

PASSPORT



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IN THIS ISSUE

America First: The Past and Future of an Idea
On Grand Strategy: A Roundtable
The Sorrows of International Historians

AND MORE...

Passport

THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS REVIEW



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Passport Editorial Office:

Andrew Johns
Department of History
Brigham Young University
2161 JFSB, Provo, UT 84602
passport@shafir.org
801-422-8942 (phone)
801-422-0275 (fax)

SHAFR Business Office:

Amy Sayward, Executive Director
Department of History
Middle Tennessee State University
1301 East Main Street, Box 23
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
Amy.Sayward@mtsu.edu
615-898-2569

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Passport

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Contributors
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David L. Anderson is Professor of History Emeritus at California State University, Monterey Bay, and Senior Lecturer of National Security Affairs at Naval Postgraduate School. He is the author or editor of eleven books, including *Trapped By Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam* (1991), which won SHAFR's Robert H. Ferrell Prize. He is a past president of SHAFR.

Robert K. Brigham is Shirley Ecker Boskey Professor of History and International Relations at Vassar College. He is the author of nine books on the history of U.S. foreign relations, among them *Reckless: Henry Kissinger and the Tragedy of Vietnam* (2018) and *Argument Without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy* (1999), written with former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and James G. Blight.

Andrew Buchanan is Senior Lecturer in the Department of History at the University of Vermont, where he has taught courses on global and military history since 2007. He received his B.A. from Oxford University and his Ph.D. from Rutgers University, and he has written both on strategy and on war and culture in World War II. His book, *American Grand Strategy in the Mediterranean during World War II*, was published in 2014, and he is currently completing a textbook provisionally titled, *World at War: A Global History of World War II, 1931-1953*.

Jefferson Cowie is James G. Stahlman Professor of History at Vanderbilt University. He is the author of *The Great Exception: The New Deal and the Limits of American Politics* (2016); *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (2010), which received several awards including the 2011 Francis Parkman Prize and the 2011 Merle Curti Award; and *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (1999), which received the 2000 Phillip Taft Prize.

Brian D'Haeseleer is Visiting Assistant Professor of History at Lyon College. He is the author of *The Salvadoran Crucible: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency in El Salvador, 1979-1992* (2017), and his research has been published in *Diplomacy and Statecraft* and *Cold War History*. He is currently working on a book manuscript on the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama and how it affected Panama as well as U.S. grand and regional strategy.

Brian C. Etheridge is Senior Associate Provost and Professor of History at Georgia Gwinnett College. A previous winner of SHAFR's Stuart L. Bernath Scholarly Article Prize, he is the author of *Enemies to Allies: Cold War Germany and American Memory* (2016); the co-editor, with Kenneth Osgood, of *The United States and Public Diplomacy: The New International History Meets the New Cultural History* (2010); and the co-editor of *Curriculum Internationalization and the Future of Education* (2018). He serves as chair of SHAFR's Teaching Committee.

David Farber is Roy A. Roberts Distinguished Professor in the Department of History at the University of Kansas. His numerous publications include *Everybody Ought to Be Rich: The Life and Times of John J. Raskob, Capitalist* (2013); *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism* (2010); and *Taken Hostage: The Iran Hostage Crisis and America's First Encounter with Radical Islam* (2004).

Michael Froman is James R. Schlesinger Distinguished Professor at the Miller Center for Public Affairs at the University of Virginia. A veteran diplomat and trade expert who served as the U.S. trade representative in the Obama Administration from 2013-2017, he is also a distinguished fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and previously served as assistant to the president and deputy national security advisor for international economic affairs.

John Lewis Gaddis is Robert A. Lovett Professor of Military & Naval History and Director of the Brady Johnson Program in Grand Strategy at Yale University. His numerous publications include *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security* (1982; rev. ed., 2005); *The Cold War: A New History* (2006); *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (2011), which received the Pulitzer Prize; and *On Grand Strategy* (2018). He is a past president of SHAFR.

Beverly Gage is Professor of History and American Studies and Brady-Johnson Professor of Grand Strategy at Yale University. She is the author of *The Day Wall Street Exploded: A Story of America in its First Age of Terror* (2008), as well as articles in the *Journal of American History* and the *Journal of Policy History*. She is currently working on a biography of former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover.

Maria Cristina Garcia is Howard A. Newman Professor of American Studies at Cornell University. She is the author of *The Refugee Challenge in Post-Cold War America* (2017); *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada* (2006); and *Havana USA: Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida* (1996). She was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Society of American Historians in 2017.

Darren Dochuk is Associate Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of *From the Bible Belt to the Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (2011), which received the Allan Nevins Prize, the John H. Dunning Prize, and the Ellis Hawley Prize; and the co-editor of three books. His current research is a study of religion and politics in North America's age of oil, 1890 to the present.

Michael Green is Director of Asian Studies and Professor at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, and Senior Vice President for Asia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. His most recent book is *By More than Providence: Grand Strategy and American Power in the Asia Pacific since 1783* (2017).

Peter L. Hahn is Professor of History and Divisional Dean of Arts & Humanities at The Ohio State University. He has published seven books, including *Missions Accomplished?: The United States and Iraq since World War I* (2012) and *Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945-1961* (2004). The long-time executive director of SHAFR, he received the inaugural SHAFR Distinguished Service Award in 2017 and serves as president of the organization in 2018.

Nicole Hemmer is Assistant Professor in Presidential Studies at the Miller Center for Public Affairs at the University of Virginia. She is the author of *Messengers of the Right: Conservative Media and the Transformation of American Politics* (2016), and is an active public intellectual, appearing frequently in print and on air in a wide variety of venues, including as the co-host of the popular podcast "Past and Present" and as editor-in-chief of the "Made by History" blog with the *Washington Post*.

Matthew Jacobs is Associate Professor of History at the University of Florida. He is the author of *Imagining the Middle East: The Building of an American Foreign Policy, 1918-1967* (2011) and is currently working on two projects: *Islam and US*, a manuscript which investigates official and unofficial U.S. responses to the rise of political Islam as a global phenomenon since 1960; and a project that uses sports as a vehicle to examine critical issues in post-1945 international history.

Geoffrey Kabaservice is Director of Political Studies at the Niskanen Center. He is the author of *The Guardians: Kingman Brewster, His Circle, and the Rise of the Liberal Establishment* (2004) and *Rule and Ruin: The Downfall of Moderation and the Destruction of the Republican Party, from Eisenhower to the Tea Party* (2012). He received his Ph.D. in History at Yale University.

Robert Kagan is Stephen & Barbara Friedman Senior Fellow with the Project on International Order and Strategy in the Foreign Policy program at the Brookings Institution. He is the author of several books, including *The World America Made* (2012) and *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World from its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the 20th Century* (2006).

Zeb Larson is a Ph.D. candidate at The Ohio State University and the assistant editor of *Passport: The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Review*. He is currently finishing a dissertation on the anti-apartheid movement in the United States.

Melvyn P. Leffler is Edward Stettinius Professor of History in the Corcoran Department of History at the University of Virginia. He is the author of numerous books, including *Safeguarding Democratic Capitalism* (2017); *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (2007), which received the George Louis Beer Prize in 2008; and *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (1992), which received the Bancroft, Hoover, and Ferrell Prizes in 1993. He is a past president of SHAFR.

Matthew D. Linton is the Communications and Publications Manager for the Council of Graduate Schools in Washington, D.C. He completed his doctorate in History at Brandeis University in 2018. His current work examines the construction of American expertise on China in the mid-20th century and its struggle to maintain political relevance while avoiding controversy.

David Milne is Senior Lecturer in the School of History at the University of East Anglia. He is the author of *America's Rasputin: Walt Rostow and the Vietnam War* (2008) and *Worldmaking: The Art and Science of American Diplomacy* (2015). He is also senior editor of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of American Military and Diplomatic History* (2013), and his scholarship has been published in a wide variety of academic journals and other publications.

Christopher Nichols is Associate Professor of History and Director of the Center for Humanities at Oregon State University. He is the author of *Promise and Peril: America at the Dawn of a Global Age* (2011); co-editor and co-author of *Prophesies of Godlessness: Predictions of America's Imminent Secularization from the Puritans to the Present Day* (2008); and senior editor of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of American Military and Diplomatic History* (2013). He was the recipient of a 2016 Andrew Carnegie Fellowship.

Aaron O'Connell is Associate Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (2012) and editor of *Our Latest Longest War: Losing Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan* (2017). Previously, he served as Director for Defense Policy & Strategy on the National Security Council in the Obama Administration and was Admiral Jay Johnson Professor in Leadership in Ethics at the U.S. Naval Academy. In addition to his academic career, he is a colonel in the United States Marine Corps Reserve.

Andrew Preston is Professor of History at Cambridge University. He is the author or editor of several books, including *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (2012) and *The War Council: McGeorge Bundy, the NSC, and Vietnam* (2006).

Markus Schoof is a Ph.D. candidate at The Ohio State University. He was born and raised in East Germany, and currently studies under Drs. Peter Hahn and Joe Parrott. His dissertation is tentatively entitled, "American Missionaries and the Remaking of U.S.-Brazilian Relations, 1930-1988."

Thomas A. Schwartz is Professor of History at Vanderbilt University. He is the author of *America's Germany: John J. McCloy and the Federal Republic of Germany* (1991) and *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam* (2003), and the co-editor of *The Strained Alliance: U.S.-European Relations from Nixon to Carter* (2009, with Matthias Schuz). He is a past president of SHAFR.

Justin Simundson recently received his Ph.D. in History from Texas Tech University, where he is on staff in the Office of International Affairs. His dissertation examined the interconnections of South Vietnamese and American propaganda, journalism, and scholarship prior to the Vietnam War. He has edited the memoirs of Nguyen Thai, a South Vietnamese official and aide to Ngo Dinh Diem; the book is currently under review. He is also working on an article about Harold Oram, Inc., Diem's American public relations firm.

Kathryn C. Statler is Professor of History at the University of San Diego. She is the author of *Replacing France: The Origins of American Intervention in Vietnam* (2007) and co-editor of *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (2006). Her current project, *Lafayette's Ghost*, will examine Franco-American relations from the Revolutionary period to the present. She currently serves on the SHAFR Council and is general editor of the Studies in Conflict, Diplomacy, and Peace book series published by the University Press of Kentucky.

Peter Trubowitz is Professor and Head of International Relations and Director of the U.S. Centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His main research and teaching interests are in the areas of international security and U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Politics and Strategy: Partisan Ambition and American Statecraft* (2011).

James Graham Wilson is a historian at the U.S. Department of State, where he compiles volumes on arms control and national security policy in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series. He is the author of *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War* (2014).

Philip Zelikow is White Burkett Miller Professor of History in the Corcoran Department of History at the University of Virginia. His publications include *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (1995, with Condoleezza Rice); *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House during the Cuban Missile Crisis* (2001, with Ernest May); and *America's Moment: Creating Opportunity in the Connected Age* (2015). He has served widely at all levels of U.S. government, including as the director of the 9/11 Commission and as Counselor to the Department of State from 2005-2007.

ATTENTION SHAFR MEMBERS

The 2018 SHAFR elections are upon us. Once again, *Passport* is publishing copies of the candidates' biographies and statements by the candidates for president and vice-president as a way to encourage members of the organization to familiarize themselves with the candidates and vote in this year's elections. Additional information, including brief CVs for each candidate, will be available on the electronic ballot.

"Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters." *Abraham Lincoln*

Passport would like to remind the members of SHAFR that voting for the 2017 SHAFR elections will begin in early August and will close on **October 31**. Ballots will be sent electronically to all current members of SHAFR. If you are a member of SHAFR and do not receive a ballot by the beginning of September, please contact the chair of the SHAFR Nominating Committee, Andrew Johnstone (aej7@leicester.ac.uk) as soon as possible to ensure that you are able to participate in the election.

"The exercise of the elective franchise is a social duty of as solemn a nature as [a person] can be called to perform." *Daniel Webster*

Last year in the 2017 SHAFR election, over 600 members of SHAFR voted. *Passport* would like to encourage the membership of SHAFR to take the time to participate in our organization's self-governance once again this year. As we have seen recently, elections have consequences.

"Every election is determined by the people who show up." *Larry J. Sabato*

2018 SHAFR Election Candidates

President	Barbara Keys , University of Melbourne
Vice President	Kristin Hoganson , University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign James I. Matray , California State University, Chico
Council	Andrew L. Johns , Brigham Young University Aaron O'Connell , University of Texas, Austin
Council	Sarah Miller-Davenport , University of Sheffield Kelly Shannon , Florida Atlantic University
Council (Graduate Student)	David Allen , Columbia University Vivien Chang , University of Virginia
Nominating Committee	Daniel Immerwahr , Northwestern University Sarah B. Snyder , American University

2018 SHAFR Election Candidate Biographies and Statements

Candidate for PRESIDENT (Choose 1)

Barbara Keys, University of Melbourne

Candidate for President

I teach at the University of Melbourne, where I am Associate Professor (Level D, comparable to U.S. full professor) and Assistant Dean (Research) in the Faculty of Arts. I received my Ph.D. from Harvard with Akira Iriye. I have been a visiting scholar at the Kennan Institute (Washington), Center for the Study of Law and Society (Berkeley), Center for European Studies (Harvard), and Institut für Europäische Geschichte (Mainz). My scholarship includes *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Harvard), *Globalizing Sport: National Rivalry and International Community in the 1930s* (Harvard), over 20 journal articles and chapters on topics ranging from personal diplomacy to financial crises, and the edited volume *Global Sport Ideals: From Peace to Human Rights* (Penn, forthcoming March 2019). I am finishing a book on transnational anti-torture campaigns, based on research in nine countries and four languages. I have given invited lectures in eleven countries and comment regularly in Australian media. I have been a committed SHAFR member for over 25 years, participating in eleven of the last twelve conferences and serving on the Diplomatic History Editorial Board and the Nominating, Membership, Bernath Article Prize, and Status of Women Committees; I currently serve as Vice President.

Candidate Statement

As an American-Australian dual national working outside the United States, I would work to expand SHAFR's international links, including with U.S. studies centers, explore holding an annual conference abroad, develop new ways to welcome, integrate, and mentor newcomers, revitalize development efforts, and support teaching initiatives and innovative public outreach.

Candidates for VICE PRESIDENT (Choose 1)

Kristin Hoganson, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Candidate for Vice President

Kristin Hoganson is a Professor of History at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. A SHAFR member since 1998, she has served SHAFR as a council member, *Diplomatic History* editorial board member, program committee member, program co-chair, representative to the National Coalition for History, and Bernath Book Prize Committee member. She is the author of *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (1998), *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity* (2007), and *American Empire at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: A Brief History with Documents* (2016). Her most recent book, *The Heartland: An American History*, is due out from Penguin in spring 2019. This may seem like an unusual topic for a SHAFR candidate, but be assured, it is a foreign relations history--peopled by consular officers, military aviators, a congressman active in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, bioprospectors, international students, displaced Native Americans, and other rural border crossers--that reconsiders the long nineteenth-century roots of the modern American empire. Hoganson has held the Harmsworth Visiting Professorship at Oxford University and a visiting Fulbright professorship at the Ludwig-Maximilians Universität. Her work has been recognized with the Bernath Lecture Prize, the Wayne D. Rasmussen Prize (offered by the Agricultural History Society) and the Ray Allen Billington Prize (offered by the Western History Association). She would come to the post with experience gained as president of the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.

Candidate Statement

SHAFR has been a mainstay for me since I presented one of my first academic papers at its conference as a graduate student. Having benefitted tremendously from its annual gatherings, journal, newsletter, website, ties to H-Diplo, summer institute, guides to the literature, advocacy, and support for students and junior faculty, I am running for office from a desire to give back. My vision for SHAFR is fairly straightforward: keep it open, lively, and solvent, so that it can continue to advance the field of U.S. foreign relations history and particularly the scholarship and careers of student, contingent, untenured, working-class, non-U.S., and other members who face particular challenges in a tough labor market and in the face of constrained research resources. Although SHAFR has become larger and more diverse since I joined, thus adding to the vitality of our collective enterprise, it must continue to work toward inclusivity if it wants to be the society where it happens in the years ahead. I would work to keep SHAFR's doors open and welcome mat out, hoping to persuade a new generation of scholars to regard SHAFR as their professional home and to convince scholars rooted in other fields but with intersecting interests that SHAFR is a great home-away-from-home. As a nineteenth-century historian in an organization that tilts toward the Cold War and more recent past, I would especially like to advocate for chronological inclusiveness, and as a historian with one eye on the future, I would like to advance public outreach efforts.

James I. Matray, California State University, Chico
Candidate for Vice President

James I. Matray has been professor of history at California State University, Chico, since 2002, serving as department chair from 2002 to 2008. He earned his doctorate at the University of Virginia, studying under Norman A. Graebner. His research focuses on U.S.-Korean relations during and after World War II. Matray has written or edited nine books, beginning with *The Reluctant Crusade: American Foreign Policy in Korea, 1941-1950* (1985) and most recently *Crisis in a Divided Korea* (2016). He has published or posted twenty articles, including in such journals as *Diplomatic History*, *Journal of American History*, and *Pacific Historical Review*, as well as nineteen book chapters and twenty-one essays. His current project on the Battles of Pork Chop Hill will result in publication of a monograph with Indiana University Press. Matray has been editor-in-chief of the *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* since 2013. He is a contributing editor to the *SHAFR Guide*. His proposals resulted in the establishment of the SHAFR Endowment Liaison, a position he held from 2002 to 2012, and the naming of the SHAFR Dissertation Research Grant program in honor of Samuel Flagg Bemis. Matray was a candidate for SHAFR Council in 1993. From 1993 to 2002, he was a member of SHAFR's Norman and Laura Graebner Prize Committee, serving twice as chair. Matray was co-recipient of SHAFR's "Stuart L. Bernath Article Award" in 1980. At New Mexico State University, where he taught for twenty-two years, he received a "Donald C. Roush Award for Teaching Excellence" in 1988.

Candidate Statement

SHAFR, despite its enormous success, still faces challenges that I would work to address and begin to resolve as vice president. First, SHAFR has experienced a reduction in *Diplomatic History* revenues that allowed Council to fund initiatives to help graduate students, internationalize and diversify the annual conference, and assist outside organizations. The Ways and Means Committee and Council have made some difficult decisions to ensure fiscal prudence. As vice president, I would work with both to continue developing a strategic plan to increase, or at least stretch, SHAFR resources to provide funds for worthwhile initiatives, such as assisting members at institutions with limited funding to present papers on their research or teaching at the annual conference. Second, SHAFR must find a solution to the conference keynote controversy that prevents endorsement of wrongdoing, but fosters a free sharing of diverse opinions.

If elected, I would support holding an open forum at next summer's conference where members can voice their opinions on how SHAFR should select and pay keynote speakers, as well as what roles organizations that co-sponsor keynote sessions should play in arranging and funding them. Third, since I joined SHAFR in 1977, its mission and topical emphasis has changed for the better. Council has succeeded in promoting the academic success of a broader cross-section of members with committees on women, minorities, teaching, and graduate students. As vice president, I would advocate for another open conference forum where members old, new, and in between could describe their visions for SHAFR's future.

COUNCIL: RACE #1 (Choose 1)

Andrew L. Johns, Brigham Young University
Candidate for Council Race #1

I am Associate Professor of History at Brigham Young University and the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies. I am the author or editor of five books, with another forthcoming in 2019; general editor of the *Studies in Conflict, Diplomacy, and Peace* book series published by the University Press of Kentucky; and president of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association in 2018-2019. As a life member of SHAFR who has been active in the organization since the early 1990s, I have been editor of *Passport: The Society for Historians of Foreign Relations Review* since 2011, and have also served SHAFR on the Nominating Committee, on the Teaching Committee, as co-director of the 2015 Summer Institute, as the co-chair of local arrangements for the 2016 conference, and on numerous other committees.

Given my extensive experience within SHAFR, I have a panoptic perspective on our organization's past, present, and future. My vision for SHAFR is to champion the organization's dual (and complementary) research and teaching missions; support outreach efforts to larger domestic and international audiences; build on SHAFR's legacy of supporting graduate students, young scholars, and teaching faculty; and embrace fiscal responsibility, transparency, and diversity within the organization.

Aaron O'Connell, University of Texas at Austin

Candidate for Council Race #1

I am Associate Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin and previously taught history at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. I am a historian of 20th Century U.S. military influence and infrastructure – a description that cuts across four inter-related fields: U.S. foreign relations, military history, cultural history, and American politics. My scholarship focuses on understanding the military's effects locally and globally since 1898; my public history pieces explore how the military affects contemporary politics and culture. I have been a SHAFR member since 2005 and have served on the Conference Committee and the Program Committee. My first manuscript was a cultural history of the Marines titled *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012). This was followed by an edited collection entitled *Our Latest Longest War: Losing Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2017). I am also a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve and have served in Afghanistan, South Sudan, and El Salvador. From 2015-2016, I served in the White House as Director of Defense Policy and Strategy on the National Security Council Staff. When not writing, I spend entirely too much time practicing the guitar.

COUNCIL: RACE #2 (Choose 1)

Sarah Miller-Davenport, University of Sheffield

Candidate for Council Race #2

Sarah Miller-Davenport is Lecturer in 20th century U.S. History at the University of Sheffield, U.K., where she has been since receiving her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 2014. Her work focuses on how U.S. foreign relations shaped domestic politics and culture. Her forthcoming book, *Gateway State: Hawai'i and the Global Origins of Modern Racial Liberalism*, will be published by Princeton in 2019; it explores how and why Hawai'i was constructed as a racial paradise and center for intercultural exchange in the mid-20th century. Sarah's next project, *Capital of the World: New York City and the End of the 20th Century*, examines the reinvention of New York as a "global city" in the wake of its 1975 fiscal crisis. Her work has also appeared in the *Journal of American History* and *The Historical Journal*. Her *JAH* article, "Their Blood Shall Not Be Shed in Vain": American Evangelical Missionaries and the Search for God and Country in post-World War II Asia," won SHAFR's Bernath Article Prize in 2014 and she received honorable mention for the Betty M. Unterberger Dissertation Prize. Sarah has been an active SHAFR member since 2010 and has served on the graduate student grants committee since 2015.

Kelly Shannon, Florida Atlantic University

Candidate for Council Race #2

I am Associate Professor of History at Florida Atlantic University, where I have taught since 2014. Previously I was Assistant Professor of History at the University of Alaska, Anchorage and Visiting Assistant Professor at LaSalle University. I earned my M.A. at the University of Connecticut with Frank Costigliola and Ph.D. at Temple University with Richard Immerman. I specialize in 20th century U.S. foreign relations with the Islamic world. I am the author of *U.S. Foreign Policy and Muslim Women's Human Rights* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), as well as several book chapters and articles. I am currently writing a book on U.S.-Iran relations, 1905-1953.

I have been an active member of SHAFR since 2003. I was a founding member of the Committee on Women (2007-2014), which I co-chaired from 2012-2014. I was elected to the Nominating Committee (2013-2015), which I chaired in 2015. I also served on the Ad Hoc Committee on the SHAFR Guide to the Literature, the Program Committee, and the Job Workshop. I currently serve on the committees on Teaching and Historical Documentation. I would bring with me to Council a desire to maintain SHAFR's distinctiveness, support our diverse membership, and meet the challenges currently facing academia.

COUNCIL: GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE (Choose 1)

David Allen, Columbia University

Candidate for Graduate Student Representative

I am a doctoral candidate in international and global history at Columbia University, and an Ernest May Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School. SHAFR has been central to my academic development. I have attended the Summer Institute, learned from the job workshop, and honed my work presenting at four of the last six conferences. My doctoral project looks at how American policymakers have tried, and mostly failed, to build a public consensus for foreign affairs, and I have also published on the cultural diplomacy of the League of Nations, the religious politics of the Peace Corps, and big data and the historical method in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*. Using my experience as a president of Columbia's Graduate History Association, and as part of our AHA-sponsored career diversity initiative, I hope to help widen access to SHAFR, giving back to the society as a graduate representative to the Council.

Vivien Chang, University of Virginia

Candidate for Graduate Student Representative

Vivien Chang is a third-year doctoral candidate in history at the University of Virginia. Her work focuses on decolonization, development, international organizations, and the Third World's Cold War. Her dissertation, "Creating the Third World: Anticolonial Diplomacy and the Making of the New International Economic Order, 1960-1981," explores the NIEO as a window into the Third World movement's broader evolution. Since 2016, Vivien has attended three SHAFR conferences and presented at two. Last year, she organized a panel on the Cold War in Africa. She is currently writing a book review for *Passport*. At UVA, she serves as a representative of the Graduate History Students Association and coordinates *Diplomatic History* workshops. Vivien holds a B.A. and M.A. from the University of British Columbia. Her research is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Institute of the Humanities and Global Cultures.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Choose 1)

Daniel Immerwahr, Northwestern University

Candidate for Nominating Committee

I am an associate professor in Northwestern University's history department. I'm the author of *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Harvard, 2015), which won prizes from the Organization of American Historians and the Society for U.S. Intellectual History. My second book, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States*, a study of overseas territory in U.S. history, will be published in early 2019 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. I won SHAFR's Bernath Lecture Prize in 2015 and received honorable mention for the Betty M. Unterberger Dissertation Prize in 2013. I served happily on SHAFR's dissertation completion prize committee for three years, chairing it in 2015–16. I've taught at Berkeley, Columbia, Northwestern, and San Quentin State Prison and won a teaching award at Northwestern. My essays have been published in *Slate*, *Dissent*, *Jacobin*, and *n+1*, among other places.

Sarah B. Snyder, American University

Candidate for Nominating Committee

Sarah B. Snyder is Associate Professor at American University's School of International Service. She is the author of *From Selma to Moscow: How Human Rights Activists Transformed U.S. Foreign Policy* (Columbia University Press, 2018) and *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), which won the 2012 Stuart Bernath Book Prize and the 2012 Myrna F. Bernath Book Award. She has published several chapters in edited collections and articles in *Diplomatic History*, *Cold War History*, *Human Rights Quarterly*, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, *European Journal of Human Rights* and *Journal of American Studies*. Within SHAFR, she was elected to Council, co-chaired the 2014 program committee, and served on the *Passport* Editor Search Committee, the Legal History Taskforce, the William Appleman Williams Junior Faculty Research Grants Committee, the Dissertation Completion Fellowship Committee, and the program committee.

The Tonous and Warda Johns Family Book Award

The Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association is pleased to announce the creation of a new book prize, the Tonous and Warda Johns Family Book Award.

The prize honors Tonous Hanna and Warda Paulis, who immigrated to the United States from Syria in 1900, married in 1906, and became U.S. citizens along with their children in 1919. Tony and Warda Johns, as they became known, emphasized the importance of education, hard work, and philanthropy to their children and grandchildren, and had a deep and abiding love for their adopted country and its history. These values—shared by so many other immigrants to the United States—profoundly shaped the lives of their descendants. In celebration of these ideals and in recognition of Tony and Warda’s continuing influence on their family, the Johns family created this endowment in the hope that Tony and Warda’s legacy will be felt and appreciated by the PCB-AHA community and that the award will encourage and recognize excellent historical scholarship.

The **Tonous and Warda Johns Family Book Award** will recognize the outstanding book (monograph or edited volume) in the history of U.S. foreign relations, immigration history, or military history by an author or editor residing in the PCB-AHA membership region. The inaugural award will be presented at the 2019 PCB-AHA conference—which will meet from July 31 through August 2 on the campus of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas—on the 100th anniversary of Tony and Warda’s U.S. citizenship.

Copies of books submitted for consideration for the award should be sent directly to each of the three members of the prize committee by **April 1, 2019**; more details will be available at pcb-aha.org/awards.

Questions about the award or inquiries regarding donations to the endowment should be directed to Michael Green, PCB-AHA executive director, at michael.green@unlv.edu.



Tony and Warda Johns (seated in center) with their children (c. 1946).

The Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association was organized in 1903 to serve members of the American Historical Association living in the western United States and the western provinces of Canada. With over 4000 members, it is one of the largest professional historical organizations in the United States.

The PCB-AHA thanks the founding donors to the endowment for their generosity:

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A Roundtable on John Lewis Gaddis, *On Grand Strategy*

Andrew Buchanan, Robert K. Brigham, Peter Trubowitz, Michael Green,
James Graham Wilson, and John Lewis Gaddis

Review of John Lewis Gaddis, *On Grand Strategy*

Andrew Buchanan

John Gaddis writes beautifully, and his latest book dances through time and space with lightness and erudition, skipping from Xerxes crossing the Hellespont to the musings of Isaiah Berlin via brushes with Elizabeth I, Carl von Clausewitz, Leo Tolstoy, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. It is delightful stuff, and one can imagine students in his seminar at Yale lapping it up. The problem, as one of those students might say, is that for all the layers of learning and literary allusion, it's not clear that there's much "there there." Throughout the book, Gaddis keeps returning—"pounding to the point of monotony," as reviewer Victor Davis Hanson puts it—to one single, simple idea: successful grand strategy depends on aligning "aspirations with capabilities" (105).¹ As a contribution to a discussion on grand strategy, a term whose usage according to one recent commentator has "increased exponentially since the end of the Cold War," it can be pretty thin stuff.²

The first six chapters touch lightly on a sprawling range of subjects, ranging from catastrophic imperial overstretch in Athens to the accomplishments of the founding fathers who, we are told, fitted "foundations to the ground on which they rest" (154). Nowhere does Gaddis seek to define his subject or to explain what differentiates "grand" from regular strategy. Sun Tzu pops up to make the occasional gnomic comment, but beyond that, Gaddis's finely drawn vignettes are bound by their common Eurocentrism.

There is a noticeable change of gear as Gaddis gets onto more familiar ground in chapters on the "Greatest Strategists" (Clausewitz and—oddly—Tolstoy), the "Greatest President" (Lincoln), and the "Last Best Hope" (Franklin Roosevelt). Gaddis approaches Clausewitz warily, warning his students that a "close reading" of *On War* is liable to produce "mental disorientation" and "doubts . . . about who you are" (190). In case we missed the point, *On War* is likened to an "immense dripping net of entangled octopi" (192). It's a wonderful metaphor, but is it *On War*? It is true that Clausewitz's dialectical method, inherited from Kant and—in all likelihood—Hegel, takes a bit of getting used to, and the substantial sections of the book dealing with specific operational challenges are simply outdated. But books 1 and 8, the only sections that Clausewitz revised before his untimely death from cholera in 1831, are pretty clear. What is head spinning is not Clausewitz's complexity, but the relevance and applicability of his theoretical conclusions.

Clausewitz's well-known assertion that war is a "continuation of political activity by other means" clearly bears on Gaddis's concern with the alignment of military means and political ends.³ More important, perhaps, it also probes the ways in which the attainment of specific political goals is one of the major constraints—the other being the inevitable operation of "friction"—that inhibits the inherent tendency of war to proceed towards an "absolute" state, or to what we might now refer to as "total war." For Clausewitz, the relationship between politics and war is a *dialectical* interaction, not one between fixed entities; war, unfolding according to its own logic, influences and modifies politics just as politics seeks to harness war. Clausewitz, as Gaddis notes, clearly relishes exploring these contradictions and their complex and always-evolving syntheses, but he also historicizes them, rooting theory in the "proper soil" of "experience."⁴

The theoretical conclusions presented in *On War* were the fruit of years of experience fighting against the military consequences of the French Revolution. With the revolution, Clausewitz saw, the French war effort became the "business of the people," allowing the "full weight of the nation" to be mobilized and ensuring that "nothing now impeded the vigor with which war could be waged."⁵ In this sense, "politics" did not just "inflare" war, as Gaddis suggests, but *transformed* it, allowing it to transcend "all limits" and to approach its "absolute perfection" (197).⁶ That absolute (or "total") state was, of course, historically conditioned by existing levels of industrial and technological development, but new means of mobilizing resources and manpower allowed new political goals to be set. It was this dynamic inter-relationship between ends and means, not a simple failure to align one with the other, that helped to propel Napoleon to Moscow and to disaster. Without massively expanded means in the form of the nearly 700,000-strong Grande Armée, the invasion of Russia would have been unthinkable.

Clausewitz's understanding of the interrelationship between politics and war enabled him, as Michael Howard argues, to "outlast his time."⁷ Based on his own experience of war, Clausewitz drew theoretical conclusions that transcended time-bound operational advice; indeed, without that theoretical leap, his work—as Clausewitz himself explained—would have remained at the level of "commonplaces and truisms."⁸ Gaddis claims to value theory, and he laments the ways in which history's veneration for "specialized research" has allowed a "gap" to open up between the "study of history and the construction of theory" (23). I am with Gaddis on this. Specialized, detailed, and painstaking research should provide for

historians what practical military experience provided for Clausewitz—namely, and in his own wonderfully evocative language, the “soil” from which the “flowers of theory” can grow.⁹

Gaddis’s embrace of theory could have opened the door to a number of fruitful avenues of enquiry. Perhaps the most important of these would be an examination of the interrelationship between determinism, contingency, and agency. One of the most crucial contributions of the academically marginalized study of military history is that it poses these questions with particular salience. Clausewitz understood from experience that “no other human activity is so continuously and universally bound up with chance” as war, but he also understood that wars unfold in historically determined contexts.¹⁰ Or, as Karl Marx—himself an admirer of Clausewitz—reminds us, “men make their own history . . . but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.”¹¹ Unfortunately, having opened the door to theoretical inquiry, Gaddis does not step through. Instead, his “theory” devolves to the kind of American pragmatism that reduces theoretical conclusions to simple commonsensical aphorisms.

For a book with grand aspirations—Gaddis is concerned that his use of Clausewitzian “On” in the title risks “raising eyebrows”—this is a bit of a comedown (xi). Gaddis doesn’t try to define his subject beyond the anodyne claim that “proportionality comes from what grand strategy is: the alignment of potentially infinite aspirations with necessarily limited capabilities” (312). And that’s *it*? Surprisingly, he does not engage with any of the numerous definitions of grand strategy advanced by historians and political scientists, none of which betters that offered by his Yale colleague, Paul Kennedy.

In a 1991 essay, Kennedy argued that the “crux of grand strategy” lies in “the capacity of a nation’s leaders to bring together all the elements, both military and nonmilitary, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation’s long-term . . . best interests.”¹² Developing this theme, Williamson Murray adds that grand strategy demands an “intertwining of political, social, and economic realities with military power.”¹³ These definitions point towards a complex and multi-layered process that integrates different forms of power and strands of power projection. Murray points out that “resources, will, and interests inevitably find themselves out of balance,” and that aligning them is an important *aspect* of grand strategy: it is not, however, a summary of the thing itself.¹⁴

Murray also suggests that effective practitioners of grand strategy have a capacity to act “beyond the demands of the present,” keeping their eyes on the horizon amid the daily chaos of war and politics.¹⁵ These characteristics describe Franklin D. Roosevelt perfectly, and in his discussion of American grand strategy in the first half of the twentieth century Gaddis finds firmer ground. He situates the development of American policy within the framework of a growing concern, expressed in the statecraft of British prime minister Lord Salisbury, in the geopolitics of Halford Mackinder, and in the analytical insight of Foreign Office mandarin Eyre Crowe, that modern land communications would enable the emergence of a world-dominant superpower in the Eurasian “heartland.” This concern, focused in particular on the rising power of a unified Germany, led Britain to abandon the “splendid isolation” that had carried it through the nineteenth century in favor of a “continental commitment.” That, in turn, ultimately led it to a reluctant appeal to the “new world” to redress the

balance of power in the “old” (264-65).

Rightly, I think, Gaddis sees the threat of a German-dominated Eurasia as the primary driver behind Woodrow Wilson’s decision to lead the United States into the Great War in 1917. In the recurrent waves of Wilson’s champions and iconoclasts, Gaddis stands firmly with the latter, arguing that “Wilson’s ends floated too freely above means” (271). He does not, however, pinpoint what this critical divergence looked like. Gaddis argues that the arrival of American soldiers in France in 1918 tipped the military balance in the Allies’ favor, but he misses the point that there was no German military “collapse” before the outbreak of the German Revolution in October/November 1918 (270). Wilson imagined that an American imperium could be constructed primarily by means of economic might and moral example. Both are critical elements of global hegemony, but they must be backed by decisive military superiority; this America lacked, partly as a result of its late entry into the war and partly because the Second Reich was toppled by domestic revolution before it could suffer military defeat.

Franklin Roosevelt approached the next challenge from a rising Eurasian superpower with very different mental equipment. I agree with Gaddis that Roosevelt’s training and experience, derived from the attitudes and assumptions inherited from Theodore Roosevelt, from his study of Alfred Thayer Mahan, and from his service as assistant secretary of the Navy during the Great War, fundamentally shaped his grand strategic outlook.¹⁶ Gaddis describes Roosevelt’s extraordinary long-range vision, arguing plausibly that his decision to extend diplomatic recognition to the USSR in 1933 was made with one eye on a future alliance against Germany. That is not enough to remove Roosevelt from the ranks of the appeasers, as Gaddis tries to do: FDR welcomed the outcome of the Munich Conference, sent Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles on a peace mission to Europe in 1940, and maintained diplomatic relations with the collaborationist Vichy regime until late 1942. It does, however, suggest that he had a Mahanian eye for the long game and that he clearly understood that successful grand strategy rests on deploying a *combination* of economic, diplomatic, military, and moral/ideological assets.

Roosevelt’s grand strategy, and in particular his alliances with Britain and the Soviet Union, led to victory in World War II at a comparatively modest cost in American lives and in a way that secured American hegemony and laid the basis for a sustained burst of postwar economic expansion. Gaddis’s main point here is surely right; the American “fire” that had “gone out” after the Great War had been spectacularly reignited under a leadership capable of “more careful coordination of means with ends than Wilson had achieved” (287-88).

It is worth adding, however, that it was much easier to craft successful grand strategy when economic growth was providing the United States and its allies with rapidly expanding means, and when—in contrast to 1918—war was not cut short by revolution prior to the full deployment of American military power. Under Roosevelt, the military might Wilson had lacked assumed genuinely global predominance, enabling him to chart a course with seemingly nonchalant ease. As leading *New York Times* journalist and Roosevelt confidante Anne O’Hare McCormick noted in a 1942 article celebrating his sixtieth birthday, the “key” to the president’s policy was that he “consciously rides the currents of time in the direction in which they are going.”¹⁷

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Robert K. Brigham

Roosevelt was acutely aware of the ways in which the lineaments of postwar predominance had to be established during the war, and economic policies shaped with an eye to the peace were woven into his grand strategic approach. As America's armies advanced, so did its market share. With much more limited means at his disposal, Churchill's strategic options were highly circumscribed. His famous June 1940 appeal to the "New World" to "set forth to the rescue and liberation of the Old" implicitly recognized that a profound shift in the relationship between the two "worlds" was imminent (181). Churchill hoped that the British elite's long years of experience would enable Britain to manage this transition in ways that would allow it to maintain its global influence. By 1944, it was clear that this was not going to work out as London hoped, and Britain eventually emerged from the war as a second-class power well on the way to losing its empire. The true brilliance of Roosevelt's grand strategy was that it secured decisive victory not only over its obvious enemies but also its erstwhile allies, paving the way for an expansive—if foreshortened—American century.

On Grand Strategy is entertaining, engaging, and sometimes insightful. Unfortunately, however, it does little to advance our overall understanding of this crucial subject. Despite Gaddis's best efforts, grand strategy stubbornly resists being boiled down to a single and rather self-evident injunction not to bite off more than you can chew. Complexity abounds, whether in theory or history. Multiple levels of activity are engaged simultaneously. And, as I have tried to show in relation to Roosevelt's grand strategy, the relationship between means and ends is constantly changing as the availability of resources expands or contracts and as political aims change. Thus the wartime Anglo-American alliance led to a historically unprecedented degree of bilateral military cooperation, but it also led *simultaneously* to a transition in global hegemony from Britain to the United States.

Notes:

1. Victor Davis Hanson, "When to Wage War and How to Win War," *New York Times*, April 20, 2018.
2. Nina Silove, "Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of 'Grand Strategy,'" *Security Studies* 27, no. 1 (2017): 27.
3. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, 1976), 87.
4. *Ibid.*, 61.
5. *Ibid.*, 592.
6. *Ibid.*, 593; see also David Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare As We Know It* (Boston, 2007).
7. Michael Howard, *Clausewitz* (Oxford, UK, 1983), 4.
8. Clausewitz, *On War*, 61.
9. *Ibid.*, 61.
10. *Ibid.*, 85.
11. Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, vol. 11 (Moscow, 1979), 103.
12. Paul Kennedy, "Grand Strategy in War and Peace," in *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*, ed. Paul Kennedy (New Haven, 1991), 5.
13. Williamson Murray, "Thoughts on Grand Strategy," in *The Shaping of Grand Strategy: Policy, Diplomacy, and War*, ed. Williamson Murray, Richard Hart Sinnreich, and James Lacey (Cambridge, UK), 5.
14. *Ibid.*, 4.
15. *Ibid.*, 2.
16. On this question, see my *American Grand Strategy in the Mediterranean during World War II* (Cambridge, UK, 2014), 8-11, 268-70.
17. Anne O'Hare McCormick, "At 60 He is Still a Happy Warrior," *New York Times*, January 25, 1942.

John Lewis Gaddis, the Robert A. Lovett Professor of Military and Naval History at Yale University, has given us a master text and a master class on leadership in his new book, *On Grand Strategy*. In ten breathtaking essays, Gaddis, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his biography of diplomat George F. Kennan, examines what it takes to lead and how leaders must learn to align "potentially unlimited aspirations with necessarily limited capabilities." (21) He weaves literature, history, and philosophy into a lively and informal narrative that serves as a good foundation not just for students of grand strategy but for anyone who might benefit from learning how to balance responsibility with humility.

Gaddis argues that the most successful strategists have been pragmatists who remain flexible and patient and who clearly recognize the limits of their own power. Good leaders, Gaddis tells us, have a "lightness of being... the ability, if not to find the good in bad things, then at least to remain afloat among them, perhaps to swim or to sail through them, possibly even to take precautions that can keep [them] dry." (109) For him, studying grand strategy is far more important than simply learning the immutable principles of war. Grand strategy involves prudent judgment in very trying circumstances. Learning how to avoid war without sacrificing objectives is just as important, then, as learning how to win a war.

Gaddis begins and ends his study with a word from the British philosopher and political theorist Isaiah Berlin, who popularized a line from an ancient Greek poet: "The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing." In the world of grand strategy, it is better to be more like the fox than the single-minded and obsessed hedgehog. Foxes are intuitive thinkers who can pursue many ends. They can hold a number of unrelated and often contradictory ideas in their heads at the same time because they are adaptable and know that discernment comes from resourcefulness—using what you have available. Hedgehogs, in sharp contrast, are prisoners of their own beliefs. They relate everything to a single central vision, which makes it difficult to balance means with ends. It is often overzealous hedgehogs who dig the already-too-deep hole even deeper because they cannot rescue their strategies from grandiosity.

Who are the foxes that Gaddis admires? One is Elizabeth I. She was patient, resourceful, and more Machiavellian than most of her counterparts. She kept political rivals at bay by offering them only a glimpse of her true feelings and convictions. She also avoided the mistakes of the large empires to her south by resisting unnecessary "expenditures of resources, energy, and reputation." (123)

Elizabeth's main nemesis, Philip II of Spain, sought to use his preponderant power to overwhelm Elizabeth's England, and, with victory in hand, return the mostly Protestant island to the Roman Catholic Church. Full of the arrogance and hubris that often accompanies empire, he sent his vast navy to the North Sea to bring Elizabeth (and Holland) under his rule. Poor planning, bad weather, and two skillful British naval maneuvers sank Philip's plans along with his ships. England's Lord Charles Howard and Sir Frances Drake adeptly attacked the Spanish Armada, forcing it to take to the open seas in bad weather and thus sealing its fate. England would remain under Elizabeth's rule. Gaddis writes admiringly that the queen "was a constant only in her patriotism, her insistence on keeping ends within means, and her determination—a requirement for pivoting—never to be pinned down." (133)

Another of Gaddis's noteworthy foxes is Octavian Augustus Caesar. Unlike his adoptive father, Julius Caesar,

Octavian built coalitions, seized opportunities while pursuing his objectives, and always saw next steps where others stumbled. He relied on more-experienced generals, gave veterans needed benefits, reintroduced the rule of law and respect for the senate. He was also a shrewd judge of character and a cultivator of his empire and its people. In contrast, his chief rival, Mark Antony, was “full of empty flourishes and unsteady efforts for glory.” (77) Antony lacked Octavian’s steady hand at the helm.

And what about the hedgehogs, those leaders who failed to understand the concept of proportionality or who refused to carefully weigh ends and means? Their numbers are legion, which is one of Gaddis’s main points. Much of the human experience has been dominated by hedgehogs who failed to understand history and its cautionary tale. From the Athenian generals of the Peloponnesian War, who led a foolish and unnecessary military campaign against Sicily, to Lyndon Johnson, who decided to Americanize the war in Vietnam, one hedgehog after another has reasoned that past tactical success guaranteed victory in the future.

Along the way, these leaders lied to themselves and their followers when they claimed to have all the advantages. They reasoned by poor historical analogy to produce dubious justifications for attacking rivals and destabilizing the political environment. They took unnecessary risks to preserve an order or to shake one to its core. As Gaddis reminds us when talking about Julius Caesar at the Rubicon, Alexander the Great at the Indus, and Napoleon and Hitler on Russia’s border, a good leader must not seek ends beyond means, or sooner or later, “you’ll have to scale back your ends to fit your means.” (21) Gaddis implies that most leaders recognize their limits only after it is too late to trim the sails (Gaddis loves sailing metaphors, and so do I). Some risk is necessary—as when, during the Second World War, Churchill concluded that the Third Reich could not push the British into the sea—but the best course to steer is one that is prudent.

That brings us to two of Gaddis’s favorite strategists, the self-taught Abraham Lincoln and the enigmatic Franklin D. Roosevelt. Both men, at times, combined the best qualities of foxes and hedgehogs. Lincoln wanted to make good on the founders’ claim that all men are created equal. Gaddis writes, “What more praiseworthy cause could a hedgehog possibly pursue?” (16) But to abolish slavery by helping to pass the Thirteenth Amendment, Lincoln had to act like a fox. He resorted to backroom deals, bribes, and outright deception. He used the power of his office like a ward politician. He kept long-term aspirations and immediate necessities in mind at the same time. He also showed enormous vision and common sense. Gaddis claims that this combination is rare in the corridors of power, and it is one of the many reasons that he admires Lincoln.

Another is Lincoln’s uncommon mastery of scale, space, and time. Lincoln, unlike most political leaders, sought to be underestimated. This allowed him a slow and steady rise to power but also enabled him to keep expectations within reason. When it was his time to lead the nation, Lincoln understood that the curse and sin of slavery had to be solved on his watch. He welcomed that responsibility, according to Gaddis, because he had carefully studied the costs and risks of going to war to end slavery and preserve the Union. More than most leaders, Lincoln was a master timekeeper. He knew how to wait, when to act, and how to trust that the course of events could be managed. There would always be

unforeseen contingencies, but expecting detours became one of Lincoln’s hallmarks as president. He did not leave things to fate and did not believe that everything was God’s will. Sometimes planning, execution, and resolve win large battles. Lincoln’s ends justified his means.

Of Roosevelt, Gaddis writes, “He saw better than anyone the relationships of everything to everything else—while sharing what he saw with no one.” (307) Roosevelt was perhaps an unlikely fox when he first came to power as assistant secretary of the navy in Woodrow Wilson’s administration. Born to wealth and privilege, he had to learn how to cloak his intentions and hide his emotions. In fact, he became an expert at stripping ego and emotion from the exercise of power. Few leaders could have fared as well during the Great Depression and the Second World War, Gaddis claims, because few possessed Roosevelt’s remarkable qualities and capabilities. He “improvised, edging forward where possible, falling back when necessary, always appearing to do something, never giving in to despair, and in everything remembered what Wilson forgot—that nothing would succeed without widespread continuing public support.” (282)

This political savvy, combined with his understanding of the American people, was Roosevelt’s great gift. He maneuvered behind the scenes with great skill, all the while calming the fears of the public and keeping them steady. More than most, Gaddis claims, Roosevelt had a sense of the inner needs of many Americans. This was especially true when it came to the war. Wilson liked to think of himself as an instrument of God’s will; Roosevelt was an instrument of democracy.

Taken together, then, Lincoln and Roosevelt were pragmatists who also possessed unusual abilities. They understood the difficulties before them but did not fear responsibility or the future. Both had a good sense of what was possible and what was probable. They understood that they could not control all events or human activities, but they knew that they might be able to influence both. They were patient leaders who were skilled at managing expectations. Both remained versatile enough to capitalize on events as they unfolded and work with any player on the world stage, rather than try to force history to bend in their direction. They did not attempt to fit square pegs into round holes, nor were they prisoners of some overarching theme or belief system. Finally, Lincoln and Roosevelt thought that their wars were just and necessary because of the enormous causes and projects at stake.

It is in his descriptions of Lincoln and Roosevelt that Gaddis’s *On Grand Strategy* may get its strongest pushback from critical readers. Examining Lincoln and Roosevelt, some critics may see Gaddis’s entire pantheon of successful grand strategists as emperors who consolidated too much power in their own hands and made Hobbesian bargains to obtain their goals. Others might be critical for the opposite reason. They may claim that Gaddis’s thoughts about grand strategy are so informal and impressionistic that they bear little relationship to the way decisions actually get made.

Finally, some readers may find it odd that Gaddis spends so little time (except in the sections on Roosevelt) talking about the domestic constraints on grand strategy. Even Richard Nixon, who equated domestic politics to building outhouses in Peoria, understood that he needed a domestic strategy in order to implement his broad foreign policy vision. But I believe Gaddis answers these critics

well when he says that “the test of a good theory lies in its ability to explain the past, for only if it does can we trust what it may tell us about the future.” (10) I think Gaddis has a good theory.

Perhaps the most delightful part of this splendid book is Gaddis’s return to the classroom and his belief in the power of the humanities. Gaddis fills this book with helpful memories of past students as they grappled in class with lessons of leadership. He makes a strong case for the usefulness of history and liberal education. Even though he focuses much of his attention on the Western canon, he sees a universality in these lessons that is difficult to deny. Would this have been a better book if Gaddis had included more diverse voices? Of course. But there is much to learn here if readers keep an open mind and remain versatile, like the fox.

Review of John Lewis Gaddis, *On Grand Strategy*

Peter Trubowitz

In *On Grand Strategy*, historian John Lewis Gaddis catalogues the “dos” and “don’ts” of international statecraft. Drawing on a wide range of examples from ancient times to the present, he shines a bright light on the factors that distinguish great strategists from lesser ones. These are the ability to manage contradictory goals, the wisdom to recognize missteps and reverse course midstream, and above all, an understanding of the need to keep ends and means in balance. For Gaddis, good strategy boils down to getting the alignment between one’s aspirations and capabilities right. Much of the book is about why some leaders succeed at striking that balance and others fail to do so.

Gaddis frames his analysis around the Greek poet Archilochus’s famous distinction between the fox and the hedgehog. “The fox knows many things; the hedgehog one great thing,” Archilochus wrote. Many others have employed Archilochus’s pithy formulation, most notably the philosopher Isaiah Berlin in his *The Hedgehog and the Fox*.¹ Gaddis leans heavily on Berlin’s treatment from start to finish, but like a good strategist, he modifies and adapts it to serve his purpose. The most successful leaders, Gaddis avers, are part fox and part hedgehog.

In Gaddis’s reworking of these venerable archetypes, the hedgehog and the fox represent two aspects of strategy: design and maneuver. Great leaders have goals that they wish to achieve. Sometimes these are lofty, inspiring ones, like Woodrow Wilson’s “making the world safe for democracy,” but often the goals are less noble, such as territorial conquest and imperial expansion. Yet even the most careful designs can break the bank if leaders are not strategic about how, when, and where they deploy their resources. Rivals rarely submit without a fight. They must be overcome or, preferably, outfoxed through strategic maneuver. It is better to outflank them than to try to overpower them; better to avoid their strengths and target their weaknesses; and better to rely on stealth, ambiguity, and deception than on brute force.

In Gaddis’s estimation, the leaders who best exemplify this combination of design and maneuver include the young Pericles, Augustus Caesar, Queen Elizabeth I, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Each kept his or her opponents off balance strategically and carefully calibrated desired ends to available means, and none of them ever

allowed ambition or ideology to dictate strategy or tactics. Failure to follow these “rules of the road,” Gaddis argues, has led many other leaders, from Xerxes to King Philip II, Napoleon, and Hitler, to bring calamity upon themselves. By confusing ends with means, they succumbed to one of the greatest traps of statecraft: strategic overextension.

The ever-present danger of leaders’ overreach runs like a dark thread through *On Grand Strategy*. Indeed, it is built into Gaddis’s very definition of successful grand strategy as “the alignment of potentially unlimited aspirations with necessarily limited capabilities” (21). That Gaddis would focus on this particular pitfall of statecraft is unsurprising. He was a young man studying American diplomatic history in graduate school at the height of the Vietnam War. In that war, America’s conduct was marked by many of the same strategic failings Gaddis warns against here: arrogance, ideological rigidity, the loss of proportion. These are important lessons. Unfortunately, all of them had to be relearned a generation later in Iraq by policymakers and academics, including, alas, Gaddis himself.²

Gaddis is at his best when he reflects on the ways great leaders economize in making grand strategy. His account of how Queen Elizabeth relied on stealth (espionage and subversion) to buy time and keep her many international

Gaddis is at his best when he reflects on the ways great leaders economize in making grand strategy. His account of how Queen Elizabeth relied on stealth (espionage and subversion) to buy time and keep her many international rivals at bay is illuminating. So is his treatment of Marshal Mikhail Kutuzov’s stunning use of space and territory to counter Napoleonic France’s great offensive power.

rivals at bay is illuminating. So is his treatment of Marshal Mikhail Kutuzov’s stunning use of space and territory to counter Napoleonic France’s great offensive power. By drawing Napoleon’s invading forces deep into Russia, Kutuzov stretched the Frenchman’s supply lines thin and demoralized his troops. “Few figures in history,” Gaddis says of Kutuzov, “have done more by appearing to do less” (189). Roosevelt did more, but as Gaddis shows, he also knew a thing or two

about conserving one’s power. In the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt wisely avoided dividing his forces. He decided to focus on Nazi Germany first, the greater of the two threats facing America, before settling scores with Japan.

Gaddis’s views about leaders who failed are also instructive. Xerxes saw his invasion of Greece in 480 BCE fail spectacularly, but it was not because he lacked firepower. The King of Kings was forced to beat a hasty retreat across the Hellespont (the Dardanelles) because he overreached: his invading Persian armies and fleets did not carry enough food or water, and the conquered Greeks would not supply them. “Xerxes failed, as is the habit of hedgehogs, to establish a proper relationship between his ends and his means,” writes Gaddis (12). He passes similar judgment on the older Pericles and on Philip II. Pericles’s Megarian decree imposing economic sanctions upon the city of Megara shortly before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War mistook peripheral for vital interests, a precedent that Pericles’s successors felt compelled to imitate. Strategic overextension was the result. Philip II also overextended his empire, but by putting his trust in God (ideology) rather than the watchful eye of a bursar.

For all its strengths, *On Grand Strategy* is not without weaknesses. One is the short shrift Gaddis gives to politics. To be fair, he does not ignore the role of domestic politics. But he does downplay its significance in the making of grand strategy. Consider Lincoln and FDR, whom Gaddis rightly views as America’s two greatest strategists. What made them great strategists? Gaddis believes it was their ability to adjust their tactics (i.e., to be fox-like) without losing sight of their longer-term goals (hedgehog). True enough, but also critical to their success was their uncanny ability to read the public mood and, equally important,

to outmaneuver their domestic political opponents. The timing of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (which Gaddis calls "Lincoln's Tarantino," or the strategic turning point in the war) was determined largely by Lincoln's attempts to put out what he called "the [domestic] fire in the rear."³ Strategic considerations, including depriving the Confederacy of slaves, mattered. But Lincoln timed the Emancipation Proclamation to achieve maximum domestic political advantage. It enabled him to shore up his political base in the North and, at the same time, shift the balance of power against the South.

Like Lincoln, Roosevelt understood that grand strategies are only as good as the domestic political foundations they stand upon. "It is a terrible thing to look over your shoulder when you are trying to lead," Roosevelt confided to an aide, "and to find no one there."⁴ While Roosevelt considered the rise of Nazi Germany a serious threat to American interests as early as 1936, he was forced by the demands of Depression-era politics to bide his time. Many in Roosevelt's New Deal coalition preferred butter to guns, while his Republican opponents opposed pump-priming of any kind. Until the Japanese attack reset the parameters of debate, Roosevelt was highly constrained by domestic realities. He did what any wise leader would do under similar political circumstances: he exploited diplomacy to its fullest and slowly prepared the country for the war that he knew would inevitably find its way to America's shores.

Grand strategy is thus Janus-faced: its formulation has as much to do with leaders' ability to govern effectively at home as it does with promoting the nation's interests abroad. Machiavelli captured the essence of this idea. In *The Prince*, he writes of leaders caught in a vortex of competing and often conflicting pressures, some external, others internal. "For a Prince should have two fears: one within, on account of his subjects; the other outside, on account of external powers."⁵ As political analysts, we must widen our view so that we capture both of these essential dimensions of statecraft—geopolitics and domestic politics. One without the other will not do.

Strategic overextension is thus not the only danger that statesmen must be alert to. Writing in the middle of World War II, Walter Lippmann, America's leading political commentator of the twentieth century, wrote that the key to effective U.S. statecraft after the war would require "bringing into balance, with a comfortable surplus of power in reserve, the nation's commitments and the nation's power."⁶ His fear was less that a triumphant America's global reach would exceed its grasp and more that the United States would repeat its mistake after World War I by failing once again to reach for what it could safely grasp—namely, the mantle of international leadership. Put another way, Lippmann worried more about the risk of strategic underreach than he did about the danger of overextension.

Lippmann does not appear in the pages of *On Grand Strategy*, and that is a pity. For our understanding of the "dos" and "don'ts" of statecraft would surely benefit from Gaddis's discerning eye on when and why leaders fail to rise to the challenge. At a time when a confused America is conceding valuable strategic terrain to a clear-headed China, it is worth remembering that hubris is not the only cause of great power decline and international disorder. Just as geopolitical and domestic pressures can lead great powers to overreach, they can also combine in ways that lead them to underreach—to soft-pedal foreign commitments and abdicate international leadership. When power outstrips policy, as it does in America today, the threat is not that the nation's international aspirations will exceed its strategic capabilities, but rather the reverse. Blind ambition is one danger; reckless indifference is another.

Notes:

1. Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (London, 1953).
2. For Gaddis's positive assessment of the grand strategy guiding George W. Bush's war in Iraq, see <https://www.cfr.org/interview/gaddis-bush-pre-emption-doctrine-most-dramatic-policy-shift-cold-war>.
3. On Lincoln's and Roosevelt's ability to mix politics and strategy, see my *Politics and Strategy: Partisan Ambition and American Statecraft* (Princeton, NJ, 2011).
4. H. W. Brands, *Traitor to His Class: The Privileged Life and Radical Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt* (New York, 2008), 484.
5. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1998), 72.
6. Walter Lippmann, *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* (Boston, 1943), 9.

Review of John Lewis Gaddis, *On Grand Strategy*

Michael Green

Students of John Lewis Gaddis's pathbreaking diplomatic histories should expect a very different examination of the strategic art in his newest book. History is still the milieu for his thoughts on strategy, but instead of reconstructing the evolution of concepts and policies over time, as he did in *Strategies of Containment*, Gaddis takes us on a thematic journey through the ages, with the most interesting and sometimes unlikely strategic thinkers of the past three millennia as guides.

What is lost in this nonlinear approach is the opportunity to think in time—to understand the role of agency and contingency as strategic concepts collide with the reality of power and then evolve, are contested, and ultimately succeed or fail at achieving national security objectives. (Inspired by *Strategies of Containment*, this is what I tried to achieve with my own recent history of American statecraft in Asia, *By More than Providence*). The lessons of straight history are more immediately obvious to students and policymakers, but Gaddis has a different aim with *On Grand Strategy*—to explore deeper questions about the human condition that bear on strategy rather than to understand the evolution of strategies themselves. This is not a book about how to conceptualize and execute grand strategy, in other words. It is a book about how to think strategically.

The central and most important lesson that permeates this rich volume is the importance of humility. The word "strategy" derives from the ancient Greek word for "commander" (*strategos*), and the concept of "grand" strategy seems to elevate the role of agency to the level of unbridled egoism. Yet Gaddis reminds us that one of the greatest strategic thinkers of all time, Abraham Lincoln, was also one of the humblest and of course, in a formal sense, the least educated. Lincoln's edge was that he could understand the constraints and tragedy of the human condition. And so, the volume seems to say, can you.

Gaddis's argument is propelled by a series of fundamental and often unresolvable contradictions that confront strategists. The Lincolns of history are those who can understand these contradictions. Gaddis quotes Sun Tzu's observation that, "opposites held in mind simultaneously" are "the strategist's keys to victory." Or as Clausewitz put it, "Where two ideas form a true logical antithesis, each is implied in the other. If the limitations of our mind do not allow us to comprehend both simultaneously, and discover by antithesis the whole of one in the whole of the other, each will nevertheless shed enough light on the other to clarify many of its details."¹

Gaddis has a sense of the dialectical, but he never takes the reader to the synthesis. There are no eternal lessons for how to execute strategy. There are no predictions. There is no scientific certainty. Karl Marx and Jomini are not invited to this party. They were not strategists. They predicted and

prescribed instead of intuiting.

The first and most central theme Gaddis introduces is one he takes from the Greek poet Archilochus of Paros—later appropriated by the twentieth-century British philosopher Isaiah Berlin—about the fox and the hedgehog. “The fox knows many things,” Archilochus wrote, “but the hedgehog knows one big thing.” The hedgehogs of history are not humble. They fixate and overextend, only to collapse in ignominy because of their failure to align potentially unlimited ends with limited means: Xerxes in Asia minor, Philip II in the English Channel, Napoleon in the unforgiving frozen wasteland of the Russian steppe, and Wilson with his vision of perpetual peace. The foxes are those who respect constraints, acknowledge dilemmas, anticipate contingency, and demonstrate agility: Pericles, Octavian Caesar, Elizabeth I, Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, among others.

At one point, Gaddis also contrasts history and political science, two disciplines increasingly at odds as each group of scholars retreats to its methodological safe zone. Reading Gaddis’s brief lamentation of this trend, I was reminded of the debate between a historian and political scientist staged over dinner at the 2011 Lone Star Seminar at the University of Texas at Austin. The political scientist complained that historians’ obsession with context and detail is what his discipline

calls “trivia.” The historian retorted that reducing history to two simple variables is what his discipline calls “talking to small children.” Gaddis reminds both that strategic thinking requires the political scientist’s ability to explore generalizable theories and the historian’s ability to provide context. “Strategy,” he argues, “requires a sense of the whole that reveals the significance of the respective parts.”

Other enduring strategic tensions include the difficulty of aligning fortifications with the state’s broader security interests beyond the chosen defensive line. It takes “steady nerves” and the ability to watch “smoke rise on horizons you once controlled without losing your self-confidence,” Gaddis warns. This dilemma has long been a central theme in American strategy toward the Pacific. George Kennan’s strategy of containment in Asia was based on an offshore defensive line centered on Japan and the first island chain, yet he could not abide the loss of Korea to the Communist camp—a tension he never resolved. Truman did resolve it, responding forcefully to North Korea’s invasion of the South in June 1950 and then signing a security treaty with the Republic of Korea in 1953.

The next year, smoke started to rise over the horizon in Indochina, and the defensive line was drawn farther forward onto the continent. Nixon pulled that line back to the island chain with the Guam Doctrine of 1969, but today the United States is dealing with new smoke over the horizon, as China coerces smaller states in Southeast Asia. Reassuring withdrawals are rare, Clausewitz notes, but overextension on the continent is just as dangerous for a maritime power. There is no right answer to this dilemma that can be imparted to strategists—only the importance of intuiting an answer based on the fox’s appreciation of context and contingency and an ability to see the strategic whole in the sum of the parts.

Gaddis’s guided tour never crosses into the Cold War, about which he claims he has said enough. However, the book anticipates postwar American strategy wonderfully. Tocqueville observed that a republican form of government based on checks and balances would be inimical to

strategy—the disciplined alignment of ends, ways and means. But as Richard Betts and others have noted, the American way of strategy has been effective, if often horribly inefficient.

Gaddis demonstrates why the Americans have been successful at strategy. He begins that narrative with Queen Elizabeth I on the evening of August 7, 1588, when the Spanish Armada met its fate and a seafaring English people set forth to establish a maritime empire. Elizabeth would be ruled by no man and no country, and she survived by balancing opposites both in her court and in the power politics of Europe. She was more agile at “pivoting” than the powerful Philip II, who, Gaddis concludes, became an immobile “pincushion.”

The Stuarts who followed Elizabeth were hedgehogs and had none of the Virgin Queen’s agility. They overreached in ways that produced the Glorious Revolution, a conflict

that defined both the Old World and the New, as protagonists fought from Devon to the Severn River in Maryland. The result was a constitutional monarchy that restored Elizabeth’s common sense if not her precise view of the sovereign’s divine right.

That same pragmatic ability to manage intractable contradictions was conveyed to the Founding Fathers, who created a nation based on the principle that all men are created equal while they papered over the blight of slavery and left it for another

day. Gaddis calls *The Federalist Papers* the most enduring work of political grand strategy since Machiavelli’s *The Prince*. Intrigued by that assertion (and, I confess, by the musical *Hamilton*), I went back and began re-reading the *Federalists* with my son. Gaddis is right. Hamilton’s, Jay’s, and Madison’s observations about great power politics, trade, and federalism still resonate.

Gaddis’s narrative arc then continues to Lincoln, who above all else learned to balance tensions and draw strength from contradictions, pivoting in the best Elizabethan sense as he pursued the moral imperative of emancipation but not at the cost of the Union. “I want God on my side,” he reportedly said, “but must have Kentucky.” Finally, Gaddis crosses the Atlantic to Winston Churchill, who, awaiting the Nazis after Dunkirk just as Elizabeth had awaited the Grand Armada over three centuries earlier, could famously tell Parliament that England would defend its island until “in God’s good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old.”

In contrast to so many of the purveyors of grand strategy who disparage American political culture and urge policymakers in Washington to adapt the Old World clarity of Thucydides, Metternich, or Castlereagh (and none disparaged Americanism more than Kennan, as Gaddis demonstrates in his biography of that brilliant but flawed man), *On Grand Strategy* suggests that the contradictions embraced by the Founding Fathers are themselves potential strengths. If there is to be an American way of strategy, after all, it must be American. Yet Gaddis also leaves one wondering whether his collection of contradictions, tensions, and incomplete dialectics provides a full enough menu to help us intuit the right approaches to the major strategic challenges we face today.

For example, is it true that humility is always the right starting point for strategy? “*Laudace! Laudace! Toujours Laudace!*” Napoleon cried. Well, as Russia proved, maybe not *toujours* *laudace*. Nevertheless, one could argue that audacity has characterized more American strategic

James Graham Wilson¹

successes than failures. James K. Polk's control of Oregon in 1846, Commodore Dewey's defeat of the Spanish in the Pacific in 1898, MacArthur's landings at Inchon in 1950, and Reagan's reversal of Soviet expansion with the Maritime Strategy in 1982 were all mismatches of ends and means that paid off. Perhaps in the shadow of the Iraq War this is too bold an assertion to make, but it is still worth distinguishing between respecting restraints and being bound by them—a distinction that might have made another fine theme for Gaddis.

And what of the nature of order and power in the postwar world that America (still) leads? The American empire was created by extending checks and balances to the international system after victory in the Second World War. As international relations scholar John Ikenberry notes, America became a "liberal Leviathan." Gaddis would no doubt appreciate this, noting as he does that the hardest task in *The Federalist Papers* was "showing how a republic could be an empire without becoming a tyranny."

Arguably, the greatest strategic challenge of our era is how to preserve that rules-based international order against anti-democratic revisionist powers employing gray-zone tactics that defy both the American assumptions about peace and the American way of war. *On Grand Strategy* focuses on war and deterrence, but the strategic art now must also include reassurance, shaping, and dissuasion. How would Gaddis characterize that particular tension? Would Elizabethan pivoting have suggested agile maneuvering between the reality of great power politics with China and the necessity of sustaining neoliberal norms? Would Lincoln have said, "I want God on my side, but I must sell Treasury bonds to China"?

Gaddis, fortunately, does not avoid the relationship of morality to strategy entirely. He never posits, as my former Johns Hopkins professor Robert Osgood did, that there is a distinction between "interests" and "idealism" in foreign policy strategy. In fact, successful American strategies have more often than not been premised on the understanding that justly governed states were more likely to be resilient against other imperial rivals and inclined towards American foreign policy priorities. Jefferson, Mahan, and Reagan all understood this. Even Henry Kissinger embarked on a series of speeches about morality in foreign policy in his final year as secretary of state, because he began to fear that a purely European form of realpolitik was unsustainable in American politics and might give way to neo-Wilsonianism (which it did, despite Kissinger's efforts, in the form of Jimmy Carter).

And yet there is an obvious tension in how one pursues the longer-term goal of justness with the nearer-term exigencies of crisis, confrontation, or war. Gaddis asks at the end of *On Grand Strategy* how the alignment of potentially infinite aspirations with necessarily limited capabilities could ever create fairness. His answer: "From *bending* the alignment toward freedom." I was on the National Security Council Staff (but not in the Oval Office) when Professor Gaddis visited with President George W. Bush and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice after 9/11. I later heard the president argue that one must be a "realist in the short-term, but an idealist in the long-term," and Rice's first speech on Asia as secretary of state began with the proposition that the United States would pursue a "balance of power that favors freedom." I have never asked, but perhaps they too were Gaddis's students.

Those who were definitely Gaddis's students at Yale tell me that reading *On Grand Strategy* provided a nostalgic return to the classroom. I must confess that upon finishing the last page and closing the book, I was filled with envy.

Note:

1. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984).

John Lewis Gaddis's *On Grand Strategy* is a compendium based on his semesters co-teaching Yale University's "Studies in Grand Strategy," a seminar he established in the early 2000s with fellow historian Paul Kennedy and retired foreign service officer Charles Hill. Grand strategy, or "the alignment of potentially unlimited aspirations with necessarily limited capabilities," is something Gaddis considers relevant to high politics and to one's self (21). "Your life as a student won't fundamentally change if you sleep for another twenty minutes tomorrow morning, at the cost of grabbing a cold bagel instead of a hot breakfast on your way to class," he writes. "The stakes rise, though, as you consider what you're learning in that class, how that relates to the other courses you're taking, what your major and then your degree are going to be, how you might parlay these into a profession, and with whom you may fall in love along the way" (21).

Gaddis's main theme in this book is a variant of F. Scott Fitzgerald's definition of a first-rate intelligence: "the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function" (14). That means acting like a hedgehog in some instances and like a fox in others—to use the metaphors closely associated with Isaiah Berlin, who is a central character throughout the book. The danger, for undergraduates, is allowing apparent contradictions to stand in the way of action. Nearly everyone who has been there can recall pondering the apparent contradictions between doing good and doing well. Professors face their own dilemma, since their role is to foster an unlimited desire to learn while also teaching students to appreciate their own human limitations. Whoever you are, the author suggests, and at whatever stage of life, it is probably a good thing to think about a grand strategy for life.

Gaddis writes with clarity and command, just as he has in his ten previous books. He is a reliable crafter of epigrams. "For as Wilson was trying to make the world safe for democracy, democracy was making war unsafe for the world," he writes, and "Lenin's specialty was transforming the unexpected into the predetermined" (272, 276). The breadth and ecumenical scope of key events and individuals in human history in *On Grand Strategy* are remarkable. In the first chapter, Gaddis quotes Uncle Ben Parker telling a young Spider-Man that "With great power comes great responsibility" (21).

The chapters to follow feature powerful individuals who either failed or succeeded in matching means with ends. Some of Gaddis's examples are more convincing than others. While the causes and consequences of the Peloponnesian War are of eternal relevance in the study of politics, the life of Augustus Caesar may not be. Gaddis's broader point, if I am conveying it accurately, is that individuals with what Clausewitz called the *coup d'œil*, or "inner eye," are connected to others across time and space. Patterns common to geopolitical conflicts throughout history, Gaddis appears to be saying, are also innate and discoverable in human beings born millennia apart.

Yet the connections that Gaddis draws among his characters sometimes struck me as tenuous. Reiterating that opposites held in the mind simultaneously are "the strategist's keys to victory," he writes that "it's as if Sun Tzu pre-channels, however improbably, F. Scott Fitzgerald" (83). Indeed, *very improbably*. "It's all the more interesting . . . that Augustus understood so much of Sun Tzu while knowing nothing of him," he goes on to say (91). *Perhaps*. In *The Federalist*, Madison "drew, knowingly or not, on Machiavelli" (173); later, Tolstoy may or may not have read Clausewitz, yet the two might be regarded alongside each other "as a commentary, in advance, on F. Scott Fitzgerald"

(213). “Clausewitz wasn’t available in English until 1873,” Gaddis acknowledges. “Lincoln, nevertheless intuited Clausewitz—although it would take him three years to find, in the unprepossessingly lethal Ulysses S. Grant, a general who already did” (237).

The drawback of these contrived interactions is that they detract from actual connections, such as the one between John Quincy Adams and Abraham Lincoln. It is fitting, as Gaddis duly notes, that Lincoln was with Adams on the former president’s last public day. That connection matters because Lincoln went on to realize Adams’s objectives of internal economic development and, eventually, the abolition of slavery.

Meanwhile, the idea of beauty is absent from *On Grand Strategy*. As Robert Jervis put it in a 2014 interview with *International Relations*, “I deeply believe in the study of international politics and political science as aesthetics, as gaining pleasure from the attempt to understand the world for its own sake.” Not everyone who studies those topics for a living can honestly say that, and it is hardly a prerequisite that they do. Yet it would be awkward for literary scholars not to acknowledge the aesthetics of their subjects. In *The Western Canon*, Harold Bloom wrote that his own selections shared a “strangeness, a mode of originality that either cannot be assimilated, or that so assimilates us that we cease to see it as strange,” and that what connects canonical works is “their ability to make you feel strange at home.”² Gaddis hints at such a commonality in *On Grand Strategy* when he associates “lightness” with Isaiah Berlin, yet he does not sustain this theme throughout the ten chapters (107, 301). Here, I think, is a missed opportunity.

Just as there may be beauty in grand strategy, there may also be a grand strategy in beauty. Ludwig van Beethoven aspired to bring about universal harmony through the performance of his music. Beethoven famously grew disillusioned with Napoleon—who appears in this book but is not a central character—after he belatedly understood the emperor’s true ambitions. Is there a place for morality in Gaddis’s conception of grand strategy? In the final few pages of the book, he paraphrases Berlin’s categories of positive and negative liberties, grouping Napoleon in the former category, along with twentieth-century totalitarians and Woodrow Wilson, who truly cannot catch a break. At the same time, he advocates (I think) that statesmen recognize man’s fallen state, which Berlin called “pluralism.”

Yet it is still unclear to me whether Gaddis sees a moral code that exists apart from the sublime self-interest of successfully configuring means to achieve ends. It may well be a question of scale: criminal law, ethics, and religious convictions restrict the behavior of individuals within a community yet may never actually apply to heads of state who are seeking to establish order out of chaos. Was it morally right for Franklin Roosevelt to cooperate with Josef Stalin to advance the shared objective of defeating Nazi Germany? No strategy or politics is ever pure, Gaddis writes, and in this case he defers to Hal Brands and Patrick Porter, who point out that if Roosevelt’s grand strategy wasn’t a successful one, no strategy would be (288).

Indeed, the same could be said about Gaddis’s training of graduate students at Yale and Ohio University: if he isn’t a successful teacher, no teacher would be. I wonder: how have his experiences in the classroom shaped his thinking on grand strategy? Some of the chapters read as lectures, which he has surely been reworking and refining throughout (at least) the existence of the seminar he has co-taught. Yet it is not clear from this book how interaction with students has led him to refocus his scope or rethink his assumptions and conclusions. There were times when I got to the end of a section or chapter and thought to myself that he must have triggered a few reactions when he said this in a lecture hall for the first time.

A related question: how does Gaddis conceive of grand strategy with respect to the discipline in which he received his Ph.D. at the University of Texas? In its manuscript submission guidelines, *Diplomatic History* states that it “is the only journal devoted to U.S. international history and foreign relations, broadly defined, including grand strategy, diplomacy, and issues involving gender, religion, culture, race and ethnicity, and ideology.” Over at least the past twenty years, the field of “the U.S. and the World” has not always gone in the same direction Gaddis has. I wonder whether he sees opportunities to apply the methods and research agenda of grand strategy to some of the other topics covered in this description of the flagship journal of the Society for the Historians of American Foreign Relations.

A final question has to do with evidence. In making his case, Gaddis draws freely upon literature and popular fiction across time and space. Simply put, do we need to stick to observed and recorded facts in order to teach history? Students can learn a great deal about the mood of Washington during the 1980s from the television show *The Americans* (2013–2018), in part because producers Joel Fields and Joseph Weisberg were so meticulous about the sets and scenery as well as the chronology of U.S.-Soviet relations. What their fictional versions of Soviet and American arms negotiators were prepared to put on the table for the December 1987 Washington Summit—a trade of the Soviet “Dead Hand” system for the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)—is more scintillating than the actual agenda, which was to try to come up with a counting formula for a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (which, incidentally, the negotiators actually did, and in a way that was important to the eventual 1991 agreement). Yet it would be ridiculous to consider using *The Americans* in a seminar on the end of the Cold War and then not do so because of that particular narrative enhancement.

The same can be said about *The Crown* (2016–), which covers the basic dynamics of Cold War diplomacy and makes private and complicated people a lot more human. And Winston Churchill’s 1940 trip to the London Underground in *Darkest Hour* (2017) is pure fiction, but the words Churchill allegedly strung together from those ordinary citizens in that encounter are part of his actual mobilization of the English language. As Gaddis reminds us, Churchill reached back at least to Canning—if not Pericles—when he said “[if] this Island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the oceans armed and guarded by the British Fleet, will carry on the struggle until in God’s good time the New World with all its power and might sets forth to the rescue and liberation of the Old” (181).

Yet this blending of fact and fiction can also lead one down a rabbit hole. Gaddis’s introduction to Abraham Lincoln is a scene from Steven Spielberg’s 2012 movie (screenplay by Tony Kushner) in which Lincoln explains to Senator Thaddeus Stevens that having a compass that tells you “true north” is not going to prevent you from having to veer off in other directions in order to avoid swamps, deserts, and other pitfalls along the way. While there is no evidence that this conversation ever happened, it captures the essence of Lincoln, according to Gaddis, who then cites it when he believes it illuminates patterns he sees among individuals.

This technique can be downright confusing. Gaddis uses it again in his introduction to Queen Elizabeth I, which is a passage from Virginia Woolf’s 1928 novel *Orlando* (122–23). Gaddis informs the reader that this is “as close to the great aging queen as we, from this distance, are likely to get.” Is this an eminent historian’s wry reflection on the inherent impossibility of reconstructing the past? I honestly cannot tell.

In sum, my takeaway from this book is that we all ought

to read more of the classics. I myself have no good excuse for not reading more broadly in college—although reading *Strategies of Containment* inspired me to read a lot more books about U.S. foreign relations. I found it downright impossible to read fiction in graduate school, because of what I regarded—shortsightedly—as the opportunity cost of reading the books I was supposed to. I knew that I was not going to take comprehensive exams in which I would be evaluated on a list of books that included *War and Peace* and *On War* and the few dozen that form the core of *On Grand Strategy*. But when it came to that particular crossing of the Hellespont, I suspect that they would have served me well.

Notes:

1. The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of State or U.S. Government.
2. Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages* (Boston, MA, 1994).

Author's Response

John Lewis Gaddis

My thanks to Robert Brigham, Andrew Buchanan, Michael Green, Peter Trubowitz, and James Graham Wilson for their (mostly) generous comments, and to Andrew Johns for obtaining them. But because unalloyed praise can be uninteresting, I also thank the reviewers for avoiding that. I'll respond similarly, focusing on their criticisms.

One is implied, if not explicitly stated, by all five: it's that *On Grand Strategy* is an odd duck of a book. It lacks the earnestness historians normally expect, as well as the rigor social scientists demand. It's conversational, impressionistic, and strangely casual about chronology, so that characters from one era converse with those from others across great gulfs of time, space, and culture. Most unsettlingly, the book relies occasionally on fake evidence, otherwise known as fiction.

But if you were running a seminar, would you allow it to plod along, as Virginia Woolf once put it, "without looking to right or left, in the indelible footprints of truth; unenticed by flowers; regardless of shade; and on and on methodically till we fall plump into the grave and write *finis* on the tombstone above our heads"?¹ Probably not, because "truths" in seminars are to be contested. The best ones deflate orthodoxies by exploring connections (even if improbable), by confronting contradictions (even if irreconcilable), and by sending away students exhilarated by what they've experienced (even if not quite sure what, if anything, has been decided). Green has it right, therefore: the point isn't to tell students *what* to think, but to suggest *how* they might think as they prepare for futures no one can now foresee.

On Grand Strategy grows out of seminars my colleagues Paul Kennedy, Charles Hill, and I have co-taught for almost two decades at Yale. Contrary to what Wilson suggests, we've never formally lectured in that class. We've preferred the spontaneity that allows curiosity: what might Sun Tzu and Octavian/Augustus have had in common, for example, or St. Augustine and Machiavelli, or Clausewitz and Tolstoy? What foxes and hedgehogs might Isaiah Berlin have found if allowed to range freely across time and space? And what *is* grand strategy anyway?

I've defined it as "the alignment of potentially infinite aspirations with necessarily limited capabilities," but Buchanan finds this inadequate. "[T]hat's it?" he asks incredulously, before going on, untactfully, to endorse Kennedy's more prolix alternative: "the capacity of a nation's

leaders to bring together all the elements, military and nonmilitary, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation's long-term . . . best interests." Where, though, does that "capacity" come from? Henry Kissinger, who should know, pointed out soon after switching from statecraft to memoirs that "the convictions that leaders have formed before reaching high office are the intellectual capital they will consume as long as they continue in office."² But what is "intellectual capital"? And how far back is "before"?

Octavian was eighteen when he got the news of his great uncle Julius Caesar's assassination. Princess Elizabeth was nineteen when first forced to sit through "Bloody" Mary's Catholic masses. Abe Lincoln was not yet twenty when he poled a flatboat down the Mississippi into the heartland of American slavery. All were younger than most of our students, yet these events began their steady rise. They were adjusting aspirations to capabilities even as teenagers, but they would leave much wider worlds far from what they had been. Or, as Berlin might have put it, they were foxes (managing many things) and hedgehogs (pursuing one big thing) at the same time.

Berlin is often understood to have claimed the opposite: that you can't be both a fox and a hedgehog; that you have to choose; and that once you do you're stuck with the choice. Certainly it's hard to read his 1953 essay on Tolstoy, which unleashed the animals, in any other way. But Berlin admitted, late in life, that his animals had originated in nothing more serious than an Oxford party game, and that they'd been taken too seriously.³ In that sense, they resembled George F. Kennan's 1947 "X" article in *Foreign Affairs*,⁴ for in both instances vivid writing obscured subtleties in thinking, leaving both authors to be best remembered for what they'd probably have preferred to forget.

What Berlin should be chiefly remembered for, I've argued in *On Grand Strategy*, aren't his foxes and hedgehogs but rather the procedures he left for transcending such categories: for learning to live with contradictions, owing to the impossibility of having all good things simultaneously. Berlin makes this case in what I think is his finest essay, "The Originality of Machiavelli," unmentioned by any of the *Passport* reviewers, even though it inspired my "aspirations versus capabilities" definition. I'm a bit disappointed by the omission, but authors can't have everything they want at the same time either.

Because Berlin haunted me as I wrote the book, I decided to invite him into it: that's why he wanders in and out like a time-traveler in a science fiction novel. I have him alongside Xerxes at the Hellespont, with Machiavelli in 16th century Florence, and at Tolstoy's forlorn deathbed in 1910. He interprets America to the British in World War II, spends a legendary Leningrad night with Anna Akhmatova and Stalin's listening devices, and whispers posthumously into my ear as we watch Spielberg's 2012 movie *Lincoln*—where Daniel Day-Lewis, playing Lincoln, talks about the necessity, from the days of one's youth, both of having a compass and avoiding swamps. I can see, though, that this may have made reviewers somewhat queasy.

Which is perhaps why none here seem to have noticed St. Augustine, who shares a chapter with Machiavelli. Berlin's incompatibility of good things is the bridge between them: saving the soul, Augustine argued, is a good thing, but so is saving the state that protects those who try to turn other cheeks toward those trying to kill them. Machiavelli wouldn't have disagreed: both saw *proportionality*—apportioning violence, as opposed to applying it indiscriminately or refraining from it altogether—as a tragic necessity in a flawed world.

Which then opens up persistent tragedies in American history: the Founders' toleration of slavery in order build a union; the price Lincoln paid to undo that deal; the benefits he gained by preserving an *imbalance* of power on

the North America continent at the expense of those who got there first; among which benefits were three rescues of a *balance* of power that preserved freedom in Europe in the twentieth century – one of which, nonetheless, required collaboration with authoritarian evil. From this perspective, Berlin’s “bridge” extends quite a long way, from Augustine through Franklin D. Roosevelt, and well beyond.

So—no apologies for the oddness of this duck. *On Grand Strategy* records in print, I hope, something of the excitement of some excellent seminars, as well as fulfilling a long-time ambition on my part, which has been to write a book that says almost nothing about the Cold War. That made it fun to write, just as the seminars that inspired it were fun to co-teach. All the more reason, then, to thank my teaching partners, our students, and *Passport* for the opportunity to explain.

Notes:

1. Virginia Woolf, *Orlando: A Biography* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1956; first published in 1928), p. 65.
2. Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), p. 58.
3. See *On Grand Strategy*, pp. 4-6.
4. I discuss this extensively in *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York: Penguin, 2011), pp. 249-75

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Arlington VA

June 20-22, 2019

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SHAHR is dedicated to the study of the history of the United States in the world, broadly conceived. The production, exercise, and understanding of American power takes many forms and touches myriad subjects, from exploring questions of diplomacy and statecraft to unpacking definitions and illuminating the practice of U.S. power. It considers the many political, global, social, and cultural processes that inform foreign relations, including global governance, strategy, transnational movements, religion, human rights, race, gender, activism, trade and economics, immigration, borderlands, warfare, the environment, and empire. SHAHR welcomes those who study any period from the colonial era to the present.

The 2019 program will host SHAHR's seventh annual Job Search Workshop to help prepare graduate student members for the job market. Students will have the opportunity to receive individualized feedback on their cover letters and CVs from experienced faculty members. Those interested in participating can indicate this on the online conference submission form (although it is not necessary to be a panelist to participate). The Job Workshop is open to all current graduate students and newly minted Ph.D.'s. Priority will be given to first-time participants.

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The Committee is open to alternative formats, especially those based on discussion and engagement with the audience, which should be described briefly in the proposal. The Program Committee welcomes panels that transcend conventional chronologies, challenge received categories, or otherwise offer innovative approaches and fresh thinking.

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AV requests, along with a brief explanation of how the equipment is essential to the presentation, **must** be made at the time of application. AV access is limited.

Any special **scheduling requests** (e.g., that a panel not take place on a particular day) **must** be made at the time of application.

Generally, annual membership in SHAFR is required for those participating in the 2019 meeting. The president and program committee may grant some exceptions to scholars whose specializations, broadly conceived, are outside the field. Enrollment instructions will be included with notification of accepted proposals.

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SHAFR will award several Robert A. and Barbara Divine Graduate Student Travel Grants to assist graduate students presenting papers at the 2019 conference. The following stipulations apply: 1) no award will exceed \$300; 2) priority will be given to graduate students who receive no or limited funds from their home institutions; and 3) expenses will be reimbursed by the SHAFR Business Office upon submission of receipts. The Program Committee will make decisions regarding awards. A graduate student requesting travel funds must make a request when submitting the paper/panel proposal. Applications should include: a 1-page letter from the applicant; reference letter from the graduate advisor that also confirms the unavailability of departmental travel funds. The two items should be submitted via the on-line interface at the time the panel/paper proposal is submitted. Funding requests will have no bearing on the committee's decisions on panels/papers, but funds will not be awarded unless the applicant's submission is accepted by the program committee in a separate decision. **Application deadline: December 1, 2018.**

SHAFR Global Scholars and Diversity Grants

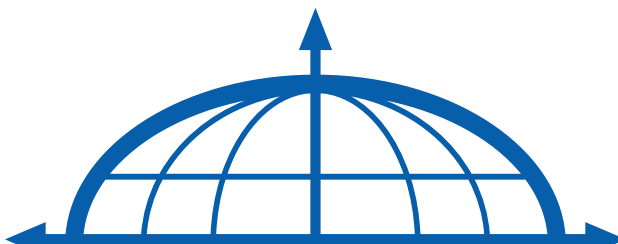
SHAFR also awards Global Scholars and Diversity Grants to help defray travel and lodging expenses for the 2019 conference. These grants are aimed at scholars whose participation in the annual meeting helps to diversify the organization. Preference will be given to those who have not previously presented at annual meetings. The awards are intended for scholars who represent groups historically under-represented at SHAFR, scholars who offer diverse and complementary intellectual approaches, scholars from outside the United States. "Scholars" includes faculty, graduate students, and independent researchers. To further integrate grant winners into SHAFR, awards include one-year membership that includes subscriptions to *Diplomatic History* and *Passport*. Applicants should submit a copy of their individual paper proposal along with a short cv (2-page maximum) and a 2-3 paragraph essay addressing the fellowship criteria (including data on previous SHAFR meetings attended and funding received). Please submit your application via the on-line interface. Funding requests will have no bearing on the committee's decisions on panels/papers, but funds will not be awarded unless the applicant's submission is accepted by the program committee in a separate decision. **Application deadline: December 1, 2018.**

For more details about the conference please visit the main conference web page.

We look forward to seeing you next June in Arlington!

2019 Program Committee co-chairs,

Kaeten Mistry (University of East Anglia) and
Jay Sexton (Kinder Institute, University of Missouri)



Perspectives on General David Petraeus's SHA FR Keynote Address

Peter L. Hahn, Brian C. Etheridge, Aaron O'Connell, and Brian D'Haeseleer

Editor's note: *The following essays address various perspectives on the controversy that arose in connection to the invitation that SHA FR President Peter L. Hahn extended to General David Petraeus to be a keynote speaker at the 2018 SHA FR conference in Philadelphia. Passport publishes these comments to provide context and detail about the situation, particularly for those who were either unable to attend the Petraeus talk or were unaware of the issues raised in the weeks leading up to the conference. AJ*

Peter L. Hahn

Editor's note: *The following essay was originally sent to the SHA FR membership via e-mail on 30 June 2018. AJ*

I am writing about the discussion in the SHA FR Council during its June 21 meeting in Philadelphia about the petition addressed to SHA FR Council protesting the luncheon address by General David Petraeus at the recent SHA FR conference.

Council passed a resolution stating: "Council approves the principle of presidential appointments of keynote speakers and affirms SHA FR's tradition of promoting scholarly engagement and exchange with all such speakers."

In the discussion that preceded the vote on the resolution, I explained my rationale for inviting General Petraeus and for settling on the nature of the presentation (moderated discussion with an interlocutor) and the method for asking questions (written questions carried forward to moderator by a SHA FR staff member). Council recommended that I share my thinking with the membership, which I am happy to do:

(1) SHA FR presidents have used their discretion to invite keynote speakers to SHA FR conferences for many years. Presidents commonly have exercised such other executive decision-making authority as naming the Program Committee co-chairs and members, setting topics and inviting speakers for "presidential sessions," setting the number and style of sessions, meals, and receptions, and selecting venues for social events.

(2) By my observation and experience, luncheons have been used for many years to invite an experienced official or non-governmental practitioner of US foreign relations to speak. In my experience, which I have come to believe that most members share, I have learned considerably from such speakers about the complications of policy-making that often are hard to discern in the archives, enabling me to write and analyze from a more informed, empathetic perspective. I heard General Petraeus speak in Columbus last year and immediately imagined that he would provide an interesting talk that members would appreciate and learn from. So I decided to invite him. The moderator was selected on the basis of his professional expertise in military history and his academic credentials, including a doctorate from Oxford.

(3) I offered General Petraeus the "moderated discussion" format and the written questions method, both of which were used effectively in his Columbus presentation. I have observed and participated in such moderated discussions previously; I believe that they are a valid means of framing a presentation and that the written question method is a valid means for channeling audience queries to a speaker.

In Council's discussion of the protest petition, Council members made the following observations:

(A) SHA FR is governed democratically. An elected Nominating Committee nominates candidates for Vice President/President to run in a competitive election. The membership elects the president. Serving as our constitution, the By-Laws stipulate the broad and specific duties of the Nominating Committee, the President, and the Council. In selecting a speaker, the President is acting within her/his By-Laws authority.

(B) Subjecting prospective selection of speakers to a membership referendum would prove extremely difficult given the logistics and timing of planning a conference, issuing invitations, negotiating fees, and confirming dates.

(C) The fee paid for the keynote speaker was nominal, and it was covered by sponsor contributions. All sponsors were reputable professional organizations. Consistent with usual practice for SHA FR meetings, they were invited to co-sponsor discrete events within the conference and did so generously. The moderator served without compensation.

(D) Members should be encouraged to convey concerns with any aspect of SHA FR governance directly to members of Council. The roster of all 14 members is posted on the SHA FR website, now including their e-mail addresses.

Given that the official minutes of the meeting remain unapproved and given my desire to send this message in timely manner, I shared a draft of this message with all members of Council, and they affirmed that it conveys the discussion that occurred. **[Editor's note: The minutes from the June 2018 SHA FR Council meeting have subsequently been approved and appear in this issue of Passport. AJ]**

Brian C. Etheridge

Author's note: *The following is an effort to capture the substance of the keynote conversation with David Petraeus at the SHA FR 2018 annual meeting for those who were unable or unwilling to attend. It is an attempt at reportage for the record; it does not offer any commentary or interpretation of Petraeus's remarks. Although I have shared it with other attendees to ensure accuracy, it does not reflect the perspective or view of any other person or institution. Any errors or omissions are solely mine. BE*

The keynote luncheon with David Petraeus took place from 12:30 to 2:30pm on Friday, June 22, 2018 at the Sheraton Philadelphia Society Hill Hotel in Philadelphia, PA.

Peter Hahn, the president of SHAFR, began the program by thanking everyone who made the conference a reality, including various committees, individuals, and sponsors. He thanked the Foreign Policy Research Institute last.

Hahn noted that the format for the keynote is a conversation. He pointed out the note cards on lunch tables were for submitting questions. He said that the moderator would strive to work as many questions into the conversation as he can.

Hahn then introduced Petraeus and John Nagl, the moderator. Petraeus and Nagl sat on chairs on the dais for the conversation.

Nagl started off by asking Petraeus to address the concern that some had about his coming to the conference to talk.

Petraeus joked that he was gratified to still be able to generate controversy after so much time out of government. He gave an anecdote in which he told the National Press Club that he was happy to have worn the uniform that protects the rights of people to criticize him.

Nagl asked Petraeus about the decision to invade Iraq.

Petraeus pointed out that he was a two-star general at the time and that he spent his time thinking about the military logistics of invasion. He said that his concern at the time was that the United States might be too light if the Iraqis fought and too light if they collapsed. He said that he has been asked several times since if the United States should have invaded, and he said he would never dishonor the sacrifice of the fallen soldiers by answering the question. He argued that American decisionmakers really did believe that there were weapons of mass destruction, and they were as surprised as anybody that they did not exist. He pointed out that some weapons were discovered later in a bunker, but they were so decayed that they did not warrant the initial appraisals. Petraeus said that the deployment was poorly carried out; people were moved out first and then the supplies followed later—the military was forced to improvise and buy what they could in the local markets.

Nagl observed that the postwar planning was even worse than the prewar planning.

Petraeus agreed, saying that the United States made three mistakes. First, it should not have invaded without a good understanding of the country that it was invading. Second, it built too many improvised units to try to stabilize the country after the invasion was successful. Petraeus said that he raised questions about what would be done after the invasion and he was told not to worry about it. Petraeus argued that the United States should have established an embassy, but he believed that Rumsfeld didn't want one because it would report to the Department of State. Third, the United States erred in dismissing Iraqi military personnel without giving them a plan for demobilization. Petraeus pointed out that there were tens of thousands of former military soldiers rioting within a few weeks. He pointed out that de-Ba'athification was poorly thought out in a similar way.

Nagl asked what Petraeus learned after the first year in Iraq.

Petraeus built on the three previous observations to say that the United States should have handed off to the Iraqis only when they were ready.

Petraeus then transitioned to a discussion of the surge and some of the criticisms of the counterinsurgency manual. He said that the manual was borne out of necessity for a comprehensive approach—counterterrorism was part of it, but the United States also needed to focus on building the host nation through reconciliation, restoration

of basic services, rebuilding schools, establishing the rule of law, etc. The manual looked toward history to try to understand what happened. Engaging the people and engaging the enemy were essential. What distinguished counterinsurgency was that it was not just offensive and defensive but also focused on stability operations.

Nagl then asked how Petraeus determined the effectiveness of the counterinsurgency program.

Petraeus talked about the need for metrics for determining success in achieving stability, and the range of individuals who would be needed to be involved in providing data. He noted that domestic partners can often be flawed actors in this endeavor.

Nagl commented that insurgencies tend not to break out in countries that are well-governed. He asked what Petraeus learned from the data after eighteen months.

Petraeus said that he learned that violence was down 80%. He said that the United States did not achieve all the legislation that they wanted but they did affect some reconciliation. He said that the results of the surge stayed with the country over the next three and a half years. He said that when he became director of the CIA he was dismayed to see Iraqis carry out vendettas against Sunni leaders. All of the hard work to bring Sunnis back in and reduce tension went out the window and began the descent that led to ISIS. He said that ISIS had been destroyed during the surge and suppressed for three and a half years. He was disappointed that Nouri al-Maliki broke his word and never signed the final agreement.

Petraeus said that what mattered most in the surge was ideas. Counterinsurgency was about learning from the past. He said that history was very important. He said his approach was very much about becoming a learning organization. He offered that whoever learns the fastest in counterinsurgency wins.

Nagl said that the most impressive thing he noticed in Baghdad after the surge was the presence of plate glass windows—a sign that security must have improved significantly. Nagl asked if Petraeus just copied David Galula's book on counterinsurgency.

Petraeus said that he was aware of it and mentions book by John Akehurst called *We Won a War*. He mentioned the French experience in Algeria specifically. Petraeus observed that one cannot directly translate experience from one place to another. He argued that you must approach the endeavor with some humility.

Referring to notecards collected from the audience, Nagl pointed out that a number of questions had been submitted about torture. He asked about the wisdom of learning from the French in Algeria when they relied so much on torture.

Petraeus said that after the first year he believed that the United States should not do anything not condoned by the Geneva conventions. After meeting with the lawyers, this was decided as the best course of action. If the government wanted information from a detainee, Petraeus argued that the best strategy was to understand the point of view of the detainee. He said that even if one obtains information through torture, it was not worth the damage done to US prestige internationally. He brought up one exception: the ticking time bomb scenario. What do you do if detainee has planted bomb that will go off in an hour? Such a scenario warrants doing anything to prevent it. Petraeus said that a perception of a ticking time bomb after 9/11 led to failure.

Petraeus sardonically noted that he was rewarded for success in Iraq with assignment to Afghanistan. One of the first things he did was to draw distinctions between Afghanistan and Iraq so facile comparisons were not made. Iraq benefited from high rates of literacy, good infrastructure, oil, etc. Afghanistan was not so lucky. All of which made Afghanistan more difficult. He shared his opinion that the United States would not be able to flip Afghanistan

in the same way as it did Iraq. He saw some chance for modest reconciliation, but the drawdown announcement undercut the ability to achieve reconciliation. He said the circumstances were very challenging; the leader of Afghanistan was flawed and difficult to manage. He said the United States went to Afghanistan because of 9/11. And for some reason ISIS and the Taliban keep trying to go back there. The United States has prevented that but cannot withdraw yet.

In response to question about Yemen and other hotspots, Petraeus cited the return of history, in contradistinction to Francis Fukuyama's famous declaration about the end of history following the end of the Cold War. He pointed out that the Chinese system is doing spectacularly well. He said the Belt and Road Initiative is a very aggressive effort by China to increase influence in the region by tying regional economies to China.

Nagl asked a question about Petraeus's directorship of the CIA. Why did the mission evolve from intelligence gathering?

Petraeus said it is founded on a legal basis. According to Title 50 of the US Code, every covert action is based in findings and authorized by the president. He argued that the president should have access to the option of covert action. He mentioned that Obama campaigned against the practice, but then jealously guarded it. The CIA exists to spy, recruit spies, avoid detection, and analyze intelligence.

Nagl said that Petraeus has worked with Bush and Obama, and interviewed with Trump. He asked for a comparison of the three.

Petraeus observed that Bush ran against nation-building; Obama wanted to do nation-building at home; and Trump wanted to pursue America First. But then events intervened for each. He argues that there were two George W. Bushes. During the first six years Bush let Rumsfeld handle everything, but then became very engaged in the last few years. He says that Obama inherited a losing situation in Afghanistan and hoped to use only counterterrorism forces, but had to do more. He said Trump did the right thing in increasing assets in Afghanistan. He pointed out that during the latter Obama years and the Trump era, the United States has been able to conduct operations in which Americans are not on the frontlines as much as they had been previously, thanks to technology like drones. Petraeus opined that the United States is in a generational struggle with Islamic extremists, and he said that campaign can only be sustained if cost in blood and treasure is not overwhelming.

Nagl asked Petraeus to talk about the role Russia is playing today.

Petraeus expressed concern about the destabilizing role Russia is playing in the world today. He argued that it seeks to restore as much of the Soviet Union and Imperial Russia as possible. He said Russia has overcome a period of malaise and engaged in aggressive action to get back to the world stage. He said the most aggressive work is in cyberspace, where it is destabilizing democracy by exacerbating tensions. He says that this is a very sensitive time for major elements of NATO. He said a successful Ukraine would be Putin's worst nightmare.

Nagl asked if Russia was the biggest threat.

Petraeus said that Russia is one of them. China is the biggest strategic competitor. He said that the Sino-American relationship is the most important in the world. He mentioned Graham Allison's *Destined for War*—he argued that it raises some very sound concerns. He contended China is acting in imperial ways.

Nagl asked Petraeus to assess America's withdrawal from the Iran deal and the Singapore Summit.

Petraeus said that the Iran deal had some strengths and weaknesses. He did not argue for leaving it because it would drive a wedge between the US and its allies, but

he wanted to see greater pressure on malign activities and missile program. Now, he said, the United States will be able to move forward to squeeze Iran, but he doesn't want to precipitate a broader Sunni Shia conflict. He believes the situation is very challenging.

Petraeus said that the summit resulted in some very vague statements. One of his hopes is that Kim's three visits to China will provide a model for the North Korean leader. He wished that Kim will see the extensive economic development in China and strive to emulate it. He said that the situation is better than it was a year ago. He conceded that the madman concept might have some merit in this case.

Nagl concluded by asking Petraeus how much sleep he gets. Is four hours the secret to success?

Petraeus said that he gets good sleep. He works out often. He said that he is able to get by on 4-6 hours for stretches of time, but it is not good for his long-term health.

After the last question, the event concluded.

Brian D'Haeseleer

This essay does not presume to speak on behalf of all the signatories of the letter protesting the decision to select General David Petraeus as the keynote speaker for the annual SHAFR conference. It expresses the political, ethical, and moral dimensions of my opposition to the invitation—opposition that is based on policies Petraeus has both promoted and presided over.

Petraeus's reputation has rested on his credentials as a scholar-officer, his illusory success in "pacifying" Mosul in the early stages of the second war with Iraq, and a media blitz that he and his defenders launched. The general honed an image of himself as a savior and recruited politicians, journalists, and academics to support him, including Max Boot, Thomas Ricks, and Fred Kaplan. They fawned over his stamina, charisma, intellectual prowess, and seemingly sensible policy positions and popularized a portrait of him as a thoughtful soldier-intellectual that helped sell a seductive brand of militarism to the U.S. public.

Petraeus, along with John Nagl, a former lieutenant colonel, counterinsurgency advocate, and prominent defender of the general who moderated the keynote session of the annual SHAFR conference, hoped to change the way the U.S. military waged war in Iraq and to counteract the diminishing public support for the war. To this end, they appeared on the talk-show circuit to promote the latest U.S. counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine, *FM 3-24*. Historically, the release of military doctrine is not a high-profile affair, and until this media blitz, such announcements did not lead to appearances on primetime television. The gambit paid off. Millions of people downloaded online versions of the manual within weeks.

Promoters of COIN portrayed the strategies contained within the pages of *FM 3-24* as a departure from the past, but many of the practices are derived from previous interventions, including the Philippines and Vietnam. The manual stresses the importance of protecting civilians (commonly known as population-centric COIN) and securing the allegiance of the "neutral and passive majority." COIN enthusiasts, including Nagl, depicted the tactics in *FM 3-24* as humane strategies that respected the lives and rights of civilians. Instead of using the heavy-handed actions that defined the first three years of the second war with Iraq—nighttime raids, for example—U.S. soldiers would protect Iraqis and win their affection.¹ Defenders of *FM 3-24* also touted the inclusion of Harvard's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy in the writing and revision process as evidence of the doctrine's supposed adherence to human rights. A former director of the Carr Center, Sarah Sewall, also authored the second edition of

the manual's introduction.

As the manual informs its readers, "some of the best weapons for counterinsurgents do not shoot."² According to the text, U.S. soldiers should focus less on killing insurgents and instead emphasize securing the support of the location population. Collecting trash, restoring electricity, and engaging in short-term development projects are all touted as means to this end. The international development agency, Oxfam, warned that the military's participation militarized aid and promoted less viable, politically motivated development projects that were the antithesis of sustainable development.³ Emphasizing civilians and securing their allegiance also made them objects of competition between belligerents. They were more likely to be targeted and subjected to retribution. Population-centric COIN put them at greater risk.⁴

While *FM 3-24* emphasized the importance of the winning the affection of the local population, the emphasis is and always has been on using violence to control people. A U.S. soldier realized the centrality of coercion: "With a heavy dose of fear and violence, and a lot of money for projects, I think we can convince these people that we are here to help them."⁵ The manual also stresses the importance of intelligence and information, which can be acquired through surveillance of the local population and understanding local customs, culture, language and tribal hierarchy. Counterinsurgents thus use information not simply to establish better relations but to surveil and control civilians.

Current and more recent military parlance uses technocratic language such as "kinetic operations" or "disaggregation" to portray violence as clean, orderly, precise, and "scientific." The U.S. military continues to assassinate mid-ranking and high-profile insurgents, generally in drone strikes that often hit and kill unintended civilian targets. The strikes nevertheless remain designated as "surgical." Petraeus, as head of Central Command and the United Nations International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, presided over a major escalation of drone warfare. The trend continues. A United Nations study reports that drone strikes "caused 590 civilian casualties in 2016, nearly double that recorded in 2015." The many innocent civilians killed in these attacks are called "collateral damage," and their needless, avoidable deaths sow further societal divisions.⁶

Many of the case studies used in both the manual and in other COIN publications, including Nagl's work on the "Malayan Emergency," reflect a highly instrumental reading of history that is being crafted to suit pre-existing pro-COIN agendas.⁷ U.S. military writers, including Nagl, hold British COIN up as a model for the U.S. military because of its doctrinal flexibility, use of "minimum force," and respect for human rights. These explanations enable authors such as Nagl to whitewash history and portray COIN as respecting the lives and rights of citizens. But the systematic use of torture in Kenya and Northern Ireland belies the idea that "hearts and minds" are sacrosanct aspects of the British approach to combating insurgency.⁸ Perhaps the military historian David French summarizes it best: British COIN is "nasty not nice."⁹

Additionally, U.S. COIN doctrine resembles its British and French counterparts more than Nagl and Petraeus have publicly acknowledged. Neither London nor Paris used COIN to foster good governance or promote democratic reform or legitimacy. They used it to suppress independence movements. Essentially, U.S. COIN doctrine includes European policies that sanction the use of torture and human rights abuses to achieve desired ends. Moreover, as Alfred McCoy has revealed, U.S. COIN and internal defense efforts have created a series of surveillance states across the globe, beginning with the Philippines during the Philippine-American War. The surveillance state eventually

replicated itself in the United States.¹⁰

That Petraeus remains a celebrity is perplexing. Both Afghanistan and Iraq remain war-torn and dangerous to their people years after he retired from military service to run the CIA. Even his much touted "surge" in Iraq did not produce lasting peace and safety. He is just another general who has presided over one of Washington's futile, self-defeating, and winless wars since World War II. Without his well-orchestrated publicity campaign, he would probably remain relatively anonymous. In Andrew Bacevich's acerbic prose, he "is a political general of the worst kind—one who indulges in the politics of accommodation that is Washington's bread and butter."¹¹

Why celebrate a failed architect of a war that endlessly grinds on? Why should we honor someone whose claim to expertise is presiding over state violence that has claimed the lives of many innocent civilians? What have any of the policies Petraeus advocated or presided over accomplished besides the further militarization of U.S. society, continued death and destruction in Iraq and Afghanistan, and perpetual war? Why not hire a keynote speaker who is a principled critic of U.S. policy? Such a selection would also reflect the prevailing trend within our discipline of focusing on non-elite and non-Western sources.

As a private citizen, Petraeus actively participates in an unseemly military-industrial-complex that includes a revolving door of officers and generals who translate their military service after retirement into lucrative careers either in think tanks, educational institutions, corporations with military contracts, or the lecture circuit. Their nefarious influence is felt across broad swaths of society and has reinforced a permanent state of war. Quite simply, despite what they claim, these people do not promote peace and security; they profit from war and death. By inviting Petraeus and letting Nagl stage-manage the event, SHAFR allowed itself to be enlisted in propaganda efforts on behalf of Petraeus and COIN rather than live up to its responsibility as a scholarly organization that asks critical, wide-ranging questions in pursuit of knowledge.

Selecting Petraeus as a keynote speaker also raises several procedural issues. To begin with, a true conversation would not involve a Q & A session that allowed only written questions. The decision not to let audience members ask questions except in writing all but eliminated the possibility of critically engaging the general in a principled conversation. He was allowed to dodge serious questions about the efficacy of his failed policies. That he and others continue to avoid sustained inquiry or any ramifications for their actions reinforces a sense that they can act with impunity, and, even more important, allows the perpetual war machine to continue. The journalist Nick Turse succinctly summed up the benefits of the lecture circuit for U.S. empire boosters. "Today, it seems, a robust Rolodex with the right global roster, a marquee name, and a cultivated geopolitical brand covers a multitude of sins."¹²

Previous experiences with former policymakers, including Michael Hayden and John Yoo, should have been instructive. They seem to have offered little beyond a defense of their actions. In the case of Yoo, that was a defense of torture. As John Prados noted about Hayden, his speech justified government secrecy to continue withholding classified information from historians.¹³ Offering these militarists—particularly Yoo, whom some consider a war criminal—paid opportunities to defend or expound upon their views contributes little to SHAFR's intellectual growth and reputation. It also undermines and subverts the organization's central goal: asking probing questions about how U.S. foreign policy develops, including questions that past and present policymakers would prefer that we not ask.

The opposition to Petraeus' nomination shows that there is a significant amount of disapproval among SHAFR

members about the selection of managers of state violence to serve as keynote speakers. This is not simply a censorship issue. It is about giving money and honors to someone who undermines SHAFR's mission. If policymakers want to participate in a critical, thoughtful, and wide-ranging discussion, they should submit a proposal and be subject to the competitive review process.

Notes:

1. These raids continued in Afghanistan under Petraeus's leadership of Central Command and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). They also became the object of sustained criticism and inquiry, especially over a concern that they fueled anger and resentment toward the United States and foreign troops operating under ISAF. Azmat Khan, "Night Raids: Disrupting or Fueling the Afghan Insurgency?" *Frontline*, June 17, 2011. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/afghanistan-pakistan/kill-capture/night-raids-disrupting-or-fueli>.
2. U.S. Army and Marine Corps, *Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2006).
3. Oxfam, "Quick Impact, Quick Collapse: The Dangers of Militarized Aid," January 27, 2010, <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/quick-impact-quick-collapse-the-dangers-of-militarized-aid-in-afghanistan-114999>; see also Oxfam, "Aid Agencies Sound the Alarm of Militarization of Aid in Afghanistan," January 27, 2010, <http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2010-01-27/aid-agencies-sound-alarm-militarization-aid-afghanistan>.
4. Gian Gentile, *Wrong Turn: America's Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency* (New York, 2013).
5. Quoted in Douglas Porch, *Counterinsurgency: Exposing the Myths of the New Way of War* (Cambridge, UK, 2013).
6. Quoted in "Anger in Kabul after U.S. Air Raid Wounds Civilians," *Al-Jazeera*, September 28, 2017.
7. John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago, 2005).
8. Critics of the concept of minimum force include Andrew Mumford, *Puncturing the Counterinsurgency Myth: Britain and Irregular Warfare in the Past, Present, and Future* (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 2011); Bruno Reis, "The Myth of British Minimum Force in Counterinsurgency Campaigns During Decolonization," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34 (2011): 245–79; and Huw Bennett, *Fighting the Mau Mau: The British Army and Counter-Insurgency in the Kenya Emergency* (Cambridge, UK, 2012).
9. David French, "Nasty Not Nice: British Counter-Insurgency Doctrine and Practice, 1945–1967," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 23, nos. 4 & 5 (2012): 744–61.
10. Alfred McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, WI, 2009).
11. Andrew Bacevich, "Sycophant Savior," *The American Conservative*, October 8, 2007.
12. Nick Turse, "Leaker, Speaker, Soldier, Spy: The Charmed Life of David Petraeus," *TomDispatch*, July 5, 2016.
13. John Prados, "More Fallout from SHAFR's Decision to Invite David Petraeus as Keynote Speaker," *History News Network*, June 18, 2017.

Petraeus at SHAFR: A Different Kind of Diversity Problem?

Aaron O'Connell

In the summer of 2007, Marilyn Young and I were at a Washington History Seminar party in Washington, D.C., and the conversation turned to American military deaths in the war in Iraq. True to form, she opened with both guns blazing, arguing that "we must not valorize or ascribe any meaning to their deaths because that helps validate this illegal war." I disagreed and countered with questions. What makes the Iraq War illegal and by what standards? Should soldiers be able to pick the wars they will fight? If not, should their service—or indeed, their lives—be dismissed for choices they didn't make? We argued for thirty minutes and neither one of us changed positions.

Marilyn's claim wasn't a historical one—we were talking about what people should do rather than what they had done—but it motivated me to do some digging into the U.N. Security Council resolutions on Iraq and the history of the Law of Armed Conflict. A few years later, I told Marilyn about my research and conclusions, which were still quite different from hers. She looked at me, took a long pause, and said "maybe you should do more research." Then she asked me about military contractors and we both ordered another drink.

As I watched *L'Affaire Petraeus* unfold over the last two months, I thought of this exchange and of the sometimes-competing impulses between how we historians write about the past and act on our politics in the present. I've known for years that SHAFR is a thoughtful, vibrant, and generally welcoming community, but I believe we may have some diversity problems. What follows are my thoughts on the critics' arguments against inviting Petraeus, and the beginnings of an idea of how we can make our community more inclusive, specifically in regards to political ideology.

The first set of objections noted in the "Open Letter: Petraeus at SHAFR" and at the Friday meeting in Independence Park concerned SHAFR's governance: who paid Petraeus, how much, and with what funds? Who chose the format and how did it compare to previous keynotes? These are all valid questions and why they matter is self-evident for a community of scholars that prides itself on dialogue, inclusion, and democratic governance. Indeed, had the only objections to Petraeus' invitation concerned process, I would have had no substantial objections. All SHAFR members have a right to know where their dues go and to discuss actions that link their organization's reputation to public figures. We don't even need 277 signatures to start that conversation. Just 25 signatures are enough to call a membership meeting and propose a resolution.¹

Both the letter and the park meeting began with process but neither stayed there. In fact, the justifications for the process concerns were historical arguments about Petraeus' legacy and scholarship—what he did in the past and wrote about the past. These actions were so outside the boundaries of acceptable conduct, his critics argued, that an invitation to speak at SHAFR's amounted to elevating "dangerous myths" that risk undermining "the very core of SHAFR's mission and accomplishments."

SHAFR's mission is "to promote the study, advancement and dissemination of a knowledge of American Foreign Relations through the sponsorship of research, annual meetings, and publications" and we do this using widely accepted professional standards.² No matter what our politics, all of us believe in fact-based assertions, source-based arguments, clear and specific writing, and a judicious weighing of evidence. *These are the principles binding us together as a community* - not the ideological or political leanings of our arguments. And sadly, I think Petraeus' critics too often got their facts wrong or speculated without evidence. I was also saddened to see that they declined the opportunity to discuss these issues in a roundtable, even though they had specifically asked "for a discussion and debate about the Iraq and Afghanistan wars more generally." If they were eager for that conversation with the General, why not welcome it with their colleagues as well?

The critics argue that it is "Petraeus' particular legacy we find most troubling" because he "played a major role in shaping the failed counterinsurgency wars of the post-9/11 era[.]" True, but so too did most of the senior policymakers on the last two presidents' national security councils: the National Security Advisors, the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and later, the U.S. Ambassadors to the United Nations.³ Therefore, any condemnation of those who played a major role in Iraq and Afghanistan should apply as forcefully to them,

including Secretaries of State Hillary Clinton, and John Kerry, and Ambassadors Susan Rice and Samantha Power. Would a keynote from any of these four distinguished public servants have prompted a similar protest at SHAFR? If not, then the “playing a major role” threshold is not what made the Petraeus invitation controversial. Something else must have mattered more.

The critics then turn to Iraq and link Petraeus and counterinsurgency tactics to the killing of civilians in Fallujah, the ethnic cleansing of Sunnis, the decision to align with the Iraq’s Shiites, and aiding and abetting Iraq’s “pervasive system of sectarian control.” There are a series of factual errors here, some of which I noted in my original letter. To recap: the two battles of Fallujah were not counterinsurgency operations and Petraeus had no involvement in either of them—he was in the United States during the first one and supervising the training of Iraqi security forces in Baghdad during the second. No military officer made the decision to align with the Iraqi government that came to power after the December 2005 parliamentary elections; that was President Bush’s choice, and his military advisors probably didn’t even weigh in on it, let alone advocate for it.⁴ Whether the United States “aided or abetted” the Iraqi government’s sectarianism or helped give rise to ISIS is a judgment call and a difficult one. It is important to note, however, that the key decisions on those topics mostly occurred in late 2010 and afterwards, a time when Petraeus had no role in Iraq policy decisions. Moreover, allegations like these—some of which border on accusing Petraeus of war crimes—need evidence, and the critics provided none.

On Afghanistan, the critics argue that Petraeus promised a softer form of warfare that would protect civilians but then delivered something else: night raids and air strikes, which they imply caused greater harm to civilians than another approach might have. But numbers matter and the numbers do not support the critics’ accusations.⁵

The United Nations Human Rights Unit in Afghanistan has been counting civilian deaths since 2007. Their reports show that in 2008, before Petraeus had any role in Afghanistan, “pro-government forces” (i.e. U.S., coalition, and Afghan forces) caused 828 civilian deaths—two-thirds of which were from air strikes.⁶ In 2009, the United States implemented counterinsurgency tactics in Afghanistan and issued directives to better protect civilians. Civilian deaths by pro-government forces declined by 28 percent that year, even as U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan more than doubled.⁷ In 2010, civilian deaths dropped by another 26 percent.⁸ In 2011, Petraeus’ last year in Afghanistan, they dropped another 6 percent, to 410 deaths – less than half of the 2008 number.⁹ That same year, civilian deaths from air strikes were one-third of what they had been in 2008, even though the number of strikes had increased dramatically over those three years.¹⁰

It is true that civilian deaths rose throughout the war and peaked in 2014.¹¹ But these deaths were overwhelmingly caused by the Taliban and associated movements that purposefully targeted civilians. Civilian deaths in warfare are a painful reality but we must not lose sight of who did the killing. Neither General Petraeus nor counterinsurgency tactics are responsible for the tragic rise in civilian deaths in Afghanistan after 2008. The Taliban are.

The last set of historical arguments against Petraeus concern his writings, which his critics believe “whitewash the history of U.S. imperial violence. From his 1987 graduate school thesis, ‘The American Military and Lessons of Vietnam,’ to the 2006 U.S. Counterinsurgency Manual, Petraeus has made a concerted effort to mute the devastation and atrocities of the Vietnam War and other counterinsurgencies past in order to revitalize counterinsurgency in the twenty-first century.”

These are serious charges but they do not stand up under scrutiny. In fact, Petraeus’ dissertation is not about counterinsurgency in Vietnam at all, as the full title—or a careful reading—makes clear.¹² It is primarily a study of eleven presidential decisions occurring after Vietnam, with detailed discussions of the Israeli Yom Kippur War (1973), the *Mayaguez* incident (1975), a skirmish along the Korean Demilitarized Zone (1976), a proposed show of force in the Horn of Africa (1978), the Iranian Hostage Crisis (1979-80), the Lebanon intervention (1982-1984), the invasion of Grenada (1983), military support to El Salvador and to the Contras (1981-1987), the *Achilles Lauro* hijacking (1985), and airstrikes in Libya (1986).

Petraeus’ conclusion is that when it came to recommending violence, the president’s military advisors were rarely “as aggressive as the president’s civilian advisors, and never more aggressive.”¹³ The reason for this, he argues, was the unsatisfactory endings Korea and Vietnam, which produced a “never again” mentality among senior military leaders that influenced their recommendations to the President from 1973-1986. These were the military’s “lessons of Vietnam.” Where is the evidence that this work “mutes the devastation and atrocities of the Vietnam” or highlights positive examples of earlier counterinsurgencies? I found none.

The critics also believe the Counterinsurgency Field Manual that Petraeus co-wrote and edited “highlights positive examples of counterinsurgency from Malaya, Algeria, Vietnam, and El Salvador to be revitalized and emulated in the post 9/11 era.” Not really. The only major reference to Malaya—a section entitled “Building a Police Force in Malaya”—notes how poorly-trained police “abused the civilian population and fell into corrupt practices,” which undermined effort to locate insurgents.¹⁴ The only discussion of Algeria—a vignette entitled “Lose Moral Legitimacy; Lose the War”—argues that the French military’s decision to employ torture emboldened the Algerian resistance, weakened the French military, and contributed to its eventual defeat and withdrawal.¹⁵ These are not positive examples; they are warnings that every soldier attempting counterinsurgency operations should heed.

The manual’s discussions of Vietnam are admittedly more mixed. Both CORDS and the Marines’ Combined Action Program are presented as positive examples, and here, Petraeus and his co-authors repeated the Marines’ mythology about their ostensible expertise in counterinsurgency.¹⁶ Nonetheless, the principal points of the two vignettes are to insist on close coordination within the U.S. government and respect for host nation customs and culture, which are hardly offensive claims. The manual also details the numerous American errors that contributed to disaster in Vietnam: American heavy-handedness in advising, the body count metric, misguided assumptions about South Vietnamese military needs, supply system failures that exacerbated corruption, “inappropriate or indiscriminate use of air strikes,” and basic ignorance of Vietnamese culture and society.¹⁷ How do any of these historical references constitute whitewashing imperial violence—U.S. or otherwise? How does instructing soldiers to avoid torture or indiscriminate bombing “sanitize” the violent histories of these conflicts?

Let me now move back to the present, because my purpose is not only to note the errors in the critics’ letter but to suggest a reason why they may have happened in the first place. I attended the critics’ Friday afternoon meeting in Independence Park and later had a constructive discussion with one of the original letter’s principal authors. Polite, thoughtful discourse was the hallmark of both meetings. We do not have a civility problem at SHAFR that I can see, even when discussing controversial topics.

But we do have a diversity problem, or, more correctly,

several of them. I agree with Petraeus' critics—I too want to add more voices to SHAFR and help it become “a more inclusive, independent-minded, and democratic organization.” If we want SHAFR to reflect the diversity of our students and the United States more broadly, we must work towards that goal, particularly in regards to gender, racial, and ethnic diversity. The Myrna F. Bernath fellowship is helping to move us in the right direction, as is SHAFR's conference committee, which has worked to improve accessibility to our annual meeting for people with disabilities, transgender members, and parents with young children. But is that enough? Are there steps SHAFR can take as a whole to improve the ideological diversity of our community?

Here's a way to test if there really is a problem: Last year, 35 percent of American adults and 22 percent of college freshmen identified as conservatives.¹⁸ Ask yourself: do you know a single self-identified conservative at SHAFR? How long do you have to think before you land on one? Can you think of three? (Full disclosure: I'm not one of them.)

There is no place for ideological litmus tests in a scholarly community dedicated to the free exchange of ideas. We do not want to narrow the range of acceptable debates. But are there steps we could take to expand it? I think the decision to invite David Petraeus to SHAFR did just that—indeed, by my lights, the debates of the last weeks and these essays in *Passport* confirm it. One dear friend told me she signed the critics' letter because she wanted Muslim and non-white graduate students to feel welcome at SHAFR—a goal I share entirely. But I also want graduate students veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan to feel welcome as well, and some of the inaccuracies in the critics' letter did nothing good for us on that front. Is there a way to be welcoming to both communities—indeed to all who seek a greater understanding of the United States' foreign relations history?

I think there is, and as with most issues of diversity, it starts with being careful about assumptions. How often have you heard the term “a good lefty” applied approvingly in conversations at our annual meetings? Or heard “conservative” applied negatively? I cringe when hear such things, not because they offend my political tribe, but because they risk alienating others whose presence might enrich our debates. We might also hold a roundtable at a future annual meeting on ideology at SHAFR, perhaps with previous program committee members, to explore if there are limits to the types of panels or papers we've accepted in the past. Are there some historical arguments that have no place in our scholarly community, even if they are based on facts and evidence? If so, I'd like to know what they are.

One of the discussions I heard in Independence Park was how to move SHAFR towards greater and broader political activism on contemporary issues. I hope this does not happen. I believe collective political activism in SHAFR's name is appropriate when the issue at hand directly affects the writing and teaching of history, such as public funding for research, access to public documents, and perhaps even mishandling of classified materials. (Indeed, the last of these was perhaps the strongest argument for opposing General Petraeus' appearance at SHAFR, one that led several colleagues to sign the letter despite some of the problems noted above.) But otherwise, let's keep our society's focus where it belongs: on promoting excellence in the researching and teaching of the history of U.S. foreign relations.

I began with the story of my debate with Marilyn on Iraq to make clear that I am not opposed to politically-charged

debates. In fact, I welcome them, because they usually make me think more carefully about what I think, what I assume, and what I can prove. But we need not conform to Marilyn's politics or ask “what would Marilyn do?” to defend her legacy or protect SHAFR's reputation. No interpretation of U.S. foreign relations history will threaten “the very core of SHAFR's mission and accomplishments,” as long as we insist on evaluating historical arguments using the professional standards of historians. As we do so, we should also work to enlarge the scope of debate so that we are prepared to deal with the full range of ideological frameworks held by the students and citizens we serve as educators and scholars. That is how we will protect the health of our community and make it even stronger in the future.

Notes:

1. SHAFR's bylaws are available on the SHAFR website at <https://shafir.org/about/governance/by-laws>; accessed June 29, 2018.
2. See the “About SHAFR” page on the society's webpage: <https://www.shafir.org/about>; accessed June 29, 2018.
3. In 2009, President Obama elevated the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations to a cabinet position and made Ambassador Susan Rice a Principal on the U.S. National Security Council. Ambassador Samantha Power held the same position from 2013-2017.
4. The only NSC Principal who is also a military officer is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and he usually limits his inputs to evaluating military options. Petraeus left Iraq in September 2005 and did not return until 2007.
5. Much has been written about the dangers of body counts, but it is important to remember that those arguments concern the dangers of tracking success by counting *enemy* dead. Counting civilian casualties in war is something entirely different, not least because the U.S. has legal obligations under International Humanitarian Law to protect civilians in armed conflict.
6. United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan (UNAMA), *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2008* (Kabul: UNAMA Human Rights Unit, 2008), iii, 16. Reports are available by year at <https://unama.unmissions.org/protection-of-civilians-reports>, accessed June 29, 2018.
7. UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians, 2009*, 1-2.
8. UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians, 2010*, 21, 23.
9. UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians, 2011*, 21, 24.
10. *Ibid.*, 24.
11. UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians, 2017*, 1.
12. David Howell Petraeus, “The American Military and the Lessons of Vietnam: A Study of Military Influence and the Use of Force in the Post-Vietnam Era,” Ph.D. Diss., Princeton University, 1987.
13. *Ibid.*, 135.
14. U.S. Army/Marine Corps, *FM 3-24: Counterinsurgency*, (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006), 6-21, available online at <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=468442>, accessed June 29, 2018.
15. *Ibid.*, 7-9.
16. For a more balanced discussion of Combined Action, see Ronald H. Spector, *After Tet: The Bloodiest Year in Vietnam* (New York, Vintage Books, 1994), 192-196.
17. U.S. Army/Marine Corps, *FM 3-24: Counterinsurgency*, 1-154, 5-98, 6-31, 8-34, and Appendix E-6.
18. Lydia Saad, “Conservative Lead in Ideology is down to Single Digits,” Gallup.com, January 11, 2018, available at <https://news.gallup.com/poll/225074/conservative-lead-ideology-down-single-digits.aspx>. On college freshmen, see Hayley Glatter, “The Most Polarized Freshmen Class in Half a Century,” Atlantic.com, May 2, 2017, available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/05/the-most-polarized-freshman-class-in-half-a-century/525135/>, both accessed June 28, 2018.

America First: The Past and Future of an Idea

Melvyn P. Leffler and William Hitchcock, eds.

Melvyn P. Leffler, Andrew Preston, Christopher Nichols, David Milne, Beverly Gage, David Farber, Geoffrey Kabaservice, Jefferson Cowie, Maria Christina Garcia, Darren Dochuk, Nicole Hemmer, Michael Froman, Philip Zelikow, and Robert Kagan

America First: Introduction

Melvyn P. Leffler

Like many historians, I was stunned a couple of years ago when Donald Trump started campaigning on the platform of America First. For me, America First was associated with the insularity, isolationism, unilateralism, nativism, anti-Semitism, and appeasement policies that President Franklin D. Roosevelt struggled to overcome in 1940 and 1941.

Why, I asked myself, would anyone want to associate himself with that discredited movement, a movement that seemed eviscerated after the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941? Did Trump understand or know about that movement?

Whether he did or did not, I quickly came to see that America First resonated with a sizeable swarth of the American population. It sounded commonsensical. The slogan had deep roots in our past. It was employed long before the late 1930s: Woodrow Wilson, the godfather of American internationalism himself, uttered it in 1915, when he was preaching the cause of American neutrality during World War I. Who, then, could argue with Trump when he asserted, “My foreign policy will put the interests of the American people and American security above all else. It has to be first. Has to be.”¹

Commonsensical though it was (and is), America First connoted something deeply loathsome in our past, a xenophobic nativism—a fear of foreigners—that punctuated our history. Worse yet, it was interlaced with the racist, white supremacist ideology of the Ku Klux Klan when it reemerged in the 1920s as a major cultural and social force in American life. And a decade later, America First symbolized the amalgam of groups and ideologues who displayed callous indifference to the rise of fascism, Nazism, and militarism in Europe and Asia and who naively believed that the United States could be secure, safe, and prosperous in a world dominated by totalitarian foes who despised the liberal democratic ethos undergirding our nation’s foundations.

Deeply perplexed about why anyone would resurrect such a slogan, I went to my colleague Will Hitchcock and suggested we hold a conference to investigate the history and implications of America First. Hitchcock was enthusiastic, and, together, we approached Bill Antholis, the director of the Miller Center at The University of Virginia. Antholis embraced the idea and allocated funds from the Stevenson family bequest to the Miller Center. We then outlined the issues that we most wanted to examine, and we invited eminent scholars to write short papers analyzing these issues.

We wanted to interrogate the meaning of America First. What are its key ingredients? Have they changed

over time? What are the cultural, economic, social, and political sources of these ingredients? How and why did America First resurface after it seemed to be crushed in the wake of Pearl Harbor? In what ways did globalization and neoliberalism in the 1970s and 1980s provide a framework for the recrudescence of America First, especially as the Cold War ended and the threat perception receded? Did Republican challengers to George H. W. Bush, like Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot, adumbrate the reincarnation of America First in the guise of Donald Trump? How have growing inequality, skyrocketing immigration, religious fundamentalism, and racial tensions reshaped political dynamics inside the United States and catalyzed support for America First? And finally, we wanted to explore the current durability of America First and its implications for the future.

As Will Hitchcock and I read the papers and listened to the discussions at our conference in April 2018 we came to see more clearly the time-worn, tangled threads of America First. We could discern its deep roots in the traditions and practices of unilateralism, nativism, exceptionalism, ethnocentrism, and free enterprise capitalism. We could see that thinking about America First strictly in its heyday, in 1940 and 1941, did not encourage understanding of its appeal, resonance, and implications. Its roots were deeper than we thought.

Yet we fear that understanding the history of an American slogan may serve to normalize it. The essays that follow probe deeply and incisively into the American past to identify the wellsprings of America First. We can see that it is inextricably woven into the fabric of American history. We can now argue over whether New Deal and Cold War liberal internationalism may have been the exception and whether America First may be the norm. We can debate whether America First is the inevitable outcome of the critiques of liberal internationalism emanating from the right and the left, whether it means America alone for the foreseeable future, or whether it will galvanize a quest for constructive partnerships that will reconcile American interests and values with those of our allies and adversaries.

We hope these insightful contributions will ignite debate about the meaning and implications of our own history and where America First fits in that history. Can the threads that fashioned the reincarnation of America First in the America of Donald Trump be rewoven to form another tapestry? If so, it will take creativity, artistry, action, and courage.

Note:

1. “Transcript: Donald Trump’s Foreign Policy Speech,” April 27, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/28/us/politics/transcript-trump-foreign-policy.html>.

America First in American History

Andrew Preston

For someone with such an obvious disregard for the study of history, it's striking how much Donald Trump's political rhetoric owes to the past. With the possible exception of the bizarrely dark phrase "American carnage" that featured in his inaugural address, none of Trump's messages are original: "the silent majority" was pilfered from Richard Nixon's November 1969 speech on Vietnam; "Make America Great Again," probably the signature Trump slogan, was first aired by Ronald Reagan in 1980.

The most meaningful Trumpian phrase, one that has more substance, policy relevance, and historical resonance than any of the others, is "America First." Usually but wrongly attributed to the anti-interventionist organization founded under the same name in 1940, America First is powerfully nationalist and populist, and it speaks to concerns that are both foreign and domestic in nature.

Taken strictly at face value, America First simply means that American leaders should put American interests before those of other countries. As Trump put it to applause from world leaders in his September 2017 speech to the UN, "As president of the United States, I will always put America first, just like you, as the leaders of your countries, will always, and should always, put your countries first." That's very unlike Trump: banal in its obviousness.

What Trump didn't say at the UN is that America First is fueled by anger and resentment. It embodies a worldview that perceives a constant struggle against corrupt elites who are abusing their power at the expense of the people. In this populist vision, foreign-policy elites put the interests of other countries, or of the world system itself, ahead of the needs of ordinary Americans. This is why the counterpart to America First is the ultimate populist insult for elites: "globalists." It's this populist rage that gives America First its hard, menacing edge.

Like many new but seemingly timeless phrases, America First came about as a way to stake a claim to an old order that wasn't necessarily dying out but was under threat. It first came into wide usage in the late nineteenth century to express concerns about the influence of global capitalism and trade. By the turn of the twentieth century, as Sarah Churchill reminds us in her recent book *Behold, America*, America First had become a nativist rallying cry and was adopted by the Ku Klux Klan in its rallies against immigrants, Jews, Catholics, and African Americans. Trump's father, Fred, attended one such rally in 1927.

The phrase has always had a similarly nationalistic tone when applied to foreign affairs, and America First has rightly been interpreted as the antithesis of another loaded, equally slippery catchphrase, "liberal internationalism." In foreign affairs, it couldn't be more ironic that the originator of the slogan America First is the father of liberal internationalism himself, Woodrow Wilson. But in October 1915, when Wilson first used the phrase in a speech to the Daughters of the American Revolution, neutrality was the objective, not a new architecture for a U.S.-led world order.

When Wilson did an about-face and brought the United States into the war, he did so on a revolutionary set of principles that have become known alternatively as "Wilsonianism"—when historians refer to Wilson and his ideas—and "liberal internationalism"—when they refer to the terms on which Wilson's successors since Franklin Roosevelt have (mostly) engaged with the rest of the world.

Intervention in the Great War was initially popular, a noble cause earnestly supported even by antiwar peace crusaders like William Jennings Bryan. But, crucially, it was a never a war of self-defense. Wilson spoke of protecting America's honor, upholding "civilization," maintaining

international rights and liberties, and reforming world order. Just not defending the United States.

This might seem odd to more recent sensibilities, when virtually anything can be tied to the dictates of national security. But not invoking self-defense in the Great War was perfectly natural in 1917, for the integrity of U.S. territorial sovereignty was never at stake. Yet after the war, this also meant that American leadership of a Wilsonian new world order rested on unstable foundations of apparent selflessness rather than national self-interest. If the new system was to work, the United States had to be at the center of it. It had to be what the British Empire had once been: *primus inter pares*, or first among equals. The motive wasn't self-defense, but something altogether grander. It would serve American interests, but the link wasn't all that direct.

In response, America First surged to the fore as the rallying cry for a foreign policy of non-entanglement. Wilsonianism, then, was the fundamental disjuncture in American history that impelled some Americans to rally for America First. Ever since, the idea has evoked a desire to free the United States from foreign entanglements that require Americans to do the heavy lifting for policies that might not actually be in their own best interests.

Here, history was actually on the side of the America Firsters who opposed U.S. membership in the League of Nations and, later, entry into World War II. As an idea, America First is part of a long tradition of unilateralism stretching back to John Adams's Model Treaty, Washington's 1796 warning about permanent allies, and Jefferson's 1801 admonition against entangling alliances. The most famous unilateralist dictum in American history, the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, divided the world into two separate spheres. The United States did indeed intervene frequently around the world before 1917, but the costs borne by such interventions had to have clear reasons and produce clear results.

Wilsonianism passed this test in 1917, thanks to the depredations of German U-boats. But it failed the test after the war, when the reasons for American world leadership became less clear and the promised results more abstract. Why should Americans uphold a largely European international system? Why should they bear the costs when Europeans seemed unable, at times even unwilling, to bear the burden themselves?

American elites remained persuaded of Wilsonianism's necessity, and they did all they could to maintain a liberal international order through piecemeal measures like the Washington Conference on naval disarmament and the Dawes and Young plans for rebalancing reparations and loans. They attracted little popular opposition at the time because the costs seemed low. When the prospective costs rose to include the possibility of being dragged into another European war, opposition returned—in 1940, under the literal banner of America First.

Franklin Roosevelt's genius was to steer the United States into a world war, and then build a new world order, under nearly the same terms that had once eluded Wilson. He was able to succeed where Wilson failed because he made it a fight not for civilization per se, but a war first and foremost for America. However strained his logic could be at times, FDR's cause was one of self-defense—"national security," to use the more capacious phrase that only then came into common usage—not selfless leadership of global hopes and dreams. Liberal internationalism might benefit the world, but it had to benefit Americans first. FDR and his successor, Harry Truman, made that crystal clear.

This formulation worked as long as liberal internationalism asked Americans to pay reasonable costs to combat reasonably clear adversaries. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union ably played this role, and containment was underwritten by unparalleled domestic prosperity. After the Cold War, American supremacy—

and an even greater economic boom—made the costs seem slight even as direct adversaries faded from view.

The “war on terror” might have been expected to continue liberal internationalism’s long bull run, but the disastrous wars in Afghanistan and especially Iraq called into question its baseline assumptions. The Great Recession, coming hard on the heels of these expensive and pointless wars, then ruined for many the notion that American leaders were acting in the national interest.

Not surprisingly, America First was reborn. Trump has built his political success by tapping into some of the deepest traditions of American political culture, one of which is exemplified by America First. He has realized that sometimes the most successful politicians are the least original.

America First, American Isolationism, and the Coming of World War II

Christopher Nichols

America First is neither a twentieth- nor a twenty-first-century term in origin. That the cry of America First emerged in the nineteenth century’s era of rapid industrialization, modernization, and urbanization should not surprise us. In this period, Americans from many walks of life confronted the myriad challenges of modern industrial society. Poverty seemed to follow progress, as one commentator remarked. New ideas and new solutions seemed necessary, especially as the United States became a global power. How would the United States, born from democratic revolution, operate in the world, given its new-found commercial and military power? How would national priorities be defined? What determined who and what “counted” as American? These questions animated turn-of-the-twentieth-century debates and continue to test policymakers and citizens alike.

In general, movements for America First focused their answers to such questions on non-entanglement, non-intervention, neutrality, and unilateralism. They often were fueled by notions of exceptionalism. Yet the range of those advocating these ideas—expansionists and anti-imperialists, industrialists and labor advocates, race and gender reformers and hyper-nationalists, nativists and settlement house leaders—underscores how these core isolationist precepts have had a remarkable appeal across the U.S. political spectrum over time. The assertion of America First emerged in the late nineteenth century from populist critiques of capitalism and inequality, calls to advance American industry, fulfill ideals, and enhance culture “at home and abroad,” as well as invocations of the policy pillars established by Washington, Jefferson, and Monroe.¹

While those questions and alliances emerged in the nineteenth century, the period between the world wars might as well be called the heyday of “isolationist” thought and policies. The ideas of this era undergird our modern understandings of the constellation of ideas in which America First rests.² “Lessons learned” and revisionist views of the causes of WWI were prime movers in the new firmament of ideas; they shaped the debates over U.S. interventions abroad after 1919, suggesting most fundamentally the ways in which involvement in foreign conflicts was due to special interests and significantly affected domestic life. The result was a policy of caution (which the later “America Firsters” thoroughly supported). This approach sought to balance the nation’s vital interests in foreign trade with the desire to avoid getting further entangled in foreign affairs. It was an era of selective U.S. engagement with the world, far from fully walled and bounded retrenchment, and it was characterized more by commercial and cultural exchange than formal U.S.

diplomacy or use of hard power.

Woodrow Wilson deployed the phrase America First during the United States’ “neutral” years during the war in Europe in 1915 and 1916, yet he came to be known as a champion of liberal internationalism. Because he had seemingly driven the United States to war via a commitment to protecting U.S. business interests abroad, and the American public responded with increasing belligerence after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts in the 1930s. These laws explicitly draw on WWI precedents; they forbade U.S. banks from lending money to foreign governments that had not paid their war debts, imposed a trade embargo on all belligerent countries, and banned U.S. citizens from traveling on belligerents’ ocean liners. They also sought to prevent Franklin Roosevelt—or any president—from taking the nation into war without wider national consent (some suggested a national referendum). Many critics, and not just from the Republican ranks, worried that FDR was driving the nation into war, just as Wilson had.

It was at this moment—in the desperate effort to keep the United States out of the next world war—that the symbolic phrase America First took off and gave rise to the meanings many of us associate with it today.

Between 1940 and 1941, as German, Japanese, and Italian armies swept across the world, a movement known as the America First Committee (AFC) developed to keep the United States prepared for war but out of the conflict. These 1940s America Firsters were akin to the anti-imperialists of the turn of the twentieth century. Together they became the two largest, and most diverse, foreign-policy lobbying organizations ever formed in the United States.³

The most extreme form of anti-interventionist isolationism made allies of Republican Gerald Nye, socialist pacifist Norman Thomas, aviator Charles Lindbergh, Old Right Republican General Robert Wood, poet e.e. cummings, animator Walt Disney, and writer/socialite Alice Roosevelt Longworth, all under the banner of the AFC. Between 1940 and 1941, the AFC included in its membership a truly motley crew of isolationists, pacifists, Old Right Republicans, industrialists and business executives, labor organizers, and major intellectuals, as well as the progeny of wealthy families—young men who would go on to become presidents, Supreme Court justices, ambassadors, and secretaries of state.

Actually, America First started out among those future leaders at Yale Law School. Thanks to the inspiration of R. Douglas Stuart, scion of the Quaker Oats fortune, the initial organizers included future president Gerald Ford, future U.S. Supreme Court justice Potter Stewart, future director of the Peace Corps Sargent Shriver, and future president of Yale University (and Jimmy Carter’s ambassador to the UK) Kingman Brewster. They appealed to General Robert E. Wood, the chairman of Sears, Roebuck; and Wood reached out to William H. Regnery, a conservative publisher and another wealthy Chicago executive. The two agreed to help underwrite the organization, with Wood acting as chairman.⁴

They began as the Committee to Defend America First, established in direct opposition to progressive journalist William Allen White’s Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (CDAAA, formed in May 1940). It was later abbreviated to the America First Committee. As Lend-Lease and other maneuvers brought the United States ever closer to entry into the war, the AFC worked hard to avoid alienating either flank, right-wing or left. Its attempts to thread the needle contrast sharply with what is going on today.

Still, then as now, there is a reason that fascists and anti-Semites were drawn to the AFC. Lindbergh, the “face” of the AFC, came to epitomize that ideology. During his now infamous September 1941 rally in Des Moines, Iowa,

Lindbergh suggested that the “Jewish race” wished to involve the United States in the war “for reasons which are not American,” lumping them in with the British in a way that reinforced the notion that members of the Jewish race should not be considered American. He warned the “Jewish race” that “tolerance” would not be able to survive a war and that they would be the first to “feel” the “consequences” of intolerance if the United States went to war.⁵

Almost every major political figure, newspaper, and organization, including other anti-interventionist and pacifist groups, called on the AFC to renounce Lindbergh. Socialist politician (and ACLU co-founder) Norman Thomas refused to act as a public spokesman for the movement after Lindbergh’s speech, reflecting a broader leftist and liberal retreat from the movement and from core isolationist ideas when it came to WWII.

Instead of a more full-throated condemnation of Lindbergh, the AFC’s press releases generated even more tumult. Internal documents reveal the AFC was riven with conflict, but ultimately they denied that either Lindbergh or the committee were anti-Semitic, and they accused their critics of being rabid interventionists, trumpeting up false charges in order to discredit the AFC’s antiwar message.⁶

The AFC also fell back on arguments based on American foreign policy traditions. They turned to Washington, Jefferson, and especially Monroe’s hemispherism.⁷ Their public documents—Speaker’s Bureau releases, position papers, bulletins, and broadsides—consistently argued that the United States should remain entirely neutral in words and deeds; that aid to allies “short of war” only weakened America; and that no foreign nation would attack America if the nation pursued a robust preparedness plan of coastal defenses and air power. Others in the movement took different positions. There was more moderation than one might expect (i.e., fewer FDR “haters”).

The New York AFC leadership was diverse. It included not only Norman Thomas and former president Herbert Hoover, but also historian Charles Beard. Beard hoped to enhance national morality through reform and to achieve greater equality of citizens and workers (i.e., more New Deal rather than less, unlike many in the AFC). He stressed a noninterventionist, “continentalist” or “hemispherist” path; and he generally rejected most forms of military preparedness (unlike Lindbergh, whose “Fortress America” vision is often thought of as epitomizing the hawkish nationalist isolationism of the AFC). Still, theirs was a difficult set of arguments to advance, as the war increasingly came to be seen as a just one against evils that menaced good peoples and groups around the world—evils that were very likely to ensnare the United States one way or another.⁸

Although the AFC’s public efforts stand out as more diverse than one might expect, they were also relatively limited, particularly in comparison to the America First program of 2016 through the present (which include a domestic budget proposal, an immigration policy framework, and even a political action committee). The original AFC aimed to advance four core principles, as noted in its first internal policy statement in the summer of 1940:

- The United States should “concentrate all energies on building a strong defense for this hemisphere.”
- “American democracy can only be preserved by keeping out of war abroad.”
- We “oppose any increase in supplies to England beyond the limitations of cash and carry,” because such a policy “would imperil American strength and lead to active American intervention in Europe.”
- We “demand Congress refrain from war, even if England is on the verge of defeat.”⁹

Members of the AFC debated internally but ultimately rejected being “political”—that is, the National Committee did not officially support or endorse parties or candidates. Nor did they have any formal stance on trade protectionism; in fact, many leading AFC members pushed for the “free hand” and disdained protectionist tariffs.

The many public statements by AFC members as well as internal memos (available at the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University) reveal clearly that, at its root, America First made a powerful appeal to an insular, nationalistic American exceptionalism, loaded with xenophobia and references to the lessons learned from WWI. The AFC waged a rearguard action to slow (but could not stop) FDR’s pro-ally policies. They did so by depicting the twin menaces of American globalism and interventionism as far worse than the dangers posed by Nazism in Germany, fascism in Italy, or militarism in Japan.

At their height, these ideas were extremely popular. The AFC had hundreds of chapters across the United States and nearly a million members. In fact, they began as a think tank-advocacy group, were ill-prepared to establish so many local chapters, and become a membership organization. Polls as late as November 1941 supported their cause, or so they thought; even then most Americans still did not want to go to war. But Japan’s surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7 changed everything.

Four days later, on December 11, 1941, the AFC disbanded. However, its xenophobic legacy continues to haunt anti-interventionist policies and the term “isolationism” itself. The AFC passed into public memory as a right-wing, hyper-nationalist, racist organization with serious ties to fascist and pro-Nazi movements.

Just as a foreign attack on U.S. soil ended the America First movement on December 7, 1941, a foreign attack on U.S. soil revived isolationism six decades later, on September 11, 2001. An old order now seems under threat, and there are significant similarities to the 1890s/early 1900s, to the 1930s, and to 1941. The combination of wars abroad, demographic change, cultural instability, intensifying receptiveness to populist, nationalist, and xenophobic appeals, along with rising economic inequality, rapid globalization, and cyclic recessions over the past two decades, has helped to drive the rise of America First sensibilities.

Notes:

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1. Christopher McKnight Nichols, *Promise and Peril: America at the Dawn of a Global Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011, 2015). See introduction and chap. 1.

2. On the main typologies of isolationism see “Strains of Isolationism” in Nichols, *Promise and Peril*, 347–52. See also Christopher McKnight Nichols, “The Enduring Power of Isolationism: An Historical Perspective,” *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs* 57, no. 3 (Summer 2013): 390–407. On the longer history of America First see Sarah Churchwell, *Behold, America: The Entangled History of America First and the American Dream* (New York: Basic Books, 2018).

3. I have written about this in *Promise and Peril*, chapters 1-2; see also work of William Appleman Williams, Robert Beisner, Eric Love, Kristin Hoganson, Paul Kramer, and others on American anti-imperialism.

4. On the AFC, see Wayne S. Cole, *America First: The Battle Against Intervention, 1940–1941* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1953); Michelle Flynn Stenehjem, *An American First: John T. Flynn and the America First Committee* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1976); and Justus D. Doenecke, *The Battle Against Intervention, 1939–1941* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Press, 1997). For a great

overview of anti-interventionism see the introduction to Justus D. Doenecke, ed., *In Danger Undaunted: The Anti-Interventionist Movement of 1940–1941 as Revealed in the Papers of the America First Committee* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1990), 2–78.

5. On Lindbergh, see Wayne S. Cole, *Charles Lindbergh and the Battle Against American Intervention in World War II* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1974); and A. Scott Berg, *Lindbergh* (New York: Berkley Books, 1998). For the text of Lindbergh's Des Moines speech in 1941, see <http://www.charleslindebergh.com/american-first/speech.asp>.

6. An insightful source in the Hoover Archives by the director of the AFC Research Bureau, Ruth Sarles, is now available in published form; see Ruth Sarles, *A Story of America First: The Men and Women Who Opposed U.S. Intervention in WWII* (Westport, CT: Praeger Press, 2003).

7. For instance, see Robert E. Wood's speech heralding the importance of the U.S. hemispheric sphere of influence and of adhering to the tradition of the Monroe Doctrine as a rationale for keeping out of the war in Europe. General Robert E. Wood, Acting Chairman, America First Committee, "Our Foreign Policy: The Course We Are Pursuing Leads to War," October 4, 1940, reprinted in *Vital Speeches of the Day*, Vol. VII (New York, 1941), 130–33, also available at "1940 documents relating to WWII," https://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1940/1940_Documents_relating_to_World_War_II.html.

8. On Beard and the AFC, see Thomas C. Kennedy, *Charles A. Beard and American Foreign Policy* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1975); Ronald Radosh, *Prophets on the Right: Profiles of Conservative Critics of American Globalism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975); David Milne, *Worldmaking: The Art and Science of American Diplomacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2015), 123–167; Christopher McKnight Nichols, "Beyond Hemispherism: Charles Beard's Vision of World Order," in *Progressivism and US Foreign Policy between the World Wars*, eds. Molly Cochran and Cornelia Navari (London: The Palgrave Macmillan History of International Thought, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017): 241–67.

9. Hoover Institution Archives, America First Committee Papers, summer 1940, initial memorandum statement of principles. For a more accessible version see Doenecke, *In Danger Undaunted*, 87.

Walking with a Ghost: FDR and America First

David Milne

On June 10, 1940, President Franklin Roosevelt travelled to Charlottesville, Virginia, and delivered a speech of moral force and political courage before a backdrop of acute crisis. That morning the French government had declared Paris an open city, ensuring that it would fall into German hands intact rather than in pieces. Scenting blood and easy treasure, Mussolini's Italy declared war on France soon after; FDR learned this news just before boarding his train. Ignoring State Department requests to proceed cautiously, FDR delivered a commencement address that assailed Italian duplicity: "On this tenth day of June, 1940, the hand that held the dagger has struck it into the back of his neighbor." He also portrayed America Firsters as Flat Earthers. The notion that the United States could retain its independence and values as "a lone island in a world dominated by the philosophy of force," Roosevelt said, "was an obvious delusion."

At a moment when opinion polls suggested that only thirty percent of the American public thought an Allied victory possible, Roosevelt aligned his nation with the supposed losers. "We will extend to the opponents of force the material resources of this nation; and at the same time, we will harness and speed up the use of those resources in order that we ourselves may have equipment and training equal to the task. Signs and signals call for speed—full speed ahead."¹ For a president often characterized as indecisive (a few months later, Admiral Harold Stark mused, "[H]ow much a part of our democratic way of life will be handled by Mr. Gallup is pure guess") this was a powerful and purposeful speech.² It galvanized the nation and its allies and can be slotted into a wider Rooseveltian pattern of thrust, parry, retreat, and repeat. His ability to

lead his nation was predicated on a keen sense of when the time was right to lead public opinion and when it was wiser to wait for it to catch up.

In this respect and others—how U.S. strategic interests were framed and packaged; the necessity for bipartisan support; the medium of communication—Roosevelt's decisions were shaped by his attentiveness to Woodrow Wilson's accomplishments and travails a generation before. FDR had served in Wilson's administration as assistant secretary of the navy and had become a sincere Wilsonian after the president fully revealed his foreign policy hand in 1917 and 1918. But he also drew appropriate lessons from the crushing disappointments that followed Wilson's defeat in the Senate. Roosevelt was able to transcend America First, in other words, because he applied the lessons of a recent history in which he was a fully vested participant.

Of course, there are many other factors that help account for Roosevelt's success in bringing the United States into closer alignment with Great Britain. In Hitler and Mussolini, FDR confronted more obvious villains than Wilson ever did. In 1940, Roosevelt also had the good fortune to run against a Republican internationalist, Wendell Willkie, who shared many of his views on the looming crisis. The America First Committee gathered real momentum through 1940 and 1941, and Charles Lindbergh was a charismatic, celebrated spokesman. But his notorious anti-Semitic speech in Des Moines on September 11, 1941, was met with fierce condemnation from all quarters. "Instead of agitating for war," Lindbergh had warned darkly, "the Jewish groups in this country should be opposing it in every possible way, for they will be among the first to feel its consequences." Dorothy Thompson noted that Lindbergh had "attracted to himself every outright Fascist sympathizer and agitator in this country" with a view to running for political office himself. Less predictably, William Randolph Hearst's papers also denounced him.³

Beyond being fortunate in his foreign and domestic adversaries, Roosevelt was also helped by non-governmental organizations such as Fight for Freedom, the American Committee for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression, and, most notably, the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies.⁴ The journalist and interventionist Herbert Agar later wrote that the work of such groups helped Roosevelt "move gingerly in the direction of saving his sleeping country."⁵ He also had a powerful ally in the form of Walter Lippmann, the most trusted journalist of that era, whose "Today and Tomorrow" columns often anticipated and shaped presidential action. Finally, in Eleanor Roosevelt, FDR had a political partner able to reach constituencies that were simply beyond his reach.

But it is the strategies that FDR himself employed, as he drew from Wilson's struggles to achieve similar ends, that best explain how he overcame anti-interventionist sentiment. During his presidency Wilson was unable to communicate to the nation through the radio—and what a difference it might have made if he had. Poignantly, Wilson delivered the first-ever live, remote radio broadcast (in which he lamented the nation's "descent into a sullen and selfish isolation") from his home in 1923, long after his battles had been lost.⁶ FDR's first "fireside chat" on the banking crisis, during the first week of his presidency, was a transformative political event. "When millions of people can hear the President speak to them directly in their own homes," wrote a *New York Times* editorial, "we get a new meaning for the old phrase about a public man 'going to the country!'"⁷

In his efforts to undermine America First and chart an interventionist path, Roosevelt used this medium to brilliant effect. Estimates suggest that 75 percent of the entire U.S. population either listened to or read FDR's fireside chat of December 29, 1940, when he declared, "No man can tame a tiger by stroking it" and "We must be the great arsenal

of democracy." In this broadcast, Roosevelt also spoke ominously of German fifth columnists working within the United States, noting that there "are also American citizens, many of which in high places who, unwittingly in most cases, are aiding and abetting the work of these agents." His meaning was clear and powerful.⁸

Where Wilson deployed grandiose rhetoric to justify U.S. intervention in the First World War, Roosevelt employed a more homespun vernacular to rationalize plans, such as Lend-Lease, that would keep peril an Atlantic's width away. During a press conference on December 17, 1940, he famously compared Lend-Lease to providing a neighbor with a hose when his house catches fire. "Now what do I do?" asked Roosevelt, "I don't say to him 'Neighbor, my garden hose cost me fifteen dollars; you have to pay me fifteen dollars for it.' No! I don't want fifteen dollars. I want my garden hose back after the fire is over." Who could disagree with such logic? That the United States was actually lending the hose *and* the water to douse the fire, and that used water was a difficult thing to return, was neither here nor there. Polls suggested that the metaphor resonated. It sung.

At times, FDR also used Wilson as a foil to demonstrate how circumstances had changed since his predecessor's administration, and he was not slow to point out how wrong his Democratic predecessor had been to demand moral and political neutrality from his fellow Americans. After the British and French declarations of war on Germany in 1939, FDR noted that "even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience." This was a pointed repudiation of Wilson's 1914 admonition that Americans must be "impartial in thought as well as action." From an early stage, FDR did not equivocate about which party was at fault.

Finally, FDR was acutely aware of Wilson's failure to co-opt Republicans to support his war aims and of the dire consequences that followed. When he travelled to the Paris Peace Conference, Wilson invited no Republicans to accompany him. After the fall of France, FDR appointed Frank Knox, who was the 1936 Republican vice-presidential candidate, as his secretary of the navy and Henry Stimson, Herbert Hoover's secretary of state, as his secretary of war. Roosevelt gave Stimson a free hand with his appointments, and Stimson chose John McCloy and Robert Lovett as assistant secretaries. None of these men had ever voted for FDR.

America Firsters were undermined and the GOP's foreign policy divisions were exposed, prised farther apart, and salted, on the eve of their convention. Crucially, just prior to their appointments, both Knox and Stimson had publicly called for the repeal of the Neutrality Acts, the reinstatement of the draft, and the use of naval convoys to supply Great Britain. In pursuing and realizing these goals, President Roosevelt merely followed the lead of these widely respected Republicans who now sat in his cabinet.

In all of these actions FDR walked with the ghost of Woodrow Wilson. His attentiveness to Wilson's presidency would only deepen through the course of the Second World War. Although his record was marred by significant failures in regard to race (the politically expedient renewal of Jim Crow) and human rights (the internship of 117,000 people with Japanese ancestry, the majority of whom were U.S. citizens), Roosevelt's accomplishments were testament to attributes that have fallen out of fashion: political experience, an attentiveness to history, and a willingness to remember it and learn from it.

Notes:

1. Jean Edward Smith, *FDR* (New York: Random House, 2007), 448–49.
2. Harold Stark, quoted in Charles A. Beard, *President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941: Appearances and Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), 427.
3. See Sarah Churchwell, *Behold America, A History of America First and the American Dream* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 285, 288.
4. For a recent study of these three citizen groups, see Andrew Johnstone, *Against Immediate Evil: American Internationalism and the Four Freedoms* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).
5. Herbert Agar, *The Darkest Year: Britain Alone, June 1940–June 1941* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1973), 56.
6. <http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2015/10/politics/woodrow-wilson-house-history/>.
7. Quoted in Roy Jenkins, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt* (New York: Pan Books, 2003), 315.
8. Smith, *FDR*, 486.

J. Edgar Hoover, Anticommunism, and America First

Beverly Gage

On May 21, 1940, White House aide Stephen Early dispatched a fresh stack of telegrams to FBI director J. Edgar Hoover. "The President thought you might like to look them over, noting the names and addresses of the senders," Early suggested.

Five days earlier, reacting to Hitler's invasion of France, Franklin Roosevelt had warned of "ominous days" ahead for Europe, and he called upon Americans to act before it was too late. Three days after that, on May 19, famed aviator Charles Lindbergh had taken to the radio airwaves to denounce Roosevelt's preparedness drive. The missives in Early's stack came from those who agreed with Lindbergh that the United States should have no part in the latest European debacle. Many of them would eventually rally under the banner of the America First Committee, the country's inchoate but prominent anti-interventionist organization, home to some of Roosevelt's fiercest foreign-policy critics.

Roosevelt's request that Hoover "look over" those letters, and keep tabs on their senders, has often been told as a story of presidential overreach: a demand for a naked political favor, in an election year, from an executive-branch appointee duty-bound to stay out of the electoral fray. This speaks to a long and rocky history of FBI enmeshment in presidential politics. Though Trump's current crisis stands out for its sheer animosity and mismanagement, dilemmas over the White House/FBI relationship are hardly new.

The request also hints at a broader shift underway from 1939 through 1941, as mobilization for World War II began to transform practices of federal surveillance and home-front policing. In the two years before Pearl Harbor, the FBI more than doubled in size, expanding into new areas of political investigation, espionage and counterespionage, and global intelligence. Much of that shift took place in secret, as the White House and the FBI worked together (and with British authorities) to build a wartime intelligence infrastructure, all the while keeping an eye on the president's isolationist foes.

Hoover's cooperative relationship with Roosevelt underscores one of the central paradoxes of the FBI director's career. As a bureaucrat and state-builder, Hoover came of age in the heyday of the liberal state. The tiny Bureau of Investigation became the mighty FBI during the Roosevelt years; in effect (if not in every detail) it was a New Deal alphabet agency. At the same time, Hoover had little patience for many of the New Deal's ideological presumptions, including the liberal internationalism at the heart of Roosevelt's war effort. With the end of the war, the vast bureaucracy built to secure Roosevelt's political vision became a vehicle for promoting Hoover's own America First mes-

sage, in which the struggle against the Communist Party and its left-liberal allies reigned supreme.

Hoover's mixed engagement with America First—as an organization and as a concept—highlights some of the complexities of that term. Though often portrayed as a conservative counterweight to liberal internationalism, the general concept of putting America First could be remarkably flexible, alternately espoused or dismissed depending upon circumstance. Like many political actors, Hoover rejected the notion in one guise (anti-interventionism) but embraced it another (anticommunism), neither of which was particularly easy to categorize along a linear political spectrum.

Hoover's experience also suggests the importance of considering the state in any historical analysis of America First as a political phenomenon. Often used as shorthand for populist anti-statism, America First could also be a powerful state-building language, especially in the realms of intelligence and national security. It was perhaps most useful in prioritizing particular forms of state activity over others: surveillance and military over diplomacy and social welfare, for instance. In a political twist that Roosevelt himself might have appreciated, the domestic intelligence service that Hoover created to serve the president's idea of an expansive liberal internationalism—a “New Deal for the World”—ultimately became one of the greatest state-centered constraints on New Deal liberalism and on Roosevelt's postwar domestic legacy.

Far more than any other president, Franklin Roosevelt made J. Edgar Hoover. Though appointed in 1924, Hoover did not begin to attain significant levels of bureaucratic influence and public celebrity until the 1930s. In 1934, Roosevelt supported a major expansion of federal law enforcement powers in areas such as bank robbery and kidnapping. Over the next few years, he encouraged Hoover to publicize this work through cutting-edge techniques of public relations and propaganda. Beginning in 1934, Roosevelt also quietly licensed the FBI to renew forms of political surveillance that had been banned a decade earlier, requesting that the bureau start keeping tabs on communists, fascists, and other alleged subversives. The president made this role official in September 1939, just after the German invasion of Poland, instructing the FBI “to take charge of investigative work in matters relating to espionage, sabotage and violations of the neutrality regulations.”

The result was the single swiftest expansion in FBI history. In early 1940, the FBI employed 2,432 men and women, roughly a third of them special agents. By February 1941, it had 4,477 employees, with plans to reach 5,588 by June. Left-wing critics foresaw a danger in the development. “The creation of a super secret service body in a democracy is injecting our democratic institutions with the virulent toxin [sic] of an antidemocratic activity under the guise of so-called protection of so-called national defense,” Congressman Vito Marcantonio warned in early 1940.

Roosevelt and Hoover pressed forward nonetheless, simply including surveillance of such critics as part of their wartime policing practices. In May 1940, just after the German invasion of France, Roosevelt secretly overturned a Supreme Court ban on wiretapping, licensing the FBI to wiretap in the name of national security. In mid-June, he authorized Hoover to launch intelligence operations in South America, where it was feared that the Germans were building an espionage network to prepare for invasion and occupation. Throughout this period, he encouraged the FBI to work secretly with British intelligence to support interventionist efforts within the United States and to train a new generation of agents in the venerable imperial practices of counterespionage and political intelligence.

Hoover's investigation of Roosevelt's anti-interventionist critics, including the America First Committee, occurred in this context of uneasy preparedness. In the months af-

ter Early's request, Hoover passed along reports and updates not only about Lindbergh and America First, but about union officials and civil rights activists, about communists and socialists and members of the Bund. Though these reports tended to remain vague about their sources of information, any reasonably astute reader could see that they contained details acquired through extra-legal and potentially illegal methods: wiretaps, microphone plants, undercover operatives. Roosevelt appreciated these efforts. “Thank you for the many interesting and valuable reports that you have made me regarding the fast moving situations of the last few months,” he wrote to Hoover on June 14, 1940. Far from being an isolated instance of overreach, the FBI's response to Early's request fit with a broader pattern of expanding intelligence and espionage operations.

These efforts continued—indeed, expanded yet again—after Pearl Harbor. Though the America First Committee officially dissolved in December 1941, the FBI continued to track its activities, warning of members' “hope that the America First Committee can again be a political force.” Instead, it was the FBI itself that emerged from the war as a formidable and increasingly independent political force, with its own interpretation of what America First might mean. “Let us be steadfast for America, work and live for America, and eternally be on guard to defend our Constitution and our way of life against the virulent poison of Communistic ideology,” Hoover urged the American Legion in September 1946. By that time, he had acquired both the bureaucratic power and political influence to help make his vision a reality. After six years of wartime expansion, he found himself in a position to realize his own America First agenda and to prod the country into its next great home-front battle.

America First and International Trade Policy in the Cold War Era

David Farber

In 1943, almost two years after the America First Committee had disintegrated in the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attack, a former member and speaker for the committee, Senator Ellison “Cotton Ed” Smith (D-SC), a rabid white supremacist, declared that he was “for America, first, last, and always, and against internationalism, first, last, and always.”¹ Smith made his declaration not in opposition to wartime alliances but out of fear that postwar planning by the Roosevelt administration would include free trade policies that would strengthen America's allies but that also would, Smith believed, upend his state's textile industry. Opposition to free trade and reduced tariffs, even more than concerns over international alliances, became central to post-World War II America Firsters. Donald Trump's version of America First is redolent of that era's economic nationalists, who carried forward the postwar banner of America First.

Ohio Senator Robert Taft led that fight until his death in 1953. Right up until December 7, 1941, “Mr. Republican,” as his supporters called him, had been an outspoken opponent of American war preparedness and Roosevelt's internationalist policies. After the war, he would continue to oppose efforts by both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations to dramatically expand U.S. international commitments.²

Taft and his allies opposed an international turn in American foreign policy for several reasons. They feared that internationalism would greatly strengthen and expand the power of the federal government; they dreaded the budget-busting costs associated with an interventionist, internationalist foreign policy; they worried that international, multilateral commitments would constrain American policymaking and even force America to bow

down to international laws and agreements; and they believed that international commitments would push America into foreign wars that had nothing to do with safeguarding the United States (during the Vietnam War, Taft was posthumously praised by the New Left).

All these factors are critical to understanding the trajectory of the America First movement in the post-World War II, early Cold War era. They help to explain why Taft and others opposed NATO, the largesse of the Marshall plan and aid to Europe more generally, and a large peacetime military. But these factors were not the most important in explaining why Republican Party leader Taft and many of his congressional allies opposed the internationalist turn that dominated the Democratic Party and the Willkie-Dewey-Eisenhower—and then Goldwater-Reagan-Bush-Bush—wing of the Republican Party. Taft abhorred the free trade, anti-tariff-oriented policies that he believed were foundational to the policy regime of internationalists of both political parties. Like most American politicians, he cared far more about domestic affairs than he did about foreign policy. Or, as he put it, he cared more about Americans than he did about foreigners. And a generous international trade policy, he believed, was bad for the American people.

In July 1943, Taft—like “Cotton Ed” Smith—spoke out against Roosevelt administration plans for a postwar free—or freer—trade policy. Before the Ohio Federation of Republican Women’s Organizations, Taft spoke bluntly: “The Republican Party believes in protection. We are not free traders. It is self-evident to me that a general policy of free trade would destroy the standards of living in America. Whether free trade would raise the average of the world as a whole I doubt, but it is obvious to me that it would drag down our own wage level and our own standard of living in this country.”³

Taft continually repeated this line of attack in the years that followed. In 1945 he opposed extending the New Deal’s Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act unless the act specifically forbade the president from using it to lower tariffs. “The additional opportunities which may be stimulated by complete free trade,” he wrote, “do not seem to me to be a very material amount compared to the damage which would be done by destroying various established American industries.”⁴

While Taft began to think harder about foreign affairs by the end of 1947, the advent of the Cold War did nothing to change his mind about the value of an America First trade policy. In 1952 he wrote that “if an American industry is threatened with destruction by the importation of foreign goods, it is almost impossible to give some protection to the workmen in that industry . . . I don’t think any political party is going to adopt a policy that would put them out of business.” He went on to say that “[the] tariff today is much lower than the Underwood tariff of 1913,” and “still the Europeans weren’t able to live under it. I believe it is their own fault, and not ours.”⁵

In January 1953, as Taft prepared, with mixed feelings, for the advent of the Eisenhower administration, he wrote a list of his legislative priorities. First on that list was the issue of “Reciprocal Trade.” Taft opposed it. Immediately after that notation, Taft listed “Scope of point 4,” then “Encouragement of American investment abroad,” and then “extent of foreign aid.”⁶ He opposed every effort to build up the economies of other nations at the expense, as he saw it, of the American taxpayer, manufacturer, and worker.

Taft, of course, was not alone. In 1947, as the Truman administration was negotiating trade liberalization, creating the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, Pennsylvania congressman Robert Rich (whose family happened to own the Woolrich Textile Mills) angrily echoed the 1943 claim of “Cotton Ed” Smith. He denounced GATT, as well as the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, on

the floor of the House: “Brother, I am for America, first, last, and always.”⁷

The Republican Party, like the Democratic Party, was by no means of one mind on the question of free trade and its relation to America’s broader role in the world. Senator Taft knew that members of his own party, including that Johnny-come-lately, Dwight Eisenhower, felt differently. In February 1951, before a joint session of Congress, General Eisenhower directly repudiated Taft. In a January Senate speech, Taft had laid the groundwork for his presidential run by declaiming that “[The] principal purpose of the foreign policy of the United States is to maintain the liberty of the American people. It is not to reform the entire world or spread sweetness and light and economic prosperity.”⁸

Eisenhower, before both the House and the Senate, rejected Taft’s America First line. The United States, Eisenhower insisted, must provide global leadership: “The cost of peace is going to be a sacrifice, a very great sacrifice, individually and nationally.”⁹ President Eisenhower later explained a key aspect of that sacrifice before an audience of nervous Republican congressional leaders, when he insisted that they support favorable trade terms for the penurious nation of Japan. “[A]ll problems of local industry pale into insignificance in relation to the world crisis . . . Japan cannot live, and Japan cannot remain in the free world unless something is done to allow her to make a living.”¹⁰ Taft, who had died six months after Eisenhower’s inauguration, was surely spinning in his grave.

Along with other political leaders affiliated directly or indirectly with an America First vision of the world, Taft did adapt to Cold War realities. He was a fierce anticommunist, and to contain the Soviets he begrudgingly accepted the need for greater military spending, extra-territorial defense (though only at sea and in the air), and even the arming of American allies at key defensive spots around the globe. While he thought the Soviet threat was exaggerated by his internationalist foes, he did not dismiss it, at least not to the extent that he and his allies had downplayed the Nazi threat. Still, Taft remained highly suspicious of the United Nations and multilateralism of almost all kinds. He scorned the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and GATT. Most of all, he remained firmly opposed to any concept of international trade that belied his fervent belief in mercantilism.

Taft was not alone in his opposition. Even as a broad consensus emerged in both political parties about the need to defend and strengthen America’s global allies against the threat of Soviet communism, politicians across the ideological spectrum continued to demur at the wholesale adaptation of a free trade regime. Still, they often folded before the Cold War demands made by presidential administrations, from Truman onward, for international economic stability and shared prosperity. They generally accepted an international trade regime that often favored America’s allies over its domestic producers and workers. George Ball, President Kennedy’s undersecretary of state for economic affairs, cavalierly expressed the new conventional wisdom in 1962. “[W]e Americans could afford to pay some economic price for a strong Europe.”¹¹ In the economic downturn of the 1970s, that sentiment began to sour, and an ideologically diverse set of political actors began to challenge it, wondering who, among the American people, would actually pay that economic price.¹² But not until 2016 did a major party presidential candidate absolutely reject the trade policy formulated during the Cold War and declare, once again, that he was for “America First.”

Notes:

1. Smith’s remarks were quoted in newspapers all over the country via the International News Service feature “What Noted People Say.” See, for example, the *Times* (Munster, Indiana), Septem-

ber 7, 1943, 8.

2. For a fine account of Taft's foreign policy views see Clarence E. Wunderlin, *Robert A. Taft: Ideas, Tradition, and Party in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005). I also draw on my chapter on Taft in David Farber, *The Rise and Fall of Modern American Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); and on Melvyn Leffler, *Preponderance of Power* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1992).

3. Robert A. Taft and Clarence E. Wunderlin Jr., *The Papers of Robert A. Taft: 1939–1944* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1997), 436.

4. *Ibid.*, 229.

5. *Ibid.*, 439–440

6. *Ibid.*, 448.

7. Quoted in Thomas Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 79–80.

8. Robert A. Taft and Clarence E. Wunderlin Jr., *The Papers of Robert A. Taft: 1949–1953* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006), 233–34.

9. Quoted in William Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018), 51.

10. Quoted in William Lovett, Alfred Eckes Jr., and Richard Brinkman, *US Trade Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 64.

11. Quoted in Judith Stein, *The Pivotal Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 8.

12. Judith Stein makes the same point on page 8 in *The Pivotal Years*, and her influence is felt throughout this essay.

Conservative Intellectuals and Critique of Cold War/ New Deal/Great Society America

Geoffrey Kabaservice

Most accounts of the America First Committee (AFC) end with its dissolution in December 1941. George H. Nash, in his comprehensive history of the post-World War II American conservative intellectual movement, notes that many of its prominent leaders had been isolationists or even members of the AFC, including William F. Buckley Jr., Russell Kirk, Henry Regnery, and the founders of *Human Events*. Even so, Nash declares that while the occasional “desperate call for a return to Fortress America” surfaced in the ‘50s and ‘60s, the postwar movement “was not predominantly isolationist.”¹

And yet . . . In 1963, Buckley recalled that his father “was a devout non-interventionist who carried to his grave his conviction that we should have never been in the war.” And, he added, “I have never altered my belief that we made a disastrous mistake in doing so.”²

The young liberals who founded the Emergency Committee to Defend America First at Yale University in the summer of 1940—including future Yale president Kingman Brewster Jr., future Supreme Court justice Potter Stewart, and future U.S. president Gerald R. Ford—came to repent of their isolationism after Pearl Harbor (if not before) and became staunch internationalists. Most of the conservative intellectual followers of the AFC, however, felt no such penitence and underwent no such conversion.

The conservative intellectuals’ views continued to be colored by the AFC experience long after World War II. As Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (a prewar interventionist) observed in a perceptive postwar article, the war destroyed isolationism as a doctrine and a program. But isolationism survived as “a set of intense emotions . . . deeply founded in the American experience and sharply etched on the American psychology. And, in this deeper sense, isolationism has never died.”³

For starters, the America First Committee had given many conservatives their first taste of grassroots political activism. Buckley, the founder of the conservative movement’s ideological flagship, *National Review*, had been a young but enthusiastic AFC member. He attended the AFC’s New York City rally in the fall of 1941, featuring speakers

Charles Lindbergh and John T. Flynn, and in hindsight considered it “quite the most exciting evening of my life.”⁴ The AFC was not just a shared bonding experience for many of the future founders of the conservative movement. It also convinced them that there was a mass participatory audience for right-wing beliefs—a conviction that Joseph McCarthy’s anticommunist crusade would strengthen.

The AFC experience further suggested to postwar conservatives that a majority of Americans would sympathize with their movement. After all, polls prior to December 1941 had shown that most Americans opposed becoming involved in the European conflict. From this premise sprang the conviction that there was a “hidden majority” of Americans who were waiting for a conservative alternative (such as Sen. Barry Goldwater’s presidential candidacy in 1964) to the indistinguishable policies of Democrats and “me too” Republicans.

However, conservatives believed that popular opposition to intervention had been thwarted by the machinations of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Buckley maintained that Roosevelt had drawn the United States into an unnecessary war by fortifying Britain rather than Pearl Harbor, thereby inviting a Japanese attack.⁵ Other conservatives averred that the perfidious Roosevelt had failed to communicate his advance knowledge of the attack on Pearl Harbor—an early instance of the conservative appetite for conspiracy theories about the treachery of liberal elites.

Conservatives also believed that grassroots anti-interventionism had been overcome by the relentless, coordinated attacks of an interlinked array of prominent institutions, which Buckley would label “the liberal establishment.” Government officials from both parties, the prestigious universities, the great metropolitan newspapers and opinion journals, even the mainstream Protestant denominations—all combined to shower the isolationists with vituperative condemnation. *Time* magazine called the AFC a collection of “Jew haters, Roosevelt-haters, England-haters, Coughlinites [and] demagogues,” while interventionists labeled the organization “the first fascist party in this nation’s history” and Roosevelt questioned its members’ patriotism.⁶

At the time, Buckley tried to strike back by (pseudonymously) asking the FBI to investigate *Time* for un-Americanism.⁷ After the war, he and other conservatives targeted the media—and the liberal establishment as a whole—as anti-populist totalitarians to be brought down by any means necessary. Historian Fred Siegel is correct to identify Joe McCarthy as the isolationists’ “tribune of revenge.”⁸ The revenge sought, however, was not just against the foreign policy establishment but against the liberal establishment as a whole.

In the eyes of conservative intellectuals, Pearl Harbor was the liberal establishment’s primal, foundational error, and from it emerged a world order that was fundamentally illegitimate. Liberals, however, were unwilling to tolerate any criticism that adverted to this original sin. That was why they ostracized revisionist scholars of the war, in the first manifestation of the coercive conformity that later became known as “political correctness.”⁹

Anticommunism legitimized conservatives’ return to participation in the foreign policy debate. Anticommunist conservative internationalism, however, retained many characteristics of isolationism—notably, a suspicion of outsiders that revealed itself as a nationalist preference for unilateral action, skepticism toward free trade, and mistrust of alliances and international organizations, particularly the United Nations.

Conservative opposition to foreign aid stemmed from skepticism about nation-building as well as (in some cases) racism. The “Asia First” orientation of many conservatives obviously harkened back to the isolationists’

traditional suspicion of Europe. But Schlesinger, writing in 1952, noticed “the glassy boredom which overtakes the New Isolationists when India is mentioned, or Point Four. Isolationism has always been most interested in the foreign countries that have already been lost to the enemy.”¹⁰

Conservative internationalism also retained the isolationists’ skepticism toward the state and the huge, expensive, intrusive government that U.S. global leadership entailed. Few conservative intellectuals, apart from a handful of extreme libertarians, went as far as Senator Robert Taft, who believed that the Cold War was a ploy to internationalize and institutionalize the New Deal. Neo-isolationism peaked with the For America organization of the early ‘50s and its campaign for the Bricker Amendment.¹¹ But conservative skepticism toward strong, Roosevelt-style executive leadership in foreign policy resurfaced in the form of opposition toward Henry Kissinger’s policy of détente with the Soviet Union and Richard Nixon’s opening to China, and even conservative criticism of the draft and advocacy of an all-volunteer military.

The isolationist impulses of postwar conservative intellectuals often were subsumed under the broader conservative movement’s need for unity, or mere partisanship. Both factors could explain conservatives’ overall quiescence during both the Vietnam and Iraq/Afghanistan wars.

But isolationism has remained a latent tendency of conservatism, one that reappears at intervals. Both Pat Buchanan’s and Donald Trump’s invocations of America First drew upon the isolationist view of America as a racially unified nation whose purity must be protected from outsiders. At the same time, they also invoked Robert Taft’s critique of the “tendency to interfere in the affairs of other nations, to assume that we are a kind of demigod and Santa Claus to solve the problems of the world.”¹²

In the final analysis, isolationism persists because conservative intellectuals, for the most part, have never really come to terms with the world created by postwar internationalist liberalism. This ambivalence is likely to persist unless (or until) conservatives make peace with that order or break from it entirely.

Notes:

1. George H. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945* (Wilmington, DE: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1996), 254.
2. William F. Buckley, Jr. to Harry Elmer Barnes, Nov. 25, 1963, I-24, “Barnes, Harry Elmer (1963),” William F. Buckley Jr. Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Sterling Memorial Library, New Haven, CT (hereafter, Yale).
3. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “The New Isolationism,” *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1952): 35.
4. William F. Buckley, Jr. to Sterling Morton, Nov. 13, 1959, I-8, “Morton, Sterling (1959),” William F. Buckley Jr. Papers, Yale.
5. William F. Buckley, Jr. (writing as “Emma Pattinson”) to editor of *Lakeville Journal*, Jan. 17, 1942, III-II-116: “William F. Buckley, Jr. from others,” William F. Buckley, Jr. Papers, Yale.
6. Justus D. Doenecke, ed., *In Danger Undaunted: The Anti-Interventionist Movement of 1940–1941 as Revealed in the Papers of the America First Committee* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1990), 35–37.
7. William F. Buckley, Jr. (writing as “Elmer Wing”) to the FBI, Jan. 14, 1942, III-II-116: “William F. Buckley, Jr. from others,” William F. Buckley Jr. Papers, Yale.
8. Frederick F. Siegel, *Troubled Journey: From Pearl Harbor to Reagan* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984), 76.
9. Justus Doenecke observed that revisionist scholar Harry Elmer Barnes’s critique of New Deal foreign policy made him “almost a pariah among his fellow historians.” Justus D. Doenecke, “Harry Elmer Barnes,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* (Summer 1973): 312.
10. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “The New Isolationism,” *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1952): 36.
11. Cathal J. Nolan, “The Last Hurrah of Conservative Isolationism: Eisenhower, Congress, and the Bricker Amendment,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 22 (Spring 1992): 337–49.

12. James T. Patterson, *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 437.

American Workers First? The Politics of Blue Collar Nationalism in an Age of Decline

Jefferson Cowie

Few scenes capture the impotent rage of the American working class better than the United Auto Workers’ picnics of the 1980s. There, for a small donation, an angry union member could work out his or her rage at the new global order by heaving a sledge hammer down on an innocent Toyota Corolla. In the parking lot, bumper stickers claimed, “Buy American: The Job You Save May Be Your Own,” while only U.S.-made cars were allowed access to spots near the plant—the benighted drivers of Japanese and German brands found their cars relegated to the back forty. Symbolic nationalist responses to the emergence of the transnational economy like these made noise but resulted in very little legislation. Still, we dismiss them at our peril.

While the phrase America First is associated with the committee that sought to thwart the United States’ entry into World War II, it actually has earlier roots of the type that those autoworkers would have understood: the politics of tariffs. A *New York Times* editor argued in 1891 that protectionist tariffs meant “America first; the rest of the world afterward.” The phrase went on to be a Republican political slogan for a high tariff economy in the 1890s, a system that, by 1900, had become known as the Republican politics of “the full dinner pail.”¹

The Toyota-pounding nationalist mood of the 1970s and 1980s hides the fact that the battle lines these workers faced were a lot less clear than they had been previously. Non-union Japanese “transplants” were landing in the United States and employing American workers, while cars imported from Germany and Sweden were built under some of the best union contracts in the world. Transnational labor solidarity with union sisters and brothers around the world turned out to be a political flutter in the trade winds when it was this job, in this town, that was on the chopping block. The old battle line between “us” and “them” in labor history had become difficult to redraw. Robert Reich mapped out the confusion of the new global age in a pair of smart articles in 1990 and 1991 with the revealing titles, “Who Is Us?” and “Who is Them?”²

One way to encapsulate the broad sweep of labor and working-class history is to tell the story of unions (based on “locals”) breathlessly chasing after the ever-widening geographic command of capital since the dawn of the market revolution. They almost always found themselves trying to catch up, except during the postwar “Golden Age,” when the United States was over-dominant in the world economy and the workers were buoyed by a host of New Deal legislation and union power. Wages went up, inequality went down, union density went up, and economic liberalism was robust. As the recipients of much of the bounty of trade liberalization under GATT, labor even supported agreements like the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. While much of this bounty privileged white male industrial workers, the formula proved beneficial across the board.

A dozen years later, however, foreign cars, electronics, steel, and garments (and, more to the point, the offshoring of the production of domestic brands) rattled the domestic dimension of the postwar trade regime. The sense of workers’ fall from economic grace was not mere American anxiety, paranoia, racism, or metaphor. It was quite real.

Not surprisingly, when the postwar settlement began to unravel, workers sought to reestablish national control

over the globalizing labor market. Like farmers seeking “parity doctrine” based on the pre-World War I agricultural golden age, workers, union leaders, and liberals frantically struggled to shore up the old system. Advocates of the Burke-Hartke Foreign Trade and Investment Proposal in the early 1970s sought to impose quotas, eliminate tax provisions for overseas investment, and regulate international investment. The ILGWU relentlessly sang the “Look for the Union Label” jingle in television ads, and “Buy American” campaigns emerged in a number of industries. Other tools, such as anti-dumping agreements, currency manipulation, voluntary trade restraint agreements, and agreements by other nations to import certain quantities of American goods, all tried to prop up the rickety system. The battle lines between laissez-faire cosmopolitans and working people grounded in place began to be drawn.

In 1979, when Ronald Reagan launched his candidacy for the presidency, he declared himself in favor of a new idea: a “North American accord” on trade and development. The concept would eventually be signed as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by his successor, George H.W. Bush, in 1992, and passed through Congress by Bill Clinton. Reagan’s populist magic allowed him to own the rally-around-the-flag nationalism (while blocking or destroying any domestic economic security dimensions and simultaneously promoting a global market in labor and other commodities). The 1980s then kicked labor’s few remaining teeth in with a direct assault on the residual legal protections workers enjoyed, leaving industrial workers ravaged and with little more than pounding claims of being “Born in the USA.”

In the 1990s, when NAFTA advocates sought to codify the new world order, labor launched a “just say no” campaign against the trade deal. But they were hemmed in by fast track authority, and they failed to generate alternative ideas or to note that hundreds of thousands of “U.S. jobs” had already relocated to Mexico. The anti-NAFTA struggle ended largely as an America First rally, with occasional flickers of solidarity with workers in Mexico and Canada. The “Battle in Seattle” in late 1999 offered a fleeting glimpse of labor’s capacity to “Act Globally” (and environmentally) that never took root in American political culture. By then, “NAFTA” and “Clinton” became toxic terms throughout the heartland as industrial workers felt that the Democrats had betrayed them.

The Democrats stumbled on the same problem that had tripped up many reformist and social democratic parties around the world: jumping on a cosmopolitan, laissez-faire global position and denying the central fact that the nation-state was and would remain the place where workers’ rights are recognized, infrastructure is built, and wealth redistribution can happen. Social democracy, where liberals make their mark, is a national project and cannot be robust if capitulation to the transnational order is the essence of politics. A critic of the floundering German Social Democrats correctly noted that it was a “convenient self-delusion of the ‘neoliberal’ decades . . . that you could strengthen both national democracy (including welfare-state capitalism) and transnational policymaking.”³ Trump’s message that the cosmopolitan “Hillary Clinton will escalate the war against the American worker” became a credible political message.⁴

The most recent mobilization of America First by Donald Trump was a long time coming, and maybe not

quite as crazy as it initially sounded. Trump was right, after all, on two important and often ignored points: American workers were sold out, and they were right to declare that the “system is rigged.” The lesson of Trump’s America First appeal is not that white workers are irredeemably provincial and racist (though many are), but that the nation state remains *the only imaginable place of redress* even in a global age. Nationalism and populism are on the rise, but they need to be understood within the claustrophobic global determinism that mocks national governments, political identity, and the capacity for people to act on their own and on their communities’ behalf. The problem is far more complex than the question “Trade expansion, yes or no?” allows for.

Ethnocentric nationalism needs to be feared, deeply, but the concept of shared national fate and commitment can be harnessed. It used to be called “civics.” The possibility of a dynamic “outward-looking” version of national economic strategy might be able to place the full cultural, racial, and geographic diversity of “American workers first” in a place between, on the one hand, the combination of free trade plus the nationalist rebel yell from Republicans and, on the other hand, the weak-kneed neoliberal diversity of the Democrats.

The key is to transcend the dominant backward-looking protectionist impulse (or any attempt to capture the labor market in the period of arrested decay that prevailed in the eighties and nineties) and to harness the state for the public good. The fact that the nation remains prostrate before Wall Street’s demands for ever faster paybacks and bigger bonuses while it actively shuns long-term experimentation, research, worker training, product development, infrastructure construction, green economy development, health care access, education, and wealth redistribution is among the worst symptoms of the problem.

Progressives have conceded the fight for national identity for fear of the dark side of the problem. But, to paraphrase Tip O’Neill, all working-class politics are national. To ignore that aspect of America First and not recognize the pragmatic path it offers for a national developmental vision is simply to invite desperate and empty calls to “Make America Great Again.”

Notes:

1. “Political Notes,” *New York Times*, June 19, 1891. See also Sarah Churchwell, “End of the American Dream? The Dark History of ‘America First,’” *The Guardian*, April 21, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/apr/21/end-of-the-american-dream-the-dark-history-of-america-first>.
2. Robert B. Reich, “Who Is Us?” *Harvard Business Review* (Jan.-Feb. 1990), <https://hbr.org/1990/01/who-is-us>; and “Who is Them?” *Harvard Business Review* (March-April 1991), <https://hbr.org/1991/03/who-is-them>.
3. Jochen Bittner, “What Happened to Germany’s Social Democrats?” *New York Times*, December 28, 2017.
4. “Trump Attacks Clinton on Energy Stance,” *Wall Street Journal*, May 26, 2016, transcript, <https://www.wsj.com/video/trump-attacks-clinton-on-energy-stance/63FDBAA8-AA3D-421D-A009-D041CA196ED7.html>. For the significance of the idea of a partisan switch on working-class loyalties, see “RFK’s Visit to Appalachia, 50 Years Later: How Kennedy Country Became Trump Country,” *USA Today*, February 12, 2018, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/02/12/rfks-visit-appalachia-50-years-later-how-kennedy-country-became-trump-country/310267002/>.

Competing Visions of America First in U.S. Immigration Policy

María Cristina García

[The Hart-Celler Act] that we will sign today will really make us truer to ourselves both as a country and as a people. It will strengthen us in a hundred unseen ways.

Lyndon B. Johnson, October 3, 1965

The time has come for a new immigration commission to develop a new set of reforms to our legal immigration . . . We need a system that serves our needs—remember, it's America First.

Donald J. Trump, August 31, 2016

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, more popularly known as the Hart-Celler Act, set into motion a series of changes that facilitated the arrival on American shores of over 59 million people from all over the world, with significant demographic consequences for the United States. The law eliminated the racist national origins quotas that had been in place since the 1920s and replaced them with a system of hemispheric—and later, global—caps that prioritized family reunification and certain forms of labor.

It is this system that President Donald J. Trump has been trying to overhaul since he took office, because, according to him, it has authorized the admission of far too many immigrants from “shithole countries.”¹ Trump has also overhauled the refugee admissions program (USRAP), reducing refugee quotas to their lowest numbers since 1980; and he has expanded the surveillance, detention, and deportation regime to deter and detain asylum seekers and unauthorized immigrants. In his estimation, immigration policies have endangered our national security.

Trump’s views on immigration have precedents in U.S. history. Since the early nineteenth century, immigrants, though vital to nation-building, have been accused of stealing jobs and undermining wages; of serving as spies, saboteurs, and terrorists; of undermining democratic institutions; and of refusing to assimilate culturally. The stakeholders who have crafted the immigration restriction regime have all claimed to be acting on behalf of American interests; but their understandings of who the American people are—and which ideals and interests merit protection—have always been hotly contested. Today’s debates about who is worthy of admission and citizenship are echoes of earlier discourses.

Since the early national period, race, national origins, and religion have been key markers of eligibility for citizenship and for admission to the United States. The 1790 Nationality Act restricted citizenship by naturalization to “free white persons” and resulted in the legal category “aliens ineligible for citizenship,” which affected property and immigration law for generations, as well as voting and civil rights. The first major battles to control entry to the United States came in the second half of the nineteenth century, when immigration flows shifted and immigrants came increasingly from Asia and southern and eastern Europe. Americans who traced their ancestry to northern and western Europe regarded immigrants from these areas of the world as racially different, politically dangerous, intellectually and morally deficient, and incapable of assimilating.

Congress enacted the first federal immigration controls beginning in the 1870s. The Chinese were the first targets of these immigration restrictions, but not exclusively. Over the next few decades, legislators passed a wide array of legislation to restrict admission based on race and national origins, but they also barred entry based on socioeconomic class, literacy, criminality, political beliefs,

physical and mental health, and sexuality. In tandem, federal policymakers created institutions to enforce the new immigration laws, such as the Immigration Bureau (1891); immigrant inspection and detention stations on Castle Garden (1855), Ellis Island (1892), and Angel Island (1910); and police forces such as “Mounted Guards” (1904) and the Border Patrol (1924).

The rapid succession of laws culminated in the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act, which reaffirmed the bar on all Asian immigration (established in 1917) and placed a cap on European immigration. The law also instituted a system of national origin quotas that privileged migration from northern and western Europe. Great Britain and Germany, for example, had quotas of 65,721 and 25,957, respectively, while southern and eastern European countries like Greece and Albania were limited to tiny quotas of 307 and 100 each.² In many years the quotas went unfulfilled. Legislators relied on embassies and consulates overseas to deny visas, and these “remote control” practices further helped to cull immigrants.³ With the Johnson-Reed Act, the first great era of immigration came to an end, but during the short period between 1880 and 1924, 20 million people had entered the United States.

The period between the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 and the Hart-Celler Act of 1965 is portrayed as an interlude between two great eras of mass migration to the United States. Critics of the current immigration system point to this period in U.S. history as a model for the future: a time when immigration policy successfully stemmed the tide of unwanted immigrants, allowing the United States to absorb and Americanize all the undesirables that they had inadvertently allowed into the country.

Immigration to the United States did decrease in the wake of the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act, but it did not stop altogether.⁴ From the start, Congress exempted from the quota U.S. colonial possessions and countries in the Americas so that these could provide cheap labor for factories, fields, mines, and railroads. When these populations proved to be insufficient, Congress authorized the entry of laborers from other parts of the world. During World War II and the early decades of the Cold War, Congress was repeatedly forced to amend immigration policy in the interest of international goodwill, positive foreign relations, economic competitiveness, and racial equality. Recognizing the need to honor wartime obligations, for example, legislators lifted the bars to Chinese, Indian, and Filipino migration and granted nationals of these countries the right to naturalize. Congress also passed the War Brides Act of 1945, the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 (renewed in 1950), and the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, which facilitated the entrance of hundreds of thousands of immigrants who were inadmissible before the war. Because it served American Cold War interests, policymakers even fast-tracked the admission and citizenship of former Nazi scientists to the United States to prevent them from using their expertise to help the Soviet Union. However, the most significant legal shift occurred with the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952. The law included provisions for “humanitarian parole,” ended racial restrictions on citizenship, and extended small immigration quotas to every nation.

The America First vision represented in the Johnson-Reed Act did have significant demographic consequences for the United States. By 1965, the percentage of foreign-born Americans had dropped to 5 percent, down from 13.2 percent earlier in the twentieth century. But despite the draconian numerical quotas, the racial bars, and the remote control policies, labor shortages and diplomatic imperatives forced Congress to establish pathways for select groups of immigrants because it was deemed in the national interest. These policies paved the way for the Hart-Celler Act of 1965, especially the commitment to family reunification and the privileging of certain types of labor.

Despite the act's nods to egalitarianism, however, the architects of Hart-Celler never imagined the demographic changes it would bring about. European migration to the United States fell in the final decades of the twentieth century, for a variety of reasons. Meanwhile, demands to emigrate increased in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Improvements in health care and education created highly mobile populations who sought better wages in industrialized nations; while revolution, economic displacement, and environmental disasters drove others to migrate. By 2014, the percentage of the U.S. population that was foreign-born was once again 13.2 percent. Sixty percent of the new immigrant population has come from Mexico, India, the Philippines, China, Vietnam, El Salvador, Cuba, South Korea, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala—countries considered undesirable by a new generation of nativists and isolationists.

Immigration restriction is once again the centerpiece of a new America First campaign. "We should have more people from Norway," said the president, echoing the calls of early twentieth-century American policymakers. Through executive orders and policy proposals, Trump has once again tried to bar entry based on racial, cultural, economic, and national origin criteria. But history suggests that he will not be entirely successful. Even during periods of war, economic contraction, and isolationism, when Americans have been particularly vocal about shutting the door and expelling "foreigners," competing understandings of the role of immigrants in nation- and state-building have resulted in parallel and often contradictory policies that left the door to immigration partway open.

It is yet unclear what our immigration system will look like after Trump. What is clear is that the United States cannot afford to shut itself off from the world. The challenges of the present—seventy million refugees and displaced persons, for example—and the challenges of the future—forecasts of hundreds of millions displaced by accelerated climate change—require international cooperation to find durable solutions to the problem of displacement.

Notes:

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3. Aristide Zolberg, "The Archaeology of Remote Control," in *Migration Control in the North Atlantic World: The Evolution of State Practices in Europe and the United States from the French Revolution to the Inter-War Period*, ed. Andreas Fahrmeir, Olivier Faron, and Patrick Weil (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003).
4. This argument is developed in a co-edited anthology to be published in 2018. See Maddalena Marinari, Madeline Hsu, and Maria Cristina Garcia, eds., *A Nation of Immigrants Reconsidered: U.S. Society in an Age of Restriction, 1924–1965* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, forthcoming). The introduction, co-written by the editors, provides a more detailed history of immigration policy in the 1924–1965 period.

America First in the Waning Age of Evangelicalism

Darren Dochuk

American evangelicalism is at war with itself. One might find that hard to believe, considering that eighty-one percent of evangelicals—a virtual consensus—voted for Donald Trump. Yet crisis is pervasive, especially among the nineteen percent of Bible believers who cast different ballots. What does "evangelical" even mean, they ask, when principles so easily give way to base

politics? Some of them pledge to fight wayward brethren and their "bronze-aged warlord" and reclaim a "Christ First" instead of an America First doctrine. The more cynical are abandoning the tarnished evangelical label and hoping their compromised community collapses on itself.¹

The recent death of Billy Graham produced a spate of op-ed obituaries that reinforced this sense of Trump-era calamity. "If you want to understand the evangelical decline in the United States," one prominent scholar editorialized, "look no further than the transition from Billy to Franklin Graham." Unlike Billy, the bridge-builder, Franklin is "a political hack, one who is rapidly rebranding evangelicalism as a belief system marked not by faith, hope, and love but by fear." The writer downplayed the two Grahams' shared DNA. Billy may have disarmed Americans with his southern drawl and Hollywood smile, but he often railed against social ills in racially coded terms and against foreigners in the type of jeremiads that stir his son's followers today.

Still, the irked scholar rightly highlighted evangelicalism's current rupture. When the senior Graham rose to fame in the 1940s, he purposefully distanced himself from his fundamentalist predecessors, whose pulpits during the interwar years reverberated with the sectarianism, isolationism, and jingoism of a populist Right. Despite ongoing opposition from those hard-edged America First sympathizers who extended their anti-internationalist agenda during the Cold War, Graham's enlivening and globally focused faith flourished for decades. Alas, the forces of fundamentalism and America First-ism have resurfaced with a vengeance.²

Why? The leadership of unbending clerics like Franklin has a lot to do with the turn, as do the single issues that have animated the Religious Right since the "Let's Make America Great Again" culture-war campaigns of the Reagan eighties. Many Christian apologists continue to explain their endorsement of Trump strictly as a vote for principles (religious freedom, the right to life, support for Israel) and friendly court justices. Yet broader theo-political dynamics have precipitated the generational shift toward Franklin Graham and Donald Trump's gospel.

Whereas Billy Graham's imperative was revival—a New Testament impulse to awaken America to its better self—Franklin's modus operandi is reconstruction. In its purest form, reconstructionism is the theology of shadowy minister-author R.J. Rushdoony, whose writings from the 1960s spawned an underground movement in the 1980s that called for a reordering of society according to Old Testament patriarchal law. Rushdoony believed Christian men had to "reverse the curse of the Fall and 'take dominion' over the planet and 'reconstruct' all of life in Christ's image," replacing "ungodly, secular forms of governance with decentralized theocracies and rule as Christ's vicegerents on earth." His was no modest revolutionary call.³

Quietly, evangelicals answered it and erected an institutional infrastructure to realign society with God's sovereignty. Evangelicals have always been prolific institution-builders; their America First moment of the interwar period was characterized by rapid construction of religious schools, associations, and mass media. But what has occurred since 1980 is unmatched. Through subtle diffusion, reconstructionist thought has propelled the home school movement, media programming, and an educational empire that underscores a patriarchal social order and teaches faith-friendly science and history to people in the pews. Best-selling author David Barton—head of the WallBuilders organization, whose writings reframe U.S. history as a product of divine destiny—is but one captain in an army of activists whose primary aim is to recast the nation's past and present as blessed struggle for a future millennium of godly rule.

If David Barton rules evangelicalism's classrooms,

Bruce Barton and the Babbitts of the corporate world control its pocketbook notions of political economy, which align with the policies and fantasies of the businessman-president. Billy Graham was certainly a bootstrap capitalist at heart, and a fierce defender of free-market Christianity. Yet the born-again 1970s, a decade animated by globalizing markets, deregulation, and the dawn of a neo-liberal order, redefined evangelicalism's money management in a way he would not have imagined possible.

Or considered healthy. Whereas Graham exuded Max Weber's Protestant ethic and preached calculation and control in the name of Christian stewardship, the prosperity gospel that arose during his later years justifies risk-taking, accepts the volatilities of chance, and pursues profits as if there is no tomorrow. Place your trust in God, the logic goes, and ride the capricious markets to happiness and success. A "get-rich" scheme in sacred guise, this formula is also therapeutic for Americans caught in the "calcified" inequalities of late capitalist society. It "explains away the deep societal problems that individuals are powerless to change" by insisting that "personal responsibility reigns supreme" and "faith is responsible for everything that happens to you." "Get going. Move forward. Aim High. Change your attitude and gain some altitude." These words, which Trump has uttered, are what prosperity gospel preachers deliver to their parishioners on a weekly basis.⁴

Warrior heroes of late-stage capitalism, today's evangelicals also see themselves as warrior heroes of the nation. Evangelicalism's ascent during the Cold War was in part a function of its tightening relationship with the military, something Billy Graham acknowledged by regularly paying tribute to the Christian commitment to national defense. But the evangelical takeover of U.S. military culture accelerated after 1980. In 1983, Ronald Reagan thanked evangelicals for shielding their society from those who would place it "in a position of military and moral inferiority." America was at war with an "evil empire," he declared, and he called for more of their religious patriotism.⁵

Evangelicals answered that call, staffing military posts and the chaplaincy in unmatched quantities. Between 1994 and 2005, the number of evangelical chaplains in the U.S. Air Force doubled, while Catholic and mainline Protestant contributions dropped. At a 2005 "Spiritual Fitness Conference," hosted by the Air Force in Colorado Springs, a reporter noted "there were personal testimonies about Jesus from the stage . . . a band performing contemporary Christian praise songs," and "hundreds of Air Force chaplains" singing, "with palms upturned, in a service with a distinctly evangelical tone."⁶

As the military turned evangelical, evangelicalism turned militaristic. Today, evangelical mothers praise the courage of their soldiering sons while their husbands attend male-only conferences to hear testimonials of godly GIs, praise Jesus ("the ultimate man"), and digest sermons that warn of a "once-powerful nation" becoming "soft and feminine" and now in desperate need of virile fighters. In Trump they have found their general. "I want the meanest, toughest, son-of-a-you-know-what I can find in that role," one pastor charges, "and I think that's where many evangelicals are."⁷

For all their bravado, evangelicals are vulnerable. A final shifting course for them involves demographics and a reversed narrative. When Billy Graham appeared on the national scene, he was a fresh face from the small-town South, representative of a region and religion on the rise. His ministry basked in a glow of optimism; despite the threats of Cold War annihilation they faced, evangelicals perceived good times ahead and built their movement to be America's lodestar as it climbed to new heights. Demographics offered them reasons to believe they would be successful. By the

1970s, scholars were hustling to explain why conservative churches were flourishing while progressive ones failed.

Billy's buoyancy has been replaced with Franklin's dark despair, and statistics justify his dire tones. Religion is in decline in the United States, and though slightly more resilient, evangelicalism is too. Over the past decade, white evangelicalism's proportion of the U.S. population has dropped from twenty-three percent to seventeen percent. Meanwhile, "A Quiet Exodus" is occurring, as black conservative Protestants flee white churches and separate themselves altogether from the "evangelical" label. That is no surprise, really, as the church of Trump is a predominantly white one. And then there are the growing numbers of Americans (now twenty-seven percent of the population) claiming to be "nones"—religiously unaffiliated citizens who say they are "spiritual but not religious." As frustrated conservative Protestants survey the landscape, they sense that evangelicalism's right-wing political attachments have corrupted it beyond repair, making the "none" camp a more comfortable fit.⁸

Statistically and symbolically, the eighty-one percent of evangelicals who voted for Trump reinforce one image of contemporary evangelicalism even as they belie another. In their rush to champion Trump's America First agenda, evangelicals have brought to fruition a generation of theo-political change that has seen them become more theocratic in their aims, "post-truth" in their dependence on alternative media and education, and blustery in their muscular, authoritarian doctrines and populist backlash. Yet in doing so, they have also marked the end of their movement's age of authority; their overwhelming support for their leader has weakened, not strengthened, their long-term lot. Evangelicals have always looked out onto the world through anxious eyes, measuring current events against expectations of apocalypse. They now face a bleak and bloody reckoning of their own creation.

Notes:

1. Russell Moore, "Why This Election Makes Me Hate the Word 'Evangelical,'" *The Washington Post*, February 29, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/02/29/russell-moore-why-this-election-makes-me-hate-the-word-evangelical/?utm_term=.df848d527d7b.
2. Stephen Prothero, "Billy Graham Built a Movement. Now His Son is Dismantling It," *Politico*, February 24, 2018, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/02/24/billy-graham-evangelical-decline-franklin-graham-217077>.
3. Michael J. McVicar, *Christian Reconstructionism: R.J. Rushdoony and American Religious Conservatism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 4–5.
4. Drew Pendergrass, "The Televangelist-in-Chief: Trump and the Prosperity Gospel," *Harvard Political Review*, November 12, 2017, <http://harvardpolitics.com/culture/televangelistinchief/>.
5. Ronald Reagan "Evil Empire Speech," <http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/reagan-evil-empire-speech-text/>.
6. Laurie Goodstein, "Evangelicals Are a Growing Force in the Military Chaplain Corps," *New York Times*, July 12, 2005, <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/12/us/evangelicals-are-a-growing-force-in-the-military-chaplain-corps.html>.
7. Kristin Du Mez, "Donald Trump and Militant Evangelical Masculinity," *Religion and Politics*, January 17, 2017, <http://religionandpolitics.org/2017/01/17/donald-trump-and-militant-evangelical-masculinity/>.
8. Prothero, "Billy Graham Built a Movement"; Campbell Robertson, "A Quiet Exodus: Why Black Worshipers Are Leaving White Evangelical Churches," *New York Times*, March 9, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/09/us/blacks-evangelical-churches.html>.

America First, A Second Time

Nicole Hemmer

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the Cold War was crumbling to an end, the ties that had bound the conservative coalition snapped. The democratic triumphalism, the embrace of free markets, the commitment to foreign intervention—features of Cold War politics that knit together the disparate parts of the conservative coalition—lost their magnetic pull. The Reagan era was over; what would replace it had not yet been born.

Enter Pat Buchanan.

Buchanan had been a staple of Republican administrations since joining the Nixon team, though he had never himself run for office. And by the late 1980s, his reputation was less politician than personality: a pundit who made a name for himself as the conservative voice in countless political sparring forums, from *The McLaughlin Group* and *Crossfire* to his three-hour daily radio show and op-ed pages across the country.

Then, in late 1991, he announced he was running for president on an America First platform. Protectionist and isolationist, his campaign was an overt rejection not just of President George H. W. Bush, his primary opponent, but also of Ronald Reagan. With an enormous geopolitical shift looming, Buchanan seized the opportunity to rewrite the meaning of American conservatism along the lines of an exclusionary, pessimistic nationalism—one that resonates sharply in the Trump era.

It is, in fact, the resonances between Buchanan and Trump that help us better grapple with Buchanan's legacy. For a quarter-century, Buchanan was Goldwater without Reagan, the trounced candidate whose political ideas supposedly died with his presidential ambitions, with no redeemer waiting in the wings. Paleoconservatives, as Buchanan's tribe would be called, seemed to be a footnote, Buchanan himself a leader unable to find followers.

Then came Donald Trump, signaling that while America First conservatism may not have been the majority view of the Republican base—may still not be, in fact—it nevertheless persisted as a minor note in the years between Buchanan and Trump, and indeed, in the years between the first America First Committee and Buchanan.

What explains this persistence? And why is America First a slogan ostensibly about a posture of non-interventionist foreign policy and protectionist economics, but constantly packaged with other, far more objectionable politics: a racist, misogynistic, antidemocratic nationalism?

Here the commonalities between Buchanan and Trump are illuminating, especially their shared media backgrounds. It matters that both men launched their presidential campaigns from a base in media, not electoral politics. That is, in fact, their most important shared quality, because it allowed them to build a base outside formal party structures. That external base was crucial, because both Buchanan and Trump were challenging party orthodoxies that traditional politicians, for reasons of personal conviction or self-preservation, were unwilling to breach.

But their media backgrounds also help account for their incendiary choice of America First to describe their politics and help explain why the Buchanan and Trump campaigns share a virulent toxicity. Both men emerged from media environments that incentivized provocation, that rewarded shock and contrarianism. For Buchanan, it was a blended background in conservative media and the pugilistic left-right sparring shows of the 1970s and 1980s. For Trump, it was the mix of conservative entertainment (he was a regular contributor to the morning show *Fox and Friends*) and competitive reality television.

These incentives were different from those of

politicians in the Republican Party, where by the 1980s and 1990s a conservative establishment was emerging. Newt Gingrich, for instance, came to power in 1995 not on the back of a series of divisive culture-wars policies, but rather on a platform comprised of “sixty-percent issues”—that is, policies that the polls showed had at least sixty percent of the public supporting them. Even as the GOP became more and more ideologically rigid and tribalistic, leading Republican officeholders to back increasingly unpopular policy proposals, its members still sought to appeal, at least rhetorically, to a broader electorate.

Not so Buchanan and Trump, outsiders who expected to provoke, not govern. Both men saw themselves as anti-establishment disrupters. Both were as interested in making headlines as in unsettling party orthodoxies. They were not looking to build majorities but to build brands.

Their shared comfort with racism, anti-Semitism, and antidemocratic politics helps explain why they both reached for the America First label. A politician seeking to build broad majorities, or seeking to avoid associations with racist nationalism, would not seek to forge linkages with the America First Committee. For while the original iteration of the AFC was indeed a broad-spectrum movement, attracting pacifists and German American Bund devotees, Republicans and Democrats, left-wingers and right-wingers, it soon became associated with proto-fascism, anti-Semitism, and Nazi admiration. Consciously choosing to echo that legacy indicates a political worldview that goes well beyond tariffs and sharply curbed foreign intervention.

But reaching for a controversial label was part of both the Buchanan and Trump brands. Their populism is defined by a willingness to say things that “shouldn't” be said. They hold out their willingness to be offensive as evidence of their commitment to telling the truth. Their opposition to “political correctness” is of a piece with that approach. They argue that people avoid saying racist and sexist things not because those things are false—which they are—but because they are impolite. As a result, offensiveness and truth are conflated, and the more controversial and discredited an idea, the more power it has.

That embrace of racist and sexist ideas helps explain why, despite apparent opportunities for cross-party, cross-ideological alliances (like those featured in the original America First Committee), neither Buchanan nor Trump has been able to build a base outside the American right. A broader populist coalition that traverses the lines of Democrat and Republican, left-wing and right-wing is almost certain never to appear in the United States under the America First banner, no matter how much pundits fantasize about it. (And fantasize about it they do, whether they be Buchanan and anti-WTO protesters in the 1990s or Sanders-Trump voters in 2016.)

That is because while America First Republicans may share policy preferences with the left—on trade, on foreign policy—they have radically different goals. The goal of exclusionary nationalism is to protect white men, something the multicultural left overtly rejects. Which means that if there is to be a meaningful politics of enlightened (rather than exclusionary) nationalism, one that embraces tariffs and has a “Come Home, America” foreign policy, one that crosses party lines and ideological divides, it will not happen under the label of America First.

America First, America Alone or America Left Behind?

Michael Froman

Much has been made of the Trump administration's stated policy of America First. On the one hand, it is not a remarkable concept. Every country puts its interests first, and no U.S. president ever thought he was

putting the interests of the United States anything but first. The question is how to define U.S. interests.

President Trump's advisers have defended the America First approach by arguing that there is no such thing as an international community. We cooperate where we have common interests. We compete or conflict where we don't. On the one hand, that is true, and it's a rather obvious restatement of realism. On the other hand, it suggests a transactional theory of international relations rather than a vision of international cooperation based on a sense of shared values and purpose. That doesn't mean we always agree with our partners on specific policies, but it does mean that that we are working to advance a common set of broad objectives. The practice of international relations, after all, is the ultimate reiterative, multidimensional, cross-cutting negotiation.

For the last seventy-plus years, we have defined U.S. interests in an enlightened manner: support for an international system that reflects our values and promotes collective action consistent with those values. Not a Hobbesian, unilateral, every-country-out-for-itself system; but one in which nations work together—through alliances, regional trade agreements, or multilateral regimes—to promote common values.

By opening up our markets and financing the reconstruction of Japan and Europe, we contributed to the most significant period of peace and stability in modern history. By encouraging economic reforms, we helped developing countries become emerging markets, precipitating the most significant reduction in poverty in global history. We created middle-class markets for our goods and services and became a major exporting nation.

Even with this rather remarkable set of outcomes, we recognized that our policies came with certain costs. We saw a fair amount of free-riding on our efforts and sowed the seeds of competition against our own businesses. And that competition has not always been conducted on a fair basis. In response, and for some time now, we have made it clear that our relationships would need to be rebalanced, trade would have to be more reciprocal, and other countries would have to step up their support for their own and our collective defense. And that has been the focus of the work of several administrations, Democratic and Republican alike.

President Trump and his advisers have made it clear that, from their perspective, America First does not mean America Alone. There is no reason to doubt their sincerity or intent. But the problem is, regardless of their sincerity or intent, whether we have company or are traveling down this path alone depends on the reaction of other countries. Trump and his advisers have underscored their preference for negotiating bilateral trade agreements; so far, no country has taken them up on their invitation.

Historically, in general, there has been a tremendous amount of goodwill toward the United States and its leadership. Allies, partners, and even our competitors and, at times, our adversaries want U.S. engagement and leadership. But the international response to our current approach thus far has not been encouraging. Pulling out of agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership or the Paris Accord; threatening to pull out of other agreements, from NAFTA to KORUS to the Iran deal; and questioning the fundamental tenets of our military alliances, such as NATO's Article V—all these actions have raised real questions about U.S. credibility and reliability as a partner.

There is a widespread perception that the United States is retreating from the position of global leadership that it has held for the last seventy years. But the rest of the world is not standing still, and, at least in the trade arena, the U.S. retreat has mobilized others to move forward more aggressively so as not to allow the momentum toward economic reform and market liberalization to be slowed.

The TPP-11 countries have decided to move ahead with TPP without the United States, and additional countries have expressed interest in joining it once it is in place. The EU has negotiated agreements with Canada, Singapore, Vietnam, Japan, and Mexico. Now they are focused on Australia, New Zealand, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, India, and the GCC. The Pacific Alliance is deepening and broadening its trade relationships across the region, adding new members to their already strong group. Africa is making progress on tripartite and continental free trade agreements.

America First and the Rules-Based Trading System

One of the key issues is what the America First approach will mean for the rules-based system itself. Does America First mean that, resisting any perceived constraints on U.S. sovereignty, we ignore the rules, take unilateral actions contrary to our international obligations, lose the moral high ground to hold others to their obligations, and spur on retaliation, trade wars and perhaps, most damaging, imitation?

The United States has benefited greatly from the rules-based system. We pressed for the WTO and its binding and enforceable dispute-settlement process precisely to hold other countries accountable, to prevent others from acting unilaterally, to avert trade wars and worse, and to advance transparency and the rule of law that underpin open, democratic systems. Now there is talk in Washington that the WTO is outdated and that we should withdraw from its dispute settlement process if it rules against us. While the WTO could certainly be updated, if we open the door to pulling out of such international commitments when they are inconvenient, we might find others will follow suit, and not just in the trade arena: consider China and the South China Sea; Iran and nuclear non-proliferation; Russia and respect for its neighbors' borders and sovereignty.

America First: Making us more like China

When it comes to trade and international economics, the U.S. retreat has come at precisely the time when China has become more sophisticated in its use of hard and soft power. Between the One Belt/One Road initiative, the Silk Road Fund, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the efforts to establish facts on the ground—or ground itself—in the South China Sea, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), China has a regional strategy and is executing it. Starting with President Xi's assertion in Davos last January of China's role as the defender of the open trading system, China has sought to claim the moral high ground on trade, the environment, and regional cooperation. And, with the United States in retreat, other countries are increasingly responding to China's overtures or modeling China's behavior.

Ironically, the Trump Administration's America First policy is uniquely Chinese in its characteristics. China is nothing if not disciplined about pursuing its own national interests, narrowly defined. No country has benefited more from the open, liberal trading system, supported and maintained by others, while adhering to a nationalist policy—a China First policy—as much and as long as possible.

China has an interest in supporting a rules-based system, but that would mean making a series of important changes: removing barriers to trade and investment; fully following through on its WTO commitments; bringing an end to predatory industrial policy; stepping back from forced technology transfer and IPR theft, including theft via cyber-intrusion; and eliminating overcapacity. Such actions would all be good down payments by China on support for the rules-based system.

Opportunities to Shape the Future

As nations around the world move on—pursuing their separate regional strategies, negotiating their own trade agreements, redefining their security interests—we might find that America First not only looks like America Alone, but risks becoming America Left Behind.

It doesn't have to be that way. One way to view these initial years of the Trump administration is as a conditioning exercise. There is a new sheriff in town, with a new perspective. Other countries are on notice to be ready to rethink their assumptions.

Now the administration needs to turn that conditioning into effective negotiating leverage. It needs to lay out a vision that reflects this new perspective, specify a strategy for achieving it, and develop discrete negotiating objectives that are clear-eyed and systemically important. Step-by-step, it has to do the very hard work of bringing other countries on board, using every bit of diplomatic capability and capacity to build international coalitions of support. It is doable, but tough. It requires disciplined execution.

Ultimately, we put America first by promoting American interests and values through proactive and effective American leadership. It is the ultimate exercise of U.S. sovereignty to secure support from the rest of the world for what makes America great.

You'll Never Walk Alone

Philip Zelikow

Twenty-six years ago, in the summer of 1992, I held the pen for the drafting of and arguments over the foreign policy platform of the Republican Party. It was not an important policy document. It was only an illustration of how, in a political process, the Republican Party chose to describe its views.

I was not regarded among Republicans as some great thought leader. I just happened to be out of government, and my old colleagues in the Bush White House felt they could rely on me to represent and look out for the Bush administration's views.

That 1992 platform used the words "America first." The party promised that it would "put America first." Earlier in 1992 Pat Buchanan had made his bid for the nomination with an agenda couched in language that was pretty similar to the rhetoric Trump used in his campaign.

But Bush 41 and his team did not mean America First in the way Donald Trump means it. It is worth a bit of reflection on the difference, because it is about much more than temperament or style.

Earlier in 1992, there had been a little dustup in the papers about a draft defense policy document that was very blustery about desiring to fend off any competitors for world leadership. The drafters of that document were men of large visions but modest influence over the actual policies of that administration.

Brent Scowcroft thought the draft defense policy was "arrogant." He later told a biographer, Bartholomew Sparrow, "that this never became the national strategy for the Bush 41 team. It was the 'wrong approach.'" The drafters were admonished. The document was brought back down to earthly platitudes.

Of course, the document ended up extolling American strength and the need to contain hostile rivals. Meanwhile, in the realm of real policy, the defense and intelligence budgets were being cut—a lot. Forces deployed overseas, nuclear and conventional, were also being rolled back—a lot.

Scowcroft later explained why he thought the draft defense guidance was so wrong. His view of grand strategy

emphasized that America should pursue its interests, "wherever possible, within a framework of concert with our friends and the international community."¹

This was our view at the time, in 1992. So, for instance, in that same platform that used the term "America First" and bragged about American world leadership, we chose, as a topic heading, to describe our approach as: "Leadership Through Partnership."

Some scholars see such differences as cosmetic. They refer to the grand strategy in 1992 as one of "international hegemony," or "unipolar primacy," or "empire," or just plain "dominance." Donald Trump or John Bolton would have no problem with these labels. Yet there is a vital difference between the grand strategy of a John Bolton and the grand strategy of a Brent Scowcroft.

I have thought a lot about how to explain why such labels are so profoundly misleading. It is not just cosmetics. There are quite deep, substantive reasons why Scowcroft (and Baker, and their president) did not like such labels, even though they thought America had and should retain great power. They wanted America to be central, not dominant.

Labels like "hegemony" are unrealistic. They do not express how effects are attained outside America's borders. America does not build much in the world by telling others what to do. It has to form partnerships for common action in which the foreigners usually have the final say on what happens in their country. Not only is this true in diplomacy, it is actually also true in war.

The Trump version of America First is a conception that does not need others. It does not need them either because its imagined America is so dominant, so confident in its brute power, or because the government does not actually want to build anything outside of America's borders. This is the version of America First that seems synonymous with "America Alone."

To get anything done in American foreign policy, it has to get done in foreign countries. The foreigners live there. The foreigners control almost all of what goes on. This seems like a rather basic point. But most Americans, including most of those who work on national security, have never actually had to negotiate an agreement with foreigners. They have never had to build anything, or any institution, in foreign lands.

Nor do most Americans adequately appreciate that every foreign war we have ever won was won in an international coalition in which our foreign allies did much of—and sometimes even the majority of—the fighting. Even during the Cold War, the majority of the NATO troops holding the line in Europe, and specifically in West Germany, were foreign, not American. If you don't see the foreigners doing a lot of the effective fighting, you're probably studying either the history of a war America lost or the history of a war America is losing.

For many Americans on both the right and the left, conceptions of American interest in the world are abstract. Americans have a purpose; others react. Americans are the subject and foreigners are the object. Sometimes academics will, in an unconsciously patronizing way, concede that the foreigners in the story have some "agency." You bet they do.

Instead of seeing American power from the inside out—American purposes and foreign objects—it is usually better to start off in the opposite way, by seeing American power from the outside in—foreign purposes and their American objects. What do *they* want from *us*? If we can do that, the realistic possibilities for American leadership begin to emerge.

Often, the foreigners are divided, uncertain, or don't have all the capabilities they need. In other words, often they are just like us. In that situation, is there something Americans can do that, at the margin, makes one outcome more likely than another? That helps one of their factions

prevail? Helps crystallize a common purpose? Helps provide a critical enabler for common action? Helps organize a durable institution for common work?

If we can answer such questions constructively, American leadership can happen. I have just described the essence of the story of the Marshall Plan. And the origins of NATO. And the essence of what America contributed to the diplomacy that ended the Cold War.

Consider, for example, the American agenda in the summer of 1992. We were then trying to help reconstruct a transformed Europe and a former Soviet space that was now the home of fifteen new states. To create a North American Free Trade Area. To create a Pacific economic community, called APEC. To be constructive in the European Union building project. To create a global trading structure in the Uruguay Round. To tackle the North Korean nuclear problem, then in its first crisis stage, with the two Koreas seemingly making a promising start. To help along a Middle East peace process that America had helped restart in Madrid. To support the United Nations at work policing and inspecting a defeated Iraq. Notice how much of this involved works of construction, and contrast that world with this one.

After more than twenty-five years of complacency and distraction since 1991, the time may at last have come when Americans seem to really be confronting a void of constructive purpose in the post-Cold War world. The Trump administration's National Security Strategy, released in 2017, has a worldview *entirely* about threats. There is literally nothing in the document about constructive opportunities. Our government's default mode for sizing up the world is now called a "threat assessment."

When the world is reduced to a set of menacing abstractions, like monsters that need to be kept at a safe distance, it is easy to foster the illusion that little needs to be constructed. (Except for the weapons.) And, of course, America First can start to sound like America Alone. But there are other ways to fill the void.

There is a constructive agenda for the digital age, which is the great economic revolution of our time, and I have joined in some of the work on that. There are other major issues, many of them transnational. There are pivotal opportunities on every continent that could go either way in countries like Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine, and the European Union itself. None of them can be addressed by America alone.

The American role in the world should be reconceived in ways that are more natural, more organic, and more sustainable. The basis for this is a profound and historic shift in the relation of ordinary Americans to the rest of the world, especially in the last twenty to thirty years. For example, globalized commerce is now all over America, in small cities, towns, and farms. Throughout the American heartland, Americans go to work using components from foreign suppliers, in firms owned by foreigners, and selling to foreigners, often through digitized networks. This is a big change. Quite a few people out in rural America grasp their globalized connections; they get it very well. Many intellectuals do not follow the business developments in local communities closely enough to be aware of how deep this penetration has become and how well many Americans understand it.

Another deep change in America involves the way ordinary Americans are now connected, socially and culturally, to a variety of transnational phenomena, including energy, environment, terrorism, and cyber concerns. They are also aware of the significance of those connections and of how those connections affect them. This is also a historic shift.

The time is ripe for a reconception of the American role in the world, a reconception that would carry with it an emphasis on the functional partnerships that enable

common action on most of the major issues that are of lasting interest to ordinary Americans. Those reconceived partnerships, and their practical value, then need to be symbolized in some vivid ways and explained. These partnerships and coalitions will overlap with post-1945 institutions, but they will not be the same.

Note:

1. Bartholomew Sparrow, *The Strategist: Brent Scowcroft and the Call of National Security* (New York: Public Affairs, 2015), 486.

The Future of America First

Robert Kagan

The future of America First is bright, and there are two reasons why. The first is that it is normal. The second is that the alternative, the wielding of American power on behalf of a liberal world order, has been discredited, and by many of those now fretting over the resurgence of America First.

The first thing to ask is what is so unusual about America First? Most nations throughout history have viewed their interests narrowly and have placed those interests first. Normal nations do not view themselves as having responsibilities beyond their own immediate interests. And of course, for much of America's history, and certainly from the days of the early republic to the late nineteenth century, few expected Americans to take responsibility for anything beyond their protection, prosperity, and territorial expansion. Some, like Henry Clay, looked to make the United States the leader of the Western Hemisphere, presumably not only for its own benefit but also for the benefit of the other newly independent nations, and later this benevolent "pan-Americanism" would influence the thinking and policies of James Blaine and other Republicans.

However, it wasn't until the McKinley administration and the humanitarian crisis in Cuba that Americans began looking at the well-being of others as a proper object of American foreign policy. That was when the notion that Americans had a "responsibility" to something beyond themselves—to help others who might be suffering, to preserve peace, to play a part in supporting a certain kind of world order—first gained some traction not just as an ideal but as a guide to actual policy.

And in a way it was at that moment that America First was born, at least in spirit. What some Americans regarded as accepting responsibility, others denounced as imperialism or emotionalism or irrationalism. When Woodrow Wilson proposed to impose international responsibilities on the United States through the mechanism of the League of Nations, his critics, led by Henry Cabot Lodge, appealed to "Americanism" as the antidote to an "internationalism" that had foreign and subversive connotations. In the 1920s and 1930s, what people like Robert Taft and others who were both formally and informally part of the America First movement insisted upon was simply normalcy—the normalcy to which Americans had returned after the First World War, the normalcy they had chosen in rejecting the responsibilities of the League.

Today America First is again appealing for normalcy. And make no mistake: American foreign policy since World War Two has been highly abnormal. During and after the war American leaders chose to define America's interests so broadly as to transcend all traditional definitions. In taking on what they regarded as "international responsibilities," they made the United States the central provider of economic, political, and strategic security in distant parts of the world—the "locomotive at the head of mankind," as Acheson put it—in the service of a liberal world order.

Those who opposed this approach prior to December 1941 were called isolationists, but that was unfair. They were isolationists only if not being an isolationist required embracing the most extensive global involvement ever undertaken by any nation in history. Today, America First is seeking normalcy again. It is asking Americans to unshoulder the heavy moral and material burdens of the last seven-plus decades and let other nations manage their own problems as much as possible.

If one had been a supporter of the broad thrust of American foreign policy since 1945, then this would be objectionable and alarming. But why should it be objectionable to the many different varieties of critics of that foreign policy over the years? Today we see many on the liberal left and among self-described realists complaining about Trump's America First policies. But why? Other than the fact that it is associated with a brand of conservatism they find odious, it is not clear what exactly they object to.

America First in its heyday was not only a conservative phenomenon. To be sure, there was always a significant strain of white ethno-nationalism in the movement, both in the early twentieth century and today, which could be found generally, though not exclusively, on the right. Yet among the intellectual leaders of the anti-interventionist movement in the 1920s and 1930s were people who could variously be described as anti-imperialists, moralists, "realists," and even liberal internationalists of a certain type (like those who supported the "outlawry of war" and the Kellogg-Briand Pact as an alternative to intervention). They joined the America First cause, formally in some cases, not because they were racists and xenophobes (or at least not only for that reason) but out of opposition to what they regarded as a mistaken and immoral exercise of American global power.

Charles A. Beard, A.J. Muste, Howard K. Beale, and others favored a policy of America First because they feared involvement in the war would lead Americans to overreach, to seek "world domination," and to practice an "unadulterated imperialism" not very different from that sought by Germany. Taft and others believed themselves to be realists, and they were making an essentially realist case that American interests, traditionally understood, did not require "tilting like Don Quixote against the windmills of fascism," as Taft put it. Beale argued that if trade was the problem, the United States could trade as well with Germany and Japan as with Britain. Beard argued that instead of solving the problems of capitalism through war, the United States would do better to socialize its economy.

This, too, was America First, and such critiques have resonated ever since. Indeed, there is many a scholar today who would say that those old America Firsters were right to warn of the consequences of American involvement in the war and of the victory that followed. Like Richard Hofstadter in 1968, they would retrospectively endorse Beard's "pertinent warnings against the global Messianism which has come to be the curse of American foreign policy."

So why are we caviling? We should be celebrating. Today's realists and left-revisionists may not enjoy being in the company of Trump and Bannon, just as Beard may not have enjoyed being in the company of Lindbergh. But if these critics don't have much else in common, they do share a common enemy—and that is American foreign policy as it was conducted during the seven-plus decades after World War II.

If America First is in the ascendant today, it is not just because white nationalism has returned to the fore. It is because American global engagement in defense of a liberal world order has been discredited in the eyes of many Americans. It has been discredited in part by its own excesses and misjudgments. But those inevitable failures—for what foreign policy in the real world is without failures?—have occurred against the background

of a decades-old intellectual and moral critique that has amplified them to the point of drowning out whatever positive results have been achieved. Americans have been taught not only that American global involvement is prone to error, but that defense of the liberal world order itself has only been an exercise in capitalist hegemony, that the deployment of American power in defense of that order has been imperialism, and that whatever international responsibilities the United States claimed to be carrying out all these years was hypocrisy, with lofty rhetoric masking selfishness.

If the American global involvement of the past seventy years has been as much a mistake as its critics claim, and as the vast majority of those in the academy believe, then we should not be surprised to see Americans falling back to America First. Did we think they would choose world federalism instead? Or radically reform the capitalist system? Or seek to recreate the Concert of Europe? America First's critique of American foreign policy may lack the sophistication of the realist or left-revisionist critique, but its approach offers the most likely antidote to the capitalist exploitation that Beard warned of and to the messianic utopianism that Hans Morgenthau condemned.

If Americans looked only to their own narrow interests, would they not be less likely to wield power over others for any purpose, whether exploitative or messianic? Or, to ask the question another way, is there a plausible way for Americans to accept global responsibilities without wielding power selfishly and without all the material and moral failures that wielding power leads to? It is one thing to murmur about America First, but since we are no longer willing to defend the foreign policy that America First was born to critique, America First is what we are going to get.



**In the January 2019 issue
of *Passport*:**

* A roundtable on Grant
Madsen's *Sovereign
Soldiers*;

* The historiography
of 19th century U.S.
foreign relations;

* A roundtable on
Keisha Blain's
Set the World on Fire;

and much more...

CALL FOR PROPOSALS TO HOST THE 2019 or 2020 SHAFR SUMMER INSTITUTE

The SHAFR Summer Institute Oversight Committee welcomes proposals to host the
2019 or 2020 SHAFR Summer Institute.

The Institute is intended to provide advanced graduate students and junior faculty with the chance to engage in intense discussion with senior scholars on topics and methodologies related to the study of foreign policy and/or international history. It also serves as an opportunity for all participants, senior scholars included, to test ideas and themes related to their own research.

To underwrite the Institute, SHAFR will provide \$10,000 to provide a stipend for the organizers and assistance for participants' travel to and accommodations at the institute. Organizers are encouraged to seek additional funding, either by subsidies or in-kind support, from their home institutions.

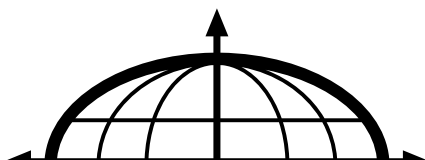
Prior institutes and their themes have been "War and Foreign Policy: America's Conflicts in Vietnam and Iraq in Historical Perspective"; "Turning Points in the Cold War"; "Decisions and History"; "Freedom and Free Markets: The Histories of Globalization and Human Rights"; "Does Culture Matter? The Emotions, the Senses, and Other New Approaches to the History of US Foreign/ International Relations"; "The International History of Nuclear Weapons"; "Wilsonianism and the Legacies of the First World War"; "'The Tocqueville Oscillation': The Intersection of Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy"; "Culture, Propaganda, and Intelligence in Foreign Relations"; and "Security and the State: Cultures of National Security and Insecurity in American Foreign Relations."

The institute should take place immediately preceding or following the annual SHAFR conference in June 2019, which will be held in Washington, D.C., or in June 2020, which likely will be held in New Orleans. The Institute can be held at the conference hotel or in an adjacent location. The Summer Institute Oversight Committee will work with the organizers of successful proposal to promote the goals of the Summer Institute.

Those interested in applying to host in 2019 or 2020 should prepare a proposal including

- The title of the institute they wish to conduct;
- A description (no more than three pages) of the themes to be pursued during the institute and how it will be organized as well as any connection to the conference site and/or theme;
- The preferred audience (graduate students, junior faculty, or both);
- A description of how the substance of the proposed institute (its conveners, its presenters, and its readings) and recruitment of participants will contribute to SHAFR's commitment to diversity and internationalization;
- A statement on funding secured from home institutions;
- Contact information and concise c.v.s of the organizers; and
- A draft "syllabus" and schedule.

Proposals should be sent to Amy.Sayward@shafr.org by **December 15, 2018**; questions can be directed to the same email address.



The Sorrows of International Historians, or My Travails in Brazil and St. Louis

Markus Schoof

I should have listened to my German-Brazilian friend. He had tried to warn me. “Markus, this is Brazil, not *Amerika*. When you walk outside, leave your phone and wallet at home, put some money in your shoe, and have some change in your pocket. This way, you get to keep most of your stuff when you get assaulted.” *When I get assaulted?* I thought to myself. But Walter knew what he was talking about. He had been assaulted three times over the last decade and knew the ins and outs of life in Brazil. I did not.

In June 2018, I was assaulted myself. Twice. Walking home from dinner on a dark night in São Paulo, four men pushed me in a corner, ripped open my pocket, and took my wallet. Just three minutes later, another (or the same?) group of men went for my other pocket and took my cellphone. Good-bye archival sources! As my shock had settled, I instantly made the mental note to myself to back up my documents every day.

Those of us who undertake international and transnational research know how exerting that quest can be. Long distances, capricious regulations, inaccessible archivists. The ostensibly innocuous archival footnote cloaks the reality that liters of sweat and blood have been spilled over it. Those of us with grant shortfalls face an additional obstacle: compelled to travel on a shoestring budget, we face the “known unknown” regarding our accommodations. What might seem like an irresistible online deal from the safe confines of our home might translate into an unsavory experience in unpredictable settings. And depending on where we research, we might be confronted with the fact that we look different from the general population.

While white privilege has afforded me numerous opportunities in various settings, my white skin, blond hair, and German/American/Spanish accent have also rendered my presence in Brazilian society conspicuous. (And no, dear anti-affirmative action advocates, this does not qualify as “reverse discrimination.”)¹ Caught in a Brazilian panopticon, not a day passes by without strangers asking me in their nasal Portuguese if I am a “*norte-americano*.” Facetiously, Brazilian friends have made repeated note of “*sua cara de gringo*”—my face of a foreigner. I still remember



Chaos reigned as parts of Brazil's Cultural Ministry had been burned down a few days prior to my arrival.

vividly the eleven year-old in one of Salvador's less safe neighborhoods who ostentatiously stretched out his arms, pointed at me, and yelled “GRINGO!!!” at the top of his lungs. You have never seen me walk away faster from this sword of Damocles that seemed poised to come down on me.

And while I cannot evaluate empirically whether my foreign aura was a contributing factor to my hapless experience that dark night in São Paulo, it is likely that it was informed by Brazil's deteriorating socioeconomic conditions: Over the last years, Brazil has suffered through a volatile period of corruption scandals, rising crime, and widening income disparities.

While my perception may be skewed, my personal experiences seem to convey that this political fallout has left a clear mark on Brazilians who have lived through exceptional, Janus-faced wealth patterns over the last 500 years.

My research experience in Bangu, a neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro's outskirts, seemed to speak to this as well. On my way to the archive, I was astonished to see that my Uber driver refused to stop at red traffic lights. Commenting on this, he told me nonchalantly that “[t]here is too much assault around here.” A few hours later, I witnessed a shootout a mere 50 feet away from me, right outside of the archive, an incident that I have related elsewhere. Then there were the bilingual street signs nearby my hotel in Rio's Santa Teresa municipality that sent shivers down my spine: “Area of Assault.” And how can I forget the hoary 70 year-old who had his bus fare stolen from him by three teenagers while entering my bus?

It is, of course, important to note that such dramatic experiences cannot be chalked off for being uniquely the plight of underdeveloped countries. As a matter of fact, this summer more than a dozen gunshots went off close to the front door of my Airbnb in St. Louis, Missouri—a mere five minutes after I had arrived. If I had taken a short detour to grab a snack, who knows if I would be writing this essay.

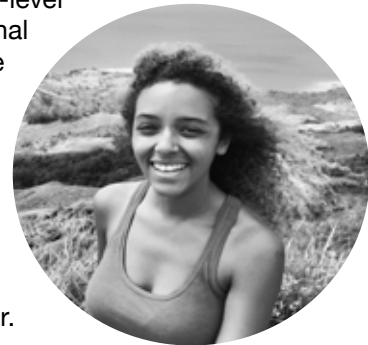
Assuredly, the plural of anecdote is not data. Yet, as we scour the world for sources that steer our writings as international historians, we need take precautions—wherever we may be. If nothing else, opening our ears to the advice of locals might confer the benefit of that otherwise only hindsight bias will convey. If the allusion is permitted, “we now know” that I should have listened.

Notes:

1. See Nancy MacLean's *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace*, (New York; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).
2. Eduardo Mello and Matias Spektor, “Will Brazil's Crackdown on Corruption Continue? How the Political Class Threatens Operation Car Wash's Future,” *Foreign Affairs* (May 7, 2018), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/brazil/2018-05-07/will-brazils-crackdown-corruption-continue>
3. Markus Schoof, “A Postcard from Brazil: The Old Struggle for a Better Future,” *Origins* (August 21, 2017), <http://origins.osu.edu/connecting-history/postcard-brazil-old-struggle-better-future>.

SHAFR SPOTLIGHTS

Hello! I'm a Ph.D. candidate in History at Northwestern University specializing in the history of the U.S. colonial empire. I grew up in Indianapolis in a family of teachers and discovered a love of history from my grandfather—a retired social studies teacher. I always knew I wanted to teach and towards the end of college, when I starting learning about academia and the world of historical research, I decided to pursue a doctorate in history. My current project looks at material culture and national identity in U.S. colonies. My research has taken me all over the world, to Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Philippines, Guam, Hawai'i, and American Samoa (with generous funding from SHAFR and other organizations). My 2017 *Diplomatic History* article, "Pocket-Sized Imperialism: U.S. Designs on Colonial Currency," examines U.S. efforts to use money to introduce U.S. national iconography to people in Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Back in Chicago, I teach U.S. History for the Odyssey Project, an Illinois Humanities program offering free college-level courses to income-eligible Chicagoans, and serve as our department's Graduate Professional Development Coordinator, an organizer for our Women's Group, and on SHAFR's Graduate Student Committee.



Alvita Akiboh

What are your favorite movies/TV shows of all time (minimum of three, maximum of ten)?

I'll always have a soft spot for the *Lord of the Rings* movies because I used to watch them incessantly. *Give My Regards to Broad Street* is another movie with a lot of nostalgia for me. TV shows are usually an opportunity for me to turn my brain off, so the less intellectual the better. And I always enjoy a trashy, inaccurate, vaguely historical drama.

What was your most embarrassing/nerve-wracking/anxiety-producing professional moment?

In my first year of graduate school, a group of us were out for karaoke when a professor in our department showed up at the bar. I had already put in a song, so the first impression I made on this faculty member I'd never met was performing "Work It" by Missy Elliott. They ended up complimenting me on my performance and later we had a good laugh, but it was nerve-wracking in the moment!

If you could have dinner with any three historical figures, who would they be and why?

Paul McCartney—I'd just want to thank him for all the music and maybe ask about some deep cuts from his solo career that are personal favorites of mine. Other than that, any of the historical actors from the U.S. colonies that I come across in my research but whose voices aren't in the archive. One of the most exciting things about being a historian is reading between the lines and doing our best to recover these stories, but it would be incredible to hear their perspectives firsthand.

What would you do if you won the \$500 million Powerball?

I've always been a penny pincher, so I don't know that I'd do too much right away. I'd take care of my family and probably buy a few more Paul McCartney concert tickets than I'd normally be able to (you might notice there's a theme emerging here...)

What are your favorite professional sports team(s)...and did you ever compete at any level?

I don't really follow any professional sports, but it's always fun to root for the home team—the Indianapolis Colts, the Indiana Pacers, IU basketball, and, since I've lived in Chicago, the Cubs.

What are five things on your bucket list?

I don't know that I have a bucket list, but if I *did* win the aforementioned \$500 million Powerball...I could probably come up with a few ideas.

What would you be doing if you were not an academic?

If I wasn't in academia, I'd probably still be teaching history in some capacity.

I got interested in history by reading James Michener and those Landmark books on famous people and the Civil War. I had pretty awful teachers in high school (mainly football coaches), but great ones in college (Walt LaFeber, Joel Silbey, Mary Beth Norton). I started as a leftist political economist type, but evolved toward culture, broadly defined, following nine months in India helping my wife with her dissertation research. I experienced India before I imagined it as a research subject, which turned me toward anthropology, critical theory (in small doses--Post-Colonial theory is South Asia's revenge for years of colonial rule by the British), and IR Constructivism. My latest project, to be published next year by Oxford, is a study of two empires (India and the Philippines) and the five senses. (Tenure is a beautiful thing.) My wife, Padma Kaimal, is an art historian of South Asia, also at Colgate. We have two grown daughters: one is a social worker, married and with a baby son; the other is an artist and activist in Burlington, VT, where she is not the only one of these. We also have an 11-year old mutt named Cleo, and a Japanese squirting toilet seat.



Andy Rotter

What are your favorite movies/TV shows of all time (minimum of three, maximum of ten)?

To save room for more movies, I'll mention just one TV show: *Breaking Bad*, which is beyond anything else I've ever seen TV do. The films: *The Wizard of Oz*; *Z* (Costa-Gavras, and formative for me); *The Life of Brian* ("He's not the Messiah: he's a very naughty boy!"); *Moonrise Kingdom*; *Grand Illusion* (my all-time favorite); *Ran* (one of several possible Kurosawas); *Wag the Dog*; *Love Actually* (best rom-com ever--I saw it on a plane, came home and rented the DVD for our young daughters, and when I watched with them discovered that the porn star stand-ins story had been cut from the version I saw originally); *Dr. Strangelove*.

What was your most embarrassing/nerve-wracking/anxiety-producing professional moment?

My SHAFR presidential address in Madison, June 2010. The venue was a subterranean dining room next to a swimming pool; it was dim and smelled of chlorine. My parents, who were then both living and in Madison, insisted on coming and bringing a dozen of their friends, and they all sat together right in front of me. Most of them fell asleep, but their combined ticket purchases put SHAFR in the black that year. Marilyn Young, one of my heroes, introduced me. I talked about loud noises and rubbing up against people and bad smells. All in all, a memorable experience.

If you could have dinner with any three historical figures, who would they be and why?

Eleanor Roosevelt, for brilliance and compassion; Jawaharlal Nehru, for politics and philosophy; and Meryl Streep, for reasons too obvious for a 65-year-old straight man to mention. I might have said John Quincy Adams, but I suspect he would argue with the others and it would get tiresome.

What would you do if you won the \$500 million Powerball?

I've never bought a Powerball ticket. I have an irrational fear that, if I do, I'll stick it in a pants pocket, then forget it's there and wash the pants, obliterating the numbers. When no one wins the \$500 million, I'll go to my grave thinking that I had won but couldn't claim the money. However, if somehow I got \$500 million, I would give a bunch to various causes (Tammy Baldwin's Senate campaign, Doctors without Borders, Hamilton Public Library), a bunch to my children, and enough to fund Passport in perpetuity (ca. \$150?). And I'd buy a house in London from a Russian oligarch, who would then say to me, quoting Talleyrand: "You have made a noble bargain. I suppose you will make the most of it."

What are your favorite professional sports team(s)...and did you ever compete at any level?

Green Bay Packers. I had a short-lived career as a lineman on my junior high football team. I still claim to have been the best ever 5'9, left-handed, gimp-kneed Jewish intramural quarterback in the history of Cornell University.

What are five things on your bucket list?

I'd like to 1. See Borobudur and Angkor Wat; 2. star in an old man version of Edward Albee's "The Zoo Story" ("I've been to the zoo." "Ehh? What?" "I said, I'VE BEEN TO THE ZOO!"); 3. be a voice actor in an animated Wes Anderson or Pixar movie; 4. give the commencement address at my high school; 5. Take a cooking class in Rome--or just watch the class, then eat what the cooks make. Not on my list are activities involving great heights--egs., sky-diving or bungee jumping.

What would you be doing if you were not an academic?

I would write fiction. Some have said I already do (see *Comrades at Odds*). I do have an academic novel in mind, post-retirement.



Susie Colbourn

I recently completed a Ph.D. in History at the University of Toronto and will be a Henry Chauncey Jr. '57 postdoctoral fellow at International Security Studies at Yale University for the 2018–2019 academic year. My research focuses on transatlantic relations, nuclear strategy, and alliance politics — with a healthy dose of Canadian foreign relations mixed in. Currently, I am completing a book on NATO and the Euromissiles Crisis and putting together an edited volume on Canadian nuclear history during the Cold War.

What are your favorite movies/TV shows of all time (minimum of three, maximum of ten)?

The Americans, Deutschland '83, It's A Wonderful Life, Mind of a Chef, Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy, The Spy Who Came In From The Cold, and the entire James Bond franchise.

What was your most embarrassing/nerve-wracking/anxiety-producing professional moment?

Everyone's favorite question! Beyond the usual suspects, application cycles and the like, the first conference paper I ever gave comes to mind. First panel of the conference in Geneva, I was suffering from some serious jetlag, and Geir Lundestad (a true giant for any young historian of transatlantic relations) was my commentator. It ended up being a fantastic experience, but I definitely drank way too many cups of coffee that morning.

If you could have dinner with any three historical figures, who would they be and why?

I'm tempted by a redux of the beachfront dinner between Jimmy Carter, Helmut Schmidt, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and James Callaghan at Guadeloupe in January 1979, but I've got to go with some culinary giants since it is, after all, dinner: Paul Bocuse, Julia Child, and Auguste Escoffier. An amazing meal complete with OSS stories *and* roast chicken from Julia? Sign me up.

What would you do if you won the \$500 million Powerball?

Travel. Buy and restore a mid-century modern house with a huge library and a top of the line kitchen. Donate to the study of history and archival preservation.

What are your favorite professional sports team(s)...and did you ever compete at any level?

If there was any doubt that I'm Canadian, this answer should clear that up: The Toronto Maple Leafs. And catching a Blue Jays game at the Skydome. I'm a big fan of the Olympics, especially winter, and you can find me glued to the television during any and all Canada-US Olympic hockey matches. I also enjoy watching college football and college basketball. Growing up, I spent most days at the rink figure skating.

What are five things on your bucket list?

I'm not one for bucket lists, so I've only got one: taking the Trans-Siberian railway.

What would you be doing if you were not an academic?

As a kid, I wanted to be a paleontologist. But probably I would have gone into government to work on foreign policy.

I took my first history class, America and Vietnam with David Schmitz, very reluctantly. I was a biology major as an undergrad and needed to take something in the humanities to meet my distribution requirements. Little did I know that I would still be grappling with the issues that course raised some **cough, cough** two decades later. The nexus of foreign and domestic politics is particularly salient to my current project on human rights and U.S. policy the Western Hemisphere in the 1970s.



Vanessa Walker

I grew up in Oregon right next to the Mt. Hood National Forest (lucky me) and I love to hike—particularly if there is a body of water to jump into at the end. I'm currently trying to convince my kids—Asher (7) and Maya (2) that hiking isn't a parent-enforced form of drudgery. I also love to cook, and usually get a new cookbook around the holidays and work my way through it during the year. This year, it is the Four and Twenty Blackbirds Pie Book. After I finished my comps in grad school, I made a habit of reading for pleasure again, apart from what I do for work. My husband, Adi Gordon, is also a historian and he loves to tote his giant tomes of intellectual history on vacation with us, so I guess everyone's idea of reading for pleasure is different. I'm currently re-reading David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*, a favorite of mine that feels very timely. I recently read the new biography of Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Prairie Fires*, which was a bracing look at a problematic but beloved childhood favorite.

What are your favorite TV shows/movies?

I love *The West Wing*; I re-watched it last year as escapism. I've also gotten into the West Wing Weekly podcast, which I highly recommend to any supporters of President Bartlett out there. *Twin Peaks* is another favorite, although I haven't gotten around to watching the new season that came out last year. I also got hooked on *Glitch*, an Australian TV show available on Netflix. It is kind of a *Twin Peaks* meets *Lost* mash-up set in a remote Australian town. I also have a deep and abiding love for cheesy '80s movies, especially *When Harry Met Sally* and *Goonies*.

What was your most embarrassing/anxiety-producing moment?

I think of myself as a fairly outgoing, social person, but I used to find the anticipation of conferences stressful, even when I was looking forward to them and well-prepared. I am glad Andy asked this question--I think a lot of us struggle with professional anxiety at various times, and talking about it with others and realizing how common it is in our profession helps.

If you could have dinner with three historical figures, who would they be?

Ida B. Wells—I admire so much her commitment to documenting the violence taking place in our society despite the enormous personal risks she faced, as well as her determination to be an activist on her own terms. Pablo Neruda—I love his poetry and would be fascinated to hear his insights on Chilean history. Julia Child—aside from being guaranteed a delicious meal, she seems like a hoot and I could hopefully pick up a few tips as we lounged around the kitchen getting a little tipsy on a great bottle of French red.

What would you do if you won 500 Million Powerball?

I would buy a house on a lake we go to every summer in Northeast Vermont. We spend a week in August with friends hiking, swimming, reading, cooking, and playing board games. It's the best and I'd love to have a place of our own on the lake shore to host friends and family. I would buy my parents their dream house in Hawaii and finally add that second bathroom to the house they've lived in since I was about 3 months old. I would also designate funds for family travel and visits—my whole family is still in Oregon and my husband's is in Israel, so first class seats to visit each other regularly would be a dream. After putting aside some seed money for the kids, the rest would go to foundations that work on conservation, supporting public education, protecting refugees, and defending human rights in the United States.

What are your favorite professional sports teams?

I don't really follow professional sports regularly, although I keep an eye on the Packers. I am a huge college football fan—go Badgers! I also unabashedly love the Olympics and usually get all verklempt watching it, especially when you see the athletes with their families. In 2006, my birthday coincided with the Opening Ceremonies, so I had an Olympic-themed party that included friends who went all-out in Torvill and Dean costumes.

What are five things on your bucket list?

1. Attend the Olympics 2. Visit American Samoa 3. Take a trip with my dad to his hometown (Scituate, MA) and to the USS Intrepid in New York, which he served on in Vietnam. I'd love to have some time just to hear his stories. 4. See the Northern Lights 5. Climb Mt. Hood

What would you do if you weren't an academic?

If I wasn't an academic, I would probably still be doing something with biology and conservation. I also had a fantasy of running an apple orchard in the Hood River Valley near where I grew up. I would probably be terrible at it, but it is a nice dream.



Sean Fear

As of January, I'm a Lecturer (Assistant Professor) in International History and Politics at the University of Leeds. I've published articles on South Vietnamese diplomacy in *Diplomatic History*, and on Ngô Đình Diệm's legacy in the *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, along with a number of short pieces in the recent *New York Times* "Vietnam '67" Op-Ed series. I'm currently working on a history of South Vietnamese politics and U.S.-South Vietnamese relations after the Tết Offensive, under contract with Harvard University Press. At Leeds, I teach courses on the Cold War, Twentieth Century International History, Vietnamese Political History, and the 1968 Global Unrest.

I've always been interested in history, but I became especially fascinated with Vietnam while writing a senior-year research paper at the University of Toronto, on South Vietnam's Strategic Hamlet Program. The project introduced me to recent Vietnamese-language research, including David Elliott's epic history of the Mekong Delta, and then-unpublished dissertations by Edward Miller and Philip Catton. After graduating, I studied Vietnamese for two months at the University of Madison-Wisconsin's SEASSI Program, and then traveled to Hanoi for six months before starting my Ph.D. at Cornell. My Vietnamese was cringe-inducingly basic back then, but from conversations with everyone and anyone willing to humour me, it soon became clear that the Vietnam War was both much more complicated and more interesting than most of the English-language books I'd read had let on. And from then on, I was hooked.

These days, my wife and I are delighted to be in Leeds, a vibrant city with a rich history, fabulous Victorian architecture, markets, canals, beer gardens, and plenty of street-life (and, not least, a very welcoming and supportive History Department). Since the weather has warmed up, we've enjoyed exploring Yorkshire by train on the weekends, from our base in a converted mill on the banks of River Aire.

What are your favorite movies/TV shows of all time (minimum of three, maximum of ten)?

My parents banned television from the house - and it seems to have backfired, as I now watch more than I probably should, no doubt to subconsciously compensate.

Some favourites include: *Our Friends in the North*, an epic nine-part drama on the history of left-wing politics in postwar Britain; *The Thick of It*, a vicious and eerily prescient political satire; and *Withnail and I*, about two underemployed young actors who find themselves on holiday in the Lake District "by mistake."

What was your most embarrassing/nerve-wracking/anxiety-producing professional moment?

My computers have an unfortunate habit of breaking down shortly before important conferences, which always sounds like "the dog ate my homework" - though I did manage to capture on film the smoke seeping out of my laptop shortly before SHAFR 2017.

As a young and very green first-time SHAFR conference attendee, I once mustered the courage to approach an eminent professor to tell him how much I'd enjoyed reading his book in seminar the previous semester - only to completely blank on the title. He helpfully listed some of his recent works, until I, red-faced and mortified, said "Yes! That one!"

If you could have dinner with any three historical figures, who would they be and why?

For purely selfish reasons, I'd invite former South Vietnamese President Nguyễn Văn Thiệu (who would almost certainly decline the invitation). By all accounts, and certainly in my own experience at the archives, he left very little behind in writing. And even his closest aides complain at length about how reclusive he was. It's astonishing that we still know so little about one of the most important figures in the Vietnam War.

To liven up the mood, I'll also invite the Bloomsbury Group - especially Keynes, for his thoughts on our current surreal conflation of cascading QE bubbles, mindless austerity, omniscient data collection, and the general financialization of all human affairs.

What would you do if you won the \$500 million Powerball?

Goodness Gracious! Nobody should ever have so much money. I would give most of it away, and then spend generously on traveling, family, and friends.

What are your favorite professional sports team(s)...and did you ever compete at any level?

I grew up listening to the Toronto Blue Jays every night on the radio - and was just the right age to appreciate them winning consecutive World Series. I played basketball and baseball until I was sixteen or so, before a line-drive to the forehead marked the end of a promising Major League career, and a retreat to the safety of the library.

I am also, for my sins, an Everton supporter - it runs in the family.

What are five things on your bucket list?

I doubt I can even name five! Well, I suppose everyone wishes they could travel more. I'd love to improve my French or learn Italian, and then travel the entire country top to bottom, moving on to the next town only after I've grown bored.

I wish I had time to read more broadly, beyond what I do for work. As it is, I wake up at five most mornings and spend a good two hours reading newspapers and current affairs magazines. It always feels a bit futile, as within a few weeks I can barely remember the name of anything I've read, let alone the contents - but I get antsy after more than a few days without keeping up.

Finally, I used to play piano and teach guitar, and it would be wonderful to get back into this, perhaps after I finally finish writing my book. I don't even have callouses on my fingers anymore!

What would you be doing if you were not an academic?

This is a difficult question. A generation ago, I'd have suggested working as a journalist or in the Canadian Foreign Service - but if anything, these are now both even more precarious than an academic career. I suppose I'd likely travel to Vietnam to try putting my language skills to use, one way or another. I've been extremely fortunate to have never seriously confronted this, apart from a few weeks of daily panic at the mailbox during each of the past few springs.

I am Associate Professor of History and director of the Institute for Korean Studies at The Ohio State University. I came to diplomatic history after years of wandering through a post-BA wilderness of confusion without any real idea of what I wanted to do with my life. Finally, I enrolled in the MA program in American Studies at UT-Austin, to study American political culture. During my second semester, a professor required us to write a historiography paper on a topic that was related to our area of focus but not directly on point. I chose to write about 20th century diplomatic history. The first book I read for the paper was (of course) *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. You know how sometimes the lightbulb would suddenly appear over Wile E. Coyote's head in the Road Runner cartoons? That was me, somewhere in the middle of *Tragedy*. And so I switched programs the next year.



Mitchell Lerner

What are your favorite movies/TV shows of all time.

The Wire is the single greatest TV ever created. If anyone disagrees, I am willing to fight them in a steel-cage death match at the next SHAFR to prove it. Other top selections that are nevertheless inferior to *The Wire* include: *Game of Thrones*; *Friday Night Lights*; *Monty Python's Flying Circus*; *The Office*; *West Wing*; and *All in the Family*.

What was your most embarrassing/nerve-wracking/anxiety-producing professional moment?

I have dozens. But my first SHAFR was in Boston, when I was an MA student in American Studies who had never really heard of SHAFR until Bob Divine suggested I apply to present my MA thesis. The night before I presented, I blew out my ACL playing basketball, and I limped into my panel with the assistance of a cane and a heavy dose of painkillers. I had been assigned to a panel with pretty big names—Randall Woods, Bob Schulzinger, KC Johnson—and the crowd was huge. My paper and Randall's paper were diametrically opposed, and they set off the academic equivalent of a rugby scrum. To this day, I remember sitting there in a percocet-induced haze and staring out the audience and wondering if my cane would be a sufficient defense when that tall man in the front (Chester Pach) actually attacked me. Even now, though, I tell people that the reason I joined SHAFR was that when I left the panel, Randall came over to chat with me and introduced me to some of the very same protagonists from 20 minutes ago, and everyone was friendly and encouraging, even though most disagreed with me. It was a great example of the "Big Tent" that is SHAFR, and it is the reason that I (and I think many of us) regard it as such a special organization.

If you could have dinner with any three historical figures, who would they be and why?

LBJ (because that might finally get me over the hump to finish this book I am working on); James Madison (because I am pretty heavily involved in Ohio politics and would love to hear his thoughts on the constitution and contemporary political debates); and Frederick Banting, whose discovery of extractable insulin in 1921 keeps all 3 of my kids alive today.

What would you do if you won the \$500 million Powerball?

Pay off SHAFR's bar tab at the next conference, although if Jeremi Suri is there, I might have to borrow a few dollars.

What are your favorite professional sports team(s)...and did you ever compete at any level?

Red Sox, Patriots, Celtics, Columbus Blue Jackets. I was a high school and college sprinter, and have played hockey for most of my life, including two games per week even now at the age of 50.

What are five things on your bucket list?

I can't think of 5 but here's 3: Running of the Bulls in Pamplona; do a 150-mile bike ride; visit North Korea after the Kim regime falls.

What would you be doing if you were not an academic?

I have no idea. I tried pretty much everything. Dropped out of law school and business school. Drove a taxi in Boston. Worked for a financial services company. When I was 28, I lied about my age and snuck into an open Red Sox tryout for people under the age of 18 (it didn't go very well). But I am still young, so I don't want to fully commit to anything at this point.

SHAFR Awards & Prizes Presented at its 2018 Annual Conference

The **Oxford University Press USA International History Dissertation Prize** was awarded to **Fritz Bartel**. His dissertation, “The Triumph of Broken Promises: Oil, Finance, and the End of the Cold War,” was completed at Cornell University under the direction of

Frederik Logevall. The prize committee—**Jim Meriwether, Jonathan Nashel, and April Merleaux**—was deeply impressed with his ambitious undertaking and the conceptual framework that weaves the economic crisis beginning in the early 1970s with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism in the late 1980s. Bartel argues that the oil crisis shifted the terrain of the Cold War to the private realm of oil and financial markets, the movements of which were beyond the control of any single nation-state. Diplomacy and statecraft, he argues, thus cannot fully explain when and why communism collapsed as a form of governance. Instead, Bartel offers a powerful framework for understanding the late Cold War within a globalizing international system comprised of private and state actors. His sophisticated analysis connects oil, global financial markets, and the politics of austerity in democratic capitalist states and state socialist regimes. The oil crisis and its long-term reverberations fundamentally challenged the material basis upon which political legitimacy rested for leaders on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Nation-states reacted to economic shocks in divergent ways, but ultimately democratic capitalist states more effectively managed the political consequences of austerity. The work, under the direction of Frederik Logevall, was supported by impressive multinational and multilingual sources from Poland, Germany, Hungary, the UK, and the United States. Bartel challenges us rethink the end of the Cold War, and the relationship between diplomacy and domestic politics. The committee takes great pleasure in recognizing this exemplary piece of scholarship.



The committee also awarded **Honorable Mention** to **Carly Goodman**, for her dissertation, “Global Game of Chance: The U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery, Transnational Migration, and Cultural Diplomacy in Africa, 1990-2016,” which was completed at Temple University under the direction of **Richard Immerman** and with support from a SHAFR Dissertation Completion Fellowship. Combining international history with migration and policy history, Goodman illuminates the history of the U.S. Diversity Visa lottery, and contributes original archival and oral history findings in the little studied area of African migration to the United States. Since 1990, the Diversity Visa lottery has transformed African immigration to the United States, and reshaped the ways Africans imagine the United States as a land of opportunity. Her research in the United States, Ghana, and Cameroon enables her to highlight the ideas and efforts of African visa entrepreneurs, including travel agents and cyber café operators, as well as lottery applicants, U.S. policymakers and diplomats, and non-state policy advocacy groups. Working with Richard Immerman, Goodman provides an exciting and compelling model of contemporary history.



SHAFR’s Marilyn B. Young Dissertation Completion Fellowship provides a year-long award to support the writing and completion of a doctoral dissertation of exceptional potential. This year the committee reviewed applications from a truly sterling and highly competitive field of candidates—the highest number in recent memory. The selection committee, consisting of **Megan Black, Osamah Khalil, and Hidetaka Hirota**, had the distinct pleasure of engaging these projects that will no doubt shape the field of U.S. foreign relations history for years to come. The recipient of this year’s award is **Caleb G. Hardner**, a PhD candidate at the University of Illinois at Chicago, for his dissertation, “Infectious Intruders, Helpless Hawaiians: Public Health and the Meaning of Race in Colonial Hawai’i, 1879-1914.”



Hardner’s dissertation explores an exciting intersection of public health and racialization in U.S. imperial management in Hawai’i. Building on extensive research in the Hawaii State Archives and multidisciplinary methods, Hardner reveals the contingent process by which the U.S. imperial state attempted to construct tidy racial hierarchies along supposed disease vectors—most notably, leprosy but also venereal disease and other pathogens—among a decidedly multiracial and transnational population of indigenous, Chinese, Japanese, and Portuguese plantation laborers. Over time, indigenous Hawai’ians were deemed assimilable, while migrant laborers were deemed incurable vessels of contagion. In the end, the seemingly mundane and neutral practices of scientific medicine became key sites, or “laboratories,” in which the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion on Hawai’i were determined on the murky path from territorial holding to statehood. This dissertation thus contributes to subfields of central importance to SHAFR, including the history of the United States and the world, migration, and empire studies, while also insisting on the importance of the history of medicine and analyses of interracial labor to understandings of U.S. global power. We believe Caleb is in an ideal position from which to launch a year of dissertation research with funds provided by SHAFR, and we congratulate him on this incredible achievement!

The **Stuart L. Bernath Scholarly Article Prize** Committee—**Kristin Ahlberg**, **Stephen Macekura**, and **Tehila Sasson**—is pleased to announce that **Vanessa Ogle** (UC-Berkeley) is this year’s recipient of the Bernath Article Prize. Vanessa’s article, entitled “Archipelago Capitalism: Tax Havens, Offshore Money, and the State, 1950s-1970s,” appeared in the December 2017 issue of the *American Historical Review*.

In it, Ogle makes a persuasive argument for studying the rise of the capitalist archipelago. These fluid spaces allowed for state and non-state actors to enhance free-market capitalism and enterprise through a variety of avoidance measures, including tax havens and shelters, free trade zones, and offshore markets. Ogle’s elegantly-written article touches upon several topics, not limited to decolonization, finance, transnationalism, and development, and utilizes a variety of multi-archival sources. This broad focus of analysis, we determined, meant that Ogle was more than deserving of this year’s award. That said, the Committee was also encouraged by the sophisticated scholarship produced by the other Bernath nominees, as published in *Diplomatic History* and other journals, as it can only bode well for our field.



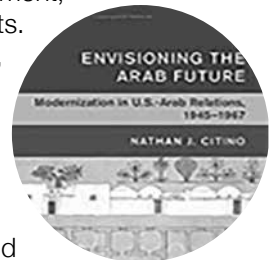
Tore C. Olsson of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville is this year’s recipient of the **Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize** for *Agrarian Crossings: Reformers and the Remaking of the US and Mexican Countryside* (Princeton University Press, 2017). The prize committee of **Andrew Preston** (chair), **Emily Conroy-Krutz**, and **Madeline Hsu** especially appreciated the book’s bilingual research, engaging writing, and historiographical nuance. They noted that this exploration of US-Mexico relations emphasizes two-way flows and intersecting campaigns targeting rural poverty. Olsson foregrounds the congruence of Depression-era rural poverty in Mexico and the U.S. South to investigate an array of reform-minded activists—including politicians, government bureaucrats, diplomats, scholars, and foundation administrators—who sought practical solutions to development problems by adapting strategies from their neighboring region. He persuasively argues that these rural poverty programs evolved into global practices of aid and technical assistance. U.S. officials then deployed these policies during the Cold War, particularly in fostering the “green revolution” in the developing world where, just as in Mexico and the U.S. South, food supply has greatly improved even as deeply divisive issues of rural poverty remained. This ingenious reconceptualization of the origins of development theory turns our gaze away from Cold War modernization theorists and towards rural agricultural policy in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. It also reminds us of the shared topographies, troubled social and economic hierarchies, and social-justice commitments that have characterized relations between the United States and Mexico.





The **Myrna Bernath Book Prize** committee—**Andy DeRoche** (chair), **Meredith Oyen**, and **Sayuri Shimizu**—reviewed a very strong pool of submissions whose topics ranged from recent Muslim women’s human rights to the role of women telephone operations in World War I, and focused on areas around the globe. The research and writing on display in these publications was truly impressive, across the board. From this strong pool, **Rebecca Tinio McKenna’s** *American Imperial Pastoral: The Architecture of US Colonialism in the Philippines* (University of Chicago Press, 2017) won the honor. McKenna’s innovative and insightful masterpiece carefully examined the American colonial hill station of Baguio, where they tried to create a racial haven for the new U.S. crew of white colonizers. By taking the focus away from urban centers such as Manila, McKenna succeeded in revealing different aspects of the U.S. occupation of the Philippines. According to committee member Meredith Oyen, McKenna’s work was an “excellent use of local history to explore a much bigger issue - nominally about this one place, but actually about the whole colonial system.” Furthermore, Oyen commented that McKenna’s “attention to the physical space and structures is novel and important.” Finally, the whole committee agreed that McKenna achieved impressive balance in her evidence by extensively utilizing Philippine archives, making her argument more convincing.

The **Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize**, established to honor this long-time professor of diplomatic history at Indiana University (1953-1990), rewards distinguished scholarship in the history of American foreign relations, broadly defined. This year’s committee—**Julia Irwin** (chair), **David Painter**, and **Susan Carruthers**—recognized **Nathan J. Citino** of Rice University for his book, *Envisioning the Arab Future: Modernization in U.S.-Arab Relations, 1945-1967*, published by Cambridge University Press. In this exceptional book, Nathan Citino weaves together the histories of U.S.-Arab relations, modernization and development, and the global Cold War while advancing bold new arguments about each of these subjects. Upending much of the existing scholarship on the United States in the postwar Middle East, Citino places Arab perspectives and experiences at the heart of his narrative. He recovers how a diverse cast of Arab elites—among them nationalists, communists, and Islamists—interacted with U.S. officials in the field of development, analyzing their contests over the meanings of modernization as well as the consensuses they shared on particular development ideas and programs. Through his regional focus on the Arab Middle East, Citino also brings fresh insights and much-needed local nuance to the global histories of the Cold War, Third Worldism, and anticolonialism. Methodologically, Citino’s work is truly impressive. Grounded in a wide range of Arabic and English-language sources, and based on extensive archival research in Lebanon, Egypt, the United Kingdom, and the United States, his book succeeds in putting Arab and U.S. American voices into dialogue, emphasizing the agency of both sides in this exchange. Further, with his sustained attention to non-U.S. historiographies, Citino demonstrates the critical importance of integrating multiple scholarly perspectives into the study of U.S. diplomatic history. His innovative and engaging book represents an outstanding example of both international history and the history of American foreign relations.



Book Reviews

Ionut Popescu, *Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy: How American Presidents Succeed in Foreign Policy* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017)

Zeb Larson

“Plans are worthless,” said Dwight Eisenhower, “but planning is everything.” Ionut Popescu’s *Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy* acknowledges this quote, which is a favorite of biographers, grand strategists, and military historians alike, but calls into question the idea—long an item of foreign-policy orthodoxy—that it is necessary for American presidents to prepare a grand, guiding strategy to drive U.S. foreign relations. Instead, he suggests that a framework he terms “emergent strategy” can often achieve better results (9). Drawing on literature from a variety of business fields, he argues for the importance of the ability to adapt to new circumstances to realize foreign policy goals.

Popescu begins with an overview of what he calls the “grand strategy paradigm,” which asserts that successful foreign policy originates in a strategy that establishes a clear goal for policymakers and identifies the steps needed to achieve that goal (8). George Kennan’s doctrine of containment is in many ways the archetype of this framework. Popescu contrasts grand strategy with emergent strategy, which relies on a balance between deliberative strategy and adaptation to changing circumstances or unforeseen events. With emergent strategy, the efficacy of certain actions dictates future actions, and an “operational code” evolves that eventually creates a consistent pattern of behavior.

Using a number of case studies, Popescu challenges security studies literature, which has tended to downplay how effective emergent strategy is. Because containment is often regarded as the best example of grand strategy, he contrasts it with his framework before going on to discuss the strategies used by Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon, Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Clinton, George W. Bush, and Obama.

In his discussion of Truman, Popescu focuses on the extent to which the president improved during his administration, and he asserts that the Marshall Plan and NATO deviated enough from Kennan’s view of containment that they could be considered examples of emergent strategy (47). Conversely, he writes that NSC-68, with its rigid view of a global communist threat that could be met only with military force, is more aptly described as a grand strategy paradigm, and one that produced a number of undesirable outcomes (63). He criticizes Eisenhower for being unwilling to adapt to the realities of Third World nationalism and, citing among other issues the strategy laid out in Project Solarium, for relying too much on nuclear weapons (81).

Nixon and Kissinger’s foreign policy is written off as largely a failure here, both for being unresponsive to domestic politics and for running roughshod over human rights for marginal or nonexistent gains in the larger Cold War. Emergent strategy might have made Nixon more responsive to domestic concerns. Instead, he adhered to a developed strategy that was unpopular at home (97). Reagan’s embrace of Gorbachev, which Popescu ascribes to his willingness to adapt while in office, comes in for high marks, but Popescu also acknowledges that the strategic paradigms created in the early 1980s deserve credit too (114).

Bill Clinton’s foreign policy, long criticized for its absence of a coherent grand strategy, is evaluated as a

qualified success. While Clinton met with considerable criticism for his interventions in Somalia, he and his foreign policy team adapted by trying to come up with ways to minimize American casualties and by working closely with NATO allies, efforts that led to successes in the Balkans (136). Popescu describes the George W. Bush administration’s foreign policy record as mixed, and he juxtaposes some of its short-term emergent successes in Afghanistan with the long-term, grand strategy aspects of the Bush Doctrine’s democracy promotion. However, he qualifies these conclusions by noting that more evidence will emerge in coming years (162).

Popescu expresses cautious optimism about Trump, who relies less on bureaucratic decision-making and more on his own instincts. In Popescu’s view, the security apparatus of the government ought to embrace adaptation to the fullest extent possible, and that means favoring more short-term planning, which can be agile and responsive (174). He concludes with a brief epilogue on Obama and the Obama Doctrine. He is critical of Obama’s foreign policy, noting that aspects of his grand strategy were failures. The “pivot to Asia,” for example, did not lessen Chinese interest in the South China Sea, and Obama’s refusal to adapt to changes in the Syrian civil war likely fueled the rise of ISIL (179).

Some elements of Popescu’s analysis do suffer as the book progresses chronologically, in part because the events he addresses are so recent that they are difficult to discuss in sufficient depth. His chapter on George W. Bush exemplifies this problem. Elsewhere, his descriptions of policymakers focus on their internal motivations, but in trying to analyze members of the second Bush administration, he is often left with only their statements and recollections. He acknowledges that because those statements can be self-serving, his approach has limitations, and the effect of those limitations is that he can’t decide whether the Bush administration’s foreign policy fits better within the emergent or the grand strategy paradigm. Confining his analysis to the Cold War might have strengthened his case for the emergent strategy paradigm, if only because it might have given him additional reliable evidence to work with.

Popescu’s decision to not analyze the Kennedy and Johnson administrations seems in some ways like a lost opportunity: surely Vietnam would be worth studying in the context of emergent strategy and grand strategy. He omits Johnson on the grounds that LBJ never developed a strategy because of his preoccupation with the Vietnam War. Yet other presidents under consideration also lacked a strategic vision. Johnson also relied on personnel from the Kennedy administration, so Popescu’s assertion that Kennedy’s people lacked the time to properly implement policies doesn’t quite stand up (21). Should Kennedy’s and Johnson’s management of the Vietnam War be examined through the lens of strategic planning? Would it fit better within an emergent or a grand strategy paradigm? Unfortunately, Popescu doesn’t answer these questions.

His discussion of Reagan is also problematic, ironically because he misses an opportunity to further criticize grand strategy paradigms. He focuses less on the Reagan doctrine of rollback and more on arms control and rapprochement with the Soviet Union. That rapprochement was not matched by a cooling of hostilities toward Marxist regimes in Africa and Latin America; rather, it was more in line with the recommendations of planners such as Richard Pipes. Popescu is correct to note that Reagan’s policies hurt America’s reputation abroad (and took a toll on human

rights), but he doesn't connect rollback to a failure of grand strategy (111).

Popescu's policy prescriptions for the Trump administration come across as strikingly optimistic, particularly when it comes to determining how the National Security Council can play a meaningful role in the administration by adopting an emergent strategy framework. Simply put, the earlier administrations Popescu described that employed emergent strategy still had foreign policy bureaucracies that they could rely on. Although he has been in office for more than a year, it is still unclear who has any effect on Trump's foreign policy; for the most part Trump seems to be at odds with his subordinates. Popescu's suggestions about enhancing the emergent approach of the NSC would not be helpful if the NSC is simply sidelined by the president.

Occasional shortcomings aside, Popescu's analysis raises a number of interesting points, particularly regarding the limitations of grand strategy planning in the Cold War. Popescu doesn't dispense with the idea of overarching strategy entirely, noting that U.S. foreign policy in the Cold War was based on the belief that the Soviet Union would aggressively expand, a belief that more or less guided American policymakers until 1989. His reminder that grand strategy approaches are often counterproductive because of geopolitical flux is worth remembering, if only because the goals set by planners might have to be completely revised as circumstances change.

Fabio Lanza, *The End of Concern: Maoist China, Activism, and Asian Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017)

Matthew D. Linton

The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS) was born out of conflict that erupted in the Vietnam Caucus at the 1968 Association for Asian Studies meeting in Philadelphia. Graduate students and young faculty were debating the Vietnam War and the appropriate responses to it from the Asian studies community. The discussion got so heated that John K. Fairbank, who was serving as moderator, had to intervene. After the caucus ended, likeminded representatives from twenty-five universities got together and formed the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars to publicize "growing concern over Asian affairs" and make themselves known as "consultants on current Asian issues" (31).

In his new book, Fabio Lanza presents a compelling picture of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars as an alternative to mainstream American China scholarship. He develops that picture by challenging the dichotomy between objective scholarship and political activism. In his view, the CCAS was a worthy but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to fuse scholarly thoughtfulness with the activist's moral urgency. CCAS members believed that combining scholarship and politics was not merely an option for Asia scholars; the categories were inextricably intertwined. They even went so far as to deny the possibility of objective Asia scholarship altogether. Their vision of scholarship required "the dismantling of the assumption of objectivity and neutrality behind the existing structure of learning and the unveiling of the political character of that assumption" (53).

This fusion of scholarship and politics was particularly pertinent for American scholars of China. Although the CCAS arose out of controversy over American actions in Vietnam, the People's Republic of China (PRC) was its primary concern. There were two reasons for the committee's China focus. First, many of its most influential and outspoken members were China specialists. Second, and more central for Lanza, the PRC represented an

alternative to American hegemony for many scholars in the CCAS. They did not want simply to export Maoism to the United States, however. They believed that Maoist China attested to the incompleteness of Western hegemony and the possibilities of political experimentation, and they hoped that Maoism presaged new horizons for radical "equalitarian and emancipatory politics" beyond the limits of the Western liberal imagination (46).

Although Lanza focuses on a U.S.-based organization, he believes the questions raised by the CCAS and the possibilities it saw in the PRC were part of a global movement. He understands CCAS scholarship and activism as part of "the global sixties," when preexisting binaries—between scholar and activist, Eastern and Western, and communist and capitalist—were being challenged (11). Globalism is central to Lanza's historical account and to the possibility it raises for radical transformation. The CCAS took Maoism seriously, not as a geographically limited Chinese ideology or an orientalist fetish, but as a tool to challenge American hegemony worldwide. He shows this globalism through the CCAS's activities in the United States and Hong Kong as well as through parallels between CCAS thought and that of French theorists like Alain Badiou and Jacques Rancière. Like the CCAS, these theorists saw in Maoism the possibility of a radically different politics that rejected imperialist policies and the narrow thinking that created them.

It was not really surprising, given the organization's ambitious agenda, that the CCAS struggled to maintain unity. Committee members disagreed over how scholarship and politics should be fused. For radical members, political activism was the primary concern. They rejected objective scholarship and wanted a total break with the academic establishment. Not all CCAS members were so radical, however. Many wanted to use activism to reform academe, not overthrow it. They aspired to tenured professorships and believed there was much in academic research worth salvaging. These tensions became more urgent in the 1970s, when a crisis in university employment began making the professional careers of graduate students increasingly precarious.

Events outside the university caused the frustrations within the CCAS that had generally been managed privately to boil over into open argument. The first of these events was the 1972 CCAS trip to the PRC. The CCAS was one of the first American delegations to travel to Maoist China, and as a result the trip received significant media attention. Though the trip gave the CCAS some much-desired publicity, it cleaved the organization into two factions: one that favored a continued focus on the Vietnam War and another that wanted to shift the organization's mission to U.S.-PRC relations. To make matters worse, the CCAS delegation had been chosen by the PRC and did not reflect the organization's hierarchy. Some senior members were incensed.

As U.S.-PRC rapprochement moved from informal, people-to-people exchanges to more formal diplomatic negotiations, the CCAS grew discouraged with the PRC leadership, which had abandoned their radical bona fides to work with President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, whom CCAS members despised. The gradual end of the Vietnam War was also a significant obstacle to CCAS cooperation. The war was the committee's *raison d'être* and one of the few issues that unified the organization's membership. Without it, personal antagonisms and professional concerns would bring about the organization's collapse before the decade's end.

While *The End of Concern* makes a valuable contribution as an intellectual history of American Asia scholarship, it is less successful at tying the CCAS to the global sixties. As noted above, Lanza highlights intellectual consonances between CCAS members and radical French philosophers,

both of whom were convinced that Maoism represented an alternative to the limitations of American hegemony. Yet there is no direct connection between these two groups. More strangely, it seems that the common ground these Western radicals shared with each other owed more to an orientalist fascination with China as an exotic “other” presenting an alternative to American ideas and politics and less to the concept of a cohesive global movement with a positive vision for how to use Maoism as a tool for reform or revolution. Though their understanding of China was more sophisticated than that of their forebears, CCAS and French theorists used Chinese difference as a vehicle to criticize the West. It was a means, not an end in itself.

This is a minor criticism, however. *The End of Concern* is a valuable addition to the intellectual history of American Asia scholarship. It recovers the central role radical scholars played in transforming the language of Asian studies, and China studies in particular, from a Western-centric story of Asian decadence and decline to an Asian-centered one of contingency and imperialism. More important, Lanza’s work explores the difficulty of balancing scholarship and politics, a challenge that has taken on new urgency for American Asia scholars with the election of Donald Trump. Understanding how the CCAS tried and failed to strike this balance may help the contemporary generation of Asian specialists achieve the success as political critics that eluded previous generations.

Sheldon A. Goldberg, *From Disarmament to Rearmament: The Reversal of US Policy toward West Germany, 1946-1955* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2017)

Thomas A. Schwartz

Back in the 1990s, with the Cold War recently over, I was giving a job talk at a state university in New York. Although my general topic was not the same as the subject of Sheldon A. Goldberg’s monograph, it did cover the American decision to favor the rearmament of West Germany. At the dinner afterwards, one of the older professors remarked to me that he remembered the rearmament issue well, and that all his progressive friends and colleagues had intensely opposed and protested the idea of rearming the Germans. Then, as if to acknowledge they may have over-reacted, or God-forbid, even been wrong, he remarked, “It is surprising how it all turned out so well.”

I was reminded of this conversation as I finished Goldberg’s well-researched and well-written book. He provides a detailed account of the intense controversies and conflicts set off within the American government and NATO alliance when one of World War II’s objectives, the demilitarization of Germany, was suddenly abandoned in favor of rearmament. A significant number of American documents have been fully declassified since I wrote my own examination of the rearmament controversy, and Goldberg has made good use of them.¹ Having spent more than four decades in the US Air Force, Sheldon Goldberg brings an insight into this material not normally available to the typical young academic. He demonstrates an intimate knowledge of the way military bureaucracies work, and his examination of the internal debates among the services in relation to German rearmament is an important addition to the literature. The epilogue, which describes the approach to handling rearmament taken by each of the military services, especially the Air Force, is particularly insightful.

The book begins with the first extensive and detailed examination of “Operation Eclipse,” the plan to disarm, demobilize, and demilitarize Germany that I have seen in the massive literature surrounding rearmament.²

This plan took shape during World War II and was an important element in binding the Grand Alliance together. It is relatively easy in retrospect to see that it reflected a simplistic and essentialist understanding of the German character and the nature of German militarism, as well as a very short-term understanding of both America’s national interests and the situation of postwar Europe. However, Goldberg makes it clear that this was a serious undertaking of serious people and that it reflected the strong belief that the demilitarization of Germany was central to a cooperative relationship with the Soviet Union.

In this respect, Goldberg’s book harkens back to one of the earliest works on US policy in Germany, John Gimbel’s seminal study, which argued that the Cold War arrived rather late in Germany and that General Lucius Clay, the American commander in Germany, saw France as a bigger obstacle to Allied cooperation than the Soviet Union.³ Operation Eclipse also reflected a historical reading of the “lessons” of the Treaty of Versailles, with particular concern to the prevention of any German “cheating” similar to the “secret” rearmament that went on during the interwar period. In Goldberg’s presentation, this official policy would remain in place until September 12, 1950, when Secretary of State Dean Acheson made his dramatic proposal for a new German military force.

Goldberg’s focus on Operation Eclipse does not mean that he ignores the intense debate under the surface of the stated policy of demilitarization. Chapter 3 provides a full account of the debate within the American military and addresses the conclusion reached by the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the rearmament of Germany was necessary for American security long before September 1950. Goldberg maintains that the U.S. military commanders “never wavered in their belief that a national German Army within NATO was the best solution to the ‘German question.’” (p. 118) Their position contrasted with that of the State Department and American diplomats in Europe, who recognized the political problems such an approach would cause with America’s allies.

Goldberg gives justifiable attention to Henry Byroade, a brigadier general in the US Army who also headed up the Office of German Affairs in the State Department. Byroade played a key role in providing a channel through which the State and Defense Departments could communicate on the rearmament issue at a time when Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Defense Secretary Louis Johnson were not on speaking terms. In order to keep the alliance together, the United States ultimately came to back the French initiative of having the Germans participate in a European military organization, the European Defense Community or EDC.

Goldberg argues that by supporting the EDC, the United States lost the initiative on rearmament, and it is certainly true that the EDC slowed the process down until the French Assembly rejected it in August 1954. That rejection allowed the United States, with Britain for diplomatic reasons taking the initiative, to propose the creation of German Army in NATO, which the American military had favored all along. This was an example of the United States believing the preservation of the European alliance was more important than strict military necessity, a value judgment that seems to have disappeared in contemporary Washington.

Goldberg’s account is very persuasive, thoroughly documented and well presented. My only addition would be an even stronger emphasis on the calculation of American leaders that US public opinion would not support a substantial American military commitment to Europe without a German contribution to Western defense, especially if the American public believed that the Germans were critical to an effective military shield. This domestic political factor was one that they stressed to the more cautious Europeans, and it brings me back to the professor’s with which I began this review.

In many respects, German rearmament turned out to be a huge “nothingburger,” to use a modern colloquial expression. Instead of turning into a frightening, dangerous and militaristic “Fourth Reich,” Germany has become one of the most pacifist nations in Europe, a country deeply reluctant to spend money on its military, or even consider using military force, no matter how egregious the aggression. In a 2015 NATO exercise, its soldiers used broomsticks instead of machine guns. Recently a German parliamentary commission revealed that not a single German submarine was operational and that half of Leopard 2 tanks were out of order. Having abandoned conscription, the German Army, the Bundeswehr, cannot find enough volunteers.⁴ Donald Trump may rarely tell the truth, but his complaints about Germany’s failure to contribute its fair share to Western defense are on the mark.

I am not unsympathetic to the argument that the world is much better off with a pacifist Germany than the alternative. Nevertheless, I make this point to highlight how wrong we can be when we project the past onto the future in a mechanistic way, without recognizing how much things can change because of major events and historical traumas. Sheldon Goldberg has written a concise and tightly argued work on a major diplomatic crisis of the early Cold War. It is well worth reading, if only because it helps us recognize how different our own world is from that which American leaders confronted after 1945.

Notes:

1. Thomas A. Schwartz, *America’s Germany: John J. McCloy and the Federal Republic of Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991)
2. The literature on German rearmament is significant. Among the most important English-language books are Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: the making of a European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), James McAllister, *No Exit: America and the German Problem, 1943-1954* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), Robert McGeehan, *The German Rearmament Question: American Diplomacy and European Defense after World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971) and David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).
3. John Gimbel, *The American Occupation of Germany: Politics and the Military, 1945-49* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968)
4. This was reported widely, but see this piece in the *Washington Post* https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/01/24/afraid-of-a-major-conflict-the-german-military-is-currently-unavailable/?utm_term=.3ec6b680db48

Max Boot, *The Road Not Taken: Edward Lansdale and the American Tragedy in Vietnam* (New York: Liveright, 2018)

Justin Simundson

Max Boot’s *The Road Not Taken: Edward Lansdale and the American Tragedy in Vietnam* is a solid biography of an important Cold War figure. Boot, a columnist for the *Washington Post* and a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, provides a vivid portrait of the legendary CIA operative that will attract a wide general audience. Diplomatic historians will likely find Boot’s extensive research useful in some areas, but, at the same time, there are limits to what scholars will gain from *The Road Not Taken*.

Although Lansdale was certainly a divisive figure who inspired much debate, there is not much about him that is still seriously “mysterious” or “misunderstood” (xli) among scholars. Jonathan Nashel’s *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War*, in particular, continues to stand out as a more valuable scholarly exploration of the deeper historical

context of Lansdale’s actions and the intellectual currents beneath them.¹ Nevertheless, while it may be the case that Boot does not fulfill his self-stated goal of producing an essential work that does for Lansdale what Neil Sheehan “so memorably accomplished for John Paul Vann in *A Bright Shining Lie*” (xliii), *The Road Not Taken* is a thorough and illuminating narrative and a welcome update to Cecil B. Currey’s earlier, uncritical biography, *Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American*.²

For the most part *The Road Not Taken* is a straightforward story of Lansdale’s life, proceeding chronologically through his career. Boot briefly dispenses with Lansdale’s youth, pre-war civilian career in advertising, and his World War II OSS service in part 1, then moves on to Lansdale’s exploits as a CIA operative in the Philippines in part 2, “Colonel Lansdale” (47). It was in the Philippines that Lansdale had his most clear-cut success, namely helping Ramon Magsaysay get elected president and then helping him suppress the Huk Rebellion.

Part 3, “Nation Builder” (171), explores Lansdale’s influence in building South Vietnam after France’s defeat at Dien Bien Phu and describes his futile efforts to steer Prime Minister (and later President) Ngo Dinh Diem towards a more democratic path. The remainder of the book, parts 4 through 6, details the steady decline of Lansdale’s influence, including his exile (as it were) to Washington and his frustrating return to Vietnam amidst the increasing carnage of the Vietnam War.

While clearly sympathetic to Lansdale and advocating for more “Lansdalism” (599) in American foreign policy (meaning, generally, more focus on the political dimensions of war), Boot is rightfully critical of his subject and explores many of Lansdale’s shortcomings, mistakes, and untruths. Still, while he does find fault with Lansdale in many instances, at some points Boot is too quick to excuse those faults. Nashel correctly notes in his analysis that traditional biographies often risk using historical context as a way to “absolve individuals of the moral responsibility for their actions,” and Boot’s frequent pardons of Lansdale because of extenuating circumstances like the prevailing “feeling of wartime necessity” (584) certainly fit that critique.

Where *The Road Not Taken* is at its strongest is in digging away the layers of myth surrounding Lansdale and exposing his human side. Although it is not a revelation that Lansdale had a long-term affair with a woman named Pat Kelly while stationed in the Philippines, Boot’s extensive use of Kelly’s letters to Lansdale enables him to create a much fuller portrait of Lansdale the man. Lansdale self-censored his letters to others in order to hide his relationship with Kelly, so his letters to her were frequently more revealing than his other correspondence. The full accounting of their illicit relationship and how Lansdale “lived a covert life both professionally (as an intelligence officer) and privately (as Pat’s lover),” also underscores how he was simultaneously “remarkably indifferent to the demands of subterfuge” (114) and unconcerned about the corrosive nature of such subterfuge. It is much easier for us to understand how Lansdale, an idealist sincerely committed to American democracy, was consistently willing to make use of undemocratic means to achieve his ends when we are presented with evidence of his deep, personal indifference to truth and its consequences.

In addition to Kelly’s letters, Boot also relies on an impressive range of research. He did extensive archival work in the United States and conducted dozens of interviews. He makes good use of much of the important recent scholarship on the Cold War and the Vietnam War, integrating the analyses of many academic historians into his story of Lansdale’s life. Still, there are moments in *The Road Not Taken* when he either leaves out recent scholarly debates or misrepresents them. One of the lapses that will be most jarring for Vietnam War scholars occurs when

he lumps Edward Miller together with the controversial Mark Moyar as a “revisionist”(403), despite intense and fundamental disagreements between the two authors, in order to argue (incorrectly) that Diem was actually winning his war with the Communists in 1962.

There are also notable absences in the scholarship and analysis that Boot relies on, some of which does detract from his ability to find insights into Lansdale’s life. Boot pays relatively little attention to the network of Americans who joined Lansdale in advocating for more political effort in the Cold War. Wesley Fishel, Wolf Ladejinsky, William Lederer, and John Mecklin (to name a few) spoke in much the same terms Lansdale did and even collaborated with him, but Boot largely ignores such figures, instead preferring to tell a tale of Lansdale as a lonely, unheard voice. Boot does devote some attention to Lansdale’s relationship with General John W. O’Daniel, but he still hardly even mentions the American Friends of Vietnam, which O’Daniel was the outspoken chairman of and which Lansdale made use of to get his views across to the American public.

While it would be easy (though wrong) to dismiss the absence of such relatively minor players as inconsequential, the silence on their relationships to “Lansdalism” is indicative of an even larger deficiency. Although *The Road Not Taken* is about a man who very frequently called on the United States to win “hearts and minds” (412) in the global Cold War, Boot does little to contextualize that struggle or to explain what the United States was already doing in the realms of propaganda and political struggle. Boot would have done well to consult works like Kenneth Osgood’s *Total Cold War* or Laura Belmonte’s *Selling the American Way* to give readers a better understanding that while Lansdale was unique in many ways, he was far from the only American concerned with finding ways to win “hearts and minds” in the Cold War.³ Finally, although there are frequent mentions of modern events and objects throughout *The Road Not Taken*, there is no discussion of the modernization theory underpinning Lansdale’s views of Asia or the flourishing scholarship surrounding the topic.

Although Boot clearly intends for *The Road Not Taken* to be a lesson to policymakers, his arguments are restrained, and he mostly allows Lansdale’s life to speak for itself. That makes the biography a more reliable source of straightforward facts, but it does make the real lesson of the story somewhat elusive. That is especially true because, as Nashel has noted, Lansdale just is not quite the epoch-defining “classic ‘Great Man’ around whom it is said that a history should focus.”⁴

In the end, Boot concludes that the lessons of

Lansdale’s experiences can be summed up with “the three L’s”: “Learn,” “Like,” and “Listen” (603-604). That is sound, though basic, advice for American foreign policymakers and practitioners, but whether Lansdale himself lived up to those maxims is questionable. His learning about and listening to Asians was clearly often selective, paternalistic, and self-interested. Boot’s prime example of how Americans should “listen” to foreign partners illustrates how true—and problematic—that was. He praises Lansdale for his ability to sit through Ngo Dinh Diem’s infamous monologues and then “reformulate what he had just heard, subtly changing his summary to get across more of his own message” (604). That may be a useful method of manipulation or persuasion (though in this particular example, it was not ultimately all that effective), but it is hardly listening for the purpose of understanding and adapting policy in anything other than a superficial sense.

It may also be true that communication across cultures can sometimes take place without a shared language, but we should be much more suspicious than Boot is about Lansdale’s ability to understand Asians despite his lack of language skills. While Lansdale may have believed “Stone Age” (63) Filipino tribesmen or Vietnamese politicians liked and understood him, it does not take much to see how they may have had entirely different understandings of the concepts Lansdale thought he was imparting. This is a serious problem for the United States, even with nominal allies like Diem or Hamid Karzai. They may speak English and even employ much the same rhetoric as Americans, but they can still have radically different understandings of the meaning or intent behind any dialogue. Lansdale’s story, in this regard, is more a cautionary tale than a model for action. That is a valuable thing indeed, but perhaps it is not quite what Boot aimed to provide.

Notes:

1. Jonathen Nashel, *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War* (Amherst, MA, 2005).
2. Cecil B. Currey, *Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American* (Boston, MA, 1988).
3. Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS, 2006); Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia, PA, 2008).
4. Nashel, *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War*, 13. Mostly, that’s because of how frequently Lansdale was outmaneuvered by bureaucratic enemies or ignored by superiors. Aside from his time in the Philippines and a short period early in the history of South Vietnam, Lansdale came nowhere near being a primary driver of events.

Passport would like to thank Zeb Larson—who is nearing the finish line with his dissertation and will be moving on to bigger and better things after this issue—for all of his work over the past three years as assistant editor.



SHAFR Council Minutes
Thursday, June 21, 2018
8:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Hamilton Room
Sheraton Philadelphia Society Hill Hotel
Philadelphia, PA

Council Members Present: Peter Hahn (presiding), Barbara Keys, Amy Greenberg, Matthew Connelly, Thomas Borstelmann, David Engerman, Kathryn Statler, Amanda Demmer, Mary Dudziak, Lien-Hang Nguyen, Brian McNamara, Adriane Lentz-Smith, Terry Anderson, Julia Irwin.

Others Present: Amy Sayward (ex officio), Andrew Preston, Kate Epstein, Jeff Engel, Petra Goedde, Richard Immerman, George Fujii

General Business:

Peter Hahn welcomed everyone and thanked them for their service. Amy Sayward stated that the only motion passed by Council between meetings was unanimous approval (with one abstention) of the January 2018 Council meeting minutes.

Budget Reports:

Sayward reviewed the current fiscal year to the end of May and explained that final numbers for the fiscal year (which ends on October 31) were very much in flux since the conference is our largest single expenditure. She also reviewed long-term financial projections, which show the work of both Council and the Ways & Means Committee in bringing expenditures in line with current income. She also reviewed the proposed FY2019 budget, which follows the previous year's budget quite closely, and asked for questions. Amy Greenberg made a motion to accept the proposed FY19 budget, which was seconded by Matthew Connelly and passed unanimously.

Ways and Means Committee Report:

Based on a report from Mary Dudziak, chair of the Ways & Means Committee, Council discussed the history of SHAFR's endowed awards and what its policy should be on future awards. The general lines suggested by the committee and Council were that a minimum of \$30,000 would be required for an endowed award, which would generate approximately \$1,000 per year in disburseable income. Council also clarified that such efforts would be undertaken privately, separate from Development Committee initiatives, but some assistance (such as mailings) could be coordinated by the Business Office. Kathryn Statler motioned that a formal policy be developed for Council approval at its January meeting with the above advice being provided informally to anyone inquiring; the motion was seconded by Brian McNamara and passed unanimously.

The Ways & Means Committee, having received a request from the National History Center to restore the funding that Council had cut in the previous year, saw no reason to change course on this decision, noting that work over the past two years had put SHAFR in a strong financial position. David Engerman made a motion affirming the committee's recommendation, which was seconded by Julia Irwin and passed unanimously.

SHAFR 2020 Conference Site:

Following a discussion of three sites that had developed proposals and following preliminary Council discussion in January, Council discussed the merits of the various sites, including costs, their historical connections, and the advantages of SHAFR having a conference abroad. Connelly suggested that a partnership with the World History Association conference, which meets annually at approximately the same time, might make an international conference more affordable. Statler made a motion that SHAFR move forward with New Orleans as the site of its 2020 conference. The motion was seconded by Irwin. The vote in favor was unanimous with two abstentions.

Conversation continued about an international conference and resulted in a motion made by Irwin and seconded by Adriane Lentz-Smith that SHAFR actively pursue developing a proposal for an international conference in 2022; it passed unanimously.

Diplomatic History Publisher Search:

Engerman and Petra Goedde (who joined Council for the discussion) reported on the search process for a publisher of *Diplomatic History*, as the current contract with Oxford University Press (OUP) ends on 31 December 2019 and requires one year's notice of the intention not to renew. Engerman reported that the current academic publishing market would not bear a contract as financially beneficial as SHAFR's current contract with OUP, however after engaging in an extensive search process that included a variety of bids and interviews, the committee was recommending that Council develop a contract with OUP, which was the strongest bid in financial terms. He also expressed the opinion that current technical issues with OUP related to SHAFR membership could be improved with an investment of effort from both sides in developing a better interface between the two websites.

Hahn reiterated to Council that all contracts of this nature are reviewed by SHAFR's legal counsel ahead of the President's signature. Dudziak reported that the Ways & Means Committee's review supported the conclusion of the search committee, especially because the proposed contract allows SHAFR to decouple membership dues from the *Diplomatic History* subscription in a way that will potentially benefit SHAFR. Additionally, working to resolve technical issues related to renewing membership also has the potential to allow for more efficient and visible fund-raising efforts. Irwin asked whether the new interface might allow an opportunity for SHAFR to survey its membership in order to garner better information on our membership's demographics and needs. Dudziak made a motion to approve the recommendation of the search committee; this was seconded by Amanda Demmer and approved unanimously.

Diplomatic History Editor Search:

Preceding the discussion of the specific editorial bids, Hahn raised the question of whether Council might want to consider whether the editor of its publications should simultaneously be able to sit on Council if elected. If not, such a prohibition could be included in the letter of appointment to editors or an amendment to the by-laws could be considered. Discussion by Council members considered issues raised by a concentration of power within the organization, how best to have a diverse set of leaders to represent SHAFR's membership, the ways in which serving on Council provides a much clearer sense of how the organization functions, the question of conflicts of interest, and historical precedents. Hahn explained that Council members recusing themselves from discussion and voting on issues where there might be a perceived conflict of interest was our traditional practice, but there was no formal policy on this. Having gauged the views of Council, Hahn thought it best to defer the matter to the January Council meeting.

Andrew Preston, who chaired the search committee for the new editorial team for *Diplomatic History*, joined the Council meeting to report on his committee's process, recommendation, and rationale. At this time, Hahn, Irwin, and McNamara recused themselves from the conversation (as they had perceived conflicts of interest) and left the room. Barbara Keys therefore chaired the conversation in the absence of Hahn. She thanked the committee for its hard work in helping to solicit four strong bids; Preston indicated that this spoke well for *Diplomatic History* and SHAFR, especially given the abbreviated timeframe in which teams assembled their bids.

Council considered the financial costs, the institutional commitment, the editorial structure, the innovation, and the proposed editors' experience, record of successful teamwork, diversity, and scholarship in relation to the proposed bids. After considerable discussion, Dudziak moved to accept the bid from Temple and Indiana State with the editorial team of Petra Goedde (editor), Anne Foster (editor), and Alan McPherson (associate editor); the motion was seconded by Greenberg. The final vote was 9-1-1, with 3 Council members recusing themselves. Council expressed thanks for the work done to assemble all of the outstanding bids received and asked SHAFR's President and Executive Director to work on finalizing the transition that will occur on 1 July 2019.

2018 Conference Issues:

Kate Epstein and Jeff Engel, the co-chairs of the 2018 Program Committee, joined the Council to discuss issues related to the conference and their written report. They started by thanking Debbie Sharnak, who had served as their assistant, who was both conscientious and a pleasure to work with. Full panel proposals were accepted at a rate of 77.25%. There were twenty fewer panel proposals than in the previous year; seven panels were created from individual paper proposals; and six panels were commissioned, including a panel sponsored by the Society for Historians of Technology and Business History. This year's conference included SHAFR's first poster sessions, which were part of the 36 individual paper proposals that were accepted (58% rejection rate). The committee specifically sought to foster diversity in assembling the program, including a breadth of topics and geography as well as considering the institutional levels and demographics of panelists. Committee members specifically gave preference to topics that spoke to the conference's theme and that had a global focus. Hahn thanked the co-chairs for their work.

Related to the choice of keynote speaker, Hahn explained that the decision to issue the invitation was his, which was the tradition of SHAFR. He also explained his thought process in terms of both the selection of speaker and the method of scholarly exchange in this case (moderator who integrated some of the written questions from the audience). He also explained the efforts that he and the Program Committee co-chairs had made to address the issues raised in the protest letter, but those who opposed the keynote chose not to participate in the planned roundtable, which was subsequently canceled. Conversation followed about how best to communicate, moving forward, with those SHAFR members who opposed the choice of keynote and the method of selecting such speakers. Hahn volunteered to write a letter to the membership, an idea that Council endorsed. Dudziak made a motion supporting the tradition that SHAFR's President selects the keynote speaker and supporting the tradition of scholarly exchange with such speakers. Connelly seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Membership Meeting:

Council also discussed the by-laws requirement for a petition by 25 members to call a membership meeting with at least 6 months' notice. Although some Council members expressed the opinion that this period should be shortened to three months, other members who had served on the recent advocacy task force expressed the opinion that the current language in the by-laws was the considered opinion of the SHAFR membership as voted on by Council and ratified by a majority of SHAFR members who had voted for the most recent by-laws amendment. Council reiterated as well as that its members are always open to communication with the membership on all issues of concern.

Conference Issues:

Council turned to the written report of the Conference Committee, which included recommendations about and examples of a conference code of conduct/ethics, which the President had requested from the committee. The consensus emerging from the resulting conversation was that SHAFR needed to have such a code and that graduate students especially appreciated Council's openness to creating such a code, given the power disparities and professional consequences in play. Emphasis was given on the need to have a clear reporting system. Engerman made a motion, seconded by Tim Borstelmann, that following the lead of other professional societies, SHAFR affirms its commitment that all members should be able to attend its meetings free from discrimination and harassment and will work toward drafting a code of conduct/ethics toward that end, which will be voted on at its January meeting.

Council also discussed the parameters for its call for proposals (CFP) for its next summer institute, which in keeping with past Council decisions, will be linked to the annual conference, will have a smaller budget, and will occur roughly every other year. Keys moved that the next CFP be issued for 2019 or 2020, with subsequent calls similarly falling within a two-year window. The motion was seconded by Demmer and passed unanimously. It was also agreed that the previous policy of having the three former SHAFR presidents (constituted as the Summer Institute Oversight Committee) review the proposals and make its recommendation to Council would be revived.

Graduate Student Committee:

Hahn opened the conversation of this agenda item by saying that he was concerned that there was some ambiguity regarding the Graduate Student Committee and its relationship to the elected graduate student representatives serving on Council, which he had asked McNamara and Demmer to consider. Based on that conversation, which was part of Council's pre-meeting materials, consensus emerged that the committee should continue, with the graduate student representatives serving.

Historical Advisory Committee/Committee on Historical Documentation:

Richard Immerman, chair of SHAFR's Committee on Historical Documentation and chair of the State Department's Historical Advisory Committee (HAC), joined Council to provide an update on recent, rather abrupt, changes in the committee's membership, which had prompted SHAFR representative Robert McMahon's resignation. Immerman explained the process by which new representatives will be appointed to the HAC, which includes that at-large members will be selected by the Office of the Historian in the State Department in consultation with the HAC. Hahn added that SHAFR has already nominated a member to fill the seat left vacant by McMahon's resignation and stands ready to nominate others as Thomas Zeiler and Katherine Sibley's terms expire. Borstelman moved that SHAFR formally thank McMahan, Zeiler, and Sibley for their valuable service to this important committee. The motion was seconded by Terry Anderson and passed unanimously.

SHAFR Guide:

Sayward provided an update on how the *SHAFR Guide* subscriptions for SHAFR members would be handled moving forward, with SHAFR acting essentially as a library or institutional subscriber (paying an annual subscription rate of

approximately \$480/year) who would then manage usernames and passwords for its members who subscribe; SHAFR's Information Technology Manager, George Fujii, would handle this process. Hearing no objections to this arrangement, Hahn said he would move the agreement to SHAFR's legal counsel for review.

Council then turned to the question of renewing *Guide* editor Alan McPherson's memorandum of understanding, which would otherwise end on 31 December 2018. Council members considered the relative merits of continuity and of potential conflicts of interest with serving as *Diplomatic History*'s associate editor. Keys made a motion to continue McPherson's editorial role through the next three years (through the completion of the *Guide*'s contractual update) with a stipend of \$6,000/year. Lentz-Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SHAFR Website:

Fujii entered the Council meeting to answer questions related to his written report. He discussed the different options that SHAFR would have once the current version of Drupal (the software that supports the website) was no longer supported, which included moving to WordPress, a CRM (customer relations management) model similar to the Texas Historical Society, or updating to Drupal 9. Consensus was that the Web Committee could be charged with exploring and reporting on the various options and making a recommendation to Council in 2019 so that the corresponding change could take place in 2020.

Hahn asked Fujii about the privacy issues relayed in his report. Fujii urged a review of SHAFR's policies and agreements to ensure compliance protocols, and Council recommended that he work with the Web Committee to establish these.

Committee on Minority Historians:

Lentz-Smith reported that the committee had organized a panel for this year's committee. She expressed the difficulty of identifying appropriate people to serve on the committee, which could be improved by either a survey of the membership or the "volunteer" form on the SHAFR website.

Survey Task Force:

Until a full survey of the membership can be undertaken, Irwin and her task force were emphasizing getting more feedback from and developing lines of communication with the membership. To that end, a "comment box" had been set up on the website. She circulated a list of questions that will be rotated and publicized through the monthly e-blast to the membership, which will include a link to the comment box.

Executive Director's Report:

Sayward reported that September 1st will mark the end of three years of the initial five-year commitment she had made to serve as SHAFR's executive director. She had suggested and Hahn had approved of creating a review committee that would evaluate the executive director's work and make a recommendation to Council in June 2019. Such a process would be comparable to the review processes for the editors of *Diplomatic History* and *Passport*, and its timing would also provide SHAFR with the opportunity to launch a timely search for a new executive director as needed.

Sayward also stated that she had received and would be circulating the five-year report of the Committee on Women in SHAFR; further investigation into issues raised in the report will be part of the January 2019 Council meeting agenda.

Diplomatic History:

Statler made a motion to thank the editors of *Diplomatic History* for their service. The motion was seconded by Demmer and passed unanimously.

New Business:

A member of SHAFR had inquired about whether the society would consider making posthumous awards, such as for the Graebner Award, which recognizes lifetime achievement. There being no strong opinion expressed in favor of such a change, Council opted to continue its traditional practice. Given that there had been no nominations for this year's Graebner award, it was also decided to extend (and greater publicize) the nomination process through the fall in order to make an award at the SHAFR's awards luncheon at the AHA meeting in January.

Council adjourned at 1:15 p.m. following a motion by McNamara that was seconded by Connelly and passed unanimously.



Professional Notes

Waldo Heinrichs (San Diego State University, emeritus) and **Marc Gallicchio** (Villanova University) received the Bancroft Prize in American History and Diplomacy for their book, *Implacable Foes: War in the Pacific, 1944-1945*.

Andrew L. Johns (Brigham Young University) will be President of Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association in 2018-2019.

Kyle Longley has been named Director of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library.

Julia P.R. Mansfield (Ph.D., Stanford University) received the Allan Nevins Prize for Historical Writing of Exceptional Merit from the Society of American Historians for her dissertation, "The Disease of Commerce: Yellow Fever in the Atlantic World, 1793-1805."



Announcements

The Ferrell Book Prize rewards distinguished scholarship in the history of American foreign relations, broadly defined. The Ferrell Prize was established to honor Robert H. Ferrell, professor of diplomatic history at Indiana University from 1953 to 1990, by his former students.

The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations is pleased to award the 2018 Robert Ferrell Book Prize to Nathan J. Citino for his book, *Envisioning the Arab Future: Modernization in U.S.-Arab Relations, 1945-1967*, published by Cambridge University Press.

In this exceptional book, Nathan Citino weaves together the histories of U.S.-Arab relations, modernization and development, and the global Cold War while advancing bold new arguments about each of these subjects. Upending much of the existing scholarship on the United States in the postwar Middle East, Citino places Arab perspectives and experiences at the heart of his narrative. He recovers how a diverse cast of Arab elites—among them nationalists, communists, and Islamists—interacted with U.S. officials in the field of development, analyzing their contests over the meanings of modernization as well as the consensus they shared on particular development ideas and programs. Through his regional focus on the Arab Middle East, Citino also brings fresh insights and much-needed local nuance to the global histories of the Cold War, Third Worldism, and anticolonialism. Methodologically, Citino's work is truly impressive. Grounded in a wide range of Arabic and English-language sources, and based on extensive archival research in Lebanon, Egypt, the United Kingdom, and the United States, his book succeeds in putting Arab and U.S. American voices into dialogue, emphasizing the agency of both sides in this exchange. Further, with his sustained attention to non-U.S. historiographies, Citino demonstrates the critical importance of integrating multiple scholarly perspectives into the study of U.S. diplomatic history. His innovative and engaging book represents an outstanding example of both international history and the history of American foreign relations.



Recent Books of Interest

Abbenhuis, Maartje. *The Hague Conferences and International Politics, 1898-1915*, (Bloomsbury, 2018).

Allcock, Thomas Tunstall. *President Johnson, The Cold War, and the Restructuring of American Foreign Policy*, (Kentucky, 2018).

Allison, David and Larrie D. Ferreiro, eds. *The American Revolution: A World War*, (Smithsonian, 2018).

Bashevkin, Sylvia. *Women as Foreign Policy Leaders: National Security and Gender Politics in Superpower America*, (Oxford, 2018).

- Bayliss, John and Yoko Iwama, eds. *Joining the Non-Proliferation Treaty: Deterrence, Non-Proliferation and the American Alliance*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Bischoff, Eva. *Dimensions of Settler Colonialism in a Transnational Perspective: Experiences, Actors, Spaces*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Black, Megan. *The Global Interior: Mineral Frontiers and American Power*, (Harvard, 2018).
- Burke, Kyle. *Revolutionaries for the Right: Anticommunist Internationalism and Paramilitary Warfare in the Cold War*, (UNC, 2018).
- Cavell, Janice and Ryan M. Touhey, eds. *Reassessing the Rogue Tory: Canadian Foreign Relations in the Diefenbaker Era*, (UBC, 2018).
- Colman, Jonathan. *The Cuban Missile Crisis: Origins, Course and Aftermath*, (Edinburgh, 2018).
- Davies, Hannah Catherine. *Transatlantic Speculations: Globalization and the Panics of 1873*, (Columbia, 2018).
- Dietl, Raplh. *The Strategic Defense Initiative: Ronald Reagan, NATO Europe, and the Nuclear and Space Talks, 1981-1988*, (Rowman, 2018).
- Drake, Richard. *Charles Austin Beard: The Return of the Master Historian of American Imperialism*, (Cornell, 2018).
- Eicher, Peter D. *Raising the Flag: America's First Envoys in Foreign Lands*, (Potomac, 2018).
- Enstad, Nan. *Cigarettes, Inc.: An Intimate History of Corporate Imperialism*, (Chicago, 2018).
- Fishbach, Michael R. *Black Power and Palestine: Transnational Countries of Color*, (Stanford, 2018).
- Gainor, Christopher. *The Bomb and America's Missile Age*, (Johns Hopkins, 2018).
- Gawthorpe, Andrew J. *To Build as Well as Destroy: American Nation Building in South Vietnam*, (Cornell, 2018).
- Geist, Edward M. *Armageddon Insurance: Civil Defense in the United States and Soviet Union, 1945-1991*, (UNC, 2019).
- Goldberg, Ronald Allen. *Bystanders to the Vietnam War: The Role of the United States Senate, 1950-1965*, (McFarland, 2018).
- Gijswijt, Thomas. *Informal Alliance: The Bilderberg Group and Transatlantic Relations during the Cold War, 1952-1968*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Heller, Joseph. *The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-67: Superpower Rivalry*, (Manchester, 2018).
- Hurst, Steven. *The United States and the Iranian Nuclear Programme*, (Oxford, 2018).
- Ichikawa, Hiroshi. *Soviet Science in the Shadow of the Cold War*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Jackson, Simon and Alanna O'Malley, eds., *The Institution of International Order: From the League of Nations to the United Nations*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Jensehaugen, Jorgen. *Arab-Israeli Diplomacy under Carter: The U.S., Israel, and the Palestinians*, (Tauris, 2018).
- Johns, Andrew L. and Mitchell B. Lerner, eds. *The Cold War at Home and Abroad: Domestic Politics and U.S. Foreign Policy since 1945*, (Kentucky, 2018).
- Judge, Edward H. and John W. Langdon. *The Struggle Against Imperialism: Anticolonialism and the Cold War*, (Rowman, 2018).
- Kalic, Sean N. *Spies: The U.S. and Russian Espionage Game from the Cold War to the 21st Century*, (Praeger, 2019).
- Kaplan, Amy. *Our American Israel: The Story of an Entangled Alliance*, (Harvard, 2018).
- Kaufman, Scott. *The Environment and International History*, (Bloomsbury, 2018).
- Krause, Scott. *Bringing Cold War Democracy to West Berlin: A Shared German-American Project, 1940-1972*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Laderman, Scott. *Imperial Benevolence: U.S. Foreign Policy and American Popular Culture Since 9/11*, (California, 2018).
- Lahti, Janne. *The American West in the World: Transnational and Comparative Perspectives*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Lake, Marilyn. *Progressive New World: How Settler Colonialism and Transpacific Exchange Shaped American Reform*, (Harvard, 2018).
- Leebaert, Derek. *Grand Improvisation: America Confronts the British Superpower, 1945-1957*, (Farrar, 2018).

- Lindsay-Poland, John. *Plan Colombia: U.S. Ally Atrocities and Community Activism*, (Duke, 2018).
- Mayers, David A. *America and the Postwar World: Remaking International Society, 1945-1956*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Magu, Stephen M. *Great Powers and US Foreign Policy Toward Africa*, (Palgrave, 2018).
- Manela, Erez and Stephen J. Macekura, eds. *The Development Century: A Global History*, (Cambridge, 2018).
- Marsden, Lee. *Religion and US Foreign Policy*, (Routledge, 2019).
- McCann, Frank D. *Brazil and the United States during World War II and its Aftermath: Negotiating Alliance and Balancing Giants*, (Palgrave, 2018).
- McDaniel, Rodger. *The Man in the Arena: The Life and Times of U.S. Senator Gale McGee*, (Potomac, 2018).
- McVety, Amanda Kay. *The Rinderpest Campaigns: A Virus, Its Vaccines, and Global Development in the 20th Century*, (Cambridge, 2018).
- Morgan, Michael Cotey. *The Final Act: The Helsinki Accords and the Transformation of the Cold War*, (Princeton, 2018).
- O'Connor, Brendon. *Anti-Americanism and American Exceptionalism: Negative Stereotypes About Americans and their Consequences*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Ostermann, Christian. *Between Containment and Rollback: The United States and the Cold War in Germany*, (Stanford, 2018).
- Patton, Raymond. *Punk Crisis: The Global Punk Rock Revolution*, (Oxford, 2018).
- Payne, John D. *State-Sponsored Terrorism and the USA: Diplomacy, Terror, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Late Twentieth Century*, (Tauris, 2018).
- Pyle, Kenneth. *Japan in the American Century*, (Harvard, 2018).
- Rimner, Stephen. *Opium's Long Shadow: From Asian Revolt to Global Drug Control*, (Harvard, 2018).
- Rofe, Simon, ed. *Sport and Diplomacy: Games Within Games*, (Manchester, 2018).
- Ryan, David. *US Collective Memory, Intervention and Vietnam: The Cultural Politics of US Foreign Policy Since 1969*, (Routledge, 2018).
- Schoultz, Lars. *In Their Own Best Interest: A History of the U.S. Effort to Improve Latin Americans*, (Harvard, 2018).
- Trautsch, Jasper M. *The Genesis of America: US Foreign Policy and the Formation of National Identity, 1793-1815*, (Cambridge, 2018).
- Walker, William. *The Rise and Decline of the American Century*, (Cornell, 2018).



Professor Peter Hahn
President, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations
June 14, 2018

Dear Peter,

I have served since 2003 as SHAFR's representative on the State Department's Historical Advisory Committee. As you know, that committee, established by statute, advises on the integrity and reliability of volumes published in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* documentary series and on the transfer of records related to foreign affairs to the National Archives.

I resigned from the committee last week, following our June meeting in Washington, D.C., because of concerns about the possible politicization of the process by which members are appointed to the committee and have their memberships renewed. During our meeting of December 2017, we were informed by the Office of the Historian (HO) and its parent bureau, the Bureau of Public Affairs (PA), that a request for the renewal of the three-year terms for three of our members had been rejected by the State Department. Since recommendations for renewals from HO and PA have over the past two decades been commonly and routinely approved, we naturally requested an explanation for this surprising break from precedent. We were told by the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Susan Stephenson that we deserved an explanation and that she would try to provide one for us.

We asked again at our March 2018 meeting, presided over this time by a new Assistant Secretary, Michelle Giuda. She told us that since she was new in the job she was not yet in a position to provide an explanation. I expressed my concern to her that the non-renewal decision appeared to be a politicization of a non-partisan committee, especially since it was unprecedented, and said that unless my concerns could be allayed by the next committee meeting I would have no choice but to resign.

In view of the long tenure that some of us have had on the committee, and in response to her request for a concrete plan for how we might rotate new members onto the committee without losing too much expertise all at once, our chair, Richard Immerman, presented her with a rotation plan by which all nine of our members would be replaced over the next two years. She accepted that plan at the meeting last week, but refused to offer us an explanation for the non-renewal decision. Those who were recommended for new, three-year terms last Fall will now be removed from the committee following the next meeting, in August. She told us that she could not tell us why the non-renewal decision was made or by whom. She could not even tell us what office in the State Department made the decision. But she insisted the point was "moot," and that there was now a "New Day" in the state department under its new secretary of state. When I reminded former Acting Secretary Stephenson (now a Deputy Secretary of PA) that she had assured us in December that we were entitled to an explanation, she inexplicably responded that she "did not recall" saying that.

Under those circumstances, and in view of the concerns I had expressed at the previous meeting, I told Assistant Secretary Giuda that I would resign immediately following the June meeting. I also told her that, in the absence of an explanation from her or anyone at the State Department, it seemed reasonable to conclude that the non-renewal decision fit into a broader pattern, widely reported in the press, in which the current administration acts to replace or purge all members of government advisory committees who served under the Obama administration. I reiterated my concern that acting in such a fashion would be tantamount to politicizing a committee of non-partisan, academic experts.

Please share this letter with the SHAFR Council during the association's upcoming meeting at Philadelphia. And please thank SHAFR on my behalf for the opportunity to serve on this important committee for more than fifteen years. It has been a privilege and a great honor.

Sincerely,

Robert J. McMahon



To the Editor:

I would like to thank Professor Edwin Moise for his thoughtful and informative response ("Dispatches," September 2017) to my *Passport* article, "Assessing Obama's Foreign Policy" (April 2017).

More than one historian has described COSVN as "mythical." My description of COSVN as non-existent was inspired by the Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War. According to the Encyclopedia: "In reality COSVN was no more than a mobile leadership group, but U.S. military leaders believed it to be a fixed headquarters with a bureaucratic structure that could be located and destroyed, presumably crippling the communist war effort in the South."¹

Professor Moise is correct to say that COSVN existed as a leadership group; it was not my intention to deny this. There was no fixed headquarters. In their own minds, Nixon and his military planners were not striking the Central Committee Southern Branch, but the Central Office for South Vietnam.

Lubna Qureshi

Note:
1. Paul M. Taillon, "Central Office for South Vietnam" in *The Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, ed. Stanley I. Kutler (New York: Macmillan, 1996), 110.

To the Editor:

There was a slight error in my response to the reviewers in the April 2018 issue of *Passport*. I meant to single out the University of California Press rather than Cambridge University Press for not having a presence at SHAFR. In my original response I noted that I had not cited Pierre Asselin's recent book—meaning his 2013 book with UC Press—because I was unaware of it and the UC Press had never advertised the book at SHAFR. The copyeditor at *Passport* thought I meant Asselin's more recent book with Cambridge (which actually came out after my book and could not have been cited) and changed my wording. Unfortunately, I missed this when I submitted my final draft. I apologize to Cambridge University Press, which has been well represented at SHAFR for as long as I can remember and made a strong ongoing effort to engage with the organization.

Gregg Brazinsky
The George Washington University



A Post-Research Report on the Use of a Samuel Flagg Bemis Research Grant

I am writing to report that I have finished my dissertation research with a Samuel Flagg Bemis Research Grant I received in January 2018. Based on my original plan described in my grant application, I conducted research at the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in Ottawa for a month from February 20 to March 20, 2018. My project examines the origins of the North Pacific's territorialization and I hypothesize that America's and Canada's efforts to advance their food security, geostrategic security, and fishermen's economic welfare caused the North Pacific's territorialization after World War II. Thus, I mainly investigated records of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (RG 23), Department of the National Defense (RG 24), and Department of External Affairs (RG 25) at the LAC.

Documents contained in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans show that the department collaborated with the Canadian fishing industry and promoted a campaign to educate Canadians to eat more fish instead of scarce animal meat in the 1920s through 1950s. It was also useful to find documents that described transnational mobility and activities of Evelyn Spencer, a Canadian nutritionist who cooperated with the Canadian and the U.S. government to change dietary cultures of Canada and the U.S. by spreading nutritional knowledge on fish to the Canadian and American public.

Records of the Department of the National Defense demonstrate that Canadian naval officers were concerned about distant water and local Japanese fishermen who fished in waters off the coast of British Columbia. The records show that the department received from the Canadian public in the British Columbia many reports about Japanese fishermen's espionage activities. I could not find documents that explicitly demonstrated a connection between Canada's policy on the North Pacific and geostrategic threats imposed by Japanese fishermen's reported intelligence activities. But it is notable that the Canadian government accepted Japanese fishermen's espionage activities as more than a baseless rumor.

Records of the Department of External Affairs show discussions within the Canadian government about its policy on the North Pacific. The records also contained documents about detailed diplomatic negotiations between Canada and the U.S. about their policies on the North Pacific. While the diplomatic records made clear the Canadian government's nuanced attitudes toward changing the law of the sea, the documents help me reveal how the U.S. and Canadian governments finally took the first step to territorializing the North Pacific by extending their jurisdiction over marine biological resources into the high seas of the North Pacific.

Although this one-month research at the LAC was very productive, the archives' review system made it difficult for me to conduct an efficient research there. The LAC requires all restricted documents, even if they are declassified materials, to be reviewed before passing them to researchers. Many documents in the RG 24 and RG 25 are restricted materials and I needed to wait for at least some days (sometimes even more than two weeks) before investigating them. Since even archivists did not know how long the review process would take, I learned that handling this review process was the key to conducting research efficiently at the LAC in the future. That said, my research at the LAC was really fruitful and I appreciate the SHAFR's generous financial support for my dissertation project.

Koji Ito
PhD Candidate, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant Report

Recently, when my Zotero kept crashing and I suspected it was because it had become too massive to work properly, I calculated how many individual pages I had scanned last summer during two different archival trips—first, to the Library and Archives Canada (LAC), where I examined the papers of the Confederation Life Insurance Company and second, to the Royal and Sun Alliance Insurance Group Collection housed at the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA). I counted about 12,750 individual pages—each part of larger pdf documents—before I decided to stop. I then returned to processing this enormous, accumulated, digitized archive, reading for snippets to help me flesh out the story I am trying to tell in my dissertation, title currently TBD. Despite feeling daunted by this labor and unsure of where it will take me, I am sincerely grateful to SHAFR, which awarded me with a Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant. This award made both my research trips to the LAC and LMA during the summer of 2017 possible.

When I applied for my dissertation research grant, my project was tentatively titled “An Invisible Empire: The Consumer Credit Score and the Making of Global Corporate Power, 1890-1980.” This title and project was based on my initial foray into U.S.-based published sources, which had suggested that the construction of risk and creditworthiness were historically deeply intertwined. Therefore, to understand the history of the consumer credit score meant delving into the history of insurance, while making sense of the global dimensions of this story entailed researching the colonial past of the private insurance industry. This presented an immediate archival challenge. The records of insurance companies and credit rating companies, especially ones that chronicle their history in the twentieth century are notoriously difficult to access. The collections at the LMA and LAC, however, are a vast, if underused, treasure trove containing records that document the daily activities and concerns of some of the largest insurance companies in Britain and Canada into the 1960s. Even better, these collections are mostly open to researchers. Furthermore, both collections hold material related to the transnational development of British and Canadian life insurance companies, such as correspondence about the daily management of insurance companies’ international branches.

As it goes, digging into these collections came with unforeseen, but productive challenges that have forced me to question assumptions about how insurance companies expanded their markets. Now, my project focuses on neither the consumer credit score or deals with much that happens after 1946. Instead, my archival research helped me identify a more narrow, but historically significant story about a globally connected insurance industry that sought to control, discipline, and profit off of the hazards that empire making produced. This story predates the history of the consumer credit score, providing an important genealogical thread, but one that also stands on its own as important in grasping the role corporate power—and not just banks, mining, or agriculture—played in the building of U.S. empire. Indeed, on the heels of American military violence and invasion following the Spanish-American War in the Philippines and Caribbean, private insurance companies swooped in to take advantage.

What I found that has surprised me most, however, and what I’m still working very much through, are the things the archive revealed to me about the everyday labor that went into British, Canadian, and American insurance companies’ attempts to expand their markets in the early twentieth century. There are so many letters squabbling about office furniture or the proper place to put the company sign on the front of the office building. Arguments over how to choose a trustworthy manager, a particularly salient problem for an industry built on assurance against hazard and fraud, produced piles and piles of paperwork. Its this space of the intimate and everyday that the archival records took me to and from which I’m not trying to write a dissertation about the makings of a global, private insurance market from the bottom-up.

*Rachel A. Bunker
May 7, 2018*



Thanks to the 2016-2017 **SHAFR Dissertation Completion Fellowship**, I was able to finish and file my dissertation at UC Berkeley in August 2017, titled “Sowing Seeds and Knowledge: Agrarian Development in the US, China, Taiwan, and the World, 1920-1980.”

The dissertation examined the history of global agrarian development, beginning with American missionaries, scientists, and engineers who worked on famine relief China at the start of the 20th century. The efforts of these American and Chinese famine relief experts eventually turned from relief to prevention, which engendered debates over how best to achieve long-term agrarian modernization and societal improvement. By the 1940s, these efforts ranged from selecting high yielding crop cultivars, organizing farmers associations and agricultural extension networks, to encouraging community cultural practices.

After 1949 with the retreat of the Chinese Nationalist government to Taiwan, these policies thrived under the close US-Taiwan Cold War partnership, to the degree that they sought to globalize Taiwan’s success at agrarian development for diplomatic purposes. Beginning in 1959, Taiwan sent agricultural missions abroad to curry favor among Third World nations. Many of the newly decolonized nations in Africa and Asia possessed crucial votes in the United Nations that were needed to thwart attempts by the People’s Republic of China to become the officially recognized government of China. In these agricultural missions, Taiwanese scientists and technicians presented and marketed a model of agrarian development that was in part defined by American practices in science and land reform, yet also marked by Taiwanese history, knowledge, and experience.

The dissertation thus sought to illustrate one example of how American modernity was understood in global contexts around the world, and the afterlives of their ideas once engaged by local Chinese and Taiwanese actors within South-to-South networks.

*James Lin
U.C., Berkeley*



In Memoriam: Robert L. Beisner

SHA FR mourns the loss of Robert L. Beisner, its 35th president, who passed away January 31, 2018, in Washington, D.C. It was entirely fitting that the photograph of Bob that accompanied his obituary in the *Washington Post* captured three things—his warm smile, the logo on the lectern before him of American University where he spent his career, and on the table next to him a copy of *American Foreign Relations since 1600: A Guide to the Literature*. It also was appropriate that the first half of the text of the obituary described Bob's monumental 800-page biography of Dean Acheson, his inestimable contribution to the literature on the Cold War.

Bob was born in Lexington, Nebraska, on March 8, 1936, and attended Hastings College in his home state for two years before transferring to the University of Chicago. Awarded membership in Phi Beta Kappa, he stayed at Chicago through to a Ph.D. in 1965. He joined the faculty of history at American University that year, after having a brief teaching stint at Colgate. He rose through the academic ranks, served a term as department chair, and was Director of General Education at the time of his retirement. He received numerous recognitions for teaching, research, and service at American. In 1976, he married Valerie French, who was also a member of the History Department at American and later a dean. She preceded him in death in 2011.

After his retirement from American as professor emeritus in 1997, Bob's contributions to the field of diplomatic history continued. He served as president of SHA FR in 2002; guided 32 contributors through the compilation of



Picture by Jeff Watts, American University Publications

the *SHA FR Guide*, published in 2003; and researched and wrote his huge biography of Acheson, published in 2006. He had a long-term impact on SHA FR not only through his editing of the *Guide* but also in his role during his presidency in the selection of Peter Hahn as SHA FR executive director (Peter filled that key position until 2015).

Bob's distinguished career as an award-winning scholar began with his University of Chicago dissertation on the debates over American empire during the Spanish-American War. Published by McGraw-Hill in 1968, *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialist, 1898-1900*, received the AHA's John H. Dunning Prize and the Alan Nevins Prize from the Society of American Historians. It appeared in print at the height of the Vietnam War. In reviewing the book for the *Washington Post*, Ernest May wrote that *Twelve Against Empire* revealed the "current antiwar protest movement is not unique in our history." The *Post* headlined the review "Peaceniks, vintage '98." The book's subjects were older men no longer active in

politics—including Andrew Carnegie, Benjamin Harrison, William James of Harvard, and E. L. Godkin of *The Nation*—but their arguments resonated with the young protestors of 1968 and remain timeless still today. They reasoned that imperialism endangered the U.S. Constitution, hurt the domestic economy, was immoral, and exposed America to needless risks.

When I was a graduate student searching for a dissertation topic, Bob's recently-published *Twelve Against Empire* was on my reading list. I thought that his model

of parallel biographies around a theme was a rewarding analytical approach, and I employed it in my own study of pioneer American diplomats in China in the late nineteenth century. Serendipitously, his slim but insightful volume, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900*, appeared in 1975 as I was revising my dissertation for publication. As with his previous book, his framing of the era was of immense value to me, not only for its articulation of America's changing role in world politics, but also in its discussion of how the character of American diplomats was changing from politically-connected amateurs to experienced if not fully professional foreign envoys. Although I cited Bob's important work in my sources, I did not realize at the time how much his attention to what is known as the human factor had shaped my own understanding of foreign policy making.

I had the opportunity to work directly with Bob on the SHAFR bibliography. In 1997, SHAFR President Emily Rosenberg invited Bob to serve as general editor of what became *American Foreign Relations since 1600: A Guide to the Literature*. This compendium was a major revision and expansion of the original *SHAFR Guide* published in 1983 under the guidance of Richard Dean Burns and continues in today's electronic age with the current online version begun in 2007. It was an honor that Bob and his advisory board selected me as one of the contributing editors. He and his assistant Kurt Hanson introduced me and the others to the marvels of EndNote, a software package that proved absolutely essential to the efficient and accurate assembling and editing of the thousands of entries in the Guide. The technology presented a steep learning curve for me and I suspect others, but Bob patiently and creatively led us through it. Microsoft Word had not yet introduced the bibliographic management tools it now has, and EndNote was invaluable to our work. To me, Bob was one of the leaders in the evolution of writers of history into becoming users of computer technology.

While he had been immersed in teaching, administration, and mentoring graduate students at American in the 1970s and 1980s, Bob began planning for another project similar to his dissertation. He thought he would write essays on several policy makers that shaped America's diplomatic traditions. In the 1990s he started writing on Dean Acheson, and he soon had a manuscript based upon secondary sources that was too long for a

chapter and was becoming a book. He began to mine the archives at the Truman Library and Yale University Library and eventually had 1200 pages written. When published by Oxford University Press, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* was pared down to about 800 pages.

Although there were other biographies of Acheson, Bob's work was not only the most detailed on the secretary of state's life, but it also was a major work on the Cold War and the Truman administration. It garnered a host of awards, including SHAFR's Robert H. Ferrell Prize, the Douglas Dillon Award from the American Academy of Diplomacy, and the Arthur Ross Silver Medal Book Award from the Council on Foreign Relations. It was the First Runner-Up for the Harry S. Truman Book Award from the Truman Presidential Library.

Reviewers of the book noted it was a perfect companion to Acheson's well-known memoirs because it was more accurate than Acheson's account and detailed the complex personal relationships among powerful rivals and colleagues of the secretary, such as Averell Harriman, George Kennan, George Marshall, Paul Nitze, and President Truman. Bob had written an assessment of Henry Kissinger in the pages of *Diplomatic History* in 1990, and Kissinger reviewed Beisner's Acheson biography for the *New York Times*. Each author was judicious in his evaluation of the other. In his SHAFR presidential address, written as he completed the biography, Bob shared some anecdotal accounts of Acheson's differing relationships with Alger Hiss and George Kennan. His hallmark from the beginning to the end of his career was careful use of biography to capture the workings of large policies. All who knew Bob as a friend as well as a scholar recognized how sensitive he was to others and how skilled he was with understanding people. He will be fondly and admiringly remembered.

—David L. Anderson

In Memoriam: Michael H. Hunt

Celebrating a Life in Scholarship, Teaching, Mentorship, and Friendship

Renowned historian and past SHAFR President Michael H. Hunt passed away suddenly on 12 April 2018, after a short battle with aggressive leukemia and pneumonia. His wife Paula Hunt survives him, along with daughters Heather Hunt (Effie) and Daniella Hunt, sisters Suzanne Matheson (Bill) and Patricia Johnstone, and cousins Lee Hunt (Marilyn), Elise Garnica (Mario), and Alan Hunt.



Michael Houston Hunt was born in 1942 in Texas. His father was in the military, so Michael spent extensive periods of time overseas. He attended Georgetown University, where he earned his BSFS ('65) from the Walsh School of Foreign Service. It was there that he met Paula, who would become his wife and lifelong intellectual partner. From there, Michael moved to Yale University, where he completed his MA ('67) and Ph.D. ('71) in History. Michael held academic appointments at Yale University (1971-1978), Colgate University (1978-1980), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1980-2008), and Williams College (2008). During the course of his career, Michael earned fellowships and funding from a wide range of sources, including the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Fairbank Center for East Asian Studies at Harvard University, National Defense Education Act Title VI, Fulbright-Hays, and each of the universities at which he was employed. He was the recipient of two Stuart L. Bernath Memorial Book Awards as well as the Bernath Memorial Article Award from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, and was elected President of SHAFR in 1989.

One can trace the roots of many of Michael's life-long interests to the global sojourns of his youth. He was a bit young for his time in Japan in the early 1950s to have much impact, but his father's later postings proved much more significant. While in Turkey as a teenager in the late 1950s, Michael first embraced an interest in antiquities. His parents also organized a European tour during the family's stint in Turkey, and it was in Italy that Michael connected that interest in antiquities to a larger and more fundamental recognition of the enduring nature of the human condition. That moment was life altering, providing the first indications of the big picture thinker Michael would later become as a scholar. College summers spent in Vietnam in the early 1960s offered Michael the opportunity to observe the early years of U.S. involvement there and heightened his desire to think systematically about the development and evolution of U.S. foreign policy. Similarly, a lengthy stint in Iran while in graduate school allowed Michael to witness some of the consequences of U.S. policymakers' nearly unconditional support of the Shah. Taken together, these early experiences forced Michael to think critically about America's role in the world both in specific circumstances and in the larger course of human history, and provided a foundation upon which Michael would build an incredibly complex and formidable scholarly agenda.

The first piece of Michael's scholarly agenda perhaps ironically offers a notable exception that his early travels do not help explain: his initial academic focus on China. To be sure, having spent time in Asia as an astute observer of international issues, he was keenly aware of China's growing presence on the world stage. But it was a formative encounter with historian Mary Wright early in his graduate school career at Yale University that turned Michael's scholarly attention to China. As with everything Michael did, he brought tremendous energy and discipline to his study of China, including spending in his estimate three hours per day throughout much of graduate school on his language skills. The result was a dissertation, numerous articles, and two books on the early years of Sino-American relations, all of which drew heavily on Chinese-language sources. *Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese American Relations, 1895-1911* (Yale University Press, 1973) and *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (Columbia University Press, 1983) each earned Michael a Bernath Memorial Book Award from SHAFR (1974 and 1984, respectively), while "Americans in the China Market: Economic Opportunities and Economic Nationalism, 1890s-1931," published in *Business History Review*, garnered the 1978 Bernath Memorial Article Award.

The reforms and opening undertaken by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s and 1980s created new opportunities both for research and for broader intellectual and educational exchange. In this context, Michael's focus shifted to understanding Chinese foreign policy more broadly. Several more articles and another book emerged: *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy* (Columbia University Press, 1996). At the same time, Michael began working more closely with Chinese scholars, both in his own research and as a mentor, helping scholars such as Zi Zhongyun and others enter the U.S. academic and publishing world. These collaborations also led to his own additional publications, including *Toward a History of Chinese Communist Foreign Relations, 1920s-1960s: Personalities and Interpretive Approaches*, co-edited with Niu Jun (Woodrow Wilson Center, 1995).

Michael's scholarship on China and work with Chinese academics is impressive enough in its own right, but it is important to note that he was at the same time developing a second component of his scholarly agenda. It was in this period that he wrote the book that would cement his position as one of the foremost historians of U.S. foreign policy. *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, first published by Yale University Press in 1987 and later updated in 2009, was a transformative work. There, Michael integrated diplomatic history, cultural history, and intellectual history as he identified three issues—a belief in American exceptionalism, adherence to entrenched racial stereotypes and hierarchies, and an ambivalence toward revolution—that helped shape an enduring U.S. approach to the world.

That work established a new pattern in Michael's work, as he embraced his desire to explore big questions that struck at the very heart of the U.S. experience and how the country interacted with the world around it. It is important to recognize that Michael would later tackle a similar set of questions with respect to China. A review of my notes from spring 1995, when I interviewed Michael as a first-year graduate student for an assignment in my Modern America readings seminar, reveals that he openly talked about wanting to be equally immersed in Chinese and U.S. history. He made the point explicit in that conversation by referring to *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy as Ideology, Two*.

This shift to focusing more explicitly on the foundations of U.S. foreign policy propelled Michael as he returned as a scholar to study one of the early formative experiences of his life—his and America's time in Vietnam. He had consciously avoided researching and teaching about the conflict from the late 1970s through the 1980s. He first taught a graduate course focused on the topic in the mid-1990s before ultimately adding a large undergraduate class into his regular rotation of offerings. As with most of Michael's work, there was a symbiotic relationship between his teaching on Vietnam and his writing, and two more books emerged from the project. First to appear was *Lyndon Johnson's War: America's Cold War Crusade in Vietnam, 1945-1968* (Hill and Wang, 1996), followed by *A Vietnam War Reader: A Documentary History from American and Vietnamese Perspectives* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010). I regularly assign *A Vietnam War Reader* in my own course on the conflict and can confirm that students find his selections and commentary engaging, insightful, and emotionally and analytically powerful. Michael would further expand his investigation of the connections between the ideological underpinnings of U.S. foreign policy and U.S. involvement in Asia in *The Arc of Empire: America's Wars in Asia from the Philippines to Vietnam* (University of North Carolina Press, 2012), co-authored with long-time friend and fellow Asianist Steven Levine.

Michael's work on Vietnam coincided in the mid-1990s with another major project targeting undergraduate students: an effort to rethink the documentary reader. Michael was generally dissatisfied with most document readers available for survey courses on twentieth-century U.S. foreign relations, believing that the inclusion of too many case studies permitted only superficial coverage, that the emphasis on U.S. documents over those from other places and actors promoted a U.S.-centric view of the world, and that most collections failed properly to contextualize the selections. *Crises in U.S. Foreign Policy: An International History Reader* (Yale University Press, 1996) sought to address all of these concerns. There, Michael focused in-depth on just seven crises, from World War I to the Iranian Revolution, included documents from multiple individual and national perspectives, and provided an extended introductory essay to each chapter that explored the main themes students would encounter in the documents that followed. More than twenty years after publication, *Crises in U.S. Foreign Policy* remains a popular and thoroughly unique classroom text.

The *Crises* volume also served as an early step in the evolution of a third strand of Michael's scholarly agenda, this one centered on the field of global history. Once again, the connection between teaching and scholarship proved critical. Michael had been teaching an undergraduate survey class on "The World since 1945," and over time developed a course "text" based on extended lecture notes. He continued to refine his approach to his undergraduate class while immersing himself in a growing body of literature in global history and playing a leading role in developing a Ph.D. track in the field at UNC. By 2004, Michael had developed yet another undergraduate text and

accompanying document reader—*The World Transformed: 1945 to the Present* and *The World Transformed, 1945 to the Present: A Documentary Reader* (Bedford/St. Martin's). Nearly fifteen years after their initial release, both volumes remain the standard bearers among survey texts and have been revised and published as second editions by Oxford University Press.

The events of 11 September 2001 and the U.S. interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq that followed led Michael to grapple once again with the most fundamental aspects of U.S. foreign policy and the American role in the world, in a sense to keep returning to the concerns that drove *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*. It began with a short essay published in the *Journal of American History* for the first anniversary of the attacks: "In the Wake of September 11: The Clash of What" (September 2002). There, Michael made his first attempt to understand what would ultimately become another quagmire in U.S. foreign relations. He would then connect those issues to his interest in global history by examining the rise of the United States as a global hegemon in *The American Ascendancy: How the United States Gained and Wielded Global Dominance* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007). As the tenor of American politics worsened over the last few years of Michael's life, he sought to address the audience he believed could most benefit from the clear-minded historian's analysis: policy makers. Unfortunately Michael passed away before *In a Time of Troubles: History and the Specter of American Decline*, a book manuscript he was working on with former graduate student James Huskey, could go to press.

Michael's scholarship was impressive for numerous reasons. First and most obviously, the sheer quantity stands out: no less than eight sole- or co-authored books, three edited documentary readers, and one co-edited volume. This review does not include the nearly fifty articles and book chapters, or the dozens of historiographical essays and book reviews. Nor does it include his efforts to bring scholarship to wider audiences through the many public talks he gave, the lifelong learning courses he offered, or the occasional online commentary he provided through his "On Washington and the World" blog. Second, the breadth and depth of his scholarship was stunning. Michael emerged as a specialist on U.S.-China relations and expanded that expertise into Vietnam and then across Asia more broadly. He then immersed himself in the domestic side of U.S. foreign policy before turning to the growing field of global history and investigating the U.S. role in the world in that context. Third, Michael's research and teaching agenda were intimately connected. His teaching drove his research and his research drove his teaching in equal measure, and he was deeply concerned with the scholarly resources undergraduate students had at their disposal. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, Michael was intellectually fearless. He was willing to learn new fields and literatures that covered vast swaths of time and space.

Michael brought similar effort and abilities to his craft as a teacher of undergraduates. He was as comfortable and effective in a small seminar of 15-20 students as he was in a large lecture with 150 students and three teaching assistants. In seminars, students knew they would have to work hard, but that Michael would be fair. Over the course of a semester, they would come to realize that he was there as much to learn as he was to teach. In large lectures, he would provide students with a short outline (usually handwritten and projected), and then wander up and down the aisles of the classroom carrying a few quarter sheets of paper with the key points he wished to make. He assumed students completed the required readings and used class time to push students to dig deeper and to engage with big questions. He was also himself always fully engaged. Even when visiting a discussion section to observe a teaching

assistant, he would find the conversations so energizing that he could not sit idly by and would have to join in. He also found some intriguing ways to get undergraduates to think about writing. I recall one semester when students were preparing to head home for Thanksgiving break. Michael used a series of humorous statements culled from police reports of minor traffic accidents to demonstrate how a misplaced comma or some other seemingly simple mistake could completely change the meaning of a sentence. He ended the session reminding the students to “be safe, both in your driving and your writing.”

It is also important to note here how seriously Michael took the integrity of the undergraduate academic experience. The scandal regarding academic improprieties with student athletes at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill issued a fundamental challenge to that integrity, not just for students but also for the faculty. Michael believed the faculty should provide the ethical and moral compass of the university. He therefore joined a number of retired faculty in challenging the University’s handling of the crisis, and he worked hard to shed light on how things could go so far off the rails.

Graduate seminars with Michael were unique experiences. They were always small—the largest I can recall is five students—and usually held at his house in the evening, though occasionally in his campus office. If the weather was good, the 2-3 hour conversation took place on the front porch, with one or two people on the bench swing and others on chairs. If inside, they would be held in the living room. Invariably, Michael punctuated the meeting by bounding up the stairs to get this or that book, document, or note that he belatedly realized he wished to share. Ninety minutes in, we would break for some Chinese green tea or orange juice, and the conversation would shift to some explicitly non-academic topic (the honey suckle in the yard, the squirrels in the trees, etc.). Break over, we would charge back into the academic topic of the day. The conversations were probing and wide ranging, beginning with subject of the assigned readings but usually ending with a discussion of a distant but somehow still related topic.

Michael shined even more brightly as a mentor to all of his graduate students. And there were many graduate students—he served as the primary advisor for approximately two dozen Ph.D. students during his time at Yale and UNC, and served on the dissertation committees of many more. Alan McPherson recalls: “Michael’s scholarship is what attracted me to North Carolina—his unadorned writing, his bold ideas, his creative use of cartoons and other cultural artifacts. When I finally worked under him, he impressed me as thoughtful and erudite but without any sign of pretense. He cared not by telling you he cared but by paying attention to your work—the badge of a true mentor.”

Each student has his or her story of how much effort Michael put into advising. He read every word we wrote as graduate students. He wanted to read papers written for other professors so he could have a better sense of what we were thinking about and how we worked. His turn around time on dissertation chapter drafts could be somewhat intimidating. Chris Endy remembers dropping a chapter draft off at Michael’s house and walking the 30-40 minutes home, only to enter the apartment and hear Michael’s voice leaving a message saying he had read the material and had a few thoughts to share. Michael’s focus on learning to write well—developing the ability to express one’s ideas

as clearly as possible and to build and sustain an argument paragraph by paragraph—was vital to the success of his many students. He was not afraid to let his pen hemorrhage freely on our papers, so it was important to check the ego at the door and accept the constructive criticism in the spirit with which it was offered. He had several catch-words and phrases that not only remain with us, but that we use on our own students, phrases like “unpack this” or “too ambiguous,” but often something more simple like “fuzzy” or “murky.” Personally, I was what I might affectionately refer to as a “project” when it came to writing, and Michael embraced that challenge. For that I am deeply grateful.

For Michael, mentorship extended beyond academics. He consciously sought to identify specific ways in which he might connect with, encourage, or guide each of his students. For one, it meant a gentle nudge to get more exercise (Michael made sure to swim one mile at least three

times per week for the vast majority of his adult life). For another, it was helping an international graduate student adjust to life in Chapel Hill and the American academic setting. For me, he recognized that as a new father who never really had a dad of my own, I could use some general guidance on parenting and how to reasonably balance that with writing a dissertation. And of course, Michael’s mentorship did not end when we graduated either. He was always happy to

read a manuscript, have an extended phone conversation, or offer any other advice he

might have.

At some point, mentorship turned to friendship. Reflecting back, it is clear the process began when we were still in graduate school, though we did not recognize it at the time. It usually started over dinner. Michael made it a practice to take each of his graduate students to dinner separately at least once an academic year. Partners were welcome, while discussion of the dissertation decidedly was not. Paula was always there, becoming just as vital a friend in her own right. These dinners presented the first opportunities to discover the many layers of Michael and the deeper friendship that would come with time. Years later, one would still be peeling back the layers and opening up new areas for conversation, finding out for example that he was a soccer aficionado, with a particular affection for Chelsea and Roma. Indeed, just hours before he passed away, Michael was following the second game of the Roma-Barcelona Champions League quarterfinal on his phone. At the end of the game, he pulled off his oxygen mask to exclaim, “ROMA WON!”

And with that we return to Italy, the site of the first stirrings of the scholar, teacher, mentor, and friend that Michael Hunt would become. From that early trip to Italy forward, Michael embraced the richness of life, a fondness for travel, a love of good food (especially when accompanied by exhilarating company and conversation), and the need to have interests beyond one’s profession. Over time, in the words of Arne Westad, Michael came to “symbolize all that is best in academia: curiosity, dedication, independence, and the ability to ask meaningful but sometimes tough questions.” Of course, for Arne and many of us, Michael’s reach went deeper, shaping us not only as scholars but also as human beings. We thank him for his example, his friendship, his energy, his scholarship, his mentorship, and, most of all, his humanity.

—Matthew Jacobs



Alan McPherson and Michael Hunt

The Last Word: July 14 vs. July 4

Kathryn C. Statler

July 14th:

Liberté, Égalité, et Fraternité in place? Check.
Winning the 2018 World Cup? Check.
Leader of the free world, with a government based on rule of law and civil discourse? Check.

July 4th:

Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness? Hmm....
Winning the World Cup? Didn't even qualify.
Leader of the free world, with a government based on rule of law and civil discourse? Not at the moment.

They're back, and no, not the poltergeists from the most terrifying movie I have ever seen. I'm talking about the French. You know, those people who once helped America out of a jam circa 1775-1783. And before you even get going on the anti-French jokes (I promise I have heard them all) the French government is the only member of the "big three" in the western alliance still holding the political, and moral, high ground. Brexit, fueled by anti-immigration hysteria and misinformation, and the current disarray of Theresa May's government automatically disqualify Britain, not to mention the English ran out of gas in their game against Croatia. And the United States, well the current government is clearly uninterested in leading as the termination of the Iran, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and Trans-Pacific Partnership deals demonstrate, and as the trade wars and rhetorical skirmishes with its closest allies make ever clearer. The United States and France are the two longest standing republics and greatest allies in the world. Why are their current trajectories so different? There are many reasons, but as I ponder the symbolism of July 14th and July 4th, I posit three in particular.

1. The French still believe in liberty, equality, and fraternity. They celebrate the importance of the individual but they carefully weigh unfettered individualism against actual equality of opportunity and the needs of the entire society. Americans are rejecting the basic right to live in peace (as we shoot ourselves and each other) and the liberty to have a genuine choice in politics (giving money to the least loathsome candidate is not a choice). The pursuit of happiness these days seems to be measured only in how many others can be brought down to one's own level of political, social, or economic misery.

2. The World Cup. It appears undeniable that winning the World Cup boosts a country's happiness quotient for at least six months, and you only win if you play as a team. That means passing the ball to someone else who will get the goal, and the glory, if you don't have the shot. It means making sure your alliance does not break down as you defend what is most important to you. And it also means that bringing together a diversity of views, talents, and cultures (immigrants if you will) is the only way to

breathe new vigor into your team. Fifteen of the twenty-three players on the French "Rainbow team" are of African descent. The United States has lost the ability to play as a team, whether on the soccer field, political field, or even in the field of civil discourse, which brings me to point three.

3. The French take rule of law seriously. Emmanuel Macron has not laid siege to the institutions of the 5th Republic. The French president is just as powerful as the American one yet operates within the laws and spirit of the laws embodied in the French Constitution. The French people also take their role as participatory citizens seriously; in fact they thrive on it, anywhere and anytime. The most delicate political, religious, and social issues are always fair game but at the end of the argument the participants go have a drink together. Americans no longer seem interested in any constraints on personal or political behavior much less engaging in an actual debate these days. Instead, they walk on egg shells around family, friends, and colleagues whose beliefs differ from their own while refusing to emerge from their preferred social media cocoon of political, social, and economic speculation. Critical thinking and facts are demonized. When Americans do engage, they do so with hostility and assumption of the other's worst intentions. We have to break this cycle, which, although coming from on high, has now permeated every institution (and organization) in the country.

Neither France nor its president is perfect. Racial tensions, immigration crises, and the far right all find fertile ground there too. But Emmanuel Macron has embraced the role of leader of the free world in a moment when authoritarianism and the rollback of representative governments are on the rise, and he should be commended for doing so. Perhaps, in rediscovering the United States of America, we can gain strength from the courage and conviction of other world leaders. And so, as the Bastille Day parade unfolded on the Champs-Élysées and the fireworks illuminated the Eiffel Tower in celebration of the French national day of independence, I rejoiced as well. And when the massive World Cup victory revelries for les Bleus broke out all over France, I applauded this tremendous display of unity. Let's not forget that after the American revolutionaries signed the Declaration of Independence in the Pennsylvania State House, the first country to aid the fledging republic was France. The founders, with all their flaws, were engaged in a grand and risky democratic experiment and understood that sometimes the answer must come from abroad. Without French diplomatic, military and economic aid the American Revolution would have surely floundered. The revolutionaries looked to France and the forging of a Franco-American alliance to fight for their Republic, and right now so am I. So am I.

Yours in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and in *liberté, égalité, et fraternité*.

PASSPORT

Society for Historians of American Foreign
Relations (SHAFR)
Middle Tennessee State University
1301 East Main Street, Box 23
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

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