migration***

**\* Jason Parker on the historiography of public diplomacy**

**\* Teaching U.S. foreign relations with film**

**and much more!**



# Teaching on the Fringe: Perspectives from a Virginia Jail

Bethany A. Sharpe

Like many graduate students, I frequently contemplate my future career. So it was with particular gratitude that I read the articles about career prospects by Nicholas Sarantakes and Brian Etheridge in the January 2015 issue of *Passport*. It was not surprising that both discussed the need for students to look beyond the traditional career path of academia; I have heard that advice since starting graduate school. Though different sources point to a variety of reasons for the scarcity of traditional jobs, most generally agree that current students should keep all their options open as they seek employment.<sup>1</sup>

I took the advice to look for work beyond academia seriously and started early on my path to explore different historically oriented avenues. I found what I least expected: a job teaching in jail. Also unexpected: I truly enjoy it. Like other classrooms, mine is filled with students who have their own personal strengths and weaknesses and, of course, their own particular quirks. However, as much as I enjoy teaching in this unique context, I am often dismayed at how ill-equipped I am to make the practical uses of history tangible.

My classroom experience relates to a question asked at this summer's annual SHAFR conference. An audience member at the Comparing America's Wars Roundtable asked, in a nutshell, how historians can be more effective. She was referencing the efficacy of historians who work with students from the mid-to-upper levels of society, but it is a question that works at all levels—even for the students sitting in jail who represent the far end of the relevance-of-history spectrum that is sometimes forgotten. As careers move farther away from the traditional center of academia, perhaps even to the fringe, I think this question becomes even more important. I also believe SHAFR has a compelling opportunity to change the way history resonates in arenas outside of traditional academia and the way those with history degrees make use of them. There is at least one way to do this.

Both Sarantakes and Etheridge suggest that SHAFR broaden the scope of historical application. This is a fabulous start. For this endeavor to fully succeed, however, I think that a more fundamental shift needs to accompany it. This shift centers on the way history departments train students to think about their professional roles. Currently, the bulk of training received in graduate school gears students towards striving to become experts in their areas of research. They learn valuable techniques about how best to insert themselves as experts—along with their work—into the larger academic circuit. But this may be the wrong approach when it comes to selling history outside of the academy. In general, many of my students have no interest in the next big “turn” or in the revisions and post-revisions of research. They want and need resources that can materially affect the course of their lives. They are not just asking to borrow my knowledge. They are asking for the tools and resources to create their own useable information.

Because so many of the students I teach are focused on basic survival, useable history must somehow connect to their immediate needs. The best role for a historian in alternative settings such as this might therefore be that of collaborator in as opposed to dispenser of knowledge. Collaboration suggests a greater focus on the students'

needs and requires a different set of soft skills, a different way of thinking about pedagogy, and a different way of thinking about one's role in the transmission of history. If SHAFR members are going to commit to helping students find meaningful gainful employment, I would urge them to provide information not just on how students get jobs outside of the academy, but on how future graduates can reshape their roles in fundamentally different ways.

Rethinking the historian's role also requires recasting the student's role in a way that fully embraces and incorporates his or her skill set, knowledge, and expertise in the production of history. At first, such a prospect conjures up visions of wild interpretations, the unsuitable use of sources, and general pandemonium. However, these visions rest on assumptions about student inexperience and lack of expertise that the traditional expert-nonexpert divide found in academia perpetuates. But lack of expertise in history does not preclude expertise in other areas. Working as collaborators, the student and the teacher can carefully shepherd a student's outside knowledge into a more productive historical framework that enables the student to share that knowledge in a way that helps set and drive the research agenda. Such a collaborative relationship could prove a valuable way of informing diverse interpretations of the past. More important, using the student's own expertise and knowledge and making the student a partner in the process makes history more accessible and its lessons more effective in a way the expert-nonexpert division does not.

Such a partnership may sound unsettling, but this is where SHAFR can step in to quell concerns. SHAFR members can provide guidance on the best ways to govern the challenges and potential pitfalls that such a drastic reorientation of history would entail. SHAFR itself may prove the best forum for ideas about how to acknowledge and incorporate student expertise in a sincere way. The organization could create a committee like the ones for secondary teachers and public historians that Sarantakes calls for in his article. But such a committee could provide much more than information on how to get a job. Rather than focus on how to sell the historian, it could foster intense discussions about selling history differently. Ultimately, sharing the role of expert may be one important means of answering that haunting question of how to increase historians' efficacy.

Developing a successful approach to this problem presents an important challenge. I am hopeful that SHAFR can help its most junior members as it mulls over its own future and the kinds of services it can provide. If teaching on the fringe, wherever that might be, is to be a viable option for students graduating with history degrees, much more needs to be done on splicing together the needs of the community and needs of the historian. The relationship between the two could be a vibrant one in the future if it is nurtured appropriately in the present.

Note:

1. Allen Mikaelian, “The Academic Job Market's Jagged Line: Number of Ads Placed Drops for Second Year,” *Perspectives in History* 52 (2014), reinforces this suggestion with a report that history jobs marketed with the AHA were down seven percent in September 2014.

# 2016 Conference of the Society for H

The 2016 SHAFR meeting will be held 23-25 June 2016 at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice (KIPJ) building on the University of San Diego campus in San Diego, California.

SHAFR is excited to be returning to the west coast and the gorgeous University of San Diego campus. This year we will continue with the eight panel session schedule introduced in 2015, which will allow us to accommodate two plenary sessions and finish earlier each evening. The conference begins with the first panel session at 11:45 am on Thursday, June 23. The plenary session will begin at 4:15 pm. It will feature Mike Davis, Professor E at the University of California, Riverside, and author of more than winning City of Quartz to transnational studies of neoliberalism, i politics of disease. The welcome reception, open to all registrants,

SHAFR president David Engerman, Otilie Springer Professor of Hi will deliver his presidential address at the Friday luncheon. Robin Ke of History and Gary B. Nash Endowed Chair in United States History a Los Angeles. Professor Kelley, an acclaimed author of numerous bc cultural, and intellectual history and on the African diaspora, will de the Saturday luncheon. He will speak on the life and work of Grace F activist who sometimes assumed different racial and ethnic identiti inequities.

This year's Friday evening social event will be at the San Diego setting which features stunning views of the famous Balboa Park. Tickets will include a full dinner and open beer, wine, and soft drink or \$30 for students, adjunct faculty, or K-12 teachers. Round-trip ch be available for purchase. And special this year: we will offer free v guided by local experts beginning at 5:30 pm. Space will be limited.

The Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice (KIPJ) building, home to Studies, is an elegant Spanish Renaissance style conference and meeting venue located on the southwest bluff of the USD campus. Lush gardens and terraces with spectacular views of San Diego's Mission Bay and the Pacific Ocean surround the building. Wireless internet service will be available throughout the building. Coffee, drinks, and light fare are available during conference hours at the on-site La Paloma café. There are also multiple dining options at the University Center, a 7-minute walk or 2-minute tram ride from the building. Parking on campus is free.

Room blocks have been reserved at two hotels in the historic Old Town district of San Diego, both of which are just a 5-minute complimentary shuttle ride away from the KIPJ. Shuttles will operate throughout the day. The Best Western PLUS Hacienda Hotel, located at 4041 Harney Street, is a 3-Diamond property located in the heart of Old Town. There is complimentary hotel shuttle service from 7am to 10pm to San Diego International Airport and to the Amtrak station.

# Historians of American Foreign Relations

The Old Town Tequila Factory Restaurant on the premises serves Mexican and American cuisine, and Jack and Giulio's Restaurant for Italian cuisine is just steps away. Exercise facilities, cocktail bar, and outdoor heated pool are also available, complimentary wi-fi is available in all public areas, and guests have will free wi-fi service their sleeping rooms as well. Conference room rates are \$135/night, single or double occupancy, plus taxes and fees. Parking is \$15/day. The deadline for receiving the conference rate is May 22, 2016. Hotel reservations for the Best Western can be made by calling 619-298-4707 and asking for the USD—SHAFR 2016 group rate.

A room block has also been reserved at the Courtyard San Diego Old Town located at 2435 Jefferson Street. The Courtyard offers a complimentary airport shuttle and free wi-fi throughout the property. The Bistro is open for breakfast and dinner serving gourmet fare, grab-n-go meals, and a Starbucks espresso bar. A 24-hour Market features snacks, beverages, toiletries and more. Guests can enjoy the fitness center and the outdoor heated pool and spa. Conference room rates are \$189/night, single or double occupancy, plus tax. Parking is \$17/day. The deadline for receiving the conference rate is May 23, 2016. To book a room for the Courtyard, call 619-260-8500 and mention the SHAFR 2016 group.

Please note that the hotels are required to honor the reduced rates until their respective dates OR until all the rooms in the SHAFR blocks have been booked. Once the blocks are fully booked, the hotels will offer room at their usual rates, if any are available, or may even be completely full. Please make your reservation as early as you can.

Printed program booklets and registration forms will be mailed out to all SHAFR members with a current domestic U.S. address in mid-April. Online registration will be available in mid-April as well.

For more details about conference arrangements, visit the conference website at <http://shafr.org/conferences/annual/2016-annual-meeting>, or follow us on Twitter @SHAFRConference. For questions about registration and other conference logistics, please contact Julie Laut, Conference Coordinator, at [conference@shafr.org](mailto:conference@shafr.org).

# Book Reviews

Review of Janet Polasky, *Revolutions Without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015)

Christopher Hodson

In 2007, Eliga Gould introduced readers of the *American Historical Review* to the term “entangled history.”<sup>1</sup> A rough translation of the French *histoire croisée*, the term refers to an approach to history that promised to transcend the outmoded focus on individual nation-states and their overseas empires more fruitfully than the clunky, artificial, and (usually) nation-based methodologies of comparative history. In his article, Gould argues that throughout the early modern Atlantic world, people lived and circulated not in hermetically sealed national-imperial systems, but in “entangled communities” that arose as those systems bled into one another.

The book under review here, *Revolutions Without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World*, is an erudite, ambitious attempt to craft an entangled history of radical intellectual life in the late eighteenth century. Written by Gould’s University of New Hampshire colleague Janet Polasky, it ranges from Poland to the Caribbean to chart the progress of an era “when anything seemed possible” (12). The book certainly does go beyond national history. It brings into relief the bonds that joined itinerant Atlantic revolutionaries too often kept separate in modern scholarship. However, it also demonstrates that when it comes to arguments and narratives, entangled history can, well, entangle as well as enlighten.

The organization of *Revolutions Without Borders* is intricate. Polasky builds her chapters around the various kinds of documents encountered in her research: there is one each for pamphlets, journals, memoirs, newspapers, rumors, novels, familial correspondence, and official decrees. She then fleshes out these chapters with biographical sketches and microhistorical accounts of revolutionaries whose lives were linked by the production and dissemination of such documents. Some of her characters will be familiar: John Adams, Jacques-Pierre Brissot, Olaudah Equiano, and Mary Wollstonecraft, for instance. Others have been mostly forgotten: Anna Maria Falconbridge, Jean-Baptiste Belley, Betje Wolff, and Elkanah Watson. But all wheel through Polasky’s interconnected Atlantic, observing, reading, and writing in ways that both triggered and reflected the transformations unfolding around them. And those transformations did indeed unfold on a grand scale. Polasky begins by exploring the abortive revolutions of the late 1780s in the Low Countries, which furnish us with the forgotten words of rogue pamphleteers inspired by the American Revolution. Bouncing between the early United States and revolutionary France, Polasky next considers reform-minded journal-keepers, followed by an even more far-ranging crew of radicals: the narrative-publishing ex-slaves of the Black Atlantic. Heading ashore, she turns to the political clubs of 1790s Paris and the journalists whose newspapers strained to keep up with their output of bombast. From Paris, her story leaps to the Caribbean, where rumors, repeated and embellished by freedom-seeking rebels and colonial elites alike, powered the demolition and reconstruction of Saint-Domingue and beyond. The noise of tropical insurrection then gives way to the quiet of a cottage in Beverwijk near Amsterdam, where Betje Wolff and her companion Aadje Deken penned books about women

and family in the revolutionary age that rivaled those of their better-known British and French contemporaries. Polasky then rifles through letters exchanged by spouses driven apart (physically or otherwise) by the ruptures of the day. Finally, she settles in to digest the brutal declarations of the French revolutionaries as their armies bore down on central Europe.

Ultimately, Polasky argues, there existed “no single all-encompassing vision” to unite the “seemingly contradictory movements” espoused by late eighteenth-century radicals (3). Rather, as they “ignored the national borders that figure so prominently on maps and in history books,” revolutionaries and the documents they wrote created a smorgasbord of new possibilities, the very existence of which catalyzed the Atlantic world’s rapid evolution (8). But evolutionary processes, alas, often yield predators. The hopeful, tolerant, and cosmopolitan radicalism of Polasky’s subjects eventually succumbed to revolutionary nationalism, an ideology that redirected the disparate intellectual energies of the period to the service of belligerent states and made a charnel house of the nineteenth century. In the end, then, *Revolutions Without Borders* reads as a tragedy, a lament for paths closed off and alternative futures left unexplored.

Polasky’s facility with languages, her deft touch with sources, and her clear prose combine to produce individual chapters that illuminate the travelers’ knack for grasping “contradictions inherent in the implementation of the ideals of liberty and equality, both abroad where they alighted and at home when they returned” (11). Strung together, however, these appealing stories become something of a rummage sale—a collection of disparate objects that, though some of them may well be treasures, cannot be encompassed by a single motif. Having committed to a capacious argument that emphasizes the diversity of radical visions and textual forms in the age of revolution, the author struggles to draw connections among her subjects. Readers are pulled from place to place, person to person, and genre to genre with remarkably little guidance. See, for instance, the rushed mention of the Caribbean-themed novel of Leonora Sansay that serves as a bridge between a chapter on racial violence in the Caribbean and a chapter on female writers in the Low Countries, England, and France. Having cast perhaps too wide (tangled?) a net, *Revolutions Without Borders* ends on a curiously narrow note. Echoing the sermon that Martin Luther King Jr. delivered at the National Cathedral in 1968, Polasky writes that “the eighteenth-century revolutionaries who traveled across mountains, oceans, and national borders were wide awake. It was the others, their neighbors, who slept, at home” (271). She suggests that the sedentary folk of the age, unable to “see the alternatives . . . assumed the choices made by their governments to be natural” (11). This is an unnecessary, unpersuasive, and, I think, ungenerous interpretation—akin to Jonathan Israel’s nothing-if-not-persistent bid to identify a single strain of radical thought, springing from the mind of Baruch Spinoza, as the Enlightenment, tracing it from the seventeenth century to the early, heady days of the French Revolution.<sup>2</sup>

In any case, labeling the great mass of people who did not continent-hop as somehow less revolutionary than their mobile contemporaries jibes poorly with late eighteenth-century realities. Backwoods radicals such as Daniel Shays, for instance, did not believe the choices made by his government to be “natural,” nor did the *sans-culottes* in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, nor did former

plantation hands weighing loyalty to kings and republics in Saint-Domingue. Such people lived bordered lives, connected to the emerging cosmopolitan world but also tugged relentlessly back toward local concerns. But as they wrestled with the implications of liberty and order in their communities, they were no less “awake” than Polasky’s globe-trotting visionaries.

Notes:

1. Eliga Gould, “Entangled Histories, Entangled Worlds: The English-Speaking Atlantic as a Spanish Periphery.” *American Historical Review* 112 (June 2007): 764–86.

2. See Jonathan Israel, *Revolutionary Ideas: An Intellectual History of the French Revolution from the Rights of Man to Robespierre* (Princeton, 2014).

**Review of Pierre Asselin, *Hanoi’s Road to the Vietnam War, 1954–1965* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013)**

Jessica M. Chapman

North Vietnam chose war in South Vietnam several months before the Gulf of Tonkin Incident in August 1964 and more than a year before Lyndon Johnson’s fateful decision to escalate American air and ground operations in Vietnam in early 1965. This argument, central to Pierre Asselin’s masterful book *Hanoi’s Road to the Vietnam War, 1954–1965*, will challenge readers to think more broadly about the Vietnam War and its origins. By illuminating the North Vietnamese decision-making process, Asselin makes it clear that LBJ’s choice for war, outlined so convincingly by Fredrik Logevall in *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (1999), was merely a response to deliberate escalatory measures undertaken by Hanoi, albeit a response North Vietnam hoped to avoid.<sup>1</sup> This book, detailing as it does the struggles within Vietnam’s communist leadership and the process by which it made key decisions that shaped the course of the American War, is an invaluable contribution to the growing body of scholarship addressing the long-neglected Vietnamese side of the country’s extended struggle for independence.

Asselin’s work, based on a range of Vietnamese archival and published sources that are supplemented by British, French, and Canadian documents, details the evolution of Hanoi’s diplomatic, political, and military strategy from the Geneva Accords in 1954 to the beginning of the American War in 1965. For most of those years, moderates within the Politburo of the Vietnamese Worker’s Party (VWP), including Ho Chi Minh and general secretary Truong Chinh, prevailed over militants with strong ties to the South like Le Duan. As Asselin explains, a “risk-averse and temporizing ‘moderate’ wing of the party . . . steered DRVN decision-making until 1963.”<sup>2</sup> These moderates promoted a “North-first” policy that prioritized building a socialist society in the North and allowed only for “political struggle” in the South. Asselin argues that this strategy was at first animated by the moderates’ genuine faith in the Geneva Accords as an instrument for the eventual unification of Vietnam and by a desire to placate war-weary allies in Beijing and Moscow. He makes it clear, however, that the Politburo was never subservient to its superpower allies but was merely attuned to the strategic importance of a wide range of international considerations.

By 1956, it became obvious that South Vietnamese president Ngo Dinh Diem and his “imperialist” American patrons would never allow the national reunification called for by the Geneva Accords. North Vietnam was forced to recognize that “prospects for peaceful national reunification

were dim and the struggle for reunification would probably be longer and more difficult than anticipated.”<sup>3</sup> However, even as Diem’s government ramped up violent anti-subversive measures throughout the southern countryside, Hanoi held firm to its North-first strategy and refused to authorize armed struggle. Southern revolutionaries felt abandoned by their allies and betrayed by their focus on northern development.

One of Asselin’s greatest contributions to the scholarship on the war in Vietnam is his detailed portrait of the inter-party wrangling that ensued as southern militants strove to persuade the moderates at the helm in the VWP to pursue violent revolution below the seventeenth parallel. Le Duan led the charge to convince Hanoi that war would be necessary to combat imperialism and sanctify the revolution. Asselin shows that the Politburo, in response to a growing crisis in the South at the hands of Diem’s violent and oppressive government, incrementally increased its support for violent resistance but continued to temporize and prioritize political tactics whenever possible. While militants clamored ever more urgently for war, moderates were concerned that a number of tasks remained to be completed in the North before southern liberation and national unification could be successful. They feared that neither the armed forces nor the revolutionary organization in the South was strong enough to achieve victory. Furthermore, an instigation of fighting south of the seventeenth parallel would also undermine Hanoi’s international propaganda strategy, which painted Vietnam as a victim of lawless American imperialism. Finally, a turn to war in the South might sour delicate relations between Hanoi and its feuding Chinese and Soviet allies.

According to Asselin, a number of events in 1963 created a critical turning point in the inter-party struggle between militants and moderates and shifted Hanoi’s strategy irrevocably toward the path that Le Duan had long advocated. The firefight at Ap Bac in January suggested that revolutionary forces could win a decisive military victory if they struck before the United States could expand its military commitment to Saigon and if Hanoi offered its full support. Internationally, events in Cuba, Algeria, and Laos seemed to underline the vulnerability of imperialist forces and drive home the bankruptcy of the notion of peaceful coexistence. The climactic episode that finally pushed Hanoi to adopt a militant strategy in the South came in November, when ARVN officers killed Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu in a coup. Many in the VWP saw this as “tantamount to a revolution, marking as it did the transition from a bourgeois reactionary to a military counterrevolutionary regime in Saigon.”<sup>4</sup>

Asselin ably demonstrates that the coup in Saigon led to a period of reassessment in Hanoi and eventually to another sort of coup, in which party militants supplanted the moderates who had steered the ship since 1954. Diem’s ouster prompted an emergency session of the Central Committee that “produced irrevocable changes in the VWP’s revolutionary strategy and the party itself.”<sup>5</sup> The main product of the plenum, Resolution 9, announced the ascendance of Le Duan and the party’s militant wing over Ho and his moderate colleagues. That resolution, which Asselin describes as “the most significant party pronouncement on the situation in the South since the decision to accept the Geneva Accords,” denounced peaceful coexistence as tantamount to capitulation and asserted that war would be necessary to bring about national liberation, reunification, and complete sovereignty.<sup>6</sup> “In tone and substance,” Asselin writes, “Resolution 9 amounted to a declaration of war on the Saigon regime, and the United States by extension.” From that point on, Hanoi was fully invested in liberating the South through military struggle.

For Asselin, this reconfiguration of power was significant for far more than the immediate shift in

strategy it precipitated towards revolutionary war in the South. It was just as critical, he claims, that the Central Committee's adoption of Resolution 9 put an end to the militant-moderate debate within the VWP. As the militants ascended, after being sidelined for nine long years, they purged moderates in their path. For the next twenty-three years, Asselin contends, Le Duan's command and influence over the party would be essentially absolute. He not only dictated the war's beginning, but also determined how it was waged, how it ended, and even what happened after the country was finally reunified in 1975.

Asselin maintains that the Central Committee issued Resolution 9 with confidence that revolutionary forces in the South could win a decisive victory over the ARVN before Washington introduced its own combat forces. When that did not happen, however, and the Americans intensified their efforts, Le Duan and his fellow militants at the helm remained determined to fight on and not to negotiate. "They waged war against the United States with no discernible fear of consequences or concern for the suffering of their compatriots and the physical destruction of their country," writes Asselin, "because they believed history was on their side, and the triumph of the Vietnamese revolution would herald the triumph of the world revolution."<sup>8</sup> A party leadership that had long struggled from the margins to gain support for violent revolution in the South was by 1965 deeply ideologically committed to seeing it through.

Throughout the book, Asselin brilliantly situates a nuanced examination of North Vietnam's inter-party debate within the broader context of the Cold War to upend conventional wisdom about the origins of the American War in Vietnam. He brings to light critical players in that war who have too long lurked in the shadows. His book, read in tandem with Lien-Hang T. Nguyen's equally compelling *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam* (2012), will forever change how we think about the Vietnam War.<sup>9</sup>

#### Notes:

1. Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley, 1999).
2. Asselin, *Hanoi's Road to the Vietnam War, 1954–1965* (Berkeley, 2013), 15.
3. *Ibid.*, 32.
4. *Ibid.*, 161.
5. *Ibid.*, 162.
6. *Ibid.*, 167.
7. *Ibid.*, 168.
8. *Ibid.*, 210.
9. Lien-Hang T. Nguyen, *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam* (Durham, NC, 2012).

### **Review of Michael Neiberg, *Potsdam: The End of World War II and the Remaking of Europe* (New York: Basic Books, 2015)**

James Graham Wilson<sup>1</sup>

"Potsdam, like Versailles," Michael Neiberg writes in the introduction to this very fine book, "was to be a victor's peace, defined, yet again, by the great powers" (xv). When their leaders gathered in a suburb outside of Berlin in July 1945, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union had defeated Nazi Germany and paid for that victory disproportionately. The Soviet Union lost 13.9 percent of its pre-World War II population, in contrast to Great Britain, which lost 0.94 percent, and the United States, which lost 0.32 percent. Marshal Joseph Stalin sought vengeance. "REPARATIONS," he wrote on his notepad again and again at Potsdam, in between drawing sketches of wolves (149).

Disputes over the economic and political status of

Germany would go on to play a central role in the Cold War, yet Neiberg regards the seventeen-day encounter in July and August 1945 "not as the start of a new era of history, but as the end of another" (xix). He develops three key points. First, the Potsdam Conference ended the European civil war that lasted from 1914 to 1945. Second, personal and inherited memories of Versailles and Munich weighed heavily on its participants. Finally, objective realities on the ground as well as perceived lessons of history "limited and shaped the range of options open to so-called 'great men'" (xix).

"Circumstances had changed radically since the end of the Yalta Conference," Neiberg writes (2–3). Roosevelt had died in April; Germany had surrendered on May 7. To make matters worse, "no real consensus existed among the great powers about what they had agreed to at Yalta" (3). The new American president, Harry Truman, could not even track down a reliable memorandum of conversation as he prepared to meet Stalin for the first time. Waiting for the Soviet leader to arrive—on a train with unprecedented security—the president and his top advisors spent a day touring Berlin, which had been ground zero for Allied strategic bombing. The devastation was staggering. Bearing witness did not cause Truman to question the overall relationship between wartime means and ends (and it certainly did not stop him from using the atomic bomb against Japan). Yet it hastened his urgency to achieve his fundamental objectives at Potsdam: getting the Soviets to declare war on Japan and brokering a European peace settlement more equitable and durable than Versailles and Munich.

Achieving these objectives was a moral imperative that outweighed reports that Soviet commanders had watched from the east bank of the Vistula River as the Nazis crushed the Warsaw Uprising in 1944 and that, as they drove toward and occupied Berlin, Soviet soldiers were committing heinous acts against German civilians. The Americans and the British had to continue to bargain with Stalin, who, as Averell Harriman recounted, had been "better informed than Roosevelt, more realistic than Churchill, and in some ways the most effective of the war leaders" at Yalta, while "[a]t the same time . . . a murderous tyrant" (58). And bargaining with Stalin was a task deemed manageable. "The truth is he is a very likeable person," said James Byrnes, the new secretary of state, who accompanied the president to Potsdam and had also been at Yalta (58). Truman agreed. "I like Stalin. He is straightforward, knows what he wants, and will compromise when he can't get it," he wrote his wife, Bess, shortly after the Potsdam conference began (249).

In hindsight, knowing what we know about the events that took place between 1946 and 1950, it is easy to say that these men simply got duped. Yet they achieved the objectives they set out to achieve at Potsdam. America's preponderant power—most notably, its economic capacity and its nuclear monopoly—differentiated Potsdam from Munich. Was there a credible alternative to the settlement along the lines of rolling back the gains of the Red Army? It is doubtful. Churchill, who neared a complete physical and psychological breakdown, and whose countrymen were about to give him the boot, may have been pondering a scheme to launch an English invasion of the Soviet Union, but there was no way that the Americans (not to mention the rest of the British people) would have signed on to that in the summer of 1945.

After a pause in the negotiations, Clement Attlee returned to Potsdam as prime minister. He and Truman were not their larger-than-life predecessors, and they also looked to a new foreign minister and secretary of state. "Yet for all these fundamental changes in personality," Neiberg writes, "the policies of the Americans and the British changed remarkably little. . . . Neither Truman nor Attlee made radical changes to their country's main positions"



(xxi). That is a statement worth pondering alongside some of the main points of Frank Costigliola's *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War*. Averell Harriman, a hawk toward Moscow (as indeed he was) in Costigliola's book, comes across here as a nuisance whom Truman for the most part ignored. Along with James Forrestal and William Leahy, Harriman had devoted himself to FDR; these men showed up to Potsdam, without invitation, to lend their "support."

FDR would not have dressed down Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov in the Oval Office, as Truman did that April, or spoken as "plainly" as Truman had, when, on the floor of the Senate in 1941, he stated that the United States ought to assist the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany in wiping each other out. At Potsdam, Stalin griped and Molotov sulked, but it is hard to say that Truman's gaffes negatively affected the outcome there or elsewhere. Truman rashly canceled Lend Lease aid to the Soviets shortly after taking the oath of office, but as Neiberg points out, he quickly acknowledged his mistake and reversed that decision. When it came to the encounter at Potsdam, the president's biggest mistake was not something he said; rather, it was the coyness with which he spoke to Stalin about the atomic bomb. It would have been interesting to see—and Neiberg might have speculated on this—how FDR would have approached Stalin. Would there have been a more effective way to handle the disclosure? Such questions are key in thinking about any problem, great or small, in history.

This most recent book from Neiberg is well worth assigning in an undergraduate lecture course, where there may be only one week to cover the years 1914–1945. It would also go well in a more advanced seminar alongside *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances*, David Reynolds's *From Munich to Pearl Harbor*, and Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, to convey FDR's role in shaping America's destiny in the twentieth century while often confounding everyone. He certainly confounded people when he allowed party leaders to choose a running mate for him in 1944. "Oh shit," Senator Truman remarked upon hearing the news at the Democratic convention that he was to replace Henry Wallace on the party's ticket. "Why the hell didn't he tell me in the first place?" (10). The runner-up, who was none other than James Byrnes, was equally taken aback.

As Byrnes and Truman began the journey home from Potsdam on the USS *Augusta*, the two men "hit the bourbon bottle rather heavy" to celebrate their success. "Three days later," Neiberg writes, "with the *Augusta* still 700 nautical miles east of the Virginia coast, a naval officer interrupted Truman's lunch to give him the first report of the atomic bomb's success over Hiroshima." It was at that moment—not during the Potsdam Conference—that "a new era in the history of the world had opened" (256).

Note:

1. The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of State or the U.S. government.

**The Gradual Internationalist: A Review of Lawrence Kaplan's *The Conversion of Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg: From Isolation to International Engagement* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2015)**

Autumn C. Lass

Senator Arthur Vandenberg was one of the most influential Senators of the early Cold War years. His influence over foreign policy and his work to engineer bipartisan foreign policy had major effects on the Republican Party and the United States' role in global affairs. Although Senator Vandenberg has been

one of the most researched and written about Cold War Congressmen, Lawrence Kaplan's *The Conversion of Senator Arthur Vandenberg* provides a fresh perspective on him.<sup>1</sup> In his political biography, Kaplan challenges the notion that the senator's transformation from isolationist to internationalist was an abrupt shift. Instead, he argues, "Vandenberg's conversion to internationalism was gradual and hesitant" (240). He provides an in-depth analysis of this gradual evolution, tracing it from Vandenberg's early exposure to politics to his last works with Congress. Much of his analysis, especially on the post-1945 period, focuses on Vandenberg's commitment to the United Nations and on how his deep devotion to it prompted his responses to other foreign policy issues like the North Atlantic Treaty.

While Kaplan does address aspects of Vandenberg's approach to domestic politics, he uses his domestic opinions as a way to illustrate Vandenberg's overall worldview and explores variety of themes to show a degree of continuity in Vandenberg's political ideology. Vandenberg's long-standing anticommunism, his belief in the need for some type of international governing body, and his ability to embrace the middle road positions indicate that it should not have been a surprise that Vandenberg became an internationalist, Kaplan argues. His temperament and his convictions show that his conversion to internationalism was a gradual process, not just a reaction to Pearl Harbor and World War II.

Kaplan breaks his biography down into ten chapters. Each chapter provides insight into key moments, themes, individuals that played a part in Vandenberg's conversion. Kaplan begins his analysis in 1906, as Vandenberg was just starting out in his journalism career, and then outlines the impact that progressivism had on him during his early adult years. Vandenberg was greatly influenced by President Theodore Roosevelt, but he also came to understand that if he was going to become an influential member of the Republican Party, he was going to have to tone down his progressive ideals. Kaplan demonstrates the changes in Vandenberg's politics best with his analysis of his attitudes toward the Woodrow Wilson administration. He argues Vandenberg's appreciation for internationalism and his preference for taking the middle of the road positions can be seen in his approach to the League of Nations. Kaplan also establishes that by 1928 Vandenberg closely associated himself with Alexander Hamilton because he believed Hamilton exhibited the best traits of both progressivism and conservatism, and he tried to follow his example (17).

From 1928 to 1936, Vandenberg continued down the path toward becoming a "Republican moderate." His political outlook was a combination of "nationalism and guarded internationalism" (25). His attitude toward the World Court exemplified this synthesis; while he supported the notion of an international body, he also insisted on including an amendment to the World Court that would protect American interests. During the 1930s he became increasingly frustrated with the Roosevelt administration's attempts to advance the power of the presidency, and his disapproval of Roosevelt, combined with his own growing prominence within the Republican Party, forced Vandenberg to adopt a more isolationist approach. Kaplan argues while Vandenberg remained committed to isolationism up until 1941, he began to recognize that true isolation was impossible and advocated instead for "insulation" (66). It was the Lend-Lease program that presented Vandenberg with his greatest challenge, because his main goal during these years was to keep the U.S. out of war and keep the war-making powers of the executive branch in check.

While Kaplan contends that Vandenberg's reaction to the attack on Pearl Harbor was a "forerunner" to Vandenberg's true conversion to internationalism, as long as President Roosevelt was unwilling to include Congress, particularly Republicans, in his foreign policy plans, Vandenberg's

“potential internationalism” remained “in abeyance” (85). Using the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration as an example, Kaplan demonstrates that Vandenberg’s approach to foreign policy during the war was more about creating bipartisan foreign support than actually creating and fostering internationalism. While it was during these years that Vandenberg came to understand the need to more fully embrace internationalism, he was not willing to let the executive branch dictate its course. He was concerned that the administration would put the Allies’ interest before American interests. Therefore, he worked with leading Democratic Congressional leaders like Tom Connally to create bipartisan foreign policy that would allow for internationalism but also foster United States’ interests.

Vandenberg’s speech to the Senate January 10, 1945, is considered to be the turning point his conversion (108). Yet, Kaplan argues the speech itself was not the moment Vandenberg was wholly converted to internationalism. It was not until he was appointed a delegate to the UN Charter that he became a “true believer in a new order” (115). Kaplan argues “helping to align American foreign policy with the terms of the UN Charter was a manifestation of his conversion” (142). “Without admitting that his isolationism before Pearl Harbor was a mistake, [Vandenberg] recognized that new circumstances required a new approach to achieving a peaceful world for America in the future” (240). It was the possibility of creating a new international peace-keeping body that truly converted him. In the years after this conversion, Vandenberg became one of the most influential Senators on U.S. foreign policy. Kaplan examines the work he did as diplomat and then statesman during the Truman administration. In both roles, Vandenberg was determined to promote and protect the United Nations. He worked hard to ensure that the UN Charter was supported by his fellow Republican congressmen because, as Kaplan notes, he believed “no other instrument” could keep world peace (168). Yet even as he embraced internationalism in the form at the UN he vigorously defended American interests even within the organizations.

By 1947, Vandenberg had become the chairman for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the spokesman for the Republican Party on foreign relations. During his years as chairman, he worked with the Truman administration to create policies like the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan. But even when he advocated for these policies, he always rationalized them in the larger context of the United Nations. While Vandenberg did value his relationship with the Truman administration, he made sure the administration did not take advantage of his middle-ground positions on foreign affairs. For example, he repeatedly criticized Truman’s approach to China. In 1949 Vandenberg’s health began to decline, but he continued his commitment to international cooperation as the primary method for achieving world peace and security.

Vandenberg worked throughout his political career to achieve bipartisan foreign policy. Kaplan believes he should also be remembered for his efforts to push the United States – and his fellow Republicans – to accept internationalism. He always embraced aspects of progressive internationalism, but he balanced those ideals with a strong desire to promote American national interests and protect congressional powers from the executive branch. He could be an isolationist when it served American interests, but he fully accepted internationalism because he believed it was the only way to ensure American peace and prosperity. Kaplan places Vandenberg in the company of other Cold War architects like George Marshall and Dean Acheson and argues his legacy as an internationalist should never be in question.

Note:

1. For works on specifically about Arthur H. Vandenberg see Philip Briggs, “Senator Vandenberg, Bipartisanship, and the Origins of the United Nations Article 51,” *Mid-America* 60, no. 1 (October 1978): 163-169; Thomas Michael Hill, “Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, the Politics of Bipartisanship, and the Origins of Anti-Soviet Consensus, 1941-1949,” *World Affairs* 138, no. 3 (Winter 1975-1976):219-241; C. David Tompkins, *Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg: The Evolution of a Modern Republican 1884-1945* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1970)

**Review of Richard M. Filipink Jr.,  
*Dwight Eisenhower and American Foreign Policy during  
the 1960s: An American Lion in Winter* (New York:  
Lexington Books, 2015).**

David L. Prentice

**H**istorians of American foreign relations seldom devote much attention to the post-presidential careers of presidents. However, in the case of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard Filipink persuasively argues that we should. Filipink contends that Eisenhower had significant influence over the course of U.S. foreign policy in the 1960s. Unlike other modern presidents, Eisenhower benefited from his standing as a military and political leader, a larger Cold War context that made his Democratic successors more vulnerable to partisan attacks on international affairs, and considerable post-presidency popularity (in 1967 and 1968 he supplanted Lyndon Johnson as the most admired man in America). Despite the perception that Ike was a moderate Republican, Filipink demonstrates that Eisenhower was deeply partisan and had little trouble crossing the water’s edge when it came to politics and foreign policy after he left office. Here, Filipink adds to the rich and growing literature on the role of domestic politics in 1960s foreign policy debates. But Filipink also shows Presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson successfully managing someone who could have been a formidable political adversary.

Filipink begins by succinctly explaining Eisenhower’s views on foreign affairs and his record while in office. He notes that as president, Eisenhower had been relatively cautious, particularly in regard to the use of U.S. forces. In places like Vietnam, his policy “looked like a success, and was portrayed as one” even as it laid the foundation for future troubles. His actions turned Laos into a Cold War battleground and hardened the resolve of the Fidel Castro regime in Cuba. Owing to these policies, his successors would face difficult decisions even as Eisenhower left office with a record of peace and a reservoir of American goodwill.

Because of Eisenhower’s post-presidential popularity and how close the 1960 election had been, President Kennedy tried to manage the former president. He was often successful at it: by keeping Eisenhower apprised of major deliberations and decisions, Kennedy pursued his own foreign policy while minimizing the former president’s criticism. Filipink writes that while Eisenhower considered JFK an immature and indecisive leader, he understood the difficulties of the office and believed that publicly exposing Kennedy’s weakness and blunders would further compromise U.S. credibility abroad and encourage Communist aggression. As Filipink rightly notes, however, election cycles were the exception, as Eisenhower went on the attack to benefit Republican candidates.

Lyndon Johnson also appreciated Eisenhower’s political influence. In 1964, LBJ kept him at arm’s length because he feared cooperation could lead to leaks or charges that he was dependent upon Republican guidance. After his landslide election, however, Johnson consulted Eisenhower before nearly every Vietnam-related decision. By keeping

him informed and giving him an opportunity to share his advice, Johnson gained a powerful ally in his escalation of the Vietnam conflict. Eisenhower's public approval helped build popular support for the war and protected Johnson's flank from Republican hawks. In speeches, articles, and interviews, the former president would call for American unity while privately urging Johnson to use sufficient military force to "win the war." During election cycles, Eisenhower would become more vocal in his criticism of Johnson's gradualism, though he would return to relative quiescence after these moments passed. Overall, Filipink convincingly argues that Eisenhower was a partisan hawk who at times influenced, or at least reinforced, White House thinking on foreign affairs and the domestic political stakes involved in them.

But, the Democrats' ability to manage Ike weakens Filipink's argument that "Eisenhower's deeds, advice, and utterances during the 1960s constrained foreign policy choices for John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson." Eisenhower may have been an American lion in winter but he was at least to some extent tamed by his successors. They worked to minimize the political consequences of his dissent. Against Eisenhower's wishes and advice, Kennedy disassembled his prized National Security Council structure and pursued negotiations to neutralize Laos. "Kennedy walked a fine line in his dealings with Eisenhower," Filipink writes, "doing enough to keep him placated and publicity quiet, but not fully subordinating his plans to Eisenhower's advice." When Johnson adopted a bombing halt and began negotiations with North Vietnam in 1968, he secured Eisenhower's blessing. Given this success, I wish Filipink had grappled with Fredrik Logevall's argument that a "permissive context" existed in 1964-65.<sup>1</sup> If Eisenhower was so easily managed, could Johnson have handled him in such a way that an early American exit from Vietnam might have resulted in a few minor scratches rather than a politically fatal attack from Eisenhower and the Republican Right?

In this regard, Filipink could have sharpened his argument that Eisenhower constrained JFK's and LBJ's options because he "was a potential rallying point for the opposition" by better establishing Eisenhower's influence with the public, Congress, and the Republican Party. I believe that Filipink is right to suggest that Eisenhower stood at the nexus of these groups and that his position gave him considerable clout. As the author notes, Kennedy and Johnson thought Eisenhower important and worried about a backlash from the right, while Republicans recognized his influence and urged him to attack the White

House publicly. Perhaps by drawing on congressional correspondence, additional Republican sources, polling, news media coverage, or other archives, Filipink could have better connected the lion's roar to his potential political bite. Doing so would have reaffirmed Eisenhower's relevance to 1960s foreign policy and political debates and better demonstrated how losing Ike's support would have hurt Kennedy and Johnson politically.

Finally, in a book devoted to Eisenhower's influence in the 1960s, Filipink would have done well to extend his analysis to include Richard Nixon. Nixon's 1968 campaign rhetoric harkened back to Eisenhower's foreign policies and grand strategy. Moreover, his presidential emphasis on U.S. airpower and his threats to bomb North Vietnam unless they agreed to negotiate in earnest also drew on Eisenhower and the legacies of the 1950s, particularly in relation to how they both interpreted the end of the Korean War. A summary of the secondary literature would have likely sufficed to explain Eisenhower's influence on Nixon's early foreign policy.

These criticisms aside, this book has much to commend it. Filipink gets at Eisenhower's partisanship, especially during election years. He also reminds historians that some presidents can command enormous influence after they leave office. As he demonstrates, Presidents Kennedy and Johnson harbored no illusions about his loyalties or his political power. Filipink also explains the paradox of Eisenhower's post-presidential hawkishness. Once removed from office, his caution gave way to greater militancy because he was a sincere Cold Warrior who sought to stiffen the resolve of Democratic presidents when they faced diplomatic crises in the 1960s. And as a fiscal conservative, he wanted to direct their attention away from domestic programs like the Great Society.

In short, *Dwight Eisenhower and American Foreign Policy during the 1960s: An American Lion in Winter* is a good and needed addition to the historiography. A richer treatment of Eisenhower as a political and popular leader would have strengthened Filipink's analysis and his argument that the ex-president constrained the options of his Democratic successors. But whether tamed or not, Eisenhower emerges here as an elderly lion ever prowling around American political and foreign affairs. Aware of the danger, Presidents Kennedy and Johnson did not turn their backs on him, and neither should we.

Note:

1. Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley, 1999).



## 1. Professional Notes

**John Lamberton Harper** has been appointed the first Kenneth H. Keller Professor of American Foreign Policy at SAIS Europe, the Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

## 2. Recent Books of Interest

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- Blomstedt, Larry. *Truman, Congress, and Korea: The Politics of America's First Undeclared War* (Kentucky, 2016).
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- Etheridge, Brian. *Enemies to Allies: Cold War Germany and American Memory* (Kentucky, 2016).
- Felix, David. *Kennan and the Cold War: An Unauthorized Biography* (Transaction Publishers, 2015).
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- Ghettas, Mohamed Lakhdar. *Foreign Policy and International Relations during the Cold War* (Tauris, 2016).
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- Ikenberry, G. John. *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton, 2016).
- Jampoler, Andrew. *Embassy to the Eastern Courts: America's Secret First Pivot toward Asia, 1832-1837* (Naval Institute Press, 2015).
- Jensen, Steven. *The Making of International Human Rights: The 1960s, Decolonization, and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (Cambridge, 2016).
- Johnson, Loch. *A Season of Inquiry Revisited: The Church Committee Confronts America's Spy Agencies* (Kansas, 2015).
- Jones, Howard. *My Lai: A Massacre and Its Legacy* (Oxford, 2016).
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- Milne, David. *Worldmaking: The Art and Science of American Diplomacy* (Farrar, 2015).
- Mitcham, John C. *Race and Imperial Defense in the British World, 1870-1914* (Cambridge, 2016).
- Neer, Robert M. *Napalm: An American Biography* (Harvard, 2015).
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**Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant expense report**  
August 25, 2015

On January 4, 2015, I was privileged to receive a \$2,000 Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAHR) at their annual awards luncheon in New York City. My dissertation is about technological interchange during India's Third Five Year Plan (1961-66). I focus on four case studies during this period, three of which received technical assistance from the United States: 1) western-bloc military aid to the Indian Air Force after the 1962 Sino-Indian War; 2) the Uiam Hydroelectric Project; and 3) Tarapur Atomic Power Station, India's first nuclear powerplant. In 2014, I began my dissertation research by traveling to the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland. In 2015, with SHAHR's assistance, I was able to travel to India to complete my dissertation research there.

Just hours after receiving the Bemis award, I boarded a plane at Newark airport and flew nonstop to New Delhi. I spent the next five months researching in archives and traveling around India to visit sites related to the case studies of my dissertation. For half of the time, I was based in New Delhi, where I was able to stay inexpensively with family friends. I spent most of my time in Delhi at the National Archives of India (NAI), which holds voluminous records relating to three of my four case studies. I also spent some time in the archives reading room of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

For the balance of my time in India, I traveled to other parts of the country. In Kolkata, Guwahati, and Shillong, I visited libraries and archives, where I was able to find documents relating to some of my case studies. I also visited sites relevant to my case studies, because I wanted to see those places with my own eyes so I could describe them better in my dissertation. Outside of Shillong, I visited Uiam Lake, formed by the Uiam Hydroelectric Project. North of Mumbai, I visited Tarapur village, the namesake of Tarapur Atomic Power Station. The USAID-financed powerplant is not open to the public, but I was able to visit a ruined Portuguese fort in the area that I had read about during my research.

Having finished my research in India, I have gathered more than enough material to write my dissertation. I am grateful to the SHAHR award committee for selecting my application, and the donors who made this award possible.

William A.T. Logan  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of History, Auburn University



I have recently returned from a four-month stay in Tanzania, which completed a year of research overseas for my Ph.D. project, entitled 'Politics, decolonisation, and the Cold War in Dar es Salaam, c. 1967-72'. I used the funds kindly provided by the Hogan Fellowship to take language courses in Lisbon and Dar es Salaam.

The under-used but very rich archives in Lisbon offered an alternative angle to international politics in Africa to those found elsewhere in the United States and Western Europe, and shed greater light on the activities of FRELIMO, the Mozambican liberation movement, in Dar es Salaam during the independence struggle.

In Dar es Salaam itself, I received three weeks of intense tuition in Swahili. Although my research was exclusively conducted in English through interviews with former politicians and government officials, a basic command of Swahili was invaluable in terms of facilitating daily life in a country where English is the official language but far from widely spoken. I hope to continue with further study as part of future projects. Should other students wish to undertake Swahili training, I highly recommend KIU Kiswahili, based in Msasani, Dar es Salaam.

My study has pushed a multilateral approach and put a considerable strain on my own language skills - but I feel the trade-off between expertise in a single language and the possibility of addressing my subject from multiple angles has in my case more than paid off. Many thanks to SHAHR for allowing me to pursue these fresh lines of inquiry via its very generous Hogan Fellowship.

George Roberts  
Ph.D. candidate in History  
University of Warwick



## Announcement 2016 SHAFR Bernath Lecture Prize: Brooke L. Blower

The selection committee of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Bernath Lecture Prize announces that the 2016 winner of this award is Prof. Brooke L. Blower. Prof. Blower is an Associate Professor of History at Boston University. She is the author of *Becoming Americans in Paris: Transatlantic Politics and Culture between the World Wars* (Oxford University Press, 2011), which received best book awards from the Society for French Historical Studies as well as the New England Historical Association. Prof. Blower has published articles in flagship journals, including *The American Historical Review* and *Diplomatic History*. She also co-edited with Mark Bradley the anthology, *The Familiar Made Strange: American Icons and Artifacts after the Transnational Turn* (Cornell 2015). In addition, Prof. Blower co-chaired the program committee for the 2015 SHAFR annual conference. In the words of her nominee, Prof. Blower “is clearly at the very top of a younger cohort of scholars whose work is recasting how we understand the place of the United States in the twentieth century world and will without doubt continue to be a leading figure in the field.” Our committee unanimously agreed with this assessment. As one member observed, Prof. Blower has “already produced an impressive range of exceptionally high-quality work that speaks to a number of different audiences and concerns.” Prof. Blower will receive a \$1,000 cash prize, which will be awarded at the SHAFR luncheon at the American Historical Association Luncheon on January 9, 2016, in Atlanta, Georgia. Prof. Blower also will present the Bernath Lecture at the SHAFR-AHA lunch in January 2017, and the lecture will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Diplomatic History*.

Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, University of California, Irvine  
Chair of 2016 Bernath Lecture Prize Committee

Matthew Jones, London School of Economics and Political Science  
Chair of 2017 Committee

Brian DeLay, University of California, Berkeley  
Chair of 2018 Committee



# The Last Word: SHAFR and the Patriots' Way

Andrew L. Johns

Love them or hate them, the New England Patriots have been the dominant team in the NFL for nearly two decades—an almost unprecedented run of consistent success that has resulted in four Super Bowl championships, a near-perfect season in 2007, and the league's highest winning percentage over the past fifteen years. One of the reasons why they have been so successful—deflated footballs, Spygate, David Tyree, and the support of Mitch Lerner notwithstanding—is that Bill Belichick and the rest of the Patriots' hierarchy are completely dispassionate when it comes to decisions about the organization's future. They have traded or released players who are still productive a year early rather than a year late; have identified problems before they hamper the team's ability to continue to win; and have made decisions and taken actions that are sometimes far outside of the box in order to ensure continued success. The Patriots constantly focus on both winning in the present and creating a foundation to replicate those accomplishments the future.

As I look at the state of SHAFR as we approach the 49<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization's founding, I find myself wondering if we are the Patriots (which really kills me as a lifelong Dallas Cowboys fan) or if we could become the Oakland Raiders—a once proud and dominant franchise that did not recognize the problems with its roster and in the organization, and lacked a rational strategy for the future, all of which led them to become the perennial doormat of the NFL.

By all accounts, SHAFR is in great shape, as David Engerman alludes to in his presidential column at the beginning of this issue. We have a healthy endowment that allows us to support our membership in ways that comparably sized professional societies lack. Our expertise has relevance beyond the academy, as colleagues like Jeremi Suri, Mary Dudziak, KC Johnson, and many others demonstrate regularly in the media, in op-ed essays, and in the blogosphere. Yet as every reputable investment opportunity wisely warns, past performance is not indicative of future results. We need to understand that while things have been and currently are excellent for SHAFR, that may not always be the case. That begs the question: where should our collective attention be focused to avoid problems as we head into SHAFR's second half-century?

This is a topic I have been pondering for several months. As I considered a variety of prospective answers, I decided to take an informal—and *highly* unscientific—survey of nearly 100 SHAFR members (a cross-section of graduate students, recent Ph.D.s, mid-career, and senior faculty at a variety of research and teaching institutions) and asked them to identify potential problems that could be issues with which our organization will need to grapple either immediately or in the near future. Let me give a few representative examples of the most common responses that I received:

**Education:** “SHAFR should consider engaging in national conversations about the role of Humanities/Social Science Education, as doubts continue to be raised about the value of this type of education. SHAFR is in a good position to articulate the benefits of historical study to informed

citizenship.”

**Teaching:** SHAFR should be “focusing more attention and resources on teaching, applied learning, and public engagement, and integrative initiatives with other disciplines. The organization's certificate of incorporation states SHAFR is devoted to the ‘*study, advancement and dissemination of a knowledge of American Foreign Relations.*’ Original research is a crucial part of this mission, but it's not the only thing that it should be supporting.”

**Graduate student support:** “SHAFR has to continue to be aggressive in promoting itself as a great and welcoming environment for graduate students;” “foster better interaction between established scholars and graduate students;” and “Supporting young scholars in the span of time between Ph.D. and landing the first job.”

**Publishing:** “Can we assure the financial future of the organization given the changing landscape of academic journal publishing? What will be the fate of the print version of *DH*, and (significantly) of its refereeing function?”

**Organizational focus:** “Adjusting to changing academic interests without going too far and thereby losing track of SHAFR's core purpose...the biggest danger at the moment is veering too far from the core concern with American policymaking,” along with a concern that “the idea of U.S. foreign policy, i.e. decisions being made by presidents, secretaries of state, high and mid-ranking government officials, and organizations, is getting lost...it is perhaps even more important these days to be able to provide a big picture before getting into the details. Moreover, to suggest that this is a concern has become ‘political.’”

**Marginalization:** “In the admirable rush to expand the SHAFR tent, we cannot and should not leave SHAFR loyalists behind. Many long-time members of the organization feel increasingly marginalized, whether because they cannot get panels accepted at the annual conference, or because they seem like they are treated as irrelevant simply because they are not on the alleged cutting edge of whatever the newest trend is and actually study the policy-making process. Twenty or thirty or forty years of participation and service is disregarded in favor of the flavor of the month.”

**Leadership:** “Why is it that SHAFR's leadership is always drawn from the R1 schools almost exclusively? Council needs to reflect our makeup as a professional society, and a sizable percentage of us teach at liberal arts colleges or smaller schools that do not have the research focus that the Ivy League does.”

It is clear from this sampling that there are many concerns about SHAFR's present and future. Now, I do not want to imply that we are fiddling while Rome is burning. It would be an exaggeration to suggest that SHAFR is in any kind of real or immediate trouble—indeed, if we can survive in the wake of Peter Hahn's retirement as executive director, we really are in great shape. But these are



legitimate concerns, and for every one that is mentioned here, there are undoubtedly several others that should be on our collective radar.

I could talk about each of these issues at length, and perhaps we should have a *Passport* forum devoted to precisely that. But let me address a couple of things briefly. First, SHAFR needs to recognize that not everyone in the organization fits into the research scholar model. If recent statistics are accurate, nearly three-quarters of academics either do not have tenure or are not eligible for tenure (as contingent or adjunct faculty). In addition, a significant percentage of SHAFR members teach at state universities, liberal arts colleges, and smaller teaching schools—and a lot of our colleagues teach so many courses each year that they are left with precious little time for research and writing...not to mention that institutional research funding has become increasingly scarce. Does it concern anyone that research universities are massively over-represented on Council? That the Teaching Committee is only guaranteed one spot on the annual conference program and, frankly, has a very limited mandate and resources? Or that graduate students are represented on Council but adjunct and contingent faculty are not? Should we be devoting more attention and resources to pedagogical and professional considerations?

Moreover, it is troubling that as SHAFR has evolved, it has frequently done so at the expense of many who have contributed a great deal to the organization over the past several decades. For instance, I understand that putting together the annual conference program is a major challenge given existing spatial and temporal limitations, but when a panel with four long-time (and, for the purposes of this column, anonymous) SHAFR members, each of whom is a distinguished scholar and decorated teacher with years of service to our society, fails to make the program—particularly when that panel focuses on an important issue

like experiential learning—there is a problem (*n.b.* this is not even close to the only example I could cite, just the most recent and shocking). Expanding SHAFR's tent as the definition of what constitutes "American foreign relations" broadens is welcome, but when that results in panels, plenary sessions, and publications that are so narrowly focused that they are of interest to only a slim segment of the membership, there is a problem. When SHAFR prize committees refuse to consider books, articles, or research projects that do not fit into a specific conception of what constitutes legitimate foreign relations research, there is a problem. When long-time members of the organization contemplate disassociating themselves with SHAFR because they feel like their interests and concerns are not being adequately represented, there is a problem.

For these and a score of other reasons, SHAFR should take a page out of the Patriots' playbook and be strategic about dealing with these and other potential issues as we move forward into 2016 and beyond. At my university, our college created a Futures Committee tasked with identifying problems that might arise over the next decade and studying and proposing solutions on how they could be dealt with proactively. Perhaps Council should make a similar effort, populating the committee with representation from Ivy League institutions, public universities, liberal arts schools, and small teaching colleges, and including adjuncts, graduate students, junior faculty, and tenured faculty. For many of us, SHAFR is our intellectual, professional, and (let's be honest) social home, and we owe a debt of gratitude to people like Thomas Bailey, Alexander DeConde, Walter LaFeber, and Robert Divine for establishing the foundation for where we are today. We should repay that debt by passing along to our successors an organization that is stronger than we found it.

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