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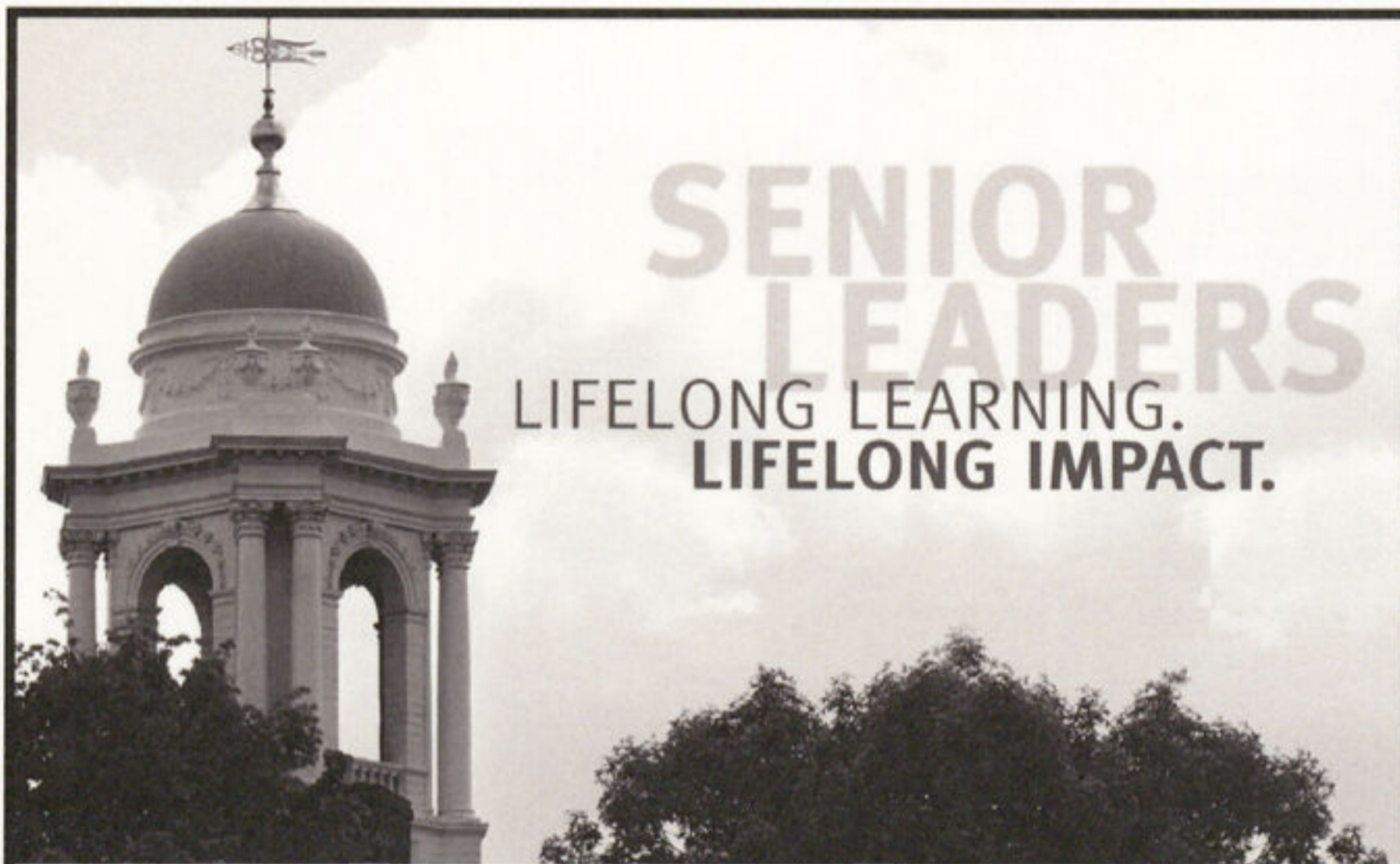
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Immutable and Permeable:

Contradictions of the United States-Mexico Border

By Anya Malkov

Photo: Anya Malkov

In May 2012, eleven students of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University visited El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, as part of a Leadership Service Seminar program sponsored by the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School and the offices of the Academic Dean and the Dean of Students.

From the top of Scenic Drive it was nearly impossible to tell where El Paso ended and Juárez began. They seemed just one city surrounded by arid plateaus. I had to look for landmarks to identify the U.S.-Mexican border that runs across this city—the barely perceptible Rio Grande in its concrete channel, the border highway, and a few bridges that are the international points of entry. With a population of nearly three million, El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, together make up the largest binational metropolitan area in the Western hemisphere.

Geographic unity of the border-straddling metropolis notwithstanding, El Paso is the safest city of its size in the United States, while Juárez is among the most dangerous in the world. It was not easy to convince Harvard University administrators to let us go into Juárez, despite the fact that the distance between the two downtowns is about the same as from Harvard to MIT. But we were eleven graduate students who came to the region determined to examine and experience the issues. Without crossing the border physically as well as mentally, we would be left staring through the fence, guessing about the people on the other side and projecting our preconceived notions on them—not unlike the current political debate on immigration reform.

Our first physical encounter with the border was in the desert outside the city. On the vast, windblown landscape, we could see the divide stretching past shrubs and patrol vehicles all the way to the horizon. It was a tall, discolored, chain-link fence topped with barbed wire. Beyond the fence, on the Mexican side, was a small trailer park. Kids spotted us and ran up to the partition. We doled out candy through the chain links, steeling our hearts when they asked for dollars instead. We watched the youngest kid smudge red candy goo all over his face and asked the older ones what they wanted to be when they grew up. The girls shrugged shyly, the boys said doctor, policeman and, inexplicably, border patrol agent.

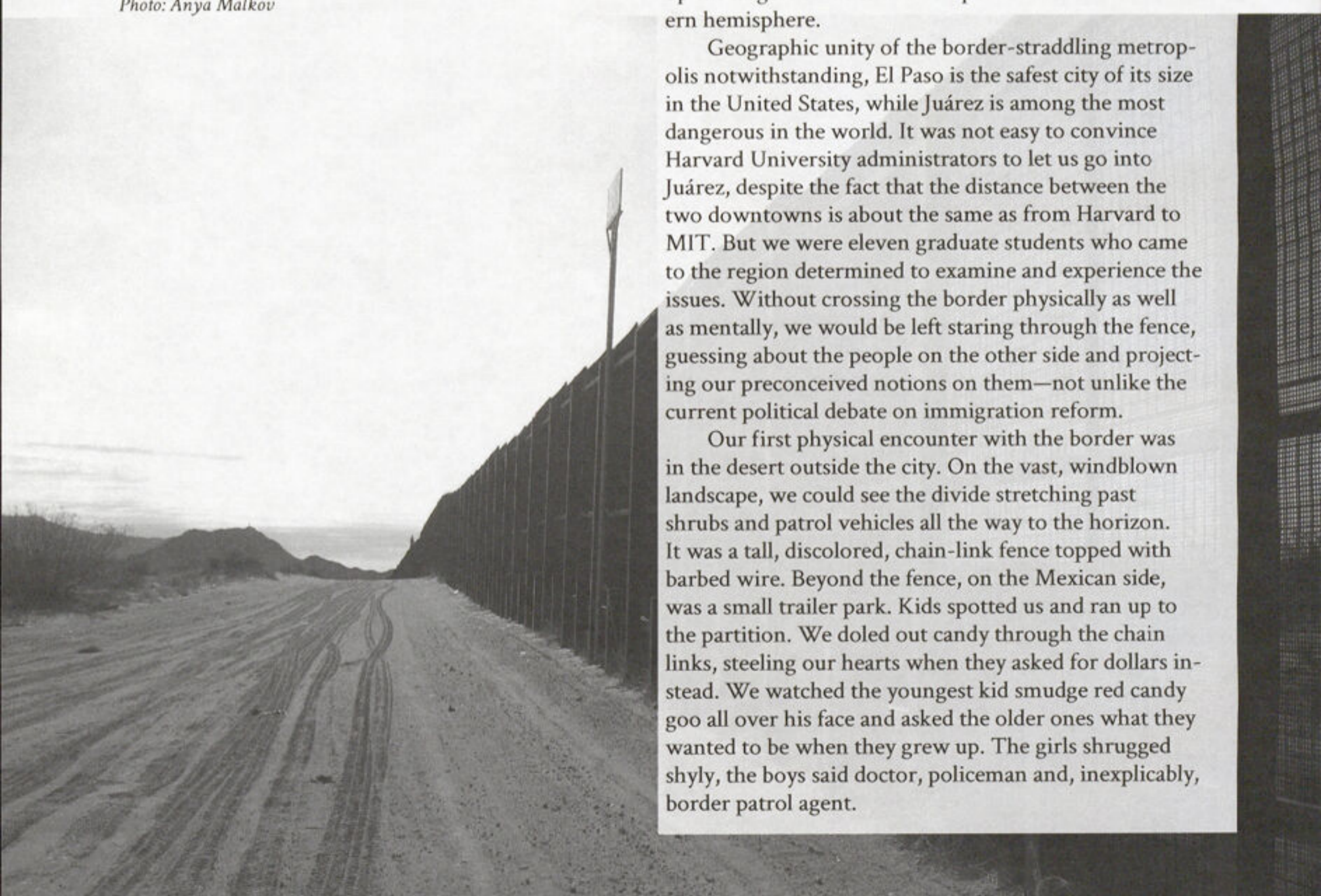




Photo: Flickr/David Dennis

That night at our group reflection, we were painfully aware that unlike those kids, we were on the privileged side of the fence. Prior to this encounter, I dismissed the argument that borders are unjust. But now that I had encountered it up close, the border seemed arbitrary, even silly. We were breathing the same air, standing on the same desert sand. Why was there a line in that sand that cut them off from the opportunities afforded to us?

Our second tour of the border was with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers. They took us to the “wall”—a section of the fence built since the increased focus on security of the George W. Bush years. Here it was a heavy mesh of fused metal rods and concrete-reinforced beams. The physical barrier is eighteen feet high and seven feet deep, but the virtual border spreads inland; the desert is covered by cameras, motion detectors, and, of course, patrols. 2,700 agents cover the 268 border miles of the El Paso sector.

Despite the border’s many layers, the officers said people can always outsmart a barrier when sufficiently motivated by profit or desperation. Agents have found tunnels under the fence and intercepted unpiloted planes sent over it to smuggle drugs. They have also rescued dehydrated migrants who tried to get through the most remote, most brutal parts of the desert where the fence is less secure.

The CBP officers we met had the demeanor of neighborhood cops: regular guys, friendly but serious about their law enforcement mission. One of the trip participants, the son of Mexican immigrants and an immigrant rights advocate, told me later that he expected them to be evil, or at least

corrupt, but now he believes that they were doing their job and doing it well. He said he grew up with stories of *la migra* (immigration authorities) picking up relatives, but found the guys we met hard to hate. He concluded that at least these two would not shoot an unarmed migrant or shoot holes in water canisters left by human rights organizations for weary border crossers.

Like my questioning of the border’s legitimacy, his questioning of previously unchallenged perceptions was significant. Each of us had crossed a mental border to understand the opposing perspective. Then it came time to cross the physical border. My stomach churned with anxiety. As we drove across the Bridge of the Americas from El Paso into Ciudad Juárez, I thought back to how intertwined the cities appeared from the mountaintop. On the ground, however, the contrast was stark. Shiny high-rises gave way to graffiti walls, colorful food carts, and occasional trucks full of machine-gun wielding *federales*—the Mexican federal police.

We turned off the main road onto a dusty, unpaved neighborhood street. After some bumpy turns, we arrived at the Centro de Derechos Humanos Paso del Norte—a prominent human rights and victim advocacy organization in Juárez.

As we settled in for a lunch discussion, the organization’s leader, Father Oscar Enriquez, asked the group: “Now tell me, why? Why do you people in America have such an insatiable appetite for drugs? When you smoke marijuana, why do you not care about people in Mexico dying?” Our group’s silence hung heavy. This was his border: Americans using drugs on one side,



Our group had strict orders to be back in the United States before dusk, yet life in Juárez went on, with weddings, quinceañeras, and parties, in spite of the violence.

Mexicans suffering from the drug trade on the other.

A discussion ensued, and differences of opinion emerged among both the Centro staff and our group. Who should take responsibility for the drug cartel violence in Juárez? There were no easy answers, but there were questions being asked honestly by everyone in an attempt to learn from each other. In a world of partisans, divides, and borders, this was a rare and significant event.

I was chatting, in limping Spanish, with Erica, a volunteer, whose name I've changed to protect her identity. She was around my age, and soon our conversation moved from policy to things we do on a night out with friends. Seeing my surprise that the youth of Juárez could still go out, she told me about her favorite places to go for dancing or karaoke. Our group had strict orders to be back in the United States before dusk, yet life in Juárez went on, with weddings, quinceañeras, and parties, in spite of the violence.

On our way back, we crossed the Paso del Norte Bridge on foot, breezing by four lanes of standstill car traffic—the rush-hour commuters at the port of entry. The American citizen lane was quicker than all the others. Each one of us went through an airport-like security screening. Aside from these layers of security, only two miles of city blocks separated Erica and her friends from our group who returned to the safety of El Paso.

Across the same bridges that we used that day, billions of dollars in goods cross the border on trucks and trains. Mixed into the legitimate stream of commerce, the drugs flow north, fueled by American demand. The guns, widely available in Texas, flow south.

As more families become desperate to escape the ensuing violence and poverty, more of them try to get into the United States. It is clear that a taller fence would fix nothing.

Securing the border, popular with U.S. pundits in the current immigration debate, is not a policy proposal that could address cross-border injustice. It is a rhetorical claim detached from the daily realities we experienced as we met with advocates, government officials, and immigrants. The border-straddling continuity of El Paso and Juárez symbolizes the interdependence between the United States and Mexico. The border is permeable and immutable all at once. On one side are comfortable consumers living in safety. On the other, struggling producers living in spite of violence.

Policy makers must consider the root causes of Mexican immigration, including the American demand for drugs, the Mexican government's failure to control cartel violence, and the role of trade policies in exacerbating poverty. Americans must not ignore their own complicity in the ills that plague Mexico, while Mexican leaders must not allow their government to be co-opted by drug money. Both countries share the responsibility to address these core issues for the sake of the people on both sides. Until that happens, no U.S. immigration reform effort will truly be comprehensive. ❖

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One Hit Too Many:

The Moral Responsibility of Football Fandom

By Mark Diaz Truman

I was a junior in college before football fandom got its hooks into me. A few friends and I bonded over my fledgling love for the Denver Broncos, one of the only sports teams close enough to my home state of New Mexico to catch my interest. On Sundays we would watch football all day at Hail Mary's, a sleazy dive bar. We were the only college kids in sight, drinking cheap beer and eating terrible bar food with the locals.

Toward the middle of that season, the Broncos were forced to start Steve Beuerlein, their backup quarterback who had previously done well playing for the Jacksonville Jaguars. During a game against the Minnesota Vikings, a star rookie defensive back caught Beuerlein as he was releasing a throw, knocking him against the Minnesota astroturf hard enough to crush the quarterback's hand. Beuerlein stood up and held his mangled hand up in front of him; it looked like he had two thumbs.¹ He could barely stand and had to be helped off the field. The pain must have been tremendous. I felt sick to my stomach.

When my friends and I turned back to our mozzarella sticks and cheap beer, we all tried to forget what we had seen. The National Football League (NFL) was happy to further obscure our memories, editing out the footage of Beuerlein's mutilated hand from replays, showing us the hit again and again while leaving out Beuerlein's tortured realization and his broken digits.² The announcers commended him for his bravery, and we all were thankful that nothing more serious occurred. It seemed so civilized.

I've learned since that it is precisely what the fans don't see that shapes the game for professional football players. They get hurt and get back up again, hoping that the injury isn't so bad that they are called out of the game. And only in those moments before the whole thing is sanitized and reprocessed do

fans see the real horror that comes with the territory. We cheer for those who tough it out, who suffer through, but it's becoming increasingly apparent that the damage that football players suffer stays with them long after their careers are over. Toughing it out, it turns out, can kill people.

Hidden Trauma: The Dangers of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy

Recent research has shown that the routine hits football players take can lead to a form of early dementia called chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE). Beginning as headaches and depression, CTE is a degenerative disease arising from repetitive brain trauma that eventually leads to cognitive impairment and full-blown dementia. In other words, every



football player, from the quarterback to the linebacker to the kicker, is at risk of enduring some of the worst kinds of brain damage a person can endure—while entertaining people just like me.

To be clear, I'm still a football fan. I spent most of 2011 keeping up with quarterback Tim Tebow's hijinks in Denver, and I was crushed when the New England Patriots routed my Broncos at Foxboro in the second round of the playoffs that year. I almost bought tickets to that game, hoping that Tebow would pull off another late-game miracle while I stood in the freezing cold next to thousands of Patriots fans. Perhaps there was part of me that knew Tebow's magic wouldn't last the season, but I was a believer all the same. Denver's wins were my wins; their losses were my losses.

Photo: DavidReber.com

Toughing it
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The 2012 season was different. Even though the Broncos signed an elite quarterback in the offseason, I managed to catch only a few games. I found other things to do on Sunday afternoons, projects that needed tending on Monday nights. I kept up with my fantasy football league, but there was something keeping me from making football a priority.

I tried to downplay my lack of enthusiasm, but perhaps it's time to be honest with myself: there is some nightmarish news coming out of professional football that's making it hard for me to even watch the sport. Amidst the usual news of trades and locker room drama, a steady drip of suicides and

depression, and aggressive outbursts—a condition so debilitating that suicide seems like a reasonable response.

While we may find some sort of external factor responsible for CTE, the mounting evidence suggests that the normal course of professional football is literally killing people, destroying their brains, and leaving them unable to function. Worse yet, we have no immediate response that can make the game safer; rules intended to reduce the number of damaging hits are highly ineffective against routine trauma, and helmets may be making things worse by encouraging players to hit without fear of acute damage. The league's re-

Perhaps the greatest change we could make is to simply demand that people acknowledge that the human body, even the human body of a man like Ray Lewis, is breakable.

damning research studies have revealed that professional football's dark side doesn't end with broken hands on rough plays. It ends in death.

CTE and Path Dependency

A moral accounting of football fandom used to have several open questions: Is the sport lethal? Are the players able to make informed choices about playing? Does our watching make us complicit?

The answer to the first question is now undeniably affirmative. The research on the brains of athletes, including Junior Seau, the acclaimed linebacker who shot himself in the chest last May, presumably to *preserve his brain* for exactly this sort of research, is conclusive: "Repetitive mild traumatic brain injury can trigger the development of chronic traumatic encephalopathy."³ In other words, just playing professional football, a sport that requires you to slam into other players at full speed a few times a week, is highly correlated with a disease that leaves you with dementia,

response is woefully inadequate, amounting to little more than fines for tough hits—financial penalties that do little to address the everyday nature of the micro-injuries that can kill players. Like boxing, football can now be counted among the sports that are no longer safe to play, even when all known safety precautions are taken.

The research on CTE is game changing. We can easily accept athletes making decisions about their acute health, like Beuerlein's broken hand, because their dangerous jobs are not all that different from those of dockworkers or crab fisherman. Society is not morally accountable every time someone picks up a profession that might result in injuries—as long as that choice is made with informed consent. The revelation that the routine exercise of the profession effectively kills people, however, should prompt us to reflect on whether or not the people involved can make informed choices about playing professional football. If they cannot, if it is unreasonable to expect the young men playing the sport



*Photo: flickr/
M Glasgow*

to be able to consent to the damage they are almost certainly experiencing, then we need to rethink our role in perpetuating the system.

There is little doubt that professional football players are intelligent, driven individuals; they have pushed their bodies to a point of physical perfection and managed the social and intellectual challenges of participating in a team sport at the highest levels. We have few grounds to determine that, as a class of people, they are unable to make good decisions regarding their health and employment.

Yet, the path dependency of football, the way that professional players start training for the sport in their early teens, should challenge our preconceptions of consent on this issue. No one would assert that a twelve- or fourteen-year-old boy could possibly consent to the dangers of full contact football, and yet not only do they play it on a regular basis, but they also find themselves increasingly locked into a single career path as their skills improve.

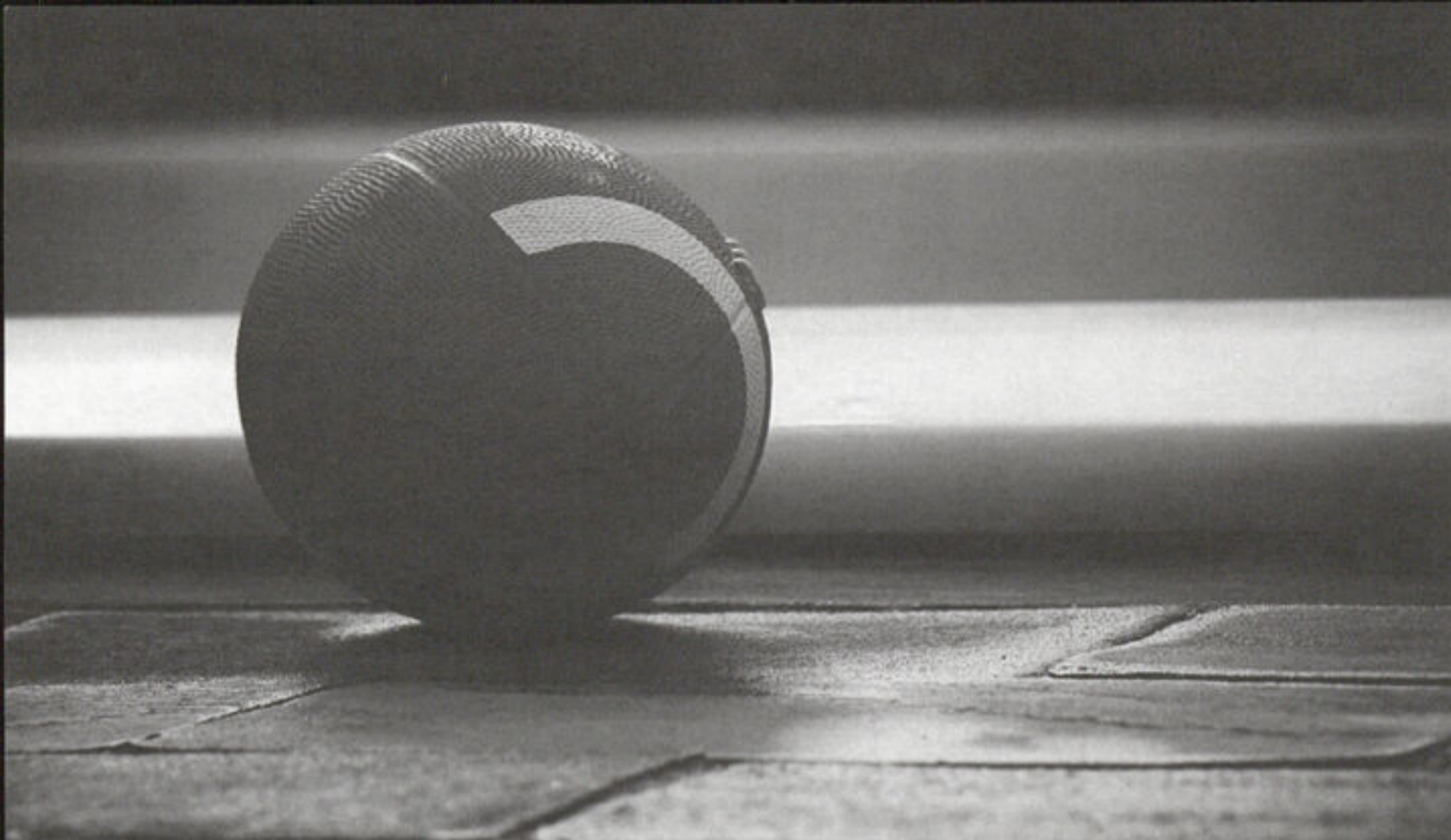
Thus, the benign choices of children limit the men those children will become a few years later. Successful high school players become collegiate players with scholarships; successful collegiate players leave their universities without a wealth of skills in other fields. In other words, it's not that these individual men can't give consent to the possible dangers of football; no one who starts playing the game at the early age required for an athlete

to develop professional skills can be expected to understand the long-term impacts of the game. The professional players who injure themselves on television every Sunday were once young men who did not understand the impact of their decisions.

Worse yet, many football players hail from economic conditions in which football may be one of the only perceptible ways out of poverty. Many of them view it as a burden to be endured, a set of life choices that are not ideal but necessary. Bart Scott, a former linebacker for the New York Jets, noted a few weeks after Seau's death that he doesn't want his son to play football, claiming that he would push noncontact sports to minimize the danger to his child. For Scott, the trade-offs were clear: "I play football so he won't have to. With what is going on, I don't know if it's really worth it."⁴ After hearing that, it's awfully difficult for me to believe that Scott, and others, would have chosen this life if they had felt other choices were available.

Difficult Choices

I was almost relieved this season when the Baltimore Ravens knocked my Broncos out of the playoffs in the second round. I didn't catch the game. I just heard about the final score. When I did, I thought to myself, "I can look away. I don't have to watch anymore." I'm troubled by the fact that I feel like I have to have a reason to stop watching altogether, as



There is no “safe” way to play football, not when we aren’t even completely sure what in football causes CTE, but there are steps we could take now to save lives.

Photo: flickr/Anderson Mancini

if my fandom is a responsibility I must fulfill instead of a pastime I enjoy.

Of course, my cynical intuition as a football fan tells me that I’m not responsible for any of the damage players suffer. It’s not up to me what kind of safety procedures the league puts in place or how the players’ union decides to prioritize the issues facing its members. I’m surely one of millions of fans who lives in denial about the role I play in perpetuating a sport that is killing people. Yet, I also know that if I regularly purchased the products of a company whose employees were exposed to the routine and regular dangers that NFL players experience, I would think about finding some other place to make those purchases.

As fans, our eyeballs generate billions of dollars for the league. If we all stopped watching together, what could the NFL do? Of course, the likelihood of that happening is vanishingly small, as small as the players collectively deciding that they don’t want to risk the health consequences or the owners collectively deciding that they don’t want to expose so many young men to brain damage. The NFL is a cultural juggernaut, a perpetual motion machine that generates too much money, prestige, and fame to slow down at my behest.

Yet, a continuing failure to do anything

about the crisis is no longer acceptable. The evidence is overwhelming. There is no “safe” way to play football, not when we aren’t even completely sure what in football causes CTE, but there are steps we could take now to save lives. The NFL could put independent doctors on the sidelines of every game to evaluate shaken-up players. They could provide additional support services to retired players, early treatments that could stop the slide into dementia and death. And more than anything else, they could set standards for youth leagues that could minimize how much damage is done before our children’s brains are fully formed. Failure to take action at this point is deeply unethical. It was one thing to not know and not act; we know enough at this point to demand a response.

But time moves slowly, and it is unfair to blame the NFL for the damage already done. There were signs earlier, indicators that all of the damage done by concussions might be lingering on, but the NFL is an enormous institution, a ship that is hard to right if it has gone off course. A consensus needs to emerge in the public, among the owners, and within the player group that things need to change for the sport to undergo the transformation that will save its soul.

Yet when I hear audio of the great Bernie Kosar, one of the league’s top quarterbacks

The league's response is woefully inadequate, amounting to little more than fines for tough hits, financial penalties that do little to address the everyday nature of the micro-injuries that can kill players.

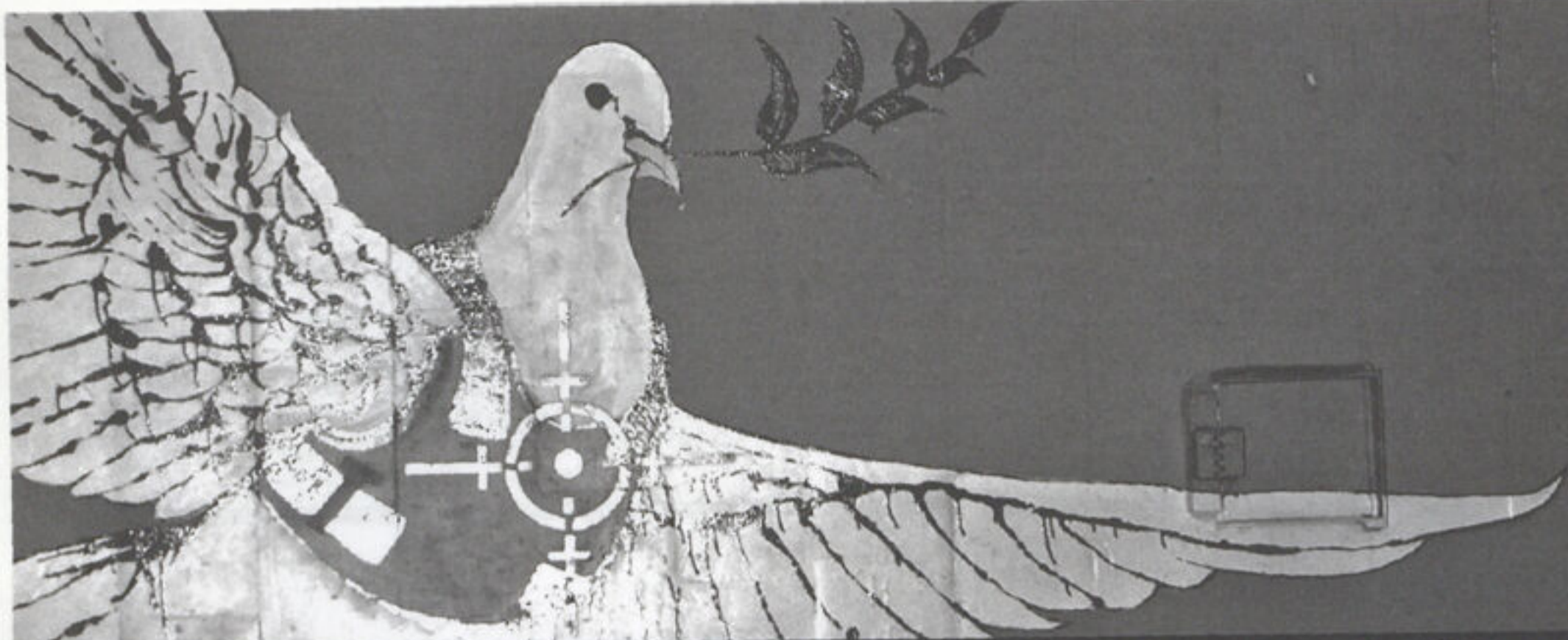
in the mid-1980s, tearfully slurring his words when calling into a morning talk-radio show, I'm struck by how little support and kindness is given to men who turned their bodies into wrecking balls for our amusement.⁵ They are too often regarded as a joke, dismissed as old men who never learned to live within their means when they were young and famous. Perhaps it's outside of our own ability to think of them as so fragile; perhaps we view them as too grand, too great, to fall to such a petty thing as a broken brain. Perhaps the greatest change we could make is to simply demand that people acknowledge that the human body, even the human body of a professional athlete, is breakable in ways we can't immediately see.

When the next season starts, I'm sure that I will try to lift up my spirits, as many other fans leap into action, and watch my favorite team. I'll join my usual fantasy football league and watch the highlights even if I miss the weekly games. But I imagine there must come a point at which I will not be alone in my frustration with the league's inability to address these issues, and difficult choices will have to be made by the players and owners alike. And if they are not made, perhaps we will all slowly find a better way to spend our Sunday afternoons. ❖

Mark Diaz Truman is a 2013 Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Prior to attending graduate school, Truman worked as a social entrepreneur in his hometown, Albuquerque, New Mexico, to help low-income students reach college.

(Endnotes)

- 1 Dailymotion. 2011. Steve Beuerlein dislocates finger against Vikings, 2003. Video, 9 August.
- 2 When I started writing this piece, I found out that play turned out to be Beuerlein's final down in the NFL; that hit ended his career.
- 3 McKee, Ann C. et al. 2012. The spectrum of disease in chronic traumatic encephalopathy. *Brain: A Journal of Neurology*, 2 December.
- 4 Smith, Michael David. 2012. Bart Scott: I don't want my son to play football. NBC Sports: ProFootball Talk, 26 May.
- 5 Chase, Chris. 2012. Bernie Kosar makes rambling, incoherent appearance on Cleveland Radio. *USA Today*, 6 December.



The Power and Complexity of the Hyphen:

A Palestinian-American Journey for Identity and Equality

By Asma Jaber

“Drop me off here!” I nervously looked over my shoulder, ran from the glaring yellow taxi, and stealthily jumped the fence.

This was my daily routine before walking through the main doors of my middle school in Travelers Rest, South Carolina. The driver was my late father, and the taxi was how he—a twice-displaced Palestinian refugee who migrated to the United States in 1971—provided for our family. Inside that taxi I was Palestinian, reliving my father’s childhood in occupied Palestine as he recalled story after story. As soon as I stepped out, I was in a completely different world—one in which my middle school classmates thought Palestine was Pakistan and poked fun at my lunch of stuffed grape leaves, making me long instead for a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

In college I thought I had reconciled my “in-betweenness”—the feeling of not fitting in either as a Palestinian in South Carolina or, I would later discover, as an American in Palestine. As it turns out, this “in-betweenness” followed me to Harvard. Inside Cambridge, Massachusetts, I am a Harvard graduate student, often shaking hands with the privileged and elite. When I return to South Carolina to visit my family, however, I find myself struggling to describe to my mother what I am studying at the Kennedy School.

It was not until more recently while living under Israeli occupation in Palestine that I realized the many facets of my in-betweenness, how it may be perceived by others, and the ways in which I can use it to promote justice and equality. Two stories from my time in Palestine describe what I mean.

In 2012, while traveling from Ramallah (in the West Bank) to Nazareth (a Palestinian town occupied

by Israel in 1948) to visit my family—a trip that involves multiple checkpoints—I found myself delayed for hours. When I walked through the first metal detector at one checkpoint, nothing rang. On the other side, the Israeli Defense Force soldier was about to hand me my passport. But as I stretched out my hand to receive it, she looked at my arm, her eyes wide. I looked at my arm. I knew what was about to happen.

“What’s that?” she asked as she pulled my passport close to her chest.

“Oh this?” I pointed to my bracelet. “This is a bracelet in the shape and colors of a Palestinian flag,” I answered matter-of-factly.

“To the side, over there,” she motioned.

I waited an hour for three Israeli border patrol guards to come and interrogate me. I went through a round of questioning, feeling like I had committed a crime by simply expressing my Palestinian heritage on my arm.

“Where are you from?” one soldier asked.

“I was born in the United States, and I’m Palestinian.”

“I don’t understand,” he said. “Are you American or Palestinian?”

I told him I was both. The subsequent conversation continued for about an hour, with more questions about my identity. The soldiers did not like my answers, which expressed my two identities and frustrated their ability to box me into either category: Palestinian or American.

In yet another poignant instance, while leading a group of Kennedy School students on a trek to Palestine in 2012, I brought my classmates to visit the Ibrahim Mosque at the Cave of the Patriarchs in the West

Bank city of Hebron—a place of religious significance to both Jews and Muslims. There is a checkpoint right below the entrance to the holy site where Israeli Defense Forces forbid Palestinians from driving or walking on the main road of the Old City (Palestinians can only walk on a narrow sidewalk, while Israeli settlers and soldiers can walk and drive anywhere along the road). On the first day, I visited the holy site with the Kennedy School group and faced no trouble walking on the road that is forbidden to Palestinian vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The next day, I went to the mosque to pray alone. When I attempted to walk on the same road that I had the previous day, however, an Israeli soldier stopped me and prohibited me from doing so. I explained to him that I walked on that same road yesterday.

man rights. Second, by attaining an advanced education while still embracing my humble upbringing, I plan to help others in my situation, and Palestinian refugees everywhere, realize their rights.

If I had only a Palestinian ID card last summer, Israeli Defense Forces would not have allowed me to enter Palestinian lands occupied by Israel in 1948 (even more extreme: if I had a Gaza ID card I could visit neither Israel or the West Bank). My American passport (the only one I have ever held), however, is what provided me access to all of Palestine/Israel this past summer. My Harvard Kennedy School Master in Public Policy degree is what I hope will allow me to return and plant myself back in Palestine—a pilgrimage in and of itself, since the Israeli occupation uprooted my parents and plummeted their children into perpetual exile.

Are you Palestinian? **Yes.**

Well you can't walk or drive here.

But I walked on this same road yesterday.

Well, today you are Palestinian.

"Are you Palestinian?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied.

"Well, you can't walk or drive here," he said.

"But I walked on this same road yesterday," I said, trying to reason with him.

"Well, today you are Palestinian."

But yesterday I had also been Palestinian.

In the bracelet incident, the Israeli soldier did not like my "in-betweenness"; in the latter encounter, the soldier ascribed certain "privileges" to my American self, but not to my Palestinian self, making clear to me how I can use the privilege that my American identity carries to empower my Palestinian-ness and Palestinians everywhere. In both instances, my Palestinian identity was a threat to the State of Israel because, as a descendant of refugees, I have a right by international law to return to my ancestral land in Palestine. It is for this reason that refugees like my family are among the most contentious issues in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

My drive for justice and equality continues, and it is the recognition of both the challenge and the privilege of my "in-betweenness" that fuels this drive. First, my ability to assert that I am Palestinian in both of the aforementioned instances, knowing the weight of that assertion, is a step toward affirming my inalienable hu-

More importantly, my graduate studies here will position me to work toward the Palestinian right of return.

While this is my own story, it is one from which many of us who pursue careers in public policy can recognize parts of their histories. In order to work in this field, we must be able to use the "disparate halves" of each of our individual identities and to reconcile our histories with our "ivory tower" education. Perhaps we are not made to ever fully fit in, and that is okay—in fact, that is what makes us better leaders, diplomats, and global citizens. It is not until we can embrace our identities, no matter how conflicted they may make us feel, that we can use them to advance human rights and make a better world for everyone. Little did I know that in my father's taxi I had embarked on my first steps toward embracing my multiple identities; little did I know that such cab rides would define my future. ❖

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Who Started the Mexican Drug War?

What Google Taught us about the “Narcos”

By Viridiana Rios



Photo: CBP Photography

At an undetermined time, somewhere in Mexico, a violent war among drug cartels erupted. For too long it was difficult to elaborate—with absolute certainty—on that statement.

Just after the turn of the millennium, drug lords who had “peacefully” conducted operations to introduce cocaine and other illegal substances into the United States since the early 1950s started battling for turf. The war escalated rapidly, and from 2006 to 2012 it claimed a total of 63,000 lives.^{1,2}

Drug-related violence soon became the talk of the town, the favorite puzzle of academics, and the defining feature of Mexico’s then-president Felipe Calderón’s term in office. His government was the first to begin tabulating drug-related homicides in December 2006 and the one that embraced a war against drug trafficking organizations as its top priority.

During Calderón’s time in office, the body count grew steadily. In 2008 and 2009, Ciudad Juárez, a city of about 1.4 million people that shares a border with El Paso, Texas, was the most violent city in the world. By 2011, nineteen out of the fifty most violent cities were in Mexico.³

The Mexican government data on this war, as with most wars, had both the ability to illuminate and obfuscate. There were days when we, meaning those of us citizens who were looking at the data provided by the government, knew that up to nineteen homicides could be linked to drug-related activities within a single city. Such was the case in Chihuahua, a city of 824,000

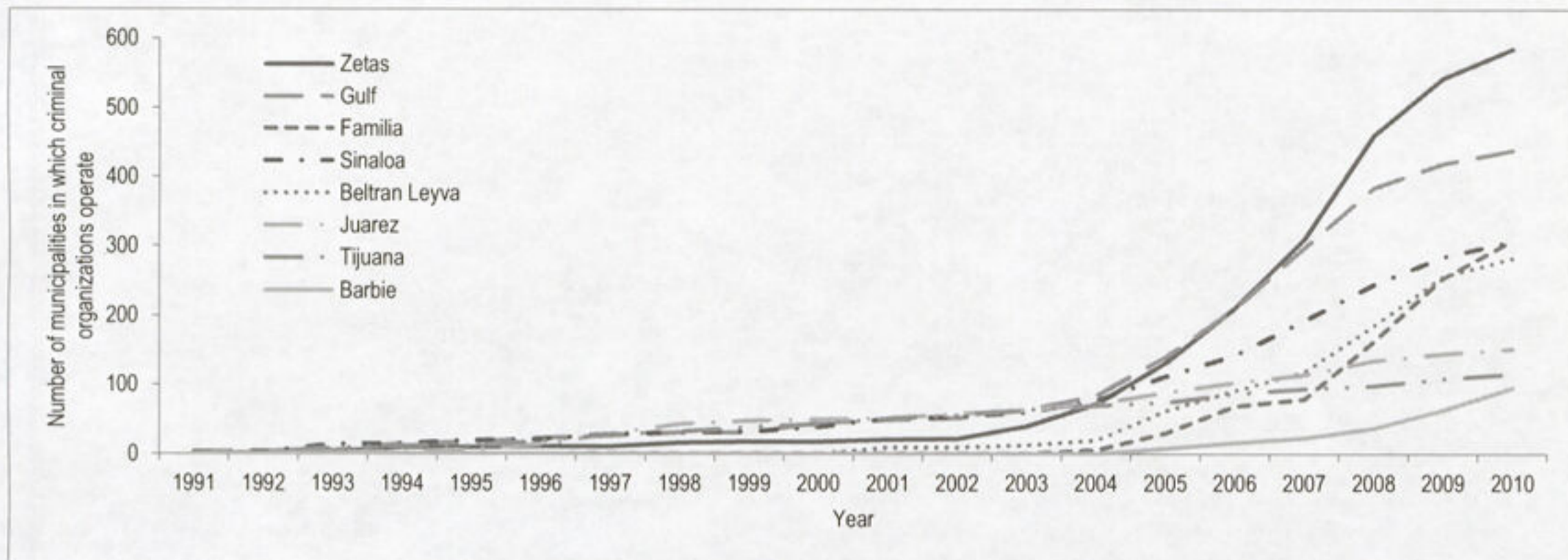


Figure 1 — The waves of criminal expansion: Number of Mexican municipalities where drug cartels operate.

people, in June 2010. The data also told us that there were times when traffickers took breaks from their violent activities; for example, nobody died in Chihuahua in June 2007. The data told us that traffickers did not like to fight in January, preferred to murder on weekdays, and took days off. They rested on Christmas Eve, even though December was always the most violent month of the year. They fought the most in summer. Sundays were calm.⁴

For too long, these statistics existed in lonely silos. They were isolated, revealing frustratingly small slivers of the war's personality.

One aspect that was clear from early on is that most homicides take the form of targeted executions. Bodies are normally discovered late at night, dumped into suburban areas or on highways with wounds caused by high-caliber weapons. For their part, the executioners are careful to provide evidence of their cruelty and motives. Victims are beheaded, dismembered, hung from bridges, and littered in public places. Strewn amidst the dump heap of bodies are messages scrawled for the world to see: "The Zetas are here"; "This is what happens to those from La Familia"; or "Mazat-

lán has an owner." These messages are meant to claim rights over territories or send specific signals to rival organizations.

Average citizens decry their city being turned into a battlefield. Traffickers are not only killing one another, they are targeting journalists, mayors, and police officers as well. They extort funds from local businesses and kidnap Central American immigrants. Piles of bodies are often found decomposed alongside the territories where the cartels operate. Small border communities are now ghost towns, their former residents having fled for safer passages. Twitter is a depository of violent stories shared in real time, many of which are not covered by the media.

The pundits around the world who tracked all of this mostly blamed the Mexican government for the escalation in drug-related violence. They saw it as no accident that this exponential increase in drug-related homicides began in 2006, when President Calderón took office and deployed the military throughout the country to fight the cartels. They say he believed that citizens would always support "those who fight the bad guys," and that he launched the war because "he needed something to legitimize his administration."⁵ A

war against crime, they claimed, was a perfect excuse to unite Mexico behind its president.

Of course, Calderón's administration promptly rejected these critiques. The president claimed that he dispatched the military because the cartels had become increasingly violent and were significantly impacting the rule of law. In some states, criminal organizations were overpowering local police and had consolidated control over local politics. Had the federal government not done anything about this situation, the president claimed, the country would have collapsed.

This debate about the drug war continued endlessly. Blame was assigned. Fingers were pointed. Presidential approval ratings wavered. The truth, however, was that nobody knew when, why, or how all of these problems started.

As important as drug-related homicides are for the international security agenda, we still knew very little about criminal groups in Mexico. We did not know when, precisely, this war started because we lacked basic information about the areas in which traffickers occupied. The "why" and "how" of their territorial seizures were a mystery. Furthermore, we lacked information about the number of

drug-related homicides before 2006 because nobody counted this type of murder before. It was impossible to devise a strategy to reduce criminal violence because we did not know what had caused that violence in the first place.

In 2007, Mexico and the United States had started a \$1.6 billion war against criminal groups without knowing who the enemy really was.

And then Google came into the picture.

While working on our PhDs at Harvard University, Michele Coscia and I found a way to leverage Google to unlock unprecedented and crucial information about the nature and modus operandi of drug cartels.

Together we developed a computerized search algorithm that identified the municipalities in which criminal groups operate. It used all the information that has ever been published online and indexed by Google News in national or local press as well as in specialized blogs. We called our algorithm MOGO (Making Order Using Google as Oracle) because Google is our platform and our oracle, and because we order information to identify the municipalities where criminal groups operate.

Obtaining information from public online sources is fruitful because of a particularity of Mexican organized criminal groups: they publicize themselves. Mexican criminals are noisy. They discuss their actions in digital forums and blogs. They share messages and advertise their crimes on billboards. From 2006 to 2010, there were at least 1,800 such billboards placed by members of criminal groups in twenty-nine states of the Mexican Republic. The communications targeted both their criminal en-



Figure 2 — Number of criminal organizations operating in Mexico's municipalities.

emies and the Mexican authorities, ranging from threats such as “the war has begun” to signed statements wishing Merry Christmas to citizens. Indeed, if we know anything about Mexico’s “narcos,” it is that they do not shut up. Academic studies have shown that the amount of data that individuals are willing to disclose on the Internet is much greater than that which they would reveal in person, and criminals are no different.⁶ Millions of pieces of the puzzle of crime in Mexico are lost in a vast sea of digital information.

A few decades ago, the lack of information was the main obstacle faced by researchers. Today, the problem is how to sort, process, filter, and verify the massive amount of intelligence available. We live in a time in which everything is recorded; the skill comes in knowing how to look for it. So Michele and I looked for traffickers.

We armed ourselves with a

horde of computers, distributing them around the world in order to deceive Google’s attempts to block us for overusing their servers. We created statistical formulas to filter what we found. We assumed that not everything that was said on the Internet was true and that the coverage of different places and different criminal organizations varies over time.

We gave more weight to information coming from different sources and in which several informants were consistent. We considered that some years and localities had less media coverage and therefore were subject to greater errors. We noticed that journalists write more about certain cartels and adjusted for it. We sat for hours in front of our computers and sent ourselves thousands of e-mails.

What we found not only shocked us but also shocked officers at the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the U.S.

Blame was assigned. Fingers were pointed. Presidential approval ratings wavered. The truth, however, was that nobody knew when, why, or how all of these problems started.

Department of Defense (DOD), and the U.S. Border Patrol—all of whom started calling us right after our results were published on our Web sites.

It is now apparent that the behavior of the cartels did, in fact, change markedly in 2003, before Calderón took office. They became more expansive and competitive. The eventual offensive launched by Calderón was a reaction to an increasingly violent situation that was spreading throughout Mexico's territory. While the president's critics were right in that his offensive increased violence in ways never seen before, Calderón was also right in claiming that he did not start Mexico's mayhem. Actions taken by Mexico's government fractured drug cartels and pushed new criminal cells to operate in new areas. However, this offensive was a response to changes in the criminal industry, one that was growing at an unprecedented rate.

Criminal groups began to spread in three waves (see Figure 1). The first cartels to expand were the Gulf-Zetas (a single group until

2008 when it split into Golfo and Zetas) and Sinaloa in 2003; followed by Sinaloa, Beltrán Leyva, and La Familia in 2005; and the rest of the organizations in 2007. In 2003, these criminal groups operated in less than fifty municipalities; by the time troops were deployed in 2006, the cartels were live in 276 municipalities—a fivefold increase.

Our research also helps disprove two other myths about the operations of Mexico's criminal groups. First, it is a falsehood that Mexican traffickers are trying to expand everywhere. In fact, they do not seek to control every municipality south of the U.S. border.

Our study shows that criminal groups operate in only 713 municipalities in Mexico, which means that 70 percent of the country has no significant presence of organized crime. Even within the states traditionally considered strongholds of drug trafficking, traffickers are not found operating in every single municipality. In Guerrero and Michoacán, for example, the cartels only oper-

Figure 3 — Drug-related homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in 2010.



Indeed, if we know anything about Mexico's "narcos," it is that they do not shut up.

ate in 40 percent and 62 percent of the state territory, respectively (see Figure 2).

Criminals only want to subjugate the areas necessary for their business. They are entrepreneurs, not territorial conquerors. They are located where they can deal drugs and engage in extortion and kidnapping. They operate in big cities and suburbs, in the southwestern shores but not in Oaxaca, and in the towns situated near interstate highways, especially those that go to Ciudad Juárez and Nuevo Laredo. They like borders and have set up shop near the United States and Guatemala.

It is also a myth that criminal groups cannot coexist in the same territory without engaging in violent battles over turf. In fact, our study shows that criminals have sometimes shared their territories peacefully. In the early 1990s, 11 percent of the municipalities with multiple cartel operations lacked large-scale violence. In 2010, 613 municipalities had organizations operating simultaneously; however, half of the executions within those areas were concentrated in just twenty municipalities.

Violence contains a logic that we do not understand and is not strictly related to territorial jurisdiction. It contains a logic of market and institutional opportunities. Criminals kill at strategic points when the benefit of the violence outweighs the cost of the attention of the authorities.

According to our data set, in 2010, there were at least sixty-six Mexican cities with no drug-related homicides, despite there being more than one cartel operating in the city at the same time. Actually, out of the 16,000 people who were assassinated in Mexico's drug war

that year alone, 43 percent of the cases happened in just eight cities. A single city—Juárez—accounted for 8 percent (see Figure 3).

Obviously, there is still work to be done. We still need to learn more and research further. But now, based on this research, we are certain of three things:

1. Calderón did not start this war.
2. Traffickers do not operate everywhere in Mexico.
3. Violence is not the unavoidable outcome of having more than one criminal organization operating in a single territory. ❖

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Money or Mothering:

Which Is More Important?



How Access to Resources and Parenting Practices Impact Children of Teen Moms

By Tara Grigg Garlinghouse

New mothers have their pick of places to go for advice. Books, Web sites, parenting classes, and support groups address every aspect of raising a child, from what type of car seat to buy to what age the child should start playing Little League baseball. These resources coach new mothers on how to effectively parent so that their children can achieve their ultimate potential.

However, there is a subgroup of parents for whom books, classes, and Web sites might not be the most beneficial way to support the development of their children: teenage mothers. As with other parents, when teen mothers use "good" parenting techniques, it often leads to better outcomes for their children, but my research on teen mothers, which is discussed in this article, shows that better financial resources can have an even greater impact. In fact, the children of "good" mothers with few social and economic resources fare worse than those of "bad" mothers with more resources. Therefore, for children with teen mothers, access to resources may matter more than parenting.

While teen fathers are also part of the subgroup of "teen parents," they are most often not the primary caretaker of the child and often are not a common presence in the child's life. Due to these factors, the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, the source of the data in this article, focused on the children of unwed young mothers. Thus, though parenting practices of young fathers are also important to consider, this article will focus solely on young mothers. In addition, the results and recommendations from my analysis of the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study are for teen mothers and cannot necessarily be generalized to adult mothers. Teen mothers as a group are very different than the larger population of adult mothers; they are disproportionately poor, are most often minorities, and face other socioeconomic limitations. Because there is

Photo: JD Hancock

The results of the study are clear: what matters most for the children of teen mothers is money and resources, not mothering.

relative homogeneity within the group that I did not control for in my statistical analysis, it is likely the relationship between parenting practices and child development could be very different for adult mothers who do not face these limitations. The findings of the research cannot be extrapolated to all mothers due to external validity issues, so the recommendations based on the research hold only for teen mothers.

Measuring Money and Mothering

To better understand how the parenting practices of teenage mothers impact child development, I analyzed data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, a joint effort by Princeton University's Center for Research on Child Wellbeing (CRCW) and Center for Health and Wellbeing, the Columbia Population Research Center, and the National Center for Children and Families (NCCF) at Columbia University. I started by choosing three common practices that can be easily taught and incorporated into a daily routine:

1. A regular bedtime. This variable demonstrates a structured family life, with a consistent daily effort on the part of the mother to interact with the child while establishing her role as the authority figure.

2. Not spanking the child. Today, spanking is considered a negative parenting practice, even though many parents support spanking as a method of disciplining their children. In my research, children who were spanked had higher rates of aggression than children who were not. I found that in young mothers, spanking indicates authoritarian inclinations and an unwillingness or inability to communicate effectively with the child.

3. Reading to the child. This variable acts as an indicator of quality time spent with the child and an interest in the child's intellectual development. Talking to children is integral to language development; consistent reading supports cognitive development.

To understand the full potential value of positive parenting, it is important to look at the child holistically and to examine how these practices impact a child's physical, emotional, and cognitive development. To measure these I used the following indicators:

- » Physical development. A child's body mass index (BMI) percentile can be used to measure health and physical development because children in the highest percentiles have an increased risk of being overweight or obese.¹ Further, high BMI is linked to many other health problems, such as Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
- » Emotional development. This

can be measured using the Achenbach aggression scale, which measures aggression based on internalizing and externalizing behaviors, such as whether the child has a tendency to hurt animals, other children, or themselves.²

- » Cognitive development. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) is designed to test a child's ability to understand words and sounds and to test a child's verbal aptitude by having him or her produce words to go with pictures on a flashcard.³
- » Though certain types of parenting may lead to better developmental outcomes for children, parenting obviously does not happen in a vacuum, and access to financial resources can also have an effect. Teenage mothers very often live in poverty and have limited resources, yet some mothers will have access to more resources than others.⁴ The Fragile Families data set does not specify income or socioeconomic status, but I used the following markers in my analysis:
 - » Private health insurance. This is a good indicator of income because it is often very expensive or requires a certain level of employment. Thus, many teen moms and their children are on Medicaid.⁵
 - » Young mother living with a biological parent. It is very common for a young mother to have strained relationships with her own parents, forcing her to live on her own or with an adult that is not her parent.⁶ If a young mother does live with one of her biological parents, it indicates that the mother has a relatively stable family life and additional

emotional and monetary support.

- » Car ownership. Owning a car indicates that the mother has a stable job that enables her to consistently make monthly payments, or that she was able to pay for the car outright. Not only does it also show that she likely has steady, disposable income to pay for gas, but transportation in itself is a valuable resource for any parent.

Money Matters More

Most of the 606 young mothers in the study performed at least one form of “good” mothering: 80 percent put their children to bed at a regular time each night and 61 percent read to their children five or more days a week. In contrast, only about one-third used some form of discipline that did not include spanking and two-thirds spanked their children either as the sole form of discipline or in addition to other disciplinary measures.

The “good” parenting made a difference; these practices were generally correlated with positive developmental outcomes. But further analysis shows that socioeconomic status plays a large role in the relationship between parenting practices and child development and is almost always the driving force behind the differences.⁷ In this study, very few mothers had access to resources that indicate higher socioeconomic status: 19 percent had private health insurance, 28 percent lived with their biological parents, and 21 percent owned a car. Though there was very little variation among the mothers regarding access to resources, even slight improvements in socioeconomic status were powerful enough to translate into benefits for the children. In other words, differences in child development were not actu-

ally a result of the mothering, but instead were a result of small variations in socioeconomic status within the group of teenage mothers.

Even more importantly, socioeconomic status can also mitigate the negative effects of bad parenting. If a young mother fails to engage in any positive parenting but has access to a lot of resources, her child can still perform well on developmental measures. In the end, the children of “bad” mothers with more resources can fare better than the children of “good” mothers with fewer resources. The results of the study clearly show that what matters most for the children of teen mothers is money and resources, not mothering.

Removing Barriers, Focusing on Resources: New Priorities for Public Policy

As officials at all levels of government consider how best to allocate resources and invest in services, it is important to understand that providing access to resources for young mothers will make more of a difference than standard services like parenting classes. If, for example, a local government has enough money to either fund intensive parenting classes or subsidize child care

for teen moms, subsidizing child care is the better option because it allows a young mother to invest in her education or work at a job, both of which provide economic returns that parenting classes do not.

Of course, there are many evidence-based initiatives that focus on developing a mother’s skills and ability to parent, such as the Nurse-Family Partnership, and the effectiveness and value of those programs should not be minimized. However, when it comes to minor mothers, and when budget restrictions do not allow for both parenting instruction and resource provision, providing resources—even bus tokens or clothing vouchers—will have a greater impact.

One way to greatly benefit young mothers is to change the restrictions for receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), a funding source that many young mothers are already eligible to receive. Cash assistance has the potential to have a real, positive impact on the children of teen mothers. The restrictions, however, prove to be an insurmountable barrier for many.

The 1996 Welfare Reform Act attempted to reduce teen childbearing and young parents’ reliance on



Photo: flickr/sapheron

government assistance by making it more difficult for teen parents to receive benefits.⁸ So to be eligible for cash assistance, a minor parent has to live with his or her parents or another approved adult and has to participate in school or vocational training, though the restrictions may be altered at each state's discretion.⁹

In terms of my specific area of focus, teen mothers, the restriction assumes the young mother has stable adult connections. Yet the reality for the vast majority of teen mothers is that they do not have a healthy family relationship with their own parents.¹⁰ Many teen moms have a history of abuse or neglect that makes them uncomfortable living at home, and some young mothers find themselves homeless after being kicked out by their parents.¹¹ So it also undermines the ability of the young mother to make decisions that are in the best interest of her and her baby by encouraging her to stay in a potentially destructive home environment. Though exemptions

or eliminating the living arrangement restriction.

Some states have already done this; Nebraska and Hawaii have eliminated the restriction altogether.¹³ Some states also have blanket exemptions that make receiving benefits easier for some young mothers; in California, for example, a minor parent can be exempt if he or she has lived apart from his or her parents for at least a year.¹⁴ Thus, if a young mother's relationship with her parents has broken down and she has had to live on her own, she is not forced to attempt reconciliation in order to provide for her child. In Illinois, young parents can receive benefits for up to six nonconsecutive months without complying with the residency requirement—a revision that considers the transitory living situations of many young mothers.¹⁵ In Vermont, a minor parent may be exempt from living with an adult if he or she is at least seventeen and has lived independently for at least six months or if both parents live together and are at least sixteen.¹⁶

Talking to children is integral to language development; consistent reading supports cognitive development.

are possible, they can be difficult to attain because the circumstances are hard to prove or the documentation cannot be acquired. As a result, many young mothers forgo TANF completely.¹²

The true effect of the living arrangement restriction has not deterred teenage childbearing as intended; instead, it has prevented young mothers in need of assistance from receiving support. Since the children of young mothers benefit most from monetary resources, states should consider revising



Photo: flickr/woodleywonderworks

In this way, Vermont respects the real-life situation and independence of older mothers while also placing a priority on demonstrated stability.

Alternatively, states can evaluate their priorities and choose to provide more leeway for teen mothers who are old enough to drive and get a job or to mothers with some history of placement stability, even if it is in a nontraditional living situation. But regardless of how states tailor the restrictions, it will greatly benefit the children of teen moms if states make it easier for them to receive the monetary support they would otherwise (without the living restriction) be eligible to receive. Further, young mothers and their children would benefit if more states made the young mother the payee for her benefits instead of her parents or guardian. Even if a teen mother is technically receiving TANF, the benefits are actually paid to the adult she is living with.¹⁷ Ideally, there is a benevolent relationship between the young mother and the payee, but it is not uncommon for the payee to spend the teen mother's money inappropriately and the child does not benefit.¹⁸

Rather, I argue that the mother's minority status does not automatically make her irresponsible. While it may be appropriate to institute a minimum age to qualify as the payee—it may be unreasonable to expect twelve- and thirteen-year-old mothers to have the knowledge and maturity to spend the money wisely—allowing the young mother to be the payee not only respects her decisions as a parent but follows a more direct link to the child.

As decision makers at different levels of government step back to evaluate the services and resources offered to young mothers, they should prioritize money

If a young mother fails to engage in any positive parenting but has access to a lot of resources, her child can still perform well on developmental measures.

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over mothering. This requires a policy change instead of the status quo of parenting classes, pamphlets, and educational Web sites because breaking down barriers to TANF will produce better outcomes for children. ❖

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Dodd-Frank, Bailout Reform, and Financial Crisis Ambiguities

By Peter Gruskin

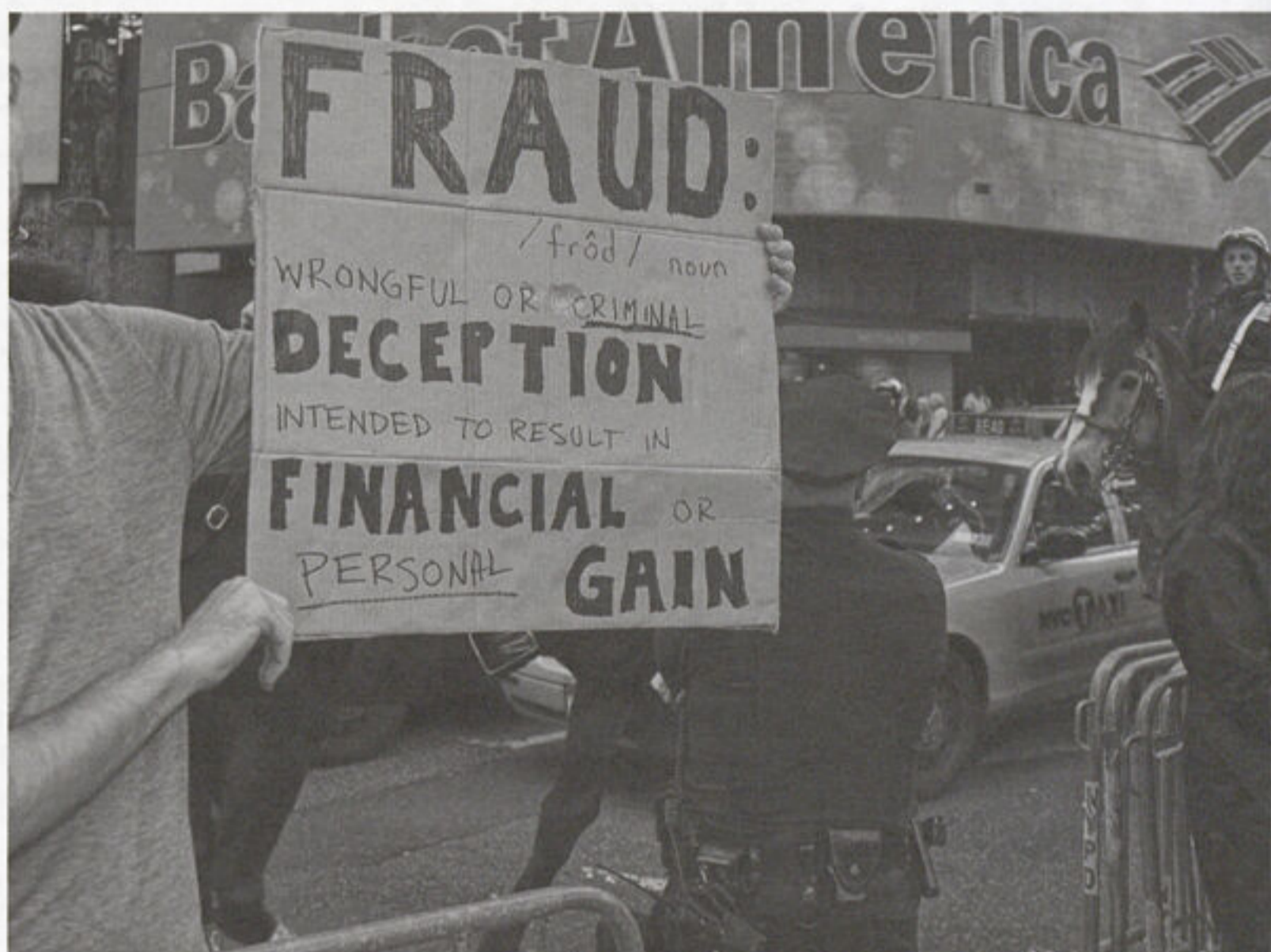
THE financial crisis of 2007-2008 forced U.S. President Barack Obama and his administration to reconcile with the need to “re-regulate” the financial markets. According to the president, the 2010 Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act gave the administration much of what it was seeking, but the legislation has also left many unanswered questions. Are taxpayer funds really safer today as compared to before the last big financial crisis? More broadly, have the legislative measures given adequate consideration to systemic risk in financial markets?

A White Paper for Reform

In order to better understand these questions, it is worth reviewing the administration’s intentions when it came to re-regulating Wall Street. In June 2009, the administration issued a white paper, which listed the following “asks”:

- (ii) new authority for the Federal Reserve to supervise all firms that could pose systemic risk . . .
- (iii) stronger capital, liquidity and other prudential standards for all financial firms and yet-higher standards for [firms that could pose a systemic risk] . . . [and] (ix) the reporting of information by [hedge fund and private equity fund] advisers about their managed funds to enable an assessment of whether these funds pose a risk to financial stability.

In response to these proposals, Chairman of the Senate Banking Committee Christopher Dodd and



Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee Barney Frank took the lead in crafting legislation that came to be known as the Dodd-Frank Act.

Because of the persistent structural restrictions on further reform (such as a lack of bipartisan political will on regulatory issues), Dodd-Frank may be the best outcome that the U.S. political apparatus can offer in response to the president’s asks. In fact, Obama has maintained that Dodd-Frank “represents ninety percent of what I proposed when I took up this fight.”

Aligning Incentives

Despite Obama’s statement, the legislation is not easy to lock down, as much of it will be more clearly

“It remains unclear how much regulators will punish or reward the private sector for taking on excess risk.”

Photo: Fotopedia/Bob Jagendorf

defined or redefined in the coming years. Consider, for example, the complicated provisions allowing for federal regulators, including the U.S. federal bank insurer—the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)—to take control of a financial firm in danger of failing, one that already has been deemed insolvent, or one that poses a “systemic risk” to the financial system (as defined by regulators). This is one of the most important provisions in Dodd-Frank and is one that gives broad new powers to the FDIC. According to Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, these new powers, and the bill as a whole, work to ensure that the public need not worry about future bailouts of “too big to fail” firms that put taxpayer money at risk. However, the takeover criteria outlined above have not been precisely defined.

Furthermore, should a firm fail despite the government’s intervention, the contingency plan is to finance a future bailout with another source of funding. The federal government can now recoup any taxpayer loss by levying fines on surviving financial institutions. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, a law firm that advises on mergers and acquisitions, summarizes the provisions relating to payback, as supervised by the FDIC:

The Act prevents the use of taxpayer funds to pay for the receivership process. It provides that “no taxpayer funds shall be used to prevent the liquidation of any financial company”; “taxpayers shall bear no losses from the exercise of any authority under this title”; “creditors and shareholders must bear all losses in connection with the liquidation of a covered financial company”; and that the FDIC shall not take

an equity interest in any covered financial company. Moreover, the Act provides that “[a]ll funds expended in the liquidation of a financial company under this title shall be recovered from the disposition of assets of such financial company,” or shall be recouped via assessments on other financial companies.

As conceptualized, the president’s re-regulation effort gives the taxpayer a high priority for payback of a government-funded loan. These stipulations, however, do not make the system less prone to systemic crisis. And in the absence of eliminating systemic risk, which is not really possible, we cannot fully

Humans have a propensity to think they can predict the future regardless of their success in this venture in the past.

shield ourselves from the possibility of having to bail out the big financial firms again. The next question, then, is how the intervention will play out.

Further entangled in this debate is the question of whether “moral hazard” has been reduced by the new financial market regulations. Moral hazard is an incentive mismatch connected to the too-big-to-fail phenomenon and occurs when firms receive bailout funds or guarantees (insurance) whose cost is not fully realized by them. This setup might lead the financial decision makers (management, shareholders, creditors, traders, etc.) to take more risk in the future than they otherwise may have taken since the consequences of bad invest-



"Ultimately, though, no legislation can make financial markets perfectly 'safe.'"

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ment decisions have been partially eliminated. In other words, if actors know that they are likely to be bailed out in the event of an institutional failure, they assume outsized market risk on that basis. Asymmetric incentives also arise on the trading floor, since traders' incentives are not always perfectly aligned with those of the institution.

If Dodd-Frank hasn't sufficiently addressed moral hazard and the risky behavior of financial entities, the public should continue to worry about the stability of the financial system during the next crisis. Dodd-Frank does try to make bailouts less likely by communicating to large financial firms that they won't be rescued again in the hopes that this will lessen the risky behavior. Ultimately, though, no legislation can make financial markets perfectly "safe."

You Can Resolve Companies, But Not the Future

So how does Dodd-Frank begin to address systemic risk? It allows regulators such as the Federal Reserve, the FDIC, and the Financial

Stability Oversight Council (FSOC) to review and exercise more control over financial companies, which they can identify as systemically important. This puts the institution in a category (on a too-big-to-fail list) of companies that the government can then further monitor and, if appropriate, assist, although Dodd-Frank places restrictions on how this is to be done.

This to-be-fully-determined federal resolution process may be initiated when the U.S. Treasury secretary asks for the boards of the Federal Reserve and the FDIC to vote on resolving a company (this is the general procedure for most financial companies). Under Section 203 of Dodd-Frank, the three agencies listed above can turn their respective "keys" and trigger the process of taking over a financial company in or near default. Two-thirds of the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors and two-thirds of the FDIC's Board of Directors must elect to resolve the company, and presidential consultation is also required. The process receives judicial oversight through a secret twenty-four-hour review by a Washington, DC, court,

which is instructed to strike down the process only if the Treasury secretary's decision was "arbitrary and capricious." This standard is "very deferential to the secretary and effectively presumes the validity of the secretary's determination," according to an analysis of Dodd-Frank by Skadden, LLP.

Bankruptcy expert David Skeel goes further in his language to portray this process as possibly unconstitutional and unfair to the firms, because they have little judicial recourse. Skeel's assertion that the FDIC has almost complete control over the resolution proceedings is useful. It explains how some believe President Obama's financial re-regulation affirms the government's "bailout rights" while others believe the exact opposite: that Dodd-Frank has eliminated the possibility of taxpayer-funded bailouts altogether. It all depends on how the FDIC and others will interpret their new mandates.

Again, a prediction of outcomes seems elusive. As with any risk-mitigation attempt against catastrophic financial events, one will probably not know if things have worked out well until the event. More will

be left up to the government in a future FDIC resolution process, but it remains unclear how much regulators will punish or reward the private sector for taking on excess risk, for example, by lobbying more systemic-risk taxes on them, by reducing too-big-to-fail insurance, or by keeping the firms afloat. All options have their costs.

Should Dodd-Frank have gone farther to mitigate the possibility of crisis? Regulators cannot necessarily properly monitor financial innovations in time to pick up on the risks inherent in them. Imperfect oversight and incomplete information reduce the capacity of regulators to manage crises. As we have seen, the success of financial regulation turns as much on the capacities of the regulator as on the fickle and evolving nature of the global financial markets.

You Can't Model the Model Error

Nassim Taleb, distinguished professor of risk engineering at New York University's Polytechnic Institute and former derivatives trader, gives insight into this confusing nature of market crises and "model error." A main theme of his book *Fooled by Randomness* is finding amusement in the human inability to predict. This lack is the result of various cognitive biases, such as our perhaps innate inability to understand "tail risk" (i.e., the tails of the bell curve are where statistically unlikely events live) in financial environments and elsewhere. The risk of a very small probability event was simply not properly accounted for in most derivatives models pre-crisis. So will it be satisfactorily dealt with by Dodd-Frank?

This article has sought to shed light on that question. The basic

If Dodd-Frank hasn't sufficiently addressed moral hazard and the risky behavior of financial entities, the public should continue to worry about the stability of the financial system during the next crisis. ”

conclusion is that humans cannot control financial markets to their liking, so Dodd-Frank should not reassure us too much. Applicable to the future of bankruptcy and bailouts is the other side of Taleb's coin: the reflection that humans have a propensity to think they can predict the future regardless of their success in this venture in the past. This may translate to overconfidence in the new regulatory regime when it comes to "predicting" the future course of bailouts, which, as we have seen, is not really possible. International efforts to make the system safer, such as Basel III, should be regarded similarly.

At the end of the day, it is probably too early to tell if Dodd-Frank will avert catastrophe or if a too-big-to-fail institution will be tackled with a heavy hand in the next bankruptcy showdown. Indeed, it may always be too early to tell. That is, until the next crisis strikes. ❖

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Winning the War on Corruption: The Six-Step Solution

by Abigail Bellows

If you are a child in India under the age of five, there is a 42 percent chance you are suffering from malnutrition. According to Reuters, every day across India, three-thousand children your age will die as a result.

The government of India runs the world's largest food distribution system for the poor, targeting 330 million beneficiaries. How could such severe malnutrition be possible, given India's robust food distribution program?

The reason is that 58 percent of food in the Public Distribution System (PDS) is lost before it reaches India's children, mainly due to a form of corruption known as "leakage": the diversion of public resources for personal gain.¹ PDS

distributors divert rations for sale on the open market, and the food that eventually reaches the village level is often of poor quality. PDS leakage in India reflects the challenges that many countries face in dealing with corruption.

Is corruption always a problem? The question may sound rhetorical, but to correctly diagnose corruption and mobilize constituencies to address it, one must critically reflect on if and how a particular instance of corruption impedes progress in that society. We define corruption here as "the breaking of a rule by a bureaucrat or elected official for private gain."² For some, this breaking of a rule is intrinsically bad: an abuse of authority and challenge to the rule of law. But

many other citizens and bureaucrats around the world judge corruption in context, evaluating the extent to which they will tolerate or even admire corrupt officials based on the impact of their deeds. Leakage has become a political concern nationally because of its intolerable impacts: the poor are deprived of their legal right to food, and massive malnutrition persists.

This article explores the phenomenon of corruption and considers possible policy interventions to address it. Four prevailing policy approaches are presented: law enforcement, economics, moralism, and cultural relativism. The article then draws on the four frameworks to offer a context-specific approach to diagnosing and intervening in



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Arian Zwegers

cases of corruption. Throughout, the example of corruption in India's PDS serves as a useful case study. While the frameworks below are each more complex than could be captured in a single article, this attempt to bridge the main intellectual silos in the anticorruption field will hopefully enable practitioners to better address corruption in a multifaceted and localized manner.

Policy Approaches to Corruption

Law Enforcement: Corruption as Rule Breaking

From a legal perspective, corruption occurs when the law is violated, regardless of the context or consequences of the act. According to Black's Law Dictionary, corruption involves being "inconsistent with official duty,"³ not simply acting out of self-interest. This legal approach is embodied by national anticorruption agencies, the International Bar Association's Anti-Corruption Committee, and legal conventions such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Anti-Bribery Convention.

The legal paradigm offers clear boundaries for a messy topic. However, the framework depends on the legitimacy of the rules in a given system. Some may view corporate spending in U.S. elections as "corrupt," enabling undue private influence on public decisions, but under the legal framework, if the spending does not violate U.S. laws, then it is not corrupt. From this perspective, the ability of law enforcement agencies to control corruption is constrained by the extent to which they have the right laws on the books to enforce.

Legalists typically combat cor-



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ruption by ramping up the resources of law enforcement agencies and promoting their political independence. This can involve establishing an anticorruption ombudsman, hiring more prosecutors, or training anticorruption investigators. Success is typically measured by an increase in prosecutions, convictions, or penalties. Ultimately, law enforcement aims not only to punish wrongdoing but also to deter future acts of corruption.

The law enforcement approach to PDS leakage is to investigate and punish those guilty of diverting resources or conspiring to permit leakage to continue. This approach has had limited success, as evidenced in the state of Uttar Pradesh, where it is widely known that \$14.5 billion in PDS food was stolen over the last ten years. Nonetheless, the corruption has gone unpunished legally. According to a news report: "A state police force beholden to corrupt lawmakers, an underfunded federal anti-graft agency and a sluggish court system have resulted in five overlapping investigations over seven years—and zero convictions."⁴

Economics: Corruption as a Product of Incentives

From an economic perspective, corruption is a function of incentives. Bribes are paid or demanded

by rational actors when the benefits of bribery exceed the costs. In this economic “game,” the payoff matrix may include non-tangibles, like the risk of legal or reputational losses, but the focus is on the monetary trade-offs involved in corruption. Accordingly, economic interventions focus on adjusting incentives and external conditions in order to change behavior.

In the Indian state of Punjab, a whopping 76 percent of PDS food grains fail to reach their intended recipients.⁵ Under the economics framework, the key driver of corruption here is the price gap between PDS grains and market-priced grains. The government enlists distributors who sell subsidized wheat to PDS beneficiaries for eight rupees per kilogram, while the same distributor can charge eighteen rupees per kilogram on the open market.⁶ Corruption pays for the PDS distributor—so well, in fact, that it outweighs the risks of getting caught.

How might an economist try to modify incentives in this system? If the price gap between PDS grains and market-priced grains were narrowed, then the distributor’s incentives would be more closely aligned with the government’s incentives, largely resolving the principal-agent problem. The method of narrowing the price gap would have to be carefully considered, as simply raising the price of wheat for PDS beneficiaries may undermine the purpose of the welfare program. Nevertheless, economists would focus on the obvious clash in incentives as a key driver of corruption and the starting point for intervention.

Moralism: Corruption as Intrinsically Wrong

From a moral perspective, cor-



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ruption is not simply illegal or economically conditioned; it is evil. Corruption is an abuse of power, and officials lining their pockets from the public coffer are greedy. This perspective stands in contrast with the value-neutral “rational actor” theory of economics, as well as with the positive admiration expressed in some communities for cunning and prosperous public officials.

A moralistic perspective on corruption is most commonly expressed by frustrated citizens or disapproving outsiders. The former was on display in 2011 during Anna Hazare’s landmark anticorruption protests in India, while the latter is reflected in the “naming and shaming” strategies of Transparency International.

A moral rejection of corruption is often a precondition for mobilizing citizens to fight for accountability. However, it can be challenging to generate this moral outrage

beyond a small core of activists; often, citizens’ moral perceptions are impacted by domestic law enforcement, which may tolerate corruption, and by their sense of resignation about the possibility of reform. Framing corruption in moral terms can be the lynchpin of citizen activism, but can also cause citizens to feel alienated and to further disengage from a seemingly immoral state.

Cultural Relativism: Corruption as in the Eye of the Beholder

While moralism condemns corruption and urges reform, cultural relativists abstain from normative judgment and from intervention, viewing the entire anticorruption enterprise as a Western imposition. For relativists, “corruption” is a social construct, derived from the Protestant work ethic and Weber-based bureaucratic ideals rather than a universal social ill. “What is seen as a corrupt

practice in a given country could be perceived as a legitimate action in another country," writes ethicist Michel Dion.⁷

Consider the differing cultural perceptions of corruption shared by a former Nigerian politician who spent time living in the American South. Suppose, she said, her fourteen-year-old son finds a twenty-dollar bill on the street and goes house to house asking the neighbors whether it is theirs. When she arrives home, her American neighbors would say, "Your son is such a gentleman! He found money on the street and had the integrity not to take it." If the same thing happened in Nigeria, she continued, her neighbors would say, "Your son is such a fool! He found money on the street and had the senselessness not to take it." The contrast in attitudes is not only a product of differing degrees of need but also of different cultural perceptions of corruption. Marshaling such illustrations, relativists conclude that corruption is not bad or good but simply a way of life in some countries. To condemn it would be imperialist.

Closely linked to relativists are two other types of non-interventionists. First are the corruption fatalists, who see corruption as a necessary evil. Economist Pranab Bardhan describes this group in an article on different policy perspectives on corruption: "The 'fatalists' are more cynical, that we have reached a point of no return in many developing countries, the corruption is so pervasive and well entrenched that for all practical purposes nothing much can be done about it."⁸ Corruption may be ugly, but it is unavoidable and here to stay.

Meanwhile, other non-interventionists deem corruption good.

In this view, corruption has evolved over time in certain places to serve important social functions. Such arguments are often made by those justifying PDS leakage; the PDS distributor skimming rations from the poor is perhaps providing for his family and reinforcing valuable in-group loyalties. In the absence of a social safety net, leakage is his retirement savings.

These relativist views on corruption are heard on the left and the right, from natives and foreigners alike. Outsiders sensitive to post-colonial dynamics express genuine concern about imposing their judgment on corruption-prone developing countries. Savvy bribe payers invoke fatalist rhetoric to justify continued bypassing of regulations in countries where corruption is pervasive. Elites from developing countries assert that permitting bribes in international business transactions is their country's competitive advantage, well deserved after decades of economic subservience. Deploying a range of rationales, relativist approaches accept the status quo of corruption.

The four major schools of thought on corruption take divergent stances both on what corruption is and what should (or should not) be done about it. The legal approach is concerned with whether an infraction occurred, not the incentives, morality, or culture behind why it occurs. The economic approach considers the law only insofar as it impacts cost-benefit decisions and has little regard for the passions of moral judgment and relativist acceptance. While moralism asserts universality, relativism asserts particularity, and neither is too concerned with the particularities of law or the incentives of individuals.

Is corruption always a problem? One must critically reflect on if and how a particular instance of corruption impedes progress in society.

Faced with a conflict between these dominant views of corruption, it can be tempting to pick a paradigm and stay within it—and that is what most practitioners do. The following section offers an alternative: reconciling aspects of these paradigms through a context-specific approach to corruption.

An Integrated Approach

To construct an integrated framework for corruption, three process-oriented approaches to public policy are employed. First is the “adaptive leadership” lens, created by Harvard leadership gurus Ronald Heifetz and Dean Williams. This method offers tools for diagnosing the root causes of problems like corruption and exercising leadership from any position in the social system in order to address them. The second approach is the “state capabilities” framework,

developed jointly by economist Lant Pritchett, sociologist Michael Woolcock, and public administration expert Matt Andrews. This framework considers how and why reform in low-capability governments often produces changes in form but not in function, a phenomenon evident in the frequently ineffective attempts to transfer anticorruption “best practices” to the local level. The third component is the problem-solving approach to harm mitigation developed by former police investigator Malcolm Sparrow, a professor of the Practice of Public Management at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Drawing on these three approaches, the six steps below outline an integrated process for diagnosing and addressing corruption.

Step 1: Evaluate the Harm Caused by Corruption

To understand whether addressing corruption in a particular context is a priority problem, it is critical to understand why, when, and how corruption is harming that society. Sometimes the harms of corruption are widely recognized. For instance, the 2012 “Coalgate” scandal in India sparked public outcry because corruption in the sale of natural coal deposits had produced significant negative consequences—\$33 billion in lost public revenue.⁹ But often the harms of corruption are not widely recognized. This may be because citizens have become inured to corruption and feel powerless against it. Or they may be unaware of corruption’s true costs, such as staggering malnutrition, in the case of PDS leakage. When the



Photo: flickr/runran

Consider whether the distributor demands a bribe because he wants a new car or because he needs to buy medication for his mother.

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harm is serious but not recognized, corruption must be dealt with by first working with the populace to confront corruption's true costs.

When corruption imposes minimal harm on the populace, most reformers will rightly focus their energy elsewhere. In such cases, despite the concern of moralists, the corruption may be small scale or isolated or may involve the breaking of rules that are themselves unjust or inefficient. The proceeds of corruption may serve as informal salary payments for a government with irregular cash flow, and thus may be seen as a reasonable exception.

Diagnosing the harm associated with corruption enables reformers to identify whether corruption is a serious problem and, if it is, how it is causing harm. The former question helps reformers decide whether to intervene; the latter begins to identify appropriate interventions.

Measuring the harms caused by corruption can also motivate complacent individuals to take corruption more seriously. Consider the reported bribes paid by Chinese companies vying for public contracts in African countries. In this instance, foreign bribery is harmful not simply because it is condemned in multilateral fora and undermines democratic governance in those African countries; it also causes harm to the long-term competitiveness of Chinese companies. These companies become oriented toward paying the highest bribe instead of competing on price and quality. Focusing on how foreign bribery harms China's economic growth makes China more likely to recognize what is at stake and to enforce foreign bribery bans.

Step 2: Assess the Causes of Corruption—In Context

After concluding that corruption's consequences impose serious harm, consider the reasons behind corruption. This step is often short-circuited by the moralist explanation that corrupt officials are simply greedy. Certainly, the value of material acquisition can drive corruption, but this value is typically reflected in the larger society—thus, firing and replacing “greedy” officials is unlikely to solve the problem. Consider whether the PDS distributor demands a bribe because he wants a new car or because he needs to buy medication for his mother; consider whether a customs official accepts a bribe for his own enrichment or because an honest importer is desperate to bypass burdensome red tape. Different motivations for corruption call for different types of intervention. It is therefore crucial to ask why the corrupt officials are engaged in corruption if we want to change their behavior.

Step 3: Map the Relevant Perspectives on Corruption

Identify which groups' behaviors need to change in order to reduce corruption and which groups will likely support reform. In the case of PDS, the 450,000 people employed by the Food Corporation of India benefit from corruption and tend to resist change,¹⁰ while PDS beneficiaries, civil society leaders, and some politicians are strong proponents of reform.

The perspectives of various factions depend in part on the type of corruption in question. Extortion involves officials demanding bribes

in return for providing or expediting a service that they are supposed to provide—for example, a bribe extracted for a construction permit when the developer has already complied with the legal guidelines. Only the person receiving the bribe has an interest in perpetuating this type of corruption. Meanwhile, corruption that takes the form of collusion between a government official and a private actor would be a rule violation in which both parties benefit. A developer who has not complied with construction guidelines might collude with officials, bribing them in return for an unwarranted permit; in this case, both receiver and payer have an interest in perpetuating the bribery. In order to identify allies and design effective interventions, it is important to understand how different groups in the social system will perceive efforts to combat corruption.

Step 4: Identify Intervention Strategies Based on the Harms Caused by Corruption

When designing intervention, target the consequences of corruption that made it a problem in the first place. In the PDS case, the underlying harm was a lack of food security for those below the poverty line. Targeting intervention toward that harm means reframing the challenge from “How do we combat leakage in the PDS system?” to “How do we more effectively distribute food to India’s poor, in light of the problem of leakage?”

Recent attempts to reframe the problem in this manner generated a robust debate in India about whether to transition the entire in-kind food distribution program to a cash transfer system. While discussion is ongoing about whether cash

transfers would be similarly prone to leakage, and whether beneficiaries would spend the transfers on food, the conversation reflects a shift from simply fighting PDS corruption toward trying to more effectively achieve the social objective of the PDS program.

To further highlight this method, consider collusion in public procurement. Economist James E. Rauch explains how identifying the harm caused by collusion can help reformers target interventions: “This system of bribes . . . ceases to be functional when corrupt favoritism leads to nonperformance—the bridge falls down or the plane doesn’t fly. But then the problem is the nonperformance rather than favoritism. The appropriate reform may be to tie officials’ pay and career advancement to the performance of the contracts they award.”¹¹ Rather than focusing on overcoming corrupt favoritism, Rauch focuses on mitigating its consequence: nonperformance. By designing interventions that address the harms caused by corruption, reformers have the best hopes of directly mitigating those harms.

In considering the best strategies to apply to a given problem, reformers should be cautious about importing “best practices,” such as the Anti-Corruption Commission model, and technological tools, such as installing cameras in government offices. These “technical fixes” typically do not address the root causes of corruption locally or engage the full set of stakeholders required to confront the challenge. In the PDS case, GPS trackers installed in PDS trucks became irrelevant when cunning distributors diverted rations by taking bags out of the trucks without veering from their routes.

Diagnosis, intervention, and iteration requires attention to the particular groups and challenges driving corruption, the particular harms produced, and the particular mix of strategies best targeted to address it.



Photo (above): flickr/ michaelwhays

Photo (right): flickr/ foxypar4



Targeting intervention toward that harm means reframing the challenge from “How do we combat leakage in the PDS system?” to “How do we more effectively distribute food to India’s poor, in light of the problem of leakage?”

Weigh stations installed at ration checkpoints failed when distributors started mixing rocks into bags of grains, thus keeping weight constant while diverting rations. In 2006, reformers tried an innovative technical solution—marking PDS kerosene with a bright dye to catch any diversion of the PDS fuel. But entrepreneurial distributors soon discovered that the dye could be chemically neutralized with natural clay. The program was abandoned two years later.¹²

Despite these types of failed attempts, anticorruption agencies all over the world engage in constant processes of technical reform. As Pritchett said during the 2012 Harvard India Conference: “Organizations that are value subtracting survive by being constantly engaged in ‘reform.’ Boiling water looks like it’s moving, but it’s actually going down.”¹³

Step 5: Consider the Sequence and Entry Point for Reform
The order of anticorruption reforms must be carefully consid-

ered. In particular, the government should make compliance feasible for citizens, employees, and businesses before ramping up anticorruption enforcement. In the case of PDS in the state of Punjab, the profit margins of the village ration shops are reportedly below the break-even point,¹⁴ so distributors have to divert some rations to remain viable. It is important to resolve this problem—perhaps through performance-based bonus payments—before punishing distributors for leakage.

Another important consideration is the opportunity and constraints of a particular reformer’s role in the system. The World Bank may not be able to generate popular will for reform, but can offer assistance in procurement reform so that fewer bureaucratic processes are susceptible to corruption. Citizen organizations cannot redesign the way driver’s licenses are distributed, but they can organize a strike against paying bribes at the local DMV office. It is important to consider the particular types of lead-

ership that reformers can exercise from their positions in the system.

Step 6: Assess Progress and Iterate

Intervention on a complex issue like corruption is a process of experimentation, gathering data, and revising the intervention strategy. Pritchett, Woolcock, and Andrews call this process “problem-driven iterative adaptation” (PDIA).¹⁵ They suggest rewarding experimentation, creating strong feedback loops, and expecting an iterative process of gradual change. In the PDS case, this means continuously monitoring indicators related to the harm in question—malnutrition among the poor—while experimenting with the legal, economic, and citizen engagement interventions appropriate to the local PDS context.

Conclusion

The process of diagnosis, intervention, and iteration described here is one that requires attention to the particular harms produced by corruption locally, the particular

groups and challenges driving corruption in that context, and the particular mix of strategies best targeted to that problem. As economist Rodrik writes: "How we deal with corruption . . . depends very much on why we think it is a problem and which of its consequences we choose to deal with."¹⁶

What does this localized approach to corruption mean for the larger anticorruption movement? One implication is that national anticorruption reform (e.g., changing laws, establishing anticorruption agencies, protesting in the capital) may have limited utility. Sometimes these macro-level interventions may be necessary, but they are most likely to be successful when they respond to a trend of corruption challenges at the micro-level.

The diversity of interpretations regarding what corruption is and how to address it—as represented in the legal, economic, moral, and relativist frameworks—is not a fluke. Rather, the seeming contradiction among the frameworks reflects the true divergence among the causes of corruption and the best interventions for specific cases. In some contexts a legal approach is needed, while in others an adjustment in economic incentives or mobilization of moral outrage is most appropriate. Still in other situations, corruption might not be a pressing problem and attention should be focused elsewhere. No universalist policy framework will apply to all cases of corruption. The key for reformers is to diagnose the particularities of corruption and to marshal the most fitting intellectual and policy-making tools for that context. ❖

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Zapatista Development:

Local Empowerment and the Curse of Top-Down Economics in Chiapas, Mexico

by Tanya Khokhar

Guaquitepec is a small village in Chiapas, the southernmost state in Mexico and by most estimates the poorest in the country. It is a humid, tropical area perhaps best known for the large-scale rebellion staged two decades ago by a leftist revolutionary group called Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), or as they are more popularly known: the Zapatistas. The famous Zapatista revolution dramatically impacted

Mexican culture and politics, and in villages like Guaquitepec, its influence is still widely felt, and its legacy on the state of Chiapas has yet to be determined.¹

The Zapatistas initially attracted a wave of local and international attention for their cause; as a result, Chiapas received an influx of development aid following the 1994 rebellion. The state currently has the second-highest number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and development organizations in the country. Yet even with all the aid, little has changed in fifteen years. While the Zapatistas secured a degree of autonomy from the Mexican government, very little progress has been made and the underlying sources of conflict remain unaddressed.

Today, the Zapatistas—representing a broad political culture of workers, teachers, students, and farmers and having a wider support base than the initial mid-1990s political-military apparatus—continue to move away from gov-

ernment programs, maintaining their independence from the state. Some argue that this self-imposed isolation has limited the political influence of Chiapas and hampered economic progress. Others highlight the alternative political and social structures that emerged, arguing that the Zapatistas actually missed a significant opportunity to truly reform the state for the better.

Visiting a village like Guaquitepec, one notes that the community embraces an alternative model of development, centered on sustainable economic and social practices. The community has developed its

Photo: <http://onthegroundglobal.org>





Photo: flickr/tj scenes

own unique market structures and agro-ecological systems. Students in Guaquitepec's community-based schools are trained in traditional, family-given agricultural practices; classes are taught in Tzeltal, their mother tongue; and indigenous cultural norms are practiced extensively. High school graduates are placed in jobs within the community rather than migrating to cities, which preserves a sense of kinship and counteracts "brain drain." Guaquitepec represents a practical success story of the unique Zapatista ideology of self-reliance; other villages across Chiapas present a less rosy picture, as will be discussed. While Chiapas has undergone massive political, economic, and social transformations since the Zapatista revolt, the impact is perceived as limited in indigenous minds.

As Mexico moves forward, the future of Chiapas and the role of the Zapatista political paradigm remain uncertain. On 1 December 2012, newly elected president Enrique Peña Nieto took up his new mandate. He is a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the same party that ran the country for nearly seventy years, under whom the Zapatistas revolted in 1994. What Nieto's rise to power might mean for the Zapatista ideals of self-autonomy and independence from the state is impossible to predict; this article explores the unique nature of development and community building in Chiapas at this crucial and uncertain moment in its history.

"Para Todos Todo":

The Zapatistas in Context

The EZLN emerged as an antiglobalization, anti-neoliberal social movement in Chiapas in the early 1990s, seeking indigenous rights

over land and other local resources. Land reform was a key demand, since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) eliminated the guarantee of land reparations to indigenous groups, which had been mandated by the 1917 Mexican Constitution.²

The Zapatistas believed that NAFTA would increase the gap between the rich and poor. Apart from opening the Mexican market to cheap, mass-produced, U.S. agricultural products, NAFTA would significantly reduce Mexican crop subsidies and affect the income and living standards for many southern Mexican farmers, making it difficult for them to compete with heavily subsidized imports from the United States. For the Zapatista rebellion, this became a critical opportunity to demand for greater democratization of the Mexican government and a stronger representation of the needs of the indigenous people.

The revolt—led by an estimated three-thousand insurgents marching into towns and cities in Chiapas—was quickly subdued by military forces, eventually leading to negotiations between the government and the Zapatista leadership. A major impact of the rebellion was the mass media campaign that put an international spotlight on issues facing the people of Chiapas. Development assistance came pouring into the state; the EZLN received significant notice from a variety of NGOs and organizations, as well as from broadcasts in both leftist and mainstream media outlets. International human rights organizations came to San Cristóbal De Las Casas, a colonial town in the highlands of Chiapas, to monitor possible human rights abuses by the army.

However, high international prominence and the increased flow

International prominence and the increased flow of funds and human resources into the state have not translated into improved livelihoods for local communities.



of funds and human resources into the state have not translated into improved livelihoods for local communities. The prevailing paradigm of development in Chiapas during the 1990s was premised on neoliberal principles and failed to engage in meaningful consultations with local communities over their land and resource issues. The dominant development narratives effectively sidelined the indigenous demands that had been embodied by the Zapatistas.

Ideologically, the Zapatistas advocate for an alternative participatory system of development, which favors grassroots initiatives over top-down directives. The Zapatistas promote development principles that connect the complex socio-historical fabric of Chiapas' indigenous communities with the local economic sphere. Their ideals revolve around the preservation of cultural and linguistic traditions, the sanctity of land for indigenous people, and the perpetuation of organic and local farming practices within the region.

The Chiapas Model in Practice

Although critics of the Zapatista movement point out that the anti-government rhetoric of the mid-1990s has not been galvanized into a

viable model of economic autonomy for poor peasants, some cases of Zapatistas-led development—such as Guaquitepec—point to their success in reconciling local context and economic needs.

The residents of Guaquitepec continue to uphold Zapatista notions of the relationship between indigenous tradition and self-sufficiency. Alternative visions of modern farming practices, combined with the establishment of strong networks of local producers and consumers, have led to the emergence of a unique commercial dynamic that has improved livelihoods for many farmers.

The Guaquitepec model extends beyond community economics and into the political sphere as well. Through its local participatory process, the village offers a unique example of a community taking ownership of its institutions in a democratic manner. At a practical level, programs and projects are initiated through grassroots leadership and are implemented directly by the people. Locals are empowered to make changes from within.

While Guaquitepec represents a development success, taking local context and dynamics into consideration, most of Chiapas has engaged on a different path. Rather than embracing community-based

development, many villages favor government-led interventions, which tend to be top-down and attempt to force change from the outside.

Recently, the Mexican government has pushed to transform local farming practices into a commercially oriented industry, exemplifying the inherent tension between cultural practices and government attempts to monetize them.³ Generally, these types of interventions in Chiapas have only led to a perpetuation of poverty and under-development. As the seventh most populous state with approximately 4.3 percent of the Mexican population, Chiapas contributes only 1.8 percent to the national gross domestic product, according to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía. Extreme social inequalities are prevalent within the region, and many indigenous communities lack basic provisions such as electricity, running water, and education.

Development and its Deficiencies

An interesting issue that arises from the contrast between the aforementioned paths to development is the question of what constitutes progress in a rural society. Among communities in Chiapas, such ideas as modernization, technology, and change are not unanimously perceived as "good." Many believe progress is derived from autonomous agricultural practices and the creation of a secure system of self-reliance. The people of Chiapas cherish indigenous political systems that are based on consensus and representative democracy, giving local voices a say in an inclusive, participatory process.

While government development programs have come pouring into Chiapas since 1994, little has been achieved toward a political reconciliation with the Zapatistas. In 1996, the San Andrés Accords granted greater autonomy and rights to indigenous peoples, but the government never implemented the agreement. The accords called for conservation of natural resources within territories used and occupied by indigenous peoples, as well as the participation of indigenous communities in determining their own development plans.⁴ Zapatista leadership demanded autonomy from the Mexican government so that natural resources extracted from Chiapas would benefit the people of the state directly. But the government has failed to deliver.

Zapatista demands for land reforms also remain unresolved. While the movement eventually led to a dramatic redistribution of land from large landholders to small peasants between 1994 and 1998, the reforms did not bring the desired economic impact: the redistributed lands were of low yield and were subdivided into plots that were inadequate to provide enough means for survival. Simultaneously, the Mexican state offered little in the way of subsidies to small farmers and failed to offer an alternative development path that would move Chiapas up the value chain.⁵ Additionally, due to the harassment of paramilitary groups and intolerance encouraged in some communities by the government, Zapatista families were often forced from their lands to relocate to smaller areas. The eviction of populations for appropriation of resources blatantly undermines the promises of the San Andrés Accords.⁶

After 1994, indigenous peas-

ants began to play a more active role in local and state politics, and various municipalities elected their first indigenous mayors; but despite enhanced political representation, Chiapas remains behind. While indigenous peasants have entered the political sphere, dysfunctional institutions and corruption persist. Chiapas is the second most indigenously populated state in Mexico—approximately 30 percent—and yet it is poorly represented in the public sphere.⁷ The result has been a failure to ameliorate basic inequalities against indigenous peoples, with continued marginalization and limited access to public services.

Looking Ahead

With the recent election of President Nieto, some expect the government's approach toward Chiapas to take a new direction. But the overall consensus among citizens in villages like Guaquitepec is one of distrust. Will the old PRI and its imposing practices return to power, or will it be a different kind of government? It is too early to say.

What is needed in Chiapas is a radically new political dialogue. The new presidency in Mexico offers an opportunity for the diverse stakeholders in Chiapas—politicians, bureaucrats, community organizations, Mayan and civil society leaders, teachers, experts, and more—to come together and seek long-term and sustainable solutions. Regarding rural development, a new platform is needed for rethinking poverty. It must be recognized that in certain contexts, local methods of development are more appropriate. Generating food security through community empowerment is more viable in Chiapas than through imported blueprints for development models that disregard context. Beyond



Photo: flickr/katesheets

dialogue, clear and specific guidelines should be established for policy implementation—without accountability mechanisms, talks would be ineffective.

What has emerged in the heart of Zapatista communities are alternative and autonomous forms of political and economic engagement, reflecting local cultural practices and traditions rather than top-down development concerns. This is reflected in the Zapatista slogan—*Para todos todo, para nosotros nada* (For everyone, everything; for us, nothing)—and oft-repeated mantra: “Autonomy is to do things ourselves, with our own ideas, and from our own traditions as indigenous people.”⁸ Such alternative models offer engaging platforms for local empowerment and collective action.

But as has been shown, the dynamics currently operating in Chiapas are extremely dysfunctional. Neither Zapatista nor government-led development models have managed to improve the livelihoods of local indigenous communities. Although sporadic successes do arise, Chiapas generally has seen only meager improvements and persistently high levels of poverty. The conflict between indigenous communities and the national government is unsustainable and will only lead to further underdevelopment. Bringing these two worlds together in Chiapas is of utmost urgency; the alternative is a reproduction of poverty for generations to come. ❖

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Acknowledgements

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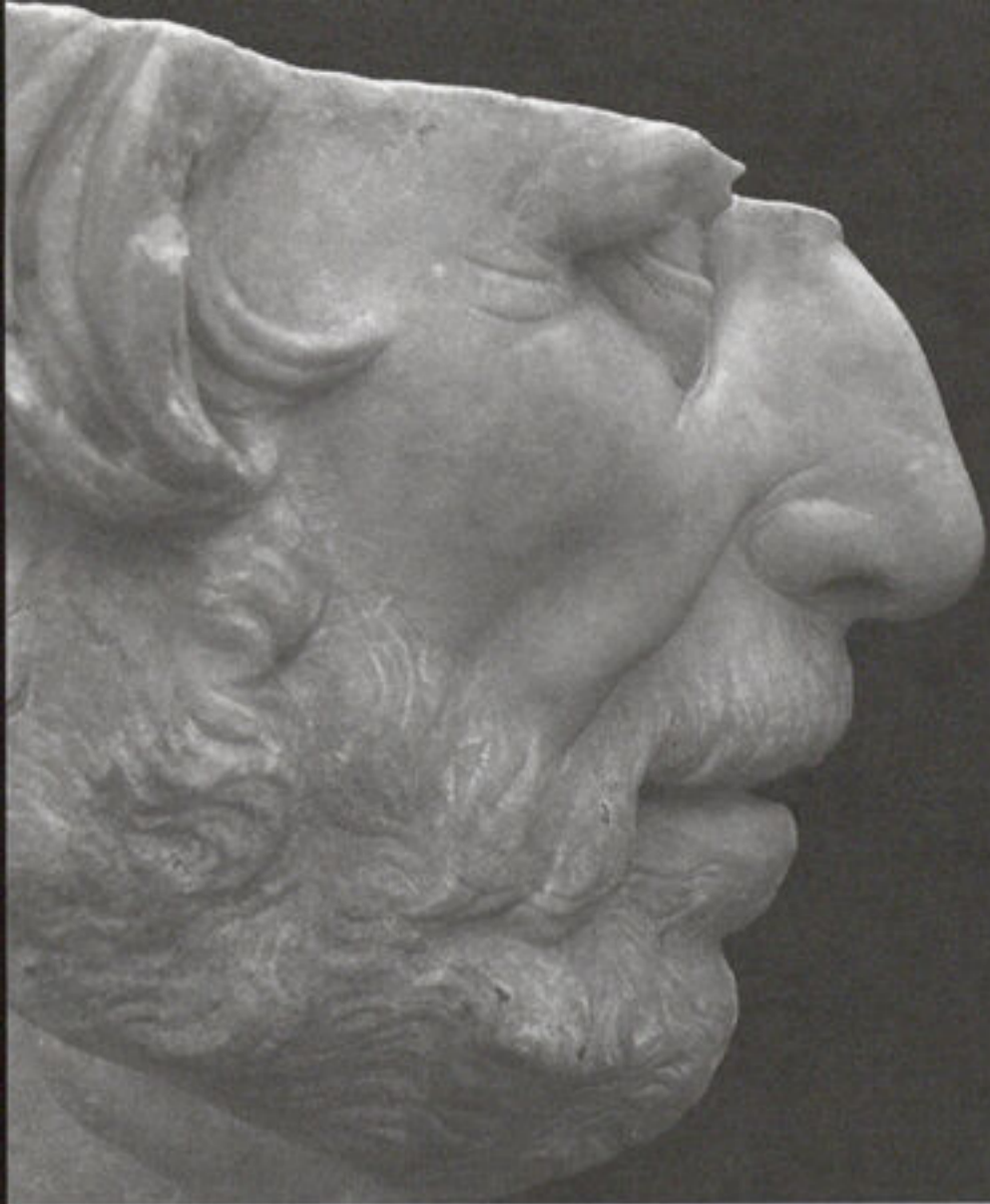
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As Mexico moves forward, the future of Chiapas and the role of the Zapatista political paradigm remain uncertain.



Another Way To Fight:

Unconventional Warfare from Rome to Iran

Photo: flickr/seier+seier

By Dave Coughran

On 20 October 2011, Mahmoud Jibril, the interim Prime Minister of the Libyan National Transitional Council, publicly announced the death of former Libyan dictator Muammar el-Qaddafi. Qaddafi's overthrow was the culmination of months of intense effort from Libyan revolutionary militias, the United States, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The victory was also a bright spot in the tumultuous Arab Spring that continues to engulf the region.

Most aspects of the military operation in Libya were largely familiar to the general public. First, NATO established a naval blockade along Libya's 1,100-mile coastline, cutting Qaddafi off from external supplies. Second, the United States used its superior air power to strike enemy targets and control the skies. Less familiar was the third prong of the strategy: the foreign military advisors who worked beside Libyan fighters to help equip, train, and direct them in combat. When this advising role came to light, major publications like the *London Telegraph* heralded it as a "new way of waging war."

Combining air and sea power with operations in support of rebel forces was definitive in the overthrow of Qaddafi. However, the manner in which the coalition supported the rebel forces on the ground was nothing new. In Libya, NATO and its Arab allies conducted an unconventional warfare (UW) campaign, defined by U.S. Special Operations Command as: Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to *coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power* by operating through or

with an underground, auxiliary, and guerilla force in a denied area.¹ (Emphasis added.)

UW has been an inseparable component of armed conflict since the inception of warfare, but as an officer with seven years of experience in Special Forces, I have seen its specific role often overlooked and misunderstood. In fact, many of the activities that characterize the Libyan conflict are present throughout military history. This misunderstanding leads policy experts to miss opportunities to study cases that can guide, inform, or offer solutions to today's conflicts. This article analyzes the use of UW during three different historical periods, ranging from ancient Rome to modern-day Iran, and concludes that a failure to understand UW represents a failure to understand a major strategy used by our adversaries.

Ancient Rome: Quiet Envoys, Mass Defections

In the third century BCE, Rome and Carthage were the preeminent superpowers of a region that spanned from Western Europe and the Mediterranean to North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. The battle for primacy between these two empires lasted more than a century. After a series of grievous defeats to Carthage at the outset of the Second Punic War, Rome decided to try a new approach.

In 213 BCE, the Roman Senate dispatched a military envoy to meet with Prince Syphax, ruler of the Numidian territories in North Africa.² Numidia was aligned under Carthage and provided its leader Hannibal with his best cavalry units. The envoy consisted

of three Roman centurions who beseeched Syphax to turn against Carthage. In return, Rome would repay Syphax, with interest, following the successful conclusion of the war. The prince agreed, but his one condition was that a centurion remain "with him as instructor in the art of war."³ The centurion Quintus Statorius agreed to stay behind and began the task of arming, equipping, and training the Numidian tribes. Syphax kept his promise and immediately sent messengers to the Numidian fighters in the Carthaginian army to persuade them to leave. Carthage then witnessed a portion of their military forces abandoning them and an uprising on the home continent.⁴

The challenges that Statorius faced more than a millennia ago were very similar to those that coalition advisors encountered on the ground in Libya in 2011. Statorius had to instruct a society accustomed to fighting on horseback and open plains on the finer points of fighting in a tightly packed phalanx (the military innovation of its day). Similarly, the soldiers deployed by countries such as the United Kingdom, France, and Qatar had to train new Libyan volunteers in hit-and-run tactics so that they could stand up to Qaddafi's well-equipped military. Both tasks required special skills such as diplomacy and an understanding of how to develop capability with limited external support. Most importantly, both Numidia and Libya highlight the inordinate impact that a handful of well-trained soldiers can have in a quiet advisory role.

The American Revolution: France's Gamble
Today, the United States commands the most capable armed forces in the world. But, as is easy to forget, during its fight for independence, the U.S. military began as a ragged mix of militia very similar to Libya's 2011 revolutionaries. Both the United States and Libya would not exist in their present form had a foreign power not intervened with UW.

In 1775, France was approaching financial insolvency, smarting from the loss of its colonies in North America, and stifled by England's encroaching power. Across the Atlantic, as the Continental Congress prepared to declare independence from England, Louis XVI saw an opportunity to reverse France's misfortune by stoking the conflict between King George III and his subjects in America.

France initially provided the American insurgency with money, gunpowder, and expertise from military advisors such as Polish engineer Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko and France's Major General Marquis De

Lafayette. Publicly, Paris gave London assurances that France had no desire to capitalize on the war,⁵ but secretly, French ministers used fictitious shell companies to continue supplying the revolutionaries with material and ammunition.⁶ U.S. General George Washington was appreciative yet cautious about France's offers of assistance. Like smart bombs and laser-guided munitions today, cannon and military engineering were the advanced technologies that America needed to defeat the British. He even made the energetic Lafayette his aide-de-camp—to the delight of the French court. However, Washington was aware that France's efforts were not wholly altruistic. "I am heartily disposed to entertain the most favorable sentiments of our new ally and to cherish them in others to a reasonable degree," he said, "but it is a maxim founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its interest."⁷

Both the United States and Libya would not exist in their present form had a foreign power not intervened with unconventional warfare.

By October 1781, the condition on the ground was strikingly similar to that in Libya in 2011. The American revolutionaries had won a share of symbolic victories. The fledgling government enjoyed diplomatic relations with countries like France, Spain, and the Dutch Republic. In the south, the Continental Army—led by Lafayette and reinforced by the French Navy on the Chesapeake—trapped British forces at Yorktown. The Southern British Army's ultimate surrender in Virginia forced Britain to the negotiating table and signaled the end of the war.

During both the American and Libyan revolutions, foreign governments shaped the outcome of events against regimes that they did not favor by using UW. It provided France, and later the United States, with the capability to influence these conflicts quietly, without involving large numbers of their own troops. When the timing was right, France and the United States used their conventional military power (i.e., naval blockade, air force) to support the unconventional

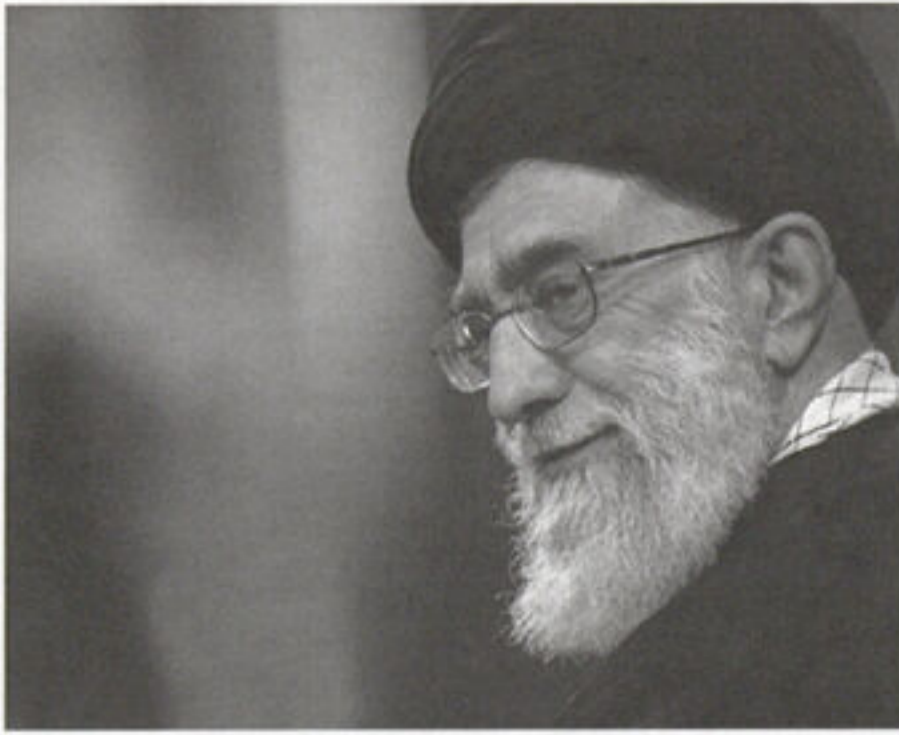


Photo (above): Public Domain

Photo (below): Jonathan Rashad



fighting on the ground. Moreover, although both the Americans and Libyans received substantial foreign assistance, both still felt in control of their own revolutions. Had Libya or the American colonies won their independence without a distinct sense of ownership, the victory would fail to unite the citizenry or garner acknowledgement from the international community.

Iran Today: UW Comes First

As the dust settles in Libya, one of the biggest mistakes U.S. leadership can make is to assume that other countries are not conducting their own UW campaigns. Among the most notable that I observed firsthand is that of Iran.

Iran looks to UW as its almost exclusive means of projecting military power. Following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Iran sent approximately twenty-four members of its Revolutionary Guard Corps to Beirut to support Hezbollah.⁸ In the eighteen years that followed, the number of agents in the country rose as high as five hundred. When Israel withdrew from Lebanon in 2000, the Ayatollah Khomeini addressed the Iranian National Security Council to comment on “Iran’s greatest foreign policy success. We will repeat it across the Islamic world until all of

Islam is liberated.”⁹ Iran considers the Israeli withdrawal the first decisive defeat of a Western power in postmodern times.¹⁰

Unlike NATO’s efforts in Libya, Iran’s UW efforts are not limited to a singular country or region. Where Iran can find a group with whom it shares a common enemy, it will build relationships. Iran’s recruiting pool of insurgents comes from the geographical swath of land known as the “Shia crescent”: Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Bahrain. According to intelligence reports, all have sizable Shia populations that Iran can use as a sectarian baseline to build surrogate forces. Further afield in South America, Iran has a presence in the Tri-Border region of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil. Hezbollah affiliates provide funding for their military wing in Lebanon, and Iran builds contacts inside the drug trade.¹¹ In my experience, even if Iran falls short of supplanting a hostile regime and installing a friendly one, these surrogates provide a capacity to retaliate when Tehran feels threatened. In Iraq, for example, I was aware that the Revolutionary Guard supplied illegal Shia militias with munitions that could penetrate the armor on U.S. vehicles. When the United States convinced China and Russia to agree to tighter United Nations (UN) sanctions against Iran on 18 May 2010, I believe that Tehran gave the order to attack U.S. forces.¹² Two days later, I saw car bombings on American patrols in the Diyala Province, an area previously characterized by relative calm.¹³

Conversely, Iran uses unconventional strategies to protect regimes fighting their own insurgencies. In Syria, there have been reports of Iranian Revolutionary Guard members advising Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad’s military officers.¹⁴ Iranian operatives wear Syrian uniforms, speak the local Arabic dialect, and provide tactical assistance in combating the Free Syrian Army. Though not playing the role of the insurgent, these agents are performing much the same function: quietly supporting foreign forces to fight a common enemy.

One of the biggest differences between Iran and the West is how Iran prioritizes its UW capability above that of its conventional military. Consider that for any NATO member, the most senior leaders are overwhelmingly conventional military officers. Their backgrounds are in the infantry, on naval ships or in jet fighter squadrons. This experience influences their planning, which consequently does not factor in UW. Iran is the opposite; the Revolutionary Guard is the

closest to the Ayatollah's ear while the conventional military sits further down the table. I can attest that when the United States feels threatened, we reach for our tanks and our cruise missiles. When Iran feels threatened, it reaches for UW.

Conclusion

UW will only play an increasing role in today's state of affairs. As the United States wrestles with intervention in Syria, how to deal with Taliban bases in Pakistan, and the right response for Al Qaeda in Yemen, UW will be an appealing choice—especially to an American public fatigued by a decade of war. UW can be cost-effective and minimally visible; it can legitimize local authorities and make conventional military options more effective. However, UW also carries real risks. In Libya, the world is still coming to terms with those recalcitrant fighters who have yet to align with the central government. What share of responsibility

One of the biggest mistakes U.S. leadership can make is to assume that other countries are not conducting their own UW campaigns.

does the international community bear for the resulting instability, given that they armed them?

It is vital that the dialogue over UW begins now. Special Operations, the proponent of UW, has grown immensely over the last twelve years. However, there has not been a corresponding growth in the understanding of UW within the Defense Department and its various agencies. The military is eager to return to its traditional mission and redevelop its conventional warfighting skills. But if there is no corresponding push to educate senior leaders and policy makers on this subject, the United States may lose a potential edge in future conflicts. Our adversaries are learning and with each passing year the United States' technological superiority is lessened. Like Rome in 213 BCE, it is time for a different approach. ❖

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“Nudging” Prisons:

New Hope for Real Prison Reform

By Mark Dlugash
Photos by Samantha Frandino

It was described as a fortress: a “brand new, state of the art, top-security prison.” Fortified by inner and outer perimeters, topped with razor wires, and circumscribed by a huge fence, it was protected by a hair-trigger alarm system and omnipresent security cameras. It was built not outside of Washington, DC, or next to the Russian Gulags, but on the beautiful island of Aruba. This led to a host of questions: “Who decided to build a top-security prison in a country where most crime is non-violent and petty and where a long sentence is regarded as one of eight months or more? Who decided to build a prison with so little access to light and air on a tropical island? Who felt that, in a place so small that personal relationships are all-important, the right prison was one controlled by electronic surveillance and high-tech gadgetry? How did such a completely Western construct end up on the beach of a South American island anyway?”¹

Prison has become an addiction in the United States. We incarcerate a greater portion of our population than any other country in the world. The prison-industrial complex continues to grow, despite regular calls for reform from policy institutes and human rights organizations. Why has it been so hard to reform prisons, and what can we do about it?

In this article, I take a brief tour through prison history and suggest that the politics of prison reform are so loaded that calls for fundamental reform are unlikely to work. Instead, we need to reconceptualize prison as a space designed to keep criminals from reoffending. One tool that may prove particularly effective comes from behavioral economics: the nudge. By “nudging” prisons from the inside we can improve policy outcomes while minimizing the political obstacles.



A History of Double-Edged Reforms

Prisons as an institution have shifted as societal thinking has changed. Prior to the late nineteenth century, prisons were meant to hold prisoners until their “real” punishment, which was usually physically painful (e.g., public whipping) and could include public humiliation (e.g., the stocks). These places were filthy, brutish, and spread disease. As corporal punishment came to be questioned as ineffective, Quakers began championing prison reforms: religious instruction, solitary confinement, classification by offense. The Walnut Street Jail built in Philadelphia—with its expensive, beautiful architecture, central heating, and emphasis on peace and solitude for prisoners—exemplified these higher aims for prisons. The cells were left bare and bars put on the walls to symbolize austerity so prisoners could meditate on the transcendent and move away from their criminality.

But the history of prisons is one of ups and downs, divots, and double-edged reforms. In the Victorian era, a more “scientific” notion of prisons came into vogue, inspired by Jeremy Bentham’s utilitarianism: maximum punishment to help offenders right their ways. Prisons in the United Kingdom used back-breaking physical labor to punish debtors—usually drunks, beggars, prostitutes, and tramps—using a horrifying piece of machinery called the treadwheel that made grown men cry. Already poor, malnourished, and filthy, prisoners were made more so with rampant diarrhea, terrible hunger, and torture, in the guise of vanguard utilitarianism and rehabilitation. Audiences came for entertainment, as if watching caged animals at the zoo.

Starting in the 1930s, various prison reform movements began to converge, based on new work in psychology and sociology. Theorists and practitioners began to believe that criminality may be inherent in so-called “deviant” people who were destined to commit crime—and so the right thing to do was to lock them up and try to help them. This in turn spurred a warehousing of prisoners and medicalization of their treatment.

It wasn’t until the 1970s that this para-

digm was thoroughly challenged by sociologist Robert Martinson, a former civil rights protester who had himself spent forty days in prison as a result of his activism. Asked by New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller to research prison rehabilitation efforts, Martinson helped produce an enormous, 1,400-page meta-study that found little evidence that any existing programs actually worked.² He was determined to get this vital information out to the public, convinced that his results would lead to a thoughtful reexamination of prisons and perhaps their elimination. Instead, the press sensationalized it as proof that “nothing works” and policy makers followed suit by using his study to justify removing educational and vocational programs from prisons as well as counseling and community-based treatment. Stunned by how his work was used to justify harsher, more punitive policies, Martinson committed suicide.

Broadly popular “tough on crime” policies continued to increase throughout the



Who decided to build a top-security prison in a country where most crime is non-violent and petty and where a long sentence is regarded as one of eight months or more?

1980s as a reaction to public fear following crime waves. More people were locked up for longer sentences, a trend that continues to this day. We have seen its apotheosis in the high-tech, high-security, incredibly expensive Supermax prisons. Today, the United States holds nearly a quarter of the world's prison population.

The costs of mass incarceration are widely agreed to be enormous. The financial cost of feeding and housing inmates can exceed the costs of attending a private university.^{3,4} There are also secondary costs to prisoners' families: lost time and wages, humiliations experienced when visiting, and social costs of children growing up without parents.⁵ Prisoners experience psychological costs, including heightened depression, anxiety, and suicidality.⁶ The economy suffers from lost labor and difficulty putting prisoners back to work. Finally, there's the moral cost from human rights abuses endured and the psychic costs of wasted lives. All these costs are amplified by high recidivism rates and the long-term imprisonment of many offenders.

So what is prison? My argument is that prison is a muddled, costly attempt to simultaneously punish, rehabilitate, and warehouse those whom society considers deviant—yet none of those goals are satisfyingly achieved. It's based on outdated thinking from bygone eras, it's ineffective, and it costs huge amounts of money. So why don't policy makers just reform them?

Why Reforms Have Stalled

There are three main reasons why prison reforms have stalled. First, the politics of prison reform are caustic. Politicians who seem "soft" on crime risk being voted out of office. This

fear crystallized in 1988 after inmate Willie Horton escaped from a prison furlough program and attacked a civilian. That year's Democratic nominee for president, Michael Dukakis, was bludgeoned in political advertisements and subsequently lost the election by an overwhelming margin. More recently, Mike Huckabee was tarnished as a 2008 presidential Republican primary candidate for pardoning a man who later allegedly murdered four police officers. Politicians strive to maintain an image as "tough on crime," which in turn undermines serious reform efforts. Lacking a well-funded, well-organized public movement to give them cover, it remains difficult for policy makers to take a strong stand for prison reform—especially if that reform includes improving conditions for violent offenders.

Second, there's an entrenched status quo. We think of prisons as normal, and this conception becomes reified; prisoners are thought to deserve their punishment, as though placing a human being in a metal cage is a proportionate punishment. There's an added "out of sight, out of mind" problem: huge swaths of the public rarely think of prisons during their daily lives. The relative lack of public debate today about punishing offenders pales when compared to the 1800s. Prison architecture plays a role as well: anachronistic structures (e.g., cells with bars) are used to save money even though they reflect outdated philosophies of punishment.

Third, people are anxious about crime in a way that's essentially primal. The specter of violent crime abounds, amplified by 24/7 cable news and screaming tabloid headlines about murders, shootings, and muggings—even as, ironically, violent crime rates continue to drop. Prison gives the illusion of security in a dangerous world; people believe it makes them safer. So it may be immoral, unjust, illegitimate, disproportionate, or incoherent—but at a gut level, it just feels safer to put so-called dangerous people behind bars. For this reason especially, attempts at prison abolition—such as those promulgated by the activist organization Critical Resistance—seem unlikely to be effective in the near term.



All these factors have contributed to gridlocked reform efforts.

A New Hope?

In 1998, Singapore was faced with similar problems: rising numbers of prisoners, overcrowding, high recidivism, and trouble recruiting and retaining correctional officers. Director of Singapore Prison Service Chua Chin Kiat changed the mission: now it would be “to get criminals out of prison.” The program implemented, “Prisons as schools for life,” recast guards as “captains of lives,” responsible for all prisoners’ human needs—physical, emotional, spiritual, vocational, educational—and future success. They tended to drug addictions, mental health, and character; focused on reintegrating prisoners speedily into the community through work release; and helped them secure steady jobs. Key components included a humane and trusting process, educating both prisoners and the public, developing effective after-care programs, and carefully monitoring and prioritizing key metrics for life success.

The results were dramatic. Within the next ten years, they slashed recidivism from 44 percent to a low of 23 percent, settling at 27 percent in 2009.⁷ Respect for guards skyrocketed above 90 percent. Assaults plummeted, guards reported better working conditions, and the recruitment problem was solved. Corrections officers enjoyed their job

more when it was to help people get their lives back on track. The service’s slogan: “We’re trained to look for the sparkle, not just the flaw.”

A few key lessons can be drawn from Singapore’s experience. First, it is worth reconceptualizing the role of prisons: to prepare prisoners to be effective citizens. As Peter van Hulten notes, prisoners are really “citizens temporarily removed from society, but almost certain to return there, with all their civil rights.”⁸ When prisons become a revolving door, they are costly and a waste of human life. If we

The Singapore results were dramatic: within ten years, they slashed recidivism from **44 to 27 percent.**

don’t prepare offenders for life outside the prison gates—and don’t remedy any preexisting problems that contribute to recidivism, such as mental health issues, illiteracy, educational deficits, and lack of job preparedness—we are paving the way for their return to prison.

Within the United States, we can also see reform programs, but they are more truncated. The drug court movement, in which drug offenders get treatment instead of jail, has been

used to decrease crowded jails and save taxpayers money. Politically, they have garnered support from a wide range of actors, including fiscally and socially conservative politicians who might otherwise be opponents of “lenient” prison policy. But these courts focus primarily on minor drug offenders rather than the entirety of the current prison population.

Similarly, reforms targeting youth offenders in Massachusetts and Missouri have garnered public support for reducing the number of young people behind bars and saving taxpayer money, but it seems doubtful the public would support using these programs for higher-risk, non-juvenile offenders. The public views youth crime more sympathetically and is more willing to consider creative and restorative approaches. But the “tough on crime” factor for adult prisoners remains; increasing expenditures to help these offenders remains a tough sell to the American public.

“Nudging” Prisons

A different approach to reconceptualizing prisons is to reform them from the inside using “nudges.” Cass Sunstein and Richard Thaler define a nudge as “any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people’s behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives.”⁹ Small nudges to prisons hold the possibility of improving conditions and outcomes for prisoners while minimizing political risk and public objections.

For example, instead of asking the state to provide drug treatment to all addicted prisoners, prisons can post the phone numbers for free drug treatment programs (run by outside nonprofits) on prison bulletin boards and give prisoners access to phones that would let them take advantage of them. The Spring Hill prison in Grendon Underwood, England, does just that. Similarly, reorienting the role of correctional officers so that their primary purpose is to help prisoners make the most of their time in prison and succeed afterward, as Singapore has done, can reduce recidivism without increasing costs.



The essentially voluntary nature of nudges can empower prisoners by giving them an opportunity to regain control over their lives, rather than being forced to do one thing or another.

Nudges could also be effective in prisoner education. Many prisoners have difficulty reading: it’s estimated that 30 percent of the Philadelphia prison population reads at a second- or third-grade level, according to a 2010 article in the Philadelphia Inquirer. Renewed emphasis on developing literacy may be a critical stepping stone in helping prisoners gain employment. Many subtle nudges can help improve literacy rates. Prisoners can be given rooms with bookshelves filled with books donated from local organizations. They could be given a choice of afternoon extracurricular activities that consist of a few unpalatable options (e.g., weeding in the yard) or reading with a volunteer tutor; this wouldn’t force them to focus on literacy but would nudge them in that direction. There could be minor incentives (e.g., dessert at meal times) given to prisoners who read at least two books a week. None of these practices amounts to a “full push,” but all of them improve the likelihood of achieving a socially beneficial outcome at an incredibly low cost.

Nudges could provide crucial support to educational programs in prison. That's because while numerous organizations across the United States help provide prisoner education, such as the Bedford Hills College Program in New York and the Prison University Project in California, a declining percentage of prisoners are participating in education programs.¹⁰ Regardless of why prisoners may not take full advantage of existing programs, nudges can help encourage them to do so.

Although nudges can't realistically be expected to fix all the problems in the criminal justice system—and may not represent the radical change that many feel the prison estate deserves¹¹—they have the potential to help build a more effective and thoughtful prison system. In particular, they can be used to help implement extremely important programs—such as those in education, drug counseling, vocational training, mental health care, and suicide prevention—at a relatively low cost while side-stepping public debate in an area that is all too frequently antagonistic and based on the politics of fear. Moreover, the essentially voluntary nature of nudges can empower prisoners by giving them an opportunity to regain control over their lives, rather than being forced to do one thing or another.

Though there still remains great reason for pessimism about the prospects for reforming the American prison system, there is also reason for hope. The politics are toxic, the status quo entrenched, and anxieties about crime and desires for punishment hardly rational, but there is a way forward for common-sense prison reform if we can begin to reconceptualize prisons as places to help prisoners fix their lives and reduce recidivism. This kind of humanistic yet results-focused philosophy—coupled with a series of thoughtful, internal adjustments and realignments, and aided by nudges—has the potential to pave the way for a more humane and effective system. ❖

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Calling for More Hanin Zoabis:

Why Israeli Arab Political Parties Should Prioritize Recruiting and Promoting Women

by Catherine Leland



Photo: flickr/ mackenzie jean

She's the "most hated woman in Israel," according to *Foreign Policy* magazine, and it doesn't bother her at all.¹ Hanin Zoabi—a member of the Knesset, the legislative branch of the Israeli government—is, undeniably, a force. Elected in 2009, Zoabi is the first Palestinian Arab female elected to the Israeli parliament through an Arab party's list and is most famous for participating in the 2010 Turkish aid flotilla to Gaza. Called a traitor and temporarily banned from standing for re-election for "undermining Israel," Zoabi began her second Knesset term in January 2013.²

I met Zoabi last year in Nazareth. As an American who sees far too few women in office in my own country, Zoabi fascinated me. She has brought new international attention to the plight of Israel's Palestinian Arab citizens (20.5 percent of the population).³ Domestically, she has been a voice for Palestinian women in the Knesset, focusing her agenda on high unemployment rates among Palestinian Arab women.

After my encounter with Zoabi, I was curious to know: why aren't there more Palestinian women in Israeli politics? And how can this change?

During the summer of 2012, I interviewed Palestinian women activists in Haifa, Nazareth, and Jerusalem to find out.⁴ These women, who worked both inside and outside of political parties, echoed similar concerns: a lack of opportunities to engage in political parties, especially when starting families; a lack of employment opportunities for college-educated Palestinian women generally, which stifles credentials to run; fear among their parents of political activism; and lack of a connection to the current party platforms. As a high-ranking party member told me, being a woman in politics means "being alone."

Many women also pointed to a feeling that change was not possible within the Israeli political system, which is committed to the idea of a Jewish state. It was simply not set up for Palestinians to succeed. Zoabi has challenged this notion. She believes that fighting an unjust system from the inside can sometimes be more effective than from the outside.⁵ She's right: Zoabi has successfully used her office—arguably more than anyone else of her time—to draw international attention to the struggles within her community. Rather than conform to the perceived confinement of public office, she has used it to promote dissent.

Today, there are eleven members representing Arab political parties in the 120-member Knesset; Zoabi is the only woman among this group.⁶ By contrast, there are twenty-six women among the 109 remaining members of the Knesset.⁷ Arab political parties must do a better job of recruiting and promoting women for internal leadership positions and for national office. Actively promoting female involvement from a young age and encouraging participation

through all stages of life will give more diversity, voice, and strength to Arab party platforms. This is especially critical as Palestinian Israelis increasingly rely on Arab (or so-called non-Zionist) parties to represent their views in the Knesset—or risk becoming disengaged entirely.

In the January 2013 election, only 56 percent of Palestinians voted, down from 75 percent in 1999.⁸ According to a survey that As'ad Ghanem, a political scientist at the University of Haifa, released prior to the election, 31 percent of Palestinians who did not plan to vote said it was because they had no one to vote for, and 26 percent said they were not interested in politics. Only 8 percent based their decision on ideology, such as a decision to boycott Israel.⁹ The bottom line: disengagement is a problem.

Arab political parties would be well served to examine the reasons behind the lack of fe-

volunteering with Mada al-Carmel (Arab Center for Applied Social Research) in Haifa.

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Being a woman in politics means being *alone.*

male involvement within their ranks. Part of this examination should involve finding ways to disabuse the notion that politics cannot change anything. Involving women not only strengthens the party platform, it can also help engage the disengaged and give a stronger voice to the Palestinian struggle from the inside, instead of relegating dissent to the outside alone—or even worse, harboring apathy.

For now, Hanin Zoabi carries the torch for Palestinian women in the Knesset and all the good and bad that comes with it. Let's hope that one day she'll have some company. ❖

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The Changing Face of Higher Education:

The Future of the Traditional University Experience



Photo: Jamin Gray

By Chrissie Long

Sarah Cummings sat at the kitchen table, her Web browser open and a handful of graduate school brochures strewn about. A senior manager at an education firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Cummings was wrestling with idea of returning to school. "People have always told me that you need a master's degree," said the twenty-eight-year-old California native. "But given the business climate, I am just not sure it is worth it."

Cummings is not alone in her hesitation: enrollment in graduate school programs has dropped for the second year in a row, according to the Council of Graduate Schools. Experts say the decline is a result of rising tuition (since 2000, there has been a 49 percent increase at private universities and 73 percent rise at

public universities) coupled with a struggling economy.

But there's a third factor that may be affecting enrollment figures.

Today, more so than ever, digital course offerings are becoming a valid alternative. Prospective students no longer need to leave their jobs or forgo a salary to pursue higher education. This is supported by the recent entry of the so-called elite colleges into the space, which is giving online learning greater credibility.

In fact, the rush to stake a flag in the online higher education movement led the *New York Times* to label 2012 "the year of the MOOCs" (massive online open courses): "MOOCs have been around for a few years," the *Times* wrote in a November 2012

When you can learn from the so-called elite universities for free and without going through the rigorous application process, will there still be interest in a \$40,000 degree from a lesser-known college?

article, "but this is the year everyone wants in."

In April 2012, former Snapfish photo company CEO Ben Nelson introduced Project Minerva, an initiative to create the next Ivy League university entirely online. With \$25 million in start-up money from Benchmark Capital and a board of advisors that includes former Harvard University President Larry Summers and the former New School President Bob Kerrey, Nelson is preparing to enlist "the smartest, hardest-working students worldwide" in a highly selective, transcontinental learning experience.

In the fall, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology teamed up to release their first seven courses as part of a not-for-profit venture called edX. The online platform extends the elite academic experience to the general public—tuition free. Those who complete the courses receive a "certificate of mastery," though no degrees are awarded.

Then there's the more well-known Khan Academy, a five-year-old nonprofit with bite-sized videos and mini-tutorials directed at secondary school students; Coursera, a private, fee-based, certificate-issuing platform launched in 2011 and used by thirty-five universities around the world, and Udacity, a computer science-focused, free online system that introduced its first two courses in February 2012.

With so many video-streaming online platforms, learning analytics, and interactive exercises delivered at a fraction of the cost (or sometimes free), a crucial question arises: are higher education programs putting themselves out of business?

Stephen Carson, external relations director at MIT OpenCourse-

Ware (one of the first MOOC projects), says no. "It's going to be a long time before a graduate school experience can be replicated online," he said. "Some of the best experiences [at least at MIT] are in labs, using the equipment, designing and creating things, and that is not going to go online very easily or very quickly."

The Impact on Campus-Based Education

The academic fields that may suffer most from this movement online are education, management, and arts and sciences. Unlike medicine or science, where you need a lab, you don't need a physical infrastructure to learn in humanities-based courses. Despite edX's "Introduction to Biology" or Coursera's "Fundamentals of Electrical Engineering," training the nation's doctors, scientists, and engineers entirely through virtual spaces—when so much of their work is hands-on—seems a far way off.

But beyond displacing fields of study, there is some concern that the rise of online learning will purge institutions. While it certainly will not threaten an MIT or a Harvard, it may put pressure on lesser-known institutions. When you can learn from the so-called elite universities for free and without going through the rigorous application process, will there still be interest in a \$40,000 degree from a lesser-known college?

"There is a lot of anxiety in the higher education community about people and jobs and academics being supplanted by these tools," Carson says. "I think they are going to challenge schools at the middle of the pack to better articulate the value that they bring to the table."

These middle-of-the-road



Photo: Wikimedia Commons/HBS

Today, even the daughter of a farm laborer in rural Thailand can access the classrooms of an Ivy League school.

institutions have one thing going for them: most of the interest in online courses is not coming from the United States but from areas that may not necessarily have access to campus-based learning. For example, according to self-reported statistics from both MIT OpenCourseWare and edX, 60 percent of each venture's traffic is international, stemming from countries such as India and Colombia.

Within the United States, there has yet to be a massive movement toward supplanting campus-based education. But if online learning continues on its current trajectory and students exchange their pricy campus-based education for an online degree, the universities that have thrived on low-cost tuition, night classes, and low entry barriers may see their enrollments taper off.

As far as learning at the un-

dergraduate level, the ivy-covered brick towers, dorm-room keg parties, and large lecture halls still have their place. Experts agree that campuses serve as an important venue for the transition from adolescence to adulthood. It is a rite-of-passage for the nation's youth and a safe environment in which young minds can experiment.

That is good news for disciples of campus-based education, who say there is nothing like sitting around a small table with a handful of students and discussing the merits of Immanuel Kant's "Transcendental Aesthetic" or John Rawls' "Veil of Ignorance." The four-year undergraduate experience—though it may be transformed—is not going anywhere.

The Changing Face of Higher Education

But while campuses still serve a

role in educating the nation's young people, the structure of their classes is much different from those who graduated just ten years earlier.

Not only is online learning allowing students to more easily study abroad or take time off due to personal issues, it is also tailoring the learning experience to an individual style or pace. Concepts not grasped immediately can be relearned through programs online or processed through a variety of formats (online questions and answers, brief summaries, and additional readings or videos). By offering greater flexibility in teaching mechanisms, students are better equipped to take their learning in stride.

Surfacing alongside the online education movement are new ideas about how to use classroom time. Today, fewer courses are being taught in the traditional lecture style; many are moving toward a discussion-based seminar or are adopting the notion of the "flipped classroom." According to Allison Pingree, director of professional pedagogy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, a flipped classroom is a new teaching method in which lectures are moved outside of class (in the form of online videos or readings) and class time is spent on problem sets with the professor serving as a guide.

"So much of our educational model in the past has been to sit and be passive recipients," Pingree said. "Today, we are recognizing that how we spend that face-to-face time is a really precious resource, and technology can help us enhance student learning by having students get caught up to speed outside of class."

Online learning is also chang-

ing the relationship between student and teacher. Rather than the instructor serving as the sole source of knowledge in a classroom, professors are increasingly encouraging information sharing between students.

In fact, online platforms have cited situations of "massive meet-ups" where students enrolled in a particular class will meet for a coffee in Argentina, a tutoring session in Germany, or class discussion over beers in India: instead of all learning being done between a professor and a student, peer-to-peer guidance is becoming increasingly important.

"The idea that learning revolves around one central figure disseminating expertise was already on its way out," Pingree said. "Technology has sped that up exponentially."

Higher Education Is Changing the World

As state and federal policy makers wrestle with higher costs of public institutions and shrinking budgets, many are exploring digital platforms as a tool to keep tuition costs low.

In the spring of 2013, forty public universities offered credits

for online courses through the MOOC2Degree/Academic Partnerships. A central idea of the platform is to ensure that those high costs and low budgets don't threaten academic quality or enrollment rates.

The Florida state legislature recently discussed online education as a means to grow a more educated workforce and keep pace with high demand for a university education. Already the state has a virtual K-12 school with a 122,000-student enrollment.

California legislators are considering a bill that gives students at state universities credit for courses taken online. The credits would only be offered to students who were denied access to oversubscribed courses, and the online classes would have to be pre-approved by faculty. According to bill sponsors, the change is one way to answer challenges of funding and over-enrollment in the state's higher education institutions.

In November 2012, edX announced it would partner with the Massachusetts Community Colleges for open access courses. Beginning in spring 2013, both Bunker Hill

and MassBay Community Colleges will offer a computer science and programming course from the edX platform that will be complemented by in-class exercises and discussion.

"The growth in student borrowing and student debt levels has been of great concern both to the general public and to the federal government," said James Honan, a senior lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. "There is a gigantic push toward online resources ... Can [digital tools] be deployed to reduce the cost of traditional higher education or tuition even in a marginal way? That is of great interest to policy makers and to leaders."

But the real opportunity for online education is in developing countries. Today, even the daughter of a farm laborer in rural Thailand can access the classrooms of an Ivy League school, provided the local Internet café connection is fast enough and she has the patience to learn English. No longer does an eight-hour bus ride to the closest urban center stand as an obstacle to greater learning. And no longer

In the spring of 2013, **forty** public universities offered credits for online courses through the MOOC2Degree/Academic Partnerships.



do the hurdles of poverty keep all determined learners on the sidelines of higher education.

Perhaps it's a bit idealistic to think that online offerings could lead to scholarship opportunities, employment opportunities, or the development of new industries in emerging markets. But the tools are there and enough institutions are working to facilitate access that it does not seem so far-fetched anymore. For anyone who has traveled to developing countries and interacted with Internet-savvy youth, the aspiration of global equality does not seem so far off.

Governments and universities around the world are experimenting with online education as a means of reaching their more rural populations and overcoming infrastructure challenges, where the number of classroom seats is not enough to meet demand. Though questions of quality of education arise from a heavy dependence on online platforms, university administrators are simultaneously re-examining accreditation standards and ways to internalize new technology.

So while a Coursera and Udacity will never replace the bricks and mortar of centuries-old universities, they are offering access to elite education in many corners of the world. They are reshaping how classes are taught and how students learn. And they are leading graduate students to rethink the hefty price tag of campus-based learning.

For now, there is still a need for ivy-covered towers, large campus quads, and wood-paneled lecture halls. But how those spaces are used and how students learn is changing. Largely because universities and academics are now embracing the Internet, higher learning will never be the same. ❖

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MIT.

Photo: flickr/bettlebrox

In Defense of Energy: Unlocking an Untapped Resource

by Jeffrey M. Voth



THE MORNING of 2 March 2013 could have started better for Americans. Although most did not wake up to Sonny and Cher singing “I Got You, Babe” as their Saturday morning alarm, it was hard to avoid turning on the television, opening the paper, or glancing at the latest news feed without feeling a bit like Bill Murray’s character—a weatherman reliving the same day over and over again—in the 1993 cult-classic movie *Groundhog Day*.

As federal programs braced for \$85 billion in indiscriminate cuts, half of which would fall on the shoulders of a military stretched thin after a decade of war, politicians reverted to familiar partisan rhetoric and dire predictions—a nod to Punxsutawney Phil, the venerable prognosticator and icon of the small Pennsylvania town featured in the film.

Unfortunately, it is not enough to agree that political inaction is the problem. Confronted with mounting government deficits, no relief to a demanding military operational tempo, and an increasing focus on the Asia-Pacific region, how can U.S. forces improve security, offset austerity measures, and preserve American global commitments critical for economic growth?

They can do so by leading an

unconventional energy revolution.

Exempt from requirements outlined by federal statutory laws and regulations, the energy consumed by America’s operational forces has largely gone unchecked. The cost to power our nation’s military could be significantly reduced by 2035 simply by making concerted efforts to transform energy efficiency. Defense operational energy consumption grew by just 0.3 percent in 2011, significantly below the 1.7 percent average annual growth experienced during the last decade of war.¹ This article posits that energy efficiency for U.S. operational forces is an untapped resource and should be considered a vital “fifth fuel” in efforts to reduce consumption.

This article proceeds in three stages. First, I examine U.S. security commitments in the Middle East region, with a focus on the operational energy required to provide a persistent presence to ensure the export of millions of barrels of oil every day. Next, I explore the relationship between energy security and security policy, discussing the primary challenges that the United States faces in adopting energy efficiency reforms within current defense acquisition and operational frameworks. Finally, this article brings these themes together to argue that

effective mitigation of oil/energy price shocks and supply disruptions resulting from exogenous political events in the Middle East region needs an expanded energy policy framework to unlock the energy efficiency potential of the U.S. military, the single-largest energy consumer in the world. As part of this strategy, the United States will be able to effectively leverage the power of a strong domestic energy agenda and support an emerging national security strategy focused on the Asia-Pacific region.

Securing American Energy
U.S. policy in the Middle East region has been predicated on the notion that the United States will use military force if necessary to defend its national interest to secure the flow of oil. First articulated during President Jimmy Carter’s 1980 State of the Union Address, the pronouncement—dubbed the Carter Doctrine—declared that “an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States.”² This doctrine underpins American policy in the Middle East that endured with an increased dependence on oil exports transiting through the Strait of Hormuz. The policy has

not come without economic consequences, however. Recent studies have employed full-cost accounting methods to estimate the cost of force projection in the Middle East, including the cost for the U.S. Navy to continuously maintain a single carrier strike group in the region. These studies, sponsored by Princeton University's Oil, Energy, and the Middle East program, estimate the cost of sustained operations over the past three decades to be more than \$7 trillion—nearly one-half of America's growing national debt.³

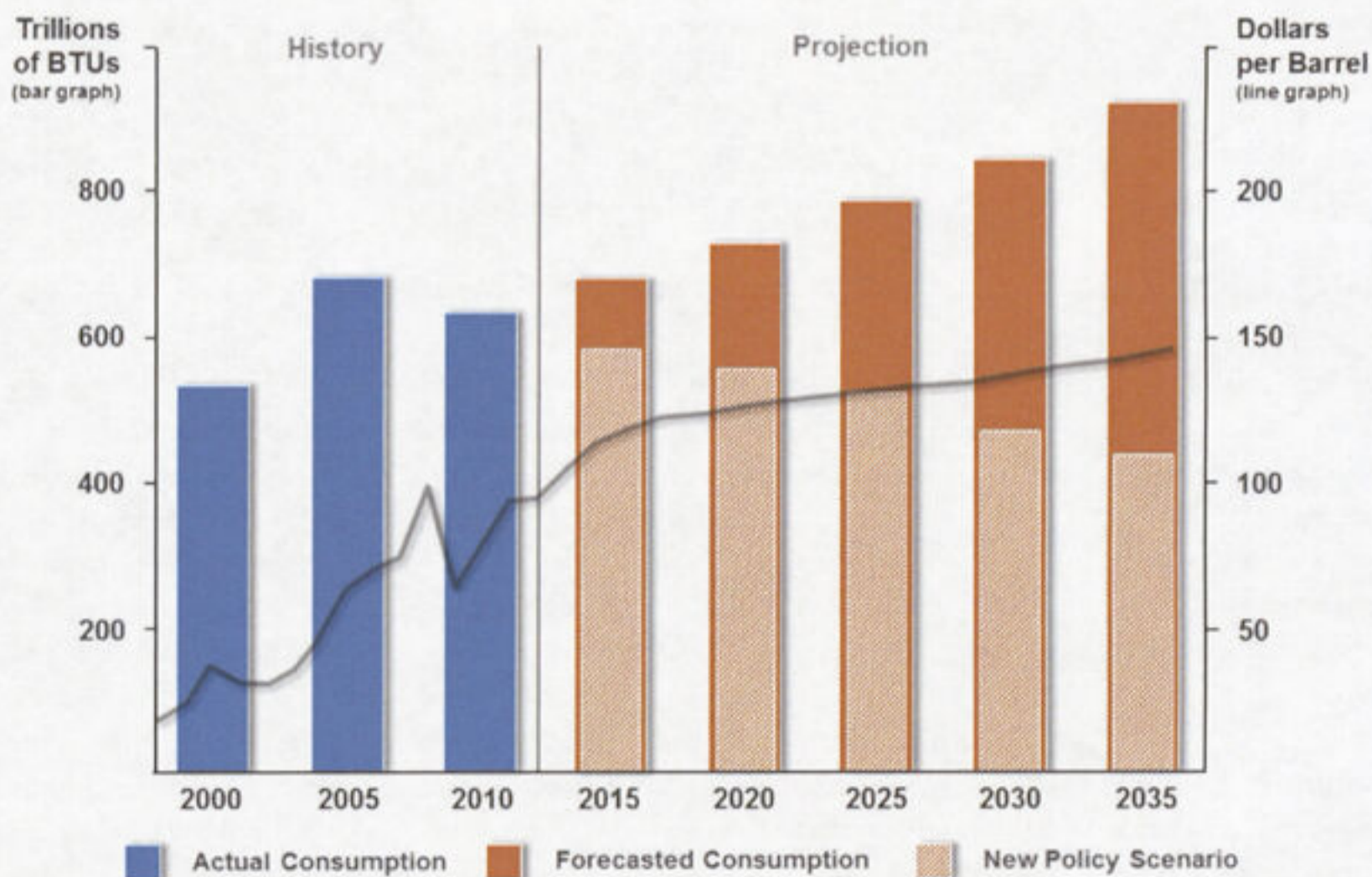
Assured access to reliable and sustainable supplies of energy has been central to the U.S. military's ability to meet operational requirements within the Middle East, whether keeping the seas safe from Somali pirates operating in the Strait of Hormuz, providing humanitarian assistance in the wake

of a natural disaster in Pakistan, or delivering counterterrorism and special-mission units to hostile regions throughout the Middle East. With the war in Afghanistan drawing to a close by the end of 2014, the United States needs to take the opportunity to establish broader operational energy reduction targets (see Figure 1) and balance regional security commitments in the Middle East while embracing a new defense strategy that calls for a strengthened American presence in the Asia-Pacific region. New approaches and innovative technologies are required to improve fuel efficiency, increase the length of time between refueling, and enhance operational flexibility with the goal of reducing vulnerability inherent in a long supply line tether. From both a strategic and operational perspective, the call to action is clear: energy efficiency must transform the

military's energy security posture to meet an increasingly interconnected series of global commitments.

As illustrated in Figure 1, extreme volatility of oil prices and the cost to provide an ongoing maritime presence to ensure access to foreign fuel supplies present a significant challenge for the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD). Between 2003 and 2009, the global oil market witnessed its most significant period of volatility in decades. After relentlessly increasing, oil prices reached a historic high in 2008. Oil prices retreated following the global economic crisis, but consistently climbed over the next three years, averaging the second-highest level on record in 2012.⁴ Operating in a fiscally constrained environment over the next few decades could magnify the impact of the DOD's dependence on foreign and nonrenewable sources

Figure 1 – U.S. Department of Defense Operational Energy



Sources: U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Energy Management Report* (September 2012); U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Annual Energy Outlook* (December 2012); Deloitte LLP, *Energy Security: America's Best Defense* (May 2010)



Photo: Flickr/DVIDSHUB

of energy. For every dollar increase in the price of a barrel of oil, the DOD's annual fuel costs rise by \$130 million.⁵ Implementing a modest 1.5 percent annual reduction target—half of the current National Energy Conservation Policy Act (NECPA) mandate—would be a step to align military operational energy goals with targets established for the DOD's fixed installations and broader federal initiatives. Efforts are already underway to significantly reduce building energy consumption within the DOD, managing a facility footprint three times larger than Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer. Expanding federal initiatives to operational energy, which comprises more than 75 percent of the military's total consumption,⁶ would offset more than 195 trillion British thermal units (BTUs) from the 2010 baseline, enough total

energy to power the entire city of Washington, DC.⁷

Accelerating America's Energy Transformation

Historically, operational energy considerations have not played a significant role within DOD acquisition or operational policy. Operational energy programs have encountered funding challenges, particularly a lack of sufficient development and procurement funding, which has impeded significant technology development for energy efficiency gains. Rapid rises in fuel costs without relief to the U.S. military's high operating tempo have limited the funds available for ship maintenance, stretched operational budgets, and forced postponement of several high-visibility deployments. Therefore, as energy policy has evolved as a national security is-

sue, more emphasis has been placed on operational energy efficiency, including the establishment of a central office within the DOD to provide guidance and oversight for operational energy plans and programs.

Recent policy progress has included an agreement from the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) to apply energy efficiency as a key performance parameter. The new energy efficiency metric will reference the total, or "fully burdened" cost of energy in analyses for selected acquisition decisions. While introducing new methods to assess total lifecycle energy costs is an important step within the overall acquisition framework for defense systems, in general, policy and regulatory structures tend to delay energy transformation. The typical time elapsed from a decision to

proceed for defense systems until its initial operational capability averages more than ten years. The real barrier to an energy transformation within military operational energy will be slow adoption rates rather than the adequacy of available technologies.

As former U.K. Prime Minister Winston Churchill once famously declared, "Gentlemen, we have run out of money; now we have to think." Churchill's admonition underlies the need for reform throughout the U.S. federal government, including its largest energy consumer. The DOD comprises 80 percent of federal consumption⁸ yet is largely exempt from recent energy reform policies due to the nature of the missions, the prioritization of warfighter safety, and the large fleet of tactical vehicles (i.e., tactical fuels are exempt from any federal mandate). Energy efficiency initiatives, particularly off-the-shelf technology, should employ a fast-track process, introducing new capabilities in fewer than twenty-four months, and should actually improve the safety and functionality of the warfighters. The DOD has the proven ability to respond effectively to urgent operational needs, establishing rapid response teams to match critical technology with warfighter demands. Finally, policies mandating energy efficiency considerations, consistent with mission needs, should be established during operational commanders' efforts to design theater campaign plans. Reshaping the traditional strategic planning process by expanding efficiency requirements within acquisition and operational policies will produce distinct advantages that will enhance national and global energy security imperatives.

Recognizing Future Global Energy Challenges

The DOD will need to enhance its security posture by significantly reducing warfighter dependence of vulnerable fuel supplies while ensuring military forces are able to meet the increasing demands as attention shifts from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region. Energy security will continue to be inextricably linked to national security interests. "The global energy landscape is changing rapidly. And those changes will recast our expectations about the role of different countries, regions and fuels over the coming decades," according to International Energy Agency (IEA) Executive Director Maria van der Hoeven.⁹ The U.S. currently imports two million barrels of oil each day from the Middle East, according to the latest IEA report, the world's source for authoritative data and analysis on energy.¹⁰ The Paris-based intergovernmental organization predicts that the combined effect of surging production of unconventional oil, known as "tight oil," and efficiency improvements to curtail demand will reduce U.S. dependence on Middle East oil imports by up to 85 percent over the next two decades.¹¹ As America secures its domestic energy future and ends a decade-long war in the Middle East, it will, "of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region," according to the U.S. national security strategy released in 2012.¹²

The Asia-Pacific region will account for more than 90 percent of Middle East oil exports by 2035,¹³ shifting U.S. military attention to the Malacca, Lombok, and Sunda Strait, which will become a growing strategic choke point for oil supplies bound for Allied nations



and require a growing U.S. military presence in the Asia-Pacific region. Critical regional allies such as Japan and Korea both have large refining sectors but rely on crude imports for nearly all of their oil needs. Vulnerabilities presented by the volatility of energy costs, dependence on limited foreign oil sources, and threat of foreign energy suppliers attempting to influence the global economy all address the need to transform energy supply, demand, and security for the DOD. With a newly established Marine Corps presence in Australia, an established Army and Air Force infrastructure in Korea, and more than half of Naval Forces scheduled to be based in the Asia-Pacific region, deliberate and strategic measures are required to mitigate operational energy challenges for a globally deployed U.S. force structure.

Expanding the current energy policy framework to incorporate the military's operational requirements will require confidence, vision, and a comprehensive strategy that will drive transformation throughout a globally deployed force. Improving energy efficiency will allow forces to quickly incorporate new mission capabilities that require increased power demand while reducing over-

all fuel consumption. Expanding the domestic blueprint for a secure energy future to incorporate its globally deployed force will unlock an untapped resource, aligning policy objectives and fully embracing energy as a strategic resource—firmly establishing America as a global energy leader in the decades ahead. ❖

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The Power to Change the World?

The Role of Sport in Development

By David Tannenwald



IN MAY 2000, Nelson Mandela stood before a microphone, prepared to address the inaugural Laureus World Sports Awards ceremony. Never more than a recreational athlete, Mandela might seem an odd choice to serve as the patron of a global sports gala. But the event's proceeds were going to charities harnessing sport to effect positive change, and Mandela is intimately familiar with using sport for good. Most notably, as South Africa's president, he helped to bridge the country's racial divide by integrating the national rugby squad. So as he began to speak, the audience members—who ranged from famed Brazilian soccer player Pelé to musician Jon Bon Jovi—listened closely. "Sport," Mandela proclaimed, "has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does... It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers."¹

Over the past thirteen years, Mandela's declaration has become a rallying cry for the burgeoning "sport and development" sector. Ranging from baseball and education nonprofits in Compton, California, to soccer and HIV initiatives in Cape Town, South Africa, this field consists of hundreds of organiza-

tions, with at least \$100-\$200 million in annual backing, attempting to use sport to tackle the world's most pressing problems. And they are gaining traction. In November 2012, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly passed its eighth in a series of resolutions endorsing sport as a development tool. This came four years after former U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair penned an essay for *Time* expressing his support for Beyond Sport—an organization that recognizes top sport and development groups. He began his piece by quoting Mandela's speech.²

Yet the notion of sport and development has its critics. Some lament that it is loosely defined, unregulated, and lacks proof that it works. Others suggest that it serves primarily to burnish the image of professional sports organizations. The most forceful critics assert that sport and development harms—not helps—the developing world. These skeptics are not just at the margins: prominent individuals and organizations—including officials from the U.S. federal government—have approached the field tepidly.

So is sport saving the world, or is the vision misguided?

Photo: flickr/acidpix

A Plane Ticket and a Ball

Gauging the impact of sport and development is challenging, in part because it is difficult to pin down exactly what to call it, let alone what it means and how many people it is helping. A cursory review of the literature reveals a host of terms that are employed within the field: sport and society, sport and social change, sport and philanthropy, sport through development, and development through sport, just to name a few. All of these labels point to sport's social benefit, a notion that is far from new. In ancient Greece, leaders signed a truce to halt fighting during the Olympics, and more recently, the belief that sport builds character has gained currency.

The past fifteen years, however, has seen an upsurge in sport and development organizations focused on some of the world's greatest challenges. Internationally, these initiatives focus primarily on achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals and fall

interest in development lack the training and resources to realize this mission. Both kinds of organizations, practitioners fear, can tarnish the field in the eyes of prospective funders. "Anyone with a plane ticket and a ball," observes an industry veteran I spoke with, "can become a sport and development organization."

To sharpen boundaries, some call for creating an accreditation system for coaches and practitioners. Currently, however, little oversight occurs, which complicates efforts to validate organizations' claims about how many people they serve. "In Zambia, I saw kids in slums who'd been trained five or more times by different NGOs [nongovernmental organizations]," says Bruce Kidd, former Olympian and University of Toronto professor, in a 2011 *Sports Illustrated* piece. "NGOs aren't just fighting for donors, they're fighting for kids."³

Forceful critics assert that sport and development harms—not helps—the developing world.

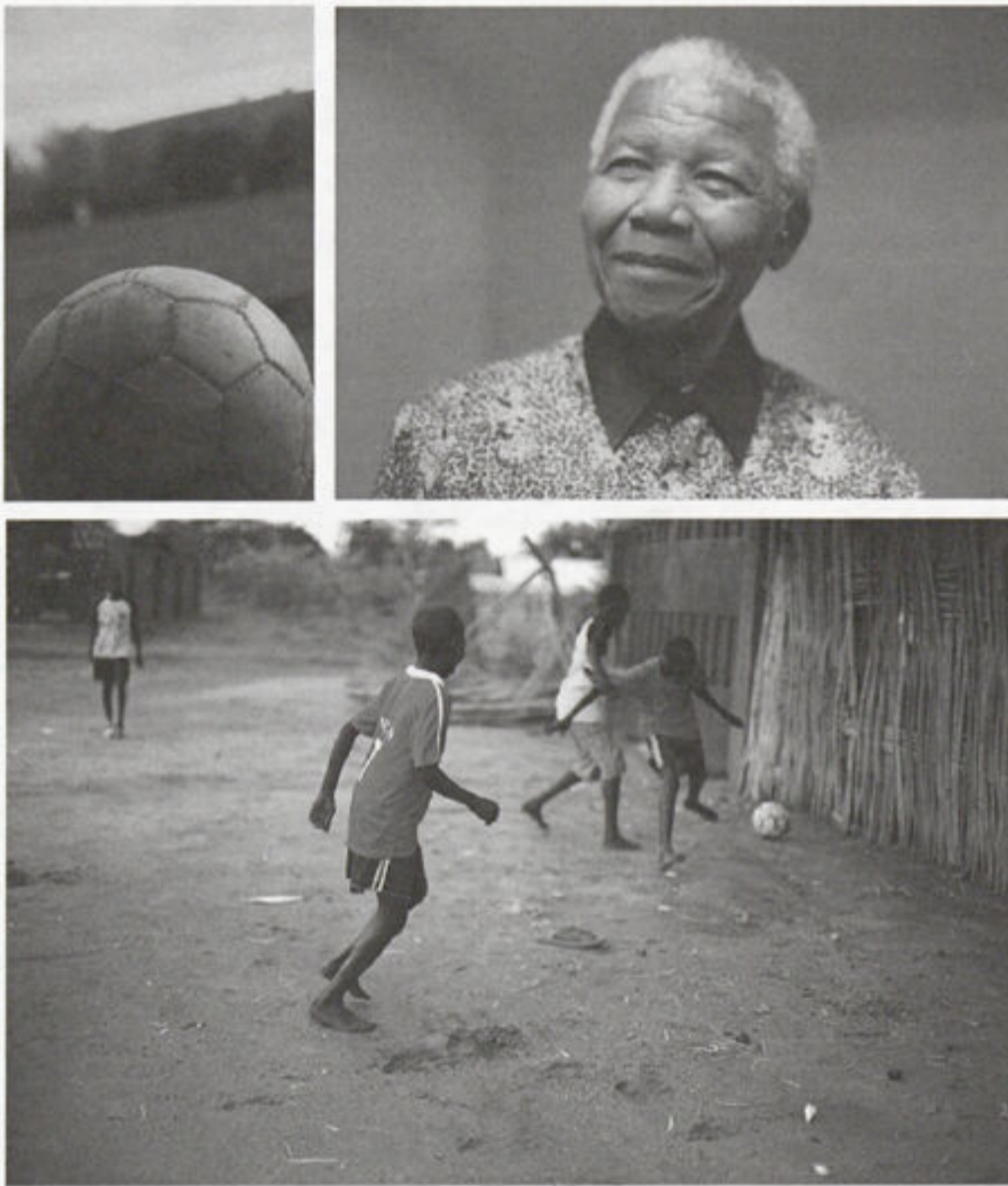
under the umbrella of "sport for development and peace." Domestically, there are several hundred sports-based youth development (SBYD) organizations addressing challenges like poverty, obesity, and educational attainment. Initiatives in both categories use sport to engage people in development programs (using "sport as a hook") and embed sport in the development curriculum itself (an approach called "sport plus"). Undergirding these methods is Mandela's credo that sport, because of its unparalleled popularity and inspirational power, has a unique ability to bring people together to achieve positive social change.

Nonetheless, no precise definition of a sport and development organization exists—an ambiguity that some find problematic. One concern is that initiatives focused on elite athletes pretend to have a broader social focus. Another is that groups with a genuine

"You Asked for Proof"

Funders often ask Paul Caccamo, the executive director of Up2Us, a coalition of SBYD organizations, for evidence that sport and development works. So in May 2012, he authored a post for Up2Us's blog entitled "You Asked for Proof." It points readers to a report called "Front Runners: Leaders of the Sports-Based Youth Development Pack," which cites anecdotes and observational studies of sport and development programs. "It means," Caccamo writes, "there is a new field out there that may very well be the most effective solution to childhood obesity, high drop-out rates, gangs and teen pregnancy: it's SBYD."⁴

Zak Kaufman, a doctoral student at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, however, warns that the data only shows a correlation between sport and development. To evaluate causality, Kaufman is partnering with Grassroot Soccer, a soc-



"Sport has the power to change the world." - Nelson Mandela
 Photos (clockwise from left): flickr/Elvert Barnes, Public Domain,
 flickr/Arsenie Coseac

cer and HIV initiative, to conduct sport and development's first randomized controlled trial. Launched in South Africa in February 2012, the project is testing whether recipients of Grassroot Soccer's treatment engage in fewer risky behaviors than those in the control group, who did not receive the Grassroot Soccer intervention. To Kaufman, the research, which will take three years and involve 4,500 participants, could yield valuable insights about whether Grassroot Soccer's program works and why.

Others are less enthusiastic about randomized controlled trials. Some warn that they could prove onerous for small NGOs and express concerns about assigning a child in need to a control group. Megan Bartlett, the director of Up2Us's Center for Sports-Based Youth Development, also emphasizes

that causal data has limitations. Most notably, it is extremely challenging—and sometimes impossible—to measure all potentially confounding variables.

Funders, however, still want proof that sport and development works, and more rigorous research—especially randomized controlled trials—will help to address their concerns. "Is there a risk?" Mori Taheripour, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) senior advisor on sport for development, said in an interview with the author. "Absolutely. You could do ... [an] evaluation ... and find that some of the things you thought to be true may not be." But sport and development's "evidence base," she argues, is the field's "biggest challenge."

A Role Model for All Others

In 2002, Todd Jacobson, the National Basketball Association's (NBA) senior vice president for community relations, was driving down a dirt road toward Kliptown, a South African township where he was meeting with the head of a local NGO. Upon arriving, he found himself surrounded by kids who peppered him with questions: Will Marcus Camby be traded? Who will lead the NBA in blocks this year? Have you met Michael Jordan? For Jacobson, the conversation was exhilarating. "I saw firsthand that . . . the power of the [NBA] brand to inspire is incredible," he recalls in an interview with the author, "and that the league can use its platform . . . to shine a light on [community] partners."

What some sport and development professionals fear, however, is that when these firms highlight community partners, it's only for a thirty-second commercial. For example, when told that the heads of several U.S. professional sports leagues recently convened at Beyond Sport United, a symposium dedicated to sport and social change, one industry veteran recited an industry adage. "When is the only time commissioners come together? The answer is when they're testifying before Congress." The implication? The gathering would be good public relations for the leagues, but whether it leads to substantial social impact is questionable.

In practice, others contend, the quality of partnerships between sports corporations and NGOs is extremely varied. Some of these collaborations involve enduring relationships that are well funded, carefully evaluated, and focused on specific issues; while others are one-off events that have little long-term effect. The bottom line, says one industry veteran, is that the impact of partnerships between sports corporations and sport and development NGOs is "really varied."

The challenge then is how to ensure more partnerships of the fruitful variety. One crucial step is for sport and development practitioners to avoid cynicism about the for-profit world. "The social sector," contends Beyond Sport founder Nick Keller in an interview with the author, "has to speak to the corporate world in language that the corporate sector truly understands and believes in." If the sport and development movement can establish this dialogue, it could have an enormous social impact because of the sports sector's massive footprint. "This industry," suggests Harvard Business School Professor Michael Porter in a recent speech at a Beyond Sport conference, "can be a role model for all others."⁵

North-South Relations

The most forceful criticism of sport and development (and development more broadly) is that it exacerbates unequal power relations. According to this view, programs originate in the more prosperous global north and are implemented in the global south without paying heed to local need.⁶ The criticism, if accurate, would represent a damning indictment of sport and development.

Amadou Gallo Fall, a Senegalese native who heads the NBA's Africa office, acknowledges in an interview with the author that there is a "danger . . . when [people] in the West think [they] know what is best for people in the developing world." Yet Fall emphasizes that his experience illustrates that sport can empower people in the global south. After growing up in Senegal, he played college basketball in the United States and then dedicated his life to youth and socioeconomic development, founding Sports for Education and

This field consists of hundreds of organizations, with at least \$100-\$200 million in annual backing, attempting to use sport to tackle the world's most pressing problems.

Economic Development in Senegal (SEEDS), a Senegalese youth basketball and education NGO, and pursuing a career with the NBA. "In my journey through sports," explains Fall in a telephone interview, "I've realized I could create [opportunities for youth]."

By designing programs that are directly attuned to global power imbalances, many sport and development leaders are striving to make sure that Fall's experience is not an isolated one. Eric Dienes, the liaison officer for the UN's Office on Sport for Development and Peace, describes by e-mail the UN's extensive, collaborative process to ensure that "projects are designed based on the needs of countries and their people." And Taheripour emphasizes that she and her colleagues at USAID partner extensively with local organizations.

In short, the questions about power imbalances are important to raise, but given the experiences of leaders like Fall and the efforts of organizations like the UN and USAID, these concerns should not lead to reflexive criticism of sport and development.

Moving Beyond Mandela

Thirteen years after Mandela's speech, sport and development is where one would expect a nascent field to be: working to define, evaluate, and scale up its work. But it can do more. To begin with, sport and development practitioners should strengthen ties with the rest of the development sector, which is grappling with many of the same evaluative and regulatory questions. (Many sport and development practitioners, notes the Univer-

sity of Toronto's Bruce Kidd in an interview, are former athletes with limited development experience.) The field's leaders also should channel the passion of young professionals, who see the movement's gaps as opportunities, not problems. "What is exciting about sport for development is the unlimited possibilities," says Aimee Dixon, a recent college graduate who is the associate director of a lacrosse NGO in Uganda, in an interview with the author. "It doesn't feel like a job. It's more like a calling."

Above all, sport and development practitioners must engage with stakeholders substantively. The field's leaders often justify their work heavily through personal experiences: "If you played a sport," Up2Us's Caccamo blogs, "you get it." But personal appeals can backfire when funders and policy makers want data tied to policy outcomes. Consider the dialogue between Caccamo and the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). "Given the fact that [Secretary of Education Arne Duncan] is . . . a former basketball coach [in the] Chicago public schools," says Caccamo in an interview, "I'm amazed . . . that they haven't taken on some greater focus [on] . . . sports interventions to achieve the outcomes they're seeking." But Michael Robbins, DOE's senior advisor for nonprofit partnerships, does not see an explicit connection to DOE's functions and funding streams. "The dialogue," he asks in an interview, "is to what specific end?"

More broadly, the "power of sport"—conveyed through personal anecdotes and rhetoric—has helped propel sport and development

to this point. Moving forward, if the field seems tethered to this abstract notion, people will question its connection to development. Ironically, to realize the power of sport, the sport and development movement needs to soften its rallying cry. ❖

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Photo: flickr/Frank Lindecke



Time for a Bull Moose:

The Risk of Generational Realignment and a Path Toward a "New Republican" Party

By Josh Rudolph

Republican President Theodore Roosevelt was once shot in the chest as he stood up to give a speech. After the assailant was immediately apprehended, the bleeding but unshaken president shuffled back over to the podium and said, "It takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose." He then proceeded to deliver his speech.

Today's Republican Party has been on the defensive ever since its humiliating defeat in the 2012 election. Party leadership conceded to tax hikes on the wealthy, asked for almost nothing in return for shelving the debt ceiling debate, and now are contemplating immigration reform and gun control.

If this recent move toward the center ends up being a permanently "new GOP (Grand Old Party)," that would be good for the country and good for the party. With former President Ronald Reagan's legacy failing to resonate with an increasingly minority and millennial electorate, the Republicans are struggling to win over a second generation in a row. Repairing the party's stodgy reputation will require going in the offensive in a way that resonates with young voters.

Just over a century ago, under similar circumstances, an earlier version of the Republican Party did successfully win the adoration of two back-to-back generations of American voters. In 1901, partisan gridlock reigned supreme while the aging generation of Lincoln Republicans struggled to excite the new electorate. That was when the youngest president in our nation's history, Teddy Roosevelt, ascended to the presidency and remolded the political landscape.

In order to enjoy similar success, today's "New Republican" Party will need to be represented by proud and loud Bull Moose personalities who are delivering a centrist policy platform that resonates with an electorate that is moving decidedly away from the GOP. Without a formidable offensive, the party risks falling out of favor with the largest generation in American history and spending thirty to forty years on the political sidelines.

Models of American Political Cycles

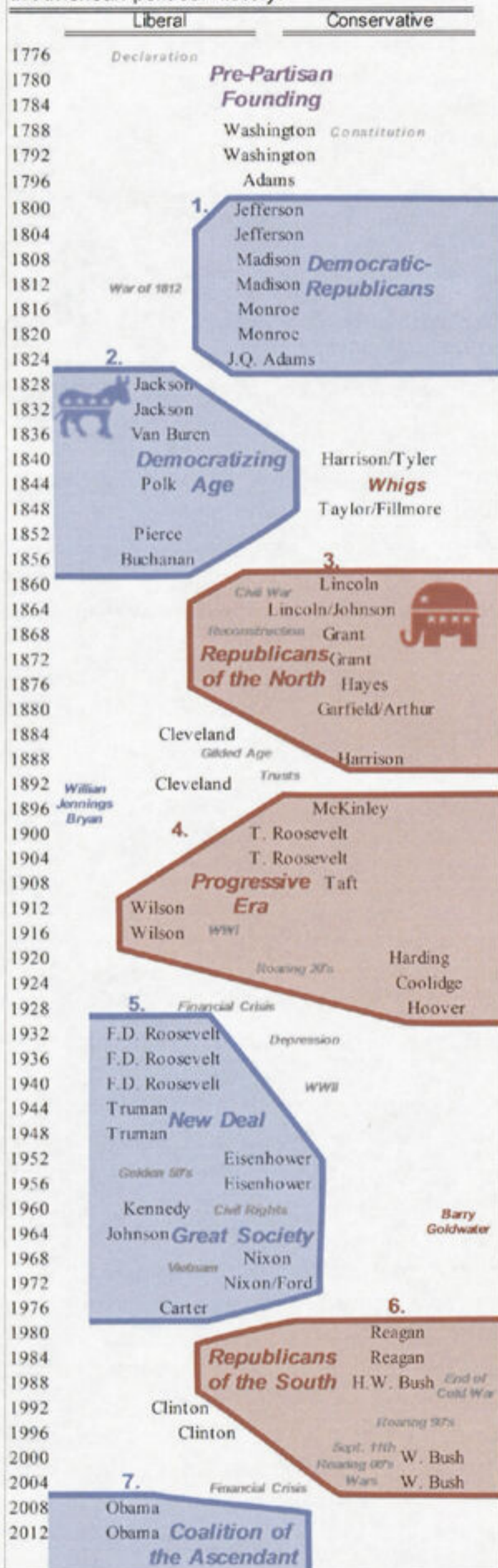
In order to estimate the odds of the Republicans being relegated to minority status for an extended period, we must begin by reviewing what leading social scientists have to say about how American political cycles work.

There are two dominant theories. The first, pioneered by historian Arthur Schlesinger, suggests that every fifteen years or so (round trip of thirty years or roughly one generation), the American political pendulum swings from the liberal ambitions of public purpose to the conservative retreats of private interest (or vice versa). Some GOP optimists observe that the Democrats have now won five of the past six presidential popular votes in the twenty years since 1992, and thus the Republicans are five years overdue for dominance.

But the four terms in the middle of this period—the presidencies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush—were one of the longest expansions of private enterprise in American history. Moreover, a closer reading of Schlesinger reveals that the liberal institution-building phase tends to follow a society-

Photo: flickr/Rick

Exhibit 1: Realignment theory may suggest we are now witnessing the seventh major electoral era in American political history.



Source: This follows the general realignment model elaborated by V.O. Key and James Sundquist and summarized by Schlesinger, but updated by me to include a potential interpretation of recent events.

rattling shock, such as the financial crisis in 2008. And even before this recent shock, toward the end of the Bush presidency, the electorate was “ready for change” away from the Republicans, the hallmark sentiment of the Schlesinger cycle.

Therefore, it is more likely that the shift toward liberal government only began in 2008, and the Schlesinger theory is more likely to suggest continued liberal dominance for at least the next two elections (2016 and 2020).

But the other dominant cyclical interpretation of American political history—the theory of generational party alignment—may paint an even starker future for the Republicans. And unfortunately for the GOP, both exit poll results and demographic data lend more support to this longer-term interpretation of the political cycle.

According to the realignment model, the American polity typically consists of a majority party and a minority party, both organized around a particular set of problems. Inevitably, new problems emerge, disrupting the balance and challenging politicians to convince a new generation of voters that they are best suited to lead under the new conditions. After a period of turmoil, one of the two parties is chosen in a critical election and this party ends up dominating the new order. As shown in Exhibit 1, six such party systems have risen and fallen through American history:

1. Thomas Jefferson’s Democratic-Republicans
2. Andrew Jackson’s Democratic Party
3. Abraham Lincoln’s Republican Party
4. Teddy Roosevelt’s Republican Party
5. Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal
6. The Reagan Revolution

Today’s open question is whether President Barack Obama’s coalition is ushering in a seventh realignment that will define the millennial political experience for decades to come. Such an outcome is certainly plausible, as a whopping 60 percent of voters below the age of thirty voted for the Democratic ticket in 2012. An Obama realignment would clearly be bad news for the GOP because generational realignments last twice as long

as Schlesinger cycles—thirty to forty years—given that 80 percent of Americans historically stay loyal to the political party that was dominant when their generation came of political age. That is, researchers find that party identification is only highly malleable the first two or three times a given voter heads to the polls. After that, the tendency to loyally cast another ballot for the same party every four years “locks in” as a lifelong habit. Given the surge in millennial voting in 2008 and 2012, the last chance for Republicans may be 2016.

If this is not reason enough for the Republicans to hit the panic button, the millennials are not the only growing segment of the electorate that is increasingly voting for Democrats.

Coalition of the Ascendant

In the realignment model, critical elections tend to split the electorate along more dimensions than age alone. National Journal Editorial Director Ronald Brownstein has pointed out that in 2008, Obama’s “coalition of the ascendant” was anchored by three groups, each of which is increasing in numbers faster than the general population—young people, minorities, and college-educated Whites (particularly women).

The third leg of this coalition is the weakest, but Obama’s overwhelming support among millennials (60 percent) and minorities (80 percent) poses a clear and present danger to the ambitions of any Republican candidate looking to run nationwide, given the steady growth of these two segments of the electorate.

Collapsing the millennials and minorities into one group, 74 percent of them voted for Obama in 2012 (see Exhibit 2), representing 40 percent of all voters. Given demographic trends, this share of the electorate is expected to increase to 48 percent and 56 percent in 2016 and 2020, respectively (see Exhibit 3).

The numbers look no better for Republicans when considering how much of this growing block of millennials and minorities the Republicans would need to win. In 2012, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney only won 26 percent but needed 33

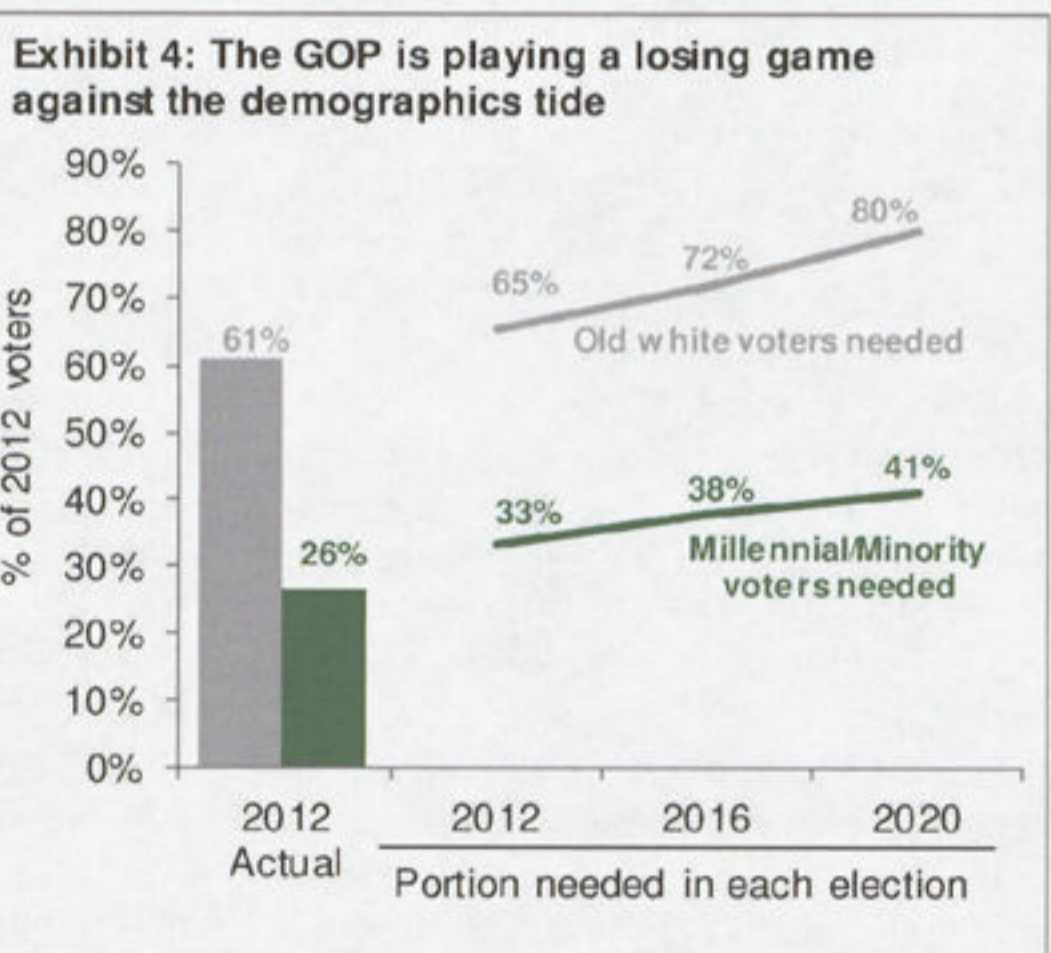
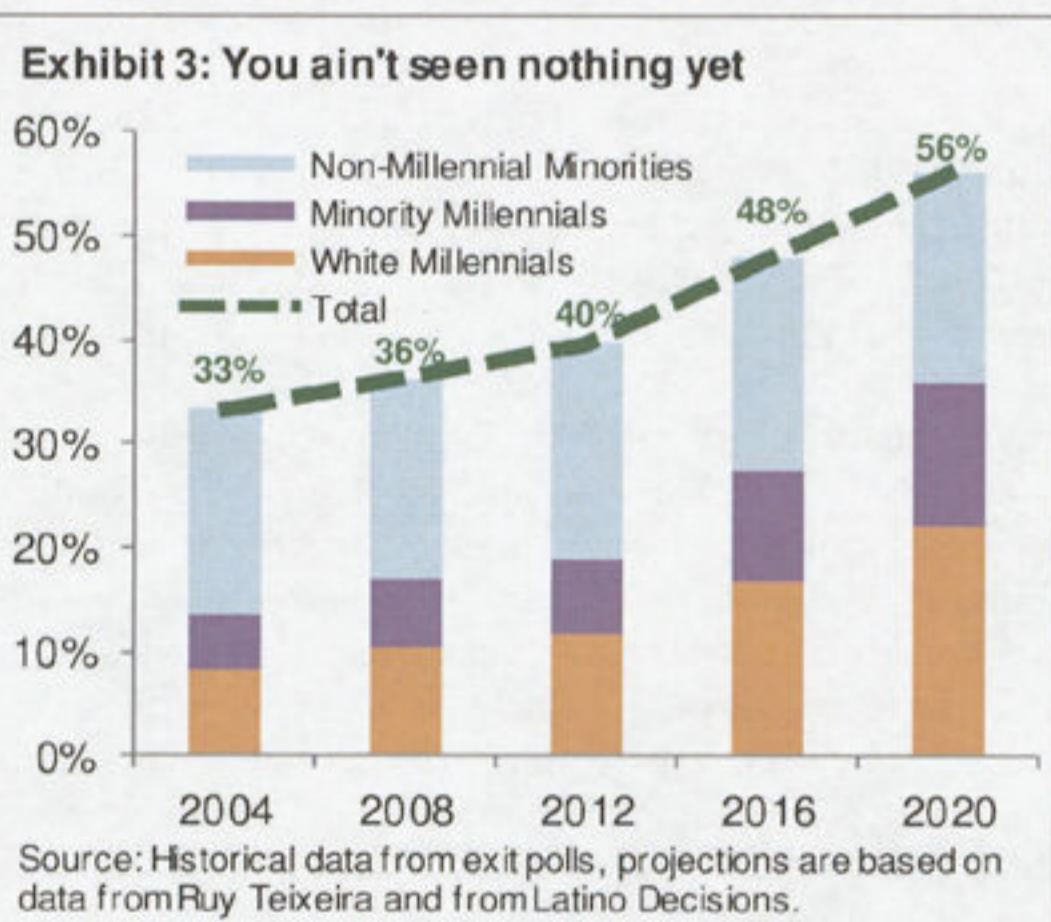
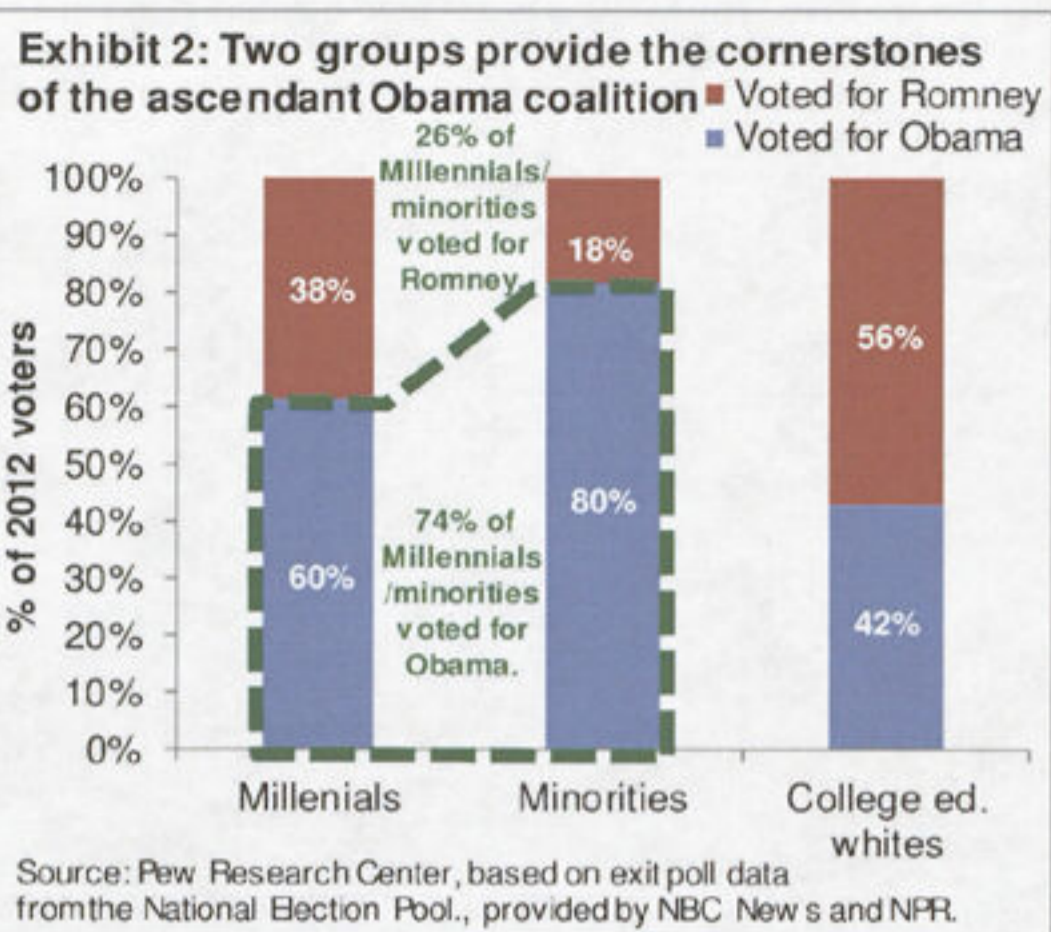
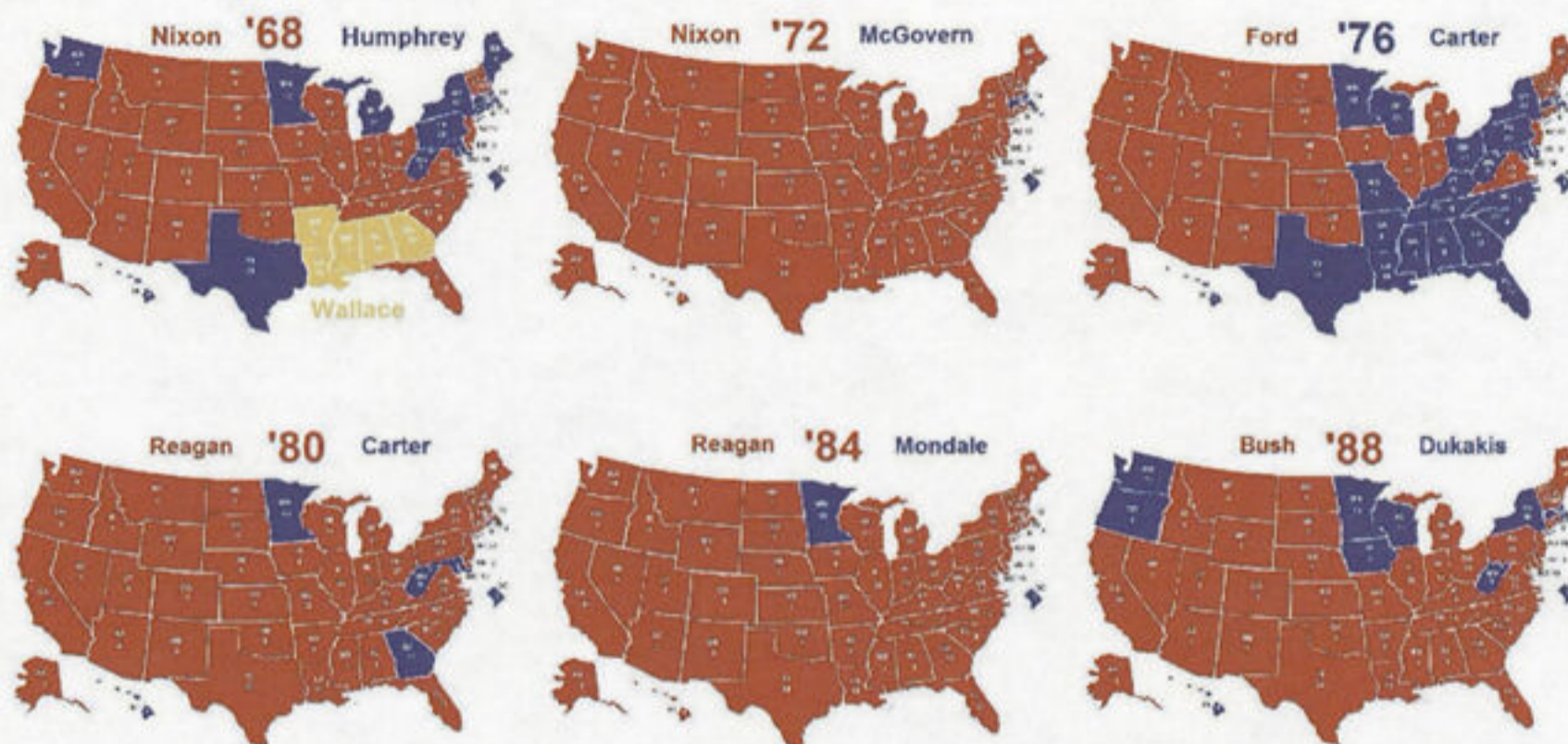


Exhibit 5: The past twelve elections are the tale of two Republican Parties.

First, the coastal states helped the GOP win 5 out of 6.



percent (along with the 61 percent of older White votes he captured). This hurdle is expected to grow to 38 percent and 41 percent in 2016 and 2020, respectively (see Exhibit 4).

To look at the problem another way, consider the share of the remaining middle-aged and elderly White voters the GOP needs to attract to win the popular vote. In 2012, a historically high 61 percent of them voted for Romney, but he needed 65 percent to win (given 26 percent of millennials and minorities); the hurdle climbs to 72 percent and 80 percent, respectively, in 2016 and 2020.

The real message in these numbers is that the GOP's political strategies that worked well in the past will not succeed with the newly emerging electorate. From former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay's famous legislative strategy of aiming for House votes to be as close to fifty-fifty as possible (thus pushing legislation as conservative as possible) to Republican political mastermind Karl Rove's brilliant electoral strategy of foregoing the center and focusing instead on getting the base out to vote, these strategies certainly produced a string of conservative victories in a nation that was evenly divided between the two party ideologies. But fifty-fifty strategies will never lead Republicans to win over either 80 percent of elderly White voters or 40 percent of millennials and minorities.

These numbers alone should be enough to scare any future Republican candidate into rethinking the party's policy platform from

the ground up. But it's even worse than that. The GOP was facing a challenging electoral map even before the rise of this new Democratic coalition. Let's look at how the electoral map has shifted over the past fifty years.

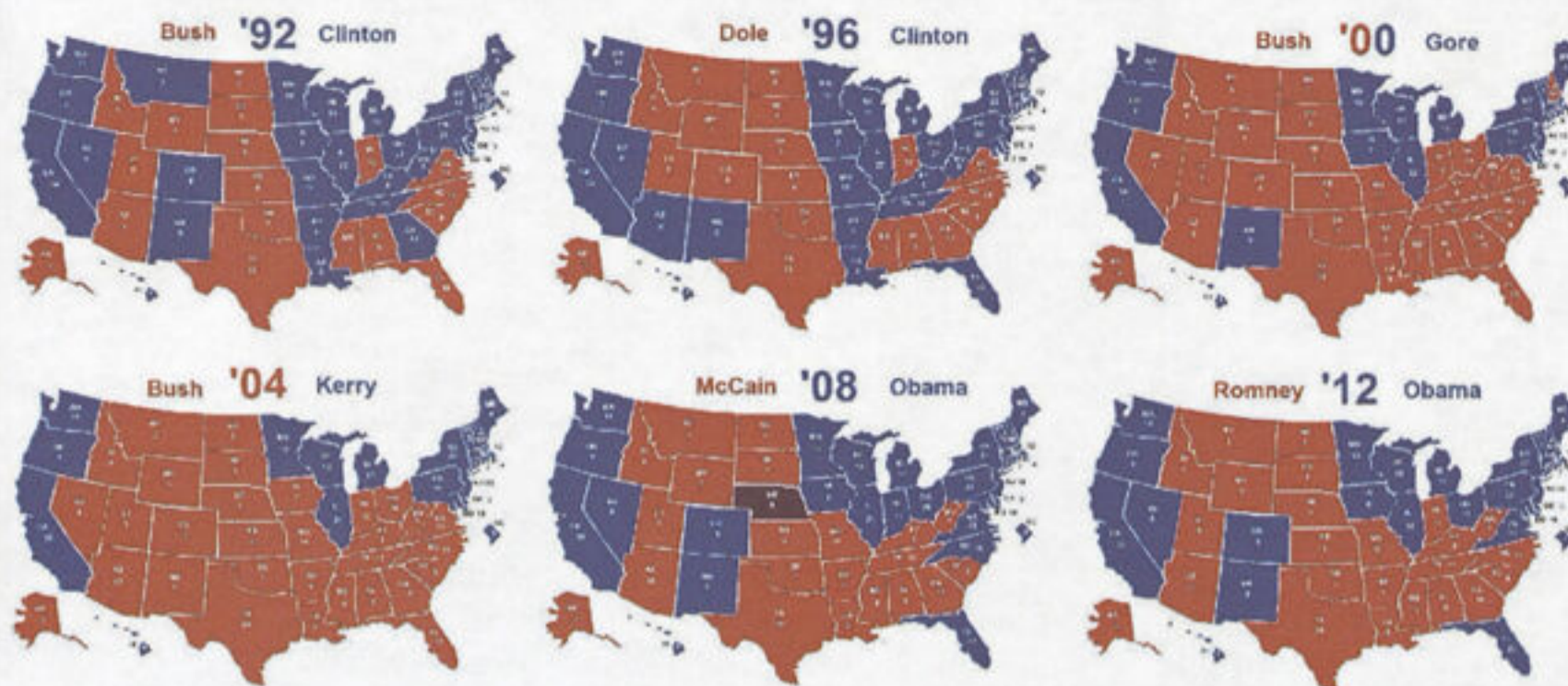
Going Coastal

The results of the past twelve elections (see Exhibit 5) are a tale of two Republican Parties. First, the GOP won five of the six elections beginning with Richard Nixon in 1968 through George Bush in 1988. After that, the Democrats won the popular vote in five out of six elections (1992 to 2012). This begs the question: what happened to the Republican Party after 1988?

There are a few potential answers to this question. One is that the idealist generation of baby boomers grew up from being mere impassioned voters to become highly ideological lawmakers, epitomized by the rise of Newt Gingrich, who became Speaker of the House in 1994.

Another event that remolded the political landscape at that time was the end of the Cold War. The absence of any existential military threats interacted with the rise of the boomers to produce one of the most highly partisan political environments in U.S. history. The end of the Cold War also presented a political problem for the Republicans, who are generally perceived as tougher on defense issues. With the GOP needing new public causes to identify with, the party courted

Then, the coastal states helped the Democrats win 5 out of 6 popular votes.



Source: <http://www.270towin.com/>

Southern Evangelicals and adopted a handful of moralist crusades, which were particularly problematic with socially moderate voters in coastal states. Broadly, the agenda was anti-immigration, anti-abortion, anti-gay rights, anti-drug legalization, and anti-environmental protection.

This is not exactly a platform that many Californians, for example, can stomach. The result is that the Golden State voted Republican in all six elections before the Cold War ended and voted Democrat in all six elections since then (see Exhibit 5). With fifty-five electoral college votes, California is the cornerstone of the 244 electoral college votes consistently won by Democratic presidential candidates in the past six elections. Unable to rely on the highly populated coastal states, the Republicans are forced to start off every election with only 169 electoral college votes in reliably red states.

Among the 125 electoral college votes claimed by neither side (the swing states) in recent electoral maps, Republicans must win 81 percent of them while the Democrats only need 21 percent to reach the 270 votes needed to win. For example, the Democrats can win a nationwide election with just their reliably blue states plus either Florida alone or the combination of Ohio and Iowa, while the GOP could win all three of those swing states and still be only half way to the 81 percent of all swing state votes they need for victory. This math suggests that the Republicans have been playing a losing game since 1992. If they

fail to quickly and dramatically reinvent the game by embracing the types of policies and candidates that can appeal to young people and minorities, they risk spending a generation on the sidelines.

But it does not have to be that way. American history provides examples of political parties successfully reinventing themselves and winning over a second generation in a row. However, only a dramatic shake-up of the GOP—from the personalities to the electoral map to the policy platform—will accomplish this.

A New Republican Personality: Bull Moose, Not Pretzel

Given the battered image of the Republican Party after the 2012 election, the first step toward nationwide acceptance must be to establish credibility as reformists. Again, history offers a few examples. The only reason Teddy Roosevelt became vice president—against the wishes of the William McKinley campaign—was that he wouldn't kowtow to the conservative establishment, so they wanted him out of the powerful New York governorship. He wasn't afraid to take on his own party's corrupt politicians or the large corporations that supported the party. Likewise, Bill Clinton established credibility as a "New Democrat" with his "Sister Souljah moment," and former U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair only truly became "New Labour" after he attacked his own party's definition of socialism.

In the recent election, the social conser-

vatives gave Romney plenty of chances to establish himself as a reformer. Most notably, the Republicans running for Senate gave morally and scientifically wacky justifications for not legalizing abortion for rape victims, saying that the female body doesn't get impregnated by "legitimate rape" (Todd Akin) and that if the woman does get pregnant from rape it was "something that God intended" (Richard Mourdock).

But rather than using such extreme blathering as a launching pad to establish credibility as a "New Republican," Romney allowed the fringe right to use him as a platform for their radical views. In order to get through the primaries, Romney had to transform

snake through the Republican primaries. The GOP needs a break from the ordinary, and Christie may bring the right Bull Moose personality along with the right moderate views.

A New Republican Platform: Socially Moderate Problem Solvers

In order for the Republicans to break out of their mathematically losing political strategies, they also need a broadly appealing policy platform. Looking at exit poll data, the majority of the electorate generally seems to favor the same social liberties that Republicans have crusaded against, especially when looking at the age breakdown. Between 60 percent and 70 percent of young voters support legal sta-

They risk spending a generation on the sidelines.



his traditionally moderate demeanor into a pretzel of sorts, contorting his own views in deference to the conservative base.

If the Republicans want any chance of picking up 40 percent of the millennial/minority portion of the electorate, they need a young moderate who will loudly and confidently lambast extremists on either side of the aisle as being nonsensical and out of their minds. Does the Republican Party have any young and tough up-and-coming moderates who are bold enough to speak out against the establishment?

Some expect New Jersey Governor Chris Christie to be the Republican frontrunner for 2016. He has recently come under criticism by the conservative establishment for calling the Republican-controlled House "disappointing and disgusting to watch" for failing to provide relief for Hurricane Sandy and for calling a National Rifle Association (NRA) advertisement "reprehensible" for saying that Obama is an elitist hypocrite for allowing his children but not yours to be protected by firearms., Christie is also known for shouting at hecklers and calling disrespectful reporters morons or idiots. It's hard to imagine him turning into a deferential pretzel in order to

tus for illegal immigrants, gay marriage, and legalized abortion (see Exhibit 6).

Turning down the volume on the GOP's moralist battles might also help the party poll well on the coasts. If the Republicans could take California away from the Democrats, the GOP would start out with thirty-five electoral college votes more than the Democrats, as opposed to starting out with seventy-five votes less than them (before even including any gains that would come in the East Coast states).

But beyond fixing the GOP's social platform, an overdue and defensive reaction, the party must also go on the offensive, casting conservatism as a source of solutions to the problems faced by minorities and millennials. These problems might include the rising costs of higher education and health care that have absorbed two decades worth of middle-class wage gains, a public school system that has not significantly enhanced educational attainment since the 1970s, and a financial sector that monopolizes the country's human capital while taking publicly subsidized bets with its financial capital.

Only by establishing credibility both as social moderates and as pragmatic problem

solvers can a “New Republican” Party appeal itself to the majority of a second generation of Americans in a row.

Can a New Republican Party Stave Off Realignment?

President Obama has been playing plenty of his own offense this year, staking out liberal positions on gay rights, gun control, immigration, and climate change. This partly reflects the freedom of never having to face voters again. But it also reveals what a future Democratic Party might look like, finally freed by its new coalition from the Clintonian shackles of having to court the moderate “Reagan Democrats” to win elections.

Importantly, Obama is trying to build a wall around his coalition, advocating for the socially liberal positions they believe in. Once that wall is built, and voter habits lock in, the game will be up for the Republicans. And the GOP only plays into this strategy when they block gun control legislation that is favored by 90% of Americans.

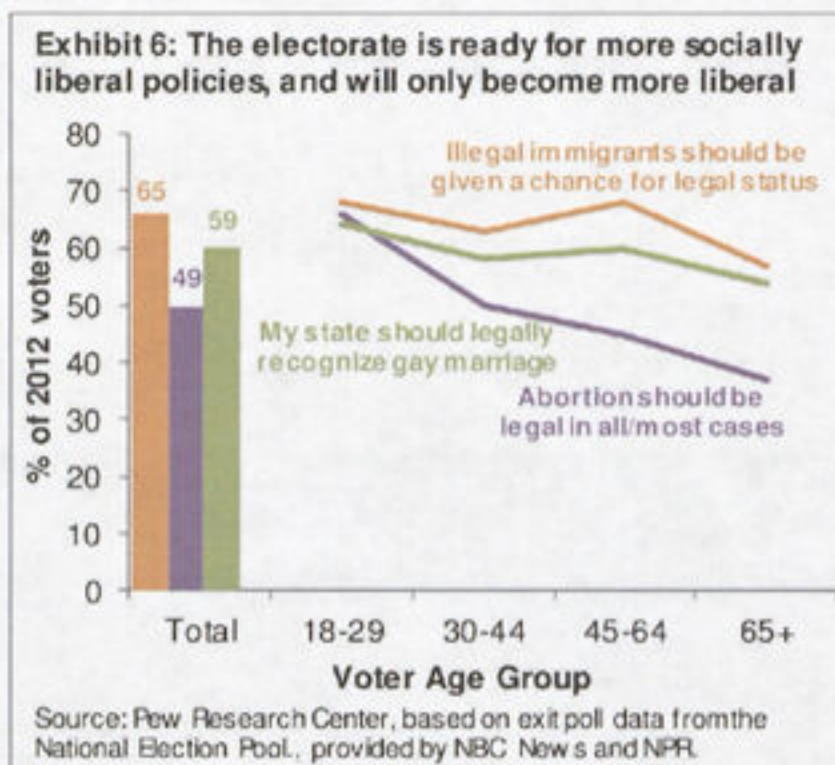
If the Republicans want to have any chance of setting the political agenda in the decades to come, it will take a lot more than defensive reactions to immigration policy and official studies about how to improve their message and their ground game and their debate performance. They need to move quickly to take ownership over the problems that young voters really care about, such as the slow economic recovery, the fiscal crisis of the entitlement state, gridlocked political partisanship, and market failure in the education, health care, and financial sectors.

And it will take a Bull Moose. ❖

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A Roadmap for RMB Internationalization:

Navigating the Economic and Political Challenges to the Rise of China's Currency

by Professor Jacob Kurien and Bernard Geoxavier



Photo: flickr/Dainis Matisons

In the decades since it began its economic reforms in the early 1980s, China has experienced impressive growth rates—in some years exceeding 10 percent increases in gross domestic product (GDP). Since the reforms of Deng Xiaoping, politician and reformist leader of the Communist Party of China, more than 500 million people have been lifted out of poverty.¹ Today, China is not only the world's largest exporter of manufactured goods, it is also the second-largest economy.² Among emerging market economies and their national currencies, China's Renminbi (RMB) holds the greatest prospect for being widely used as a global reserve currency. The size

of the economy—coupled with a diversified trade structure and relatively high growth rate—has provided much of the groundwork for internationalizing the RMB.

The Status of the RMB's Internationalization

An essential prerequisite for the RMB to be accepted as an international reserve currency is that residents of other nations must be willing to hold the currency as a financial asset. This will require that the currency be fully convertible and freely traded in international capital markets. The RMB is not a free currency but rather a managed currency. To be

recognized as a freely convertible currency, it must perform three major economic functions:

1. Facilitate international transactions as a medium of exchange
2. Be used as an accounting unit for invoicing and international debt servicing
3. Be accepted as a currency reserve asset by Central Banks

At the moment, the extent of internationalization of the RMB is limited because China's financial markets are highly regulated, for example, through capital controls. To further internationalize the RMB, China must adopt an open capital account and liberalize capital markets. When capital is freely mobile it moves from countries with low capital returns to those with higher ones. Understandably, the imminent danger of capital flight constrains China's Central Bank—the People's Bank of China (PBoC)—from liberalizing the domestic capital market.

The internationalization of the RMB is also driven by the degree of China's exports, which require the purchase of Chinese currency.

China has been pursuing internationalization of the RMB as part of its export-driven growth strategy. There are important benefits to internationalization: in addition to developing the export sectors of the economy, a rising RMB has enhanced China's political and economic status across East Asia. This, in turn, has provided a strong impetus to further internationalize the currency.

Switching Strategy: Strong Headwinds after the Financial Crisis

However, the financial crisis has slowed the internationalization of the RMB. The decline in global economic growth has reduced the consumption of Chinese exports and arrested the rise of the RMB. The slowdown has also prompted Chinese policy makers to shift toward greater domestic consumption, which will further delay the internationalization of the RMB.

But a temporary shift toward domestic consumption—whilst slowing the rise of the RMB—makes sense for compelling economic and political reasons. Given the dismal state of world economies and the growing economic challenges and social discontentment confronting China, the state should continue to reset its export-driven growth strategy to one focused on higher domestic wages and consumer spending, even though this slows the rise of the RMB. This strategy will enable the state to pursue social reforms by implementing public welfare programs, pro-growth fiscal policies, and tax incentives.

Domestic political forces also support a shift toward stimulating domestic consumption, rather than export growth, thereby slowing the process of currency internationalization. The Party's support for increased domestic growth is arguably reflected in the eleventh and twelfth five-year plans, where the Party has advocated an agenda for "putting people first" by bridging the gulf between rich



Photo: flickr/ Kevin Dooley

and poor and constructing a “harmonious society.” China’s twelfth five-year plan targets both economic and social development to ensure long-term prosperity for the entire nation. The primary focus of the plan is on the quality of growth structured along with social inclusion to overcome the rural-urban divide and income inequality. The recent rise in social unrest related to land acquisition and the wage disparity among urban and rural migrant workers might compel politicians and policy practitioners to focus on achieving long-term social and economic gains rather than pursue the long-term monetary policy

better contribute to the greater economy. If little is done, the rift between have’s and have-not’s—as well as those subsidized by the *hukou* system and those stigmatized by being outside it—will prompt social unrest unlike anything this generation in China has seen. Without internal social and political stability and domestic economic growth, the internationalization of the RMB is a false ideal.

Managing the Risks to Domestic Growth

Although stimulating domestic demand is important as Western economies delever-

Recent actions suggest that the Party continues to put politics before good public policy.

goal of internationalizing RMB.

Aspirations to internationalize the RMB should also be secondary to the need to address inequality and instability in the domestic labor market. If China is going to successfully achieve social, political, and cultural stability over the long-term and continue to balance massive investments in social welfare with economic expansion and currency flexibility, it must reform the labor market and *hukou* system. The *hukou* residence permit and administration system—a holdover from earlier decades—determines a citizen’s legal place of residence (rural or urban), which further dictates rights to free education, subsidized medical assistance, unemployment benefits, housing rights, and work authorization. The rise of the migrant worker, *nong-mengong*, referred to rural laborers working in Chinese cities with their children but without legal residence and without any insurance, benefits, or education. Granting these citizens local residence *hukou* permits will bring millions of workers and their families into the formal economy, allowing them to

age in the wake of the financial crisis, China needs to ensure that the appreciation of the RMB does not lead to higher inflation, which will undermine its ambition to increase real incomes. China’s previous export-driven strategy required the PBoC to adopt a policy of monetary sterilization to keep the Yuan deliberately undervalued and consequently keep import costs relatively high. Now, in order to stimulate domestic consumption, import costs need to be lowered by further strengthening the yuan. Although the appreciation of the RMB would facilitate cheaper imports at the cost of lower exports, it could cause price inflation due to increasing money supply and greater global liquidity flows.

Reform Required, But How?

The Chinese government needs to undertake reforms to enhance the autonomy and flexibility of the PBoC so that it can better address the threat of inflation that may follow a renewed focus on domestic growth. In particular, the PBoC must be given the autonomy

to target the interest rate. Moreover, there should be state oversight on the distribution and price of essential commodities as well as policies to enhance productivity and growth. But the tragic lessons of the 1997-1998 East Asian financial crisis justifies a more prudent and cautious approach: short-term capital inflows in the form of portfolio investments are subject to speculative attacks when financial markets are weak or illiquid and banks are burdened with excessive loan delinquency and default. This justifies the need for China's current banking and financial sector reforms and re-capitalization of state-owned banking enterprises, prior to opening up China's capital account and deregulating financial markets.

Political Complications

Despite the compelling logic of the domestic growth strategy and associated reforms, China's political context could undermine the success of this plan. The new politburo must be able to utilize all the tools at its disposal to maintain its legitimacy, ensure social stability, and plot the future course for the RMB and the larger Chinese economy. Underlying social and political conditions made China's thirty years of economic progress possible, but they can also unravel the Party's aspiration to lead the global economic order through the RMB.

The strategy to stimulate the domestic economy might be politicized, diminishing its effectiveness. The 2008 experience is illustrative of this danger. The central government's investment in infrastructure, social welfare, and transport projects was, in many cases, funneled into speculative real estate developments and investments.³ The real estate bubble, coupled with double-digits food price rises, threatened to accelerate inflation. Even worse, it continued the trend of 10-plus percent growth in the money supply, while the RMB had inversely appreciated against the dollar and other major currencies. Whilst good for domestic businesses, the increased money supply reduced average Chinese consumers' real wealth and increased domes-

tic costs for most major exporters. This case study should serve as a warning that RMB internationalization should be pursued slowly to allow the Chinese domestic economy to adjust.

Recent actions suggest that the Party continues to put politics before good public policy. The anti-graft and anticorruption campaign launched under President Xi Jinping's new administration seeks to project a more moral and just party while tackling the excess of the wealthy and a dangerously widening income disparity. Instead, the campaign has ushered in an air of austerity and dented demand of Chinese domestic high-quality goods and services—precisely when those goods and services most need support.

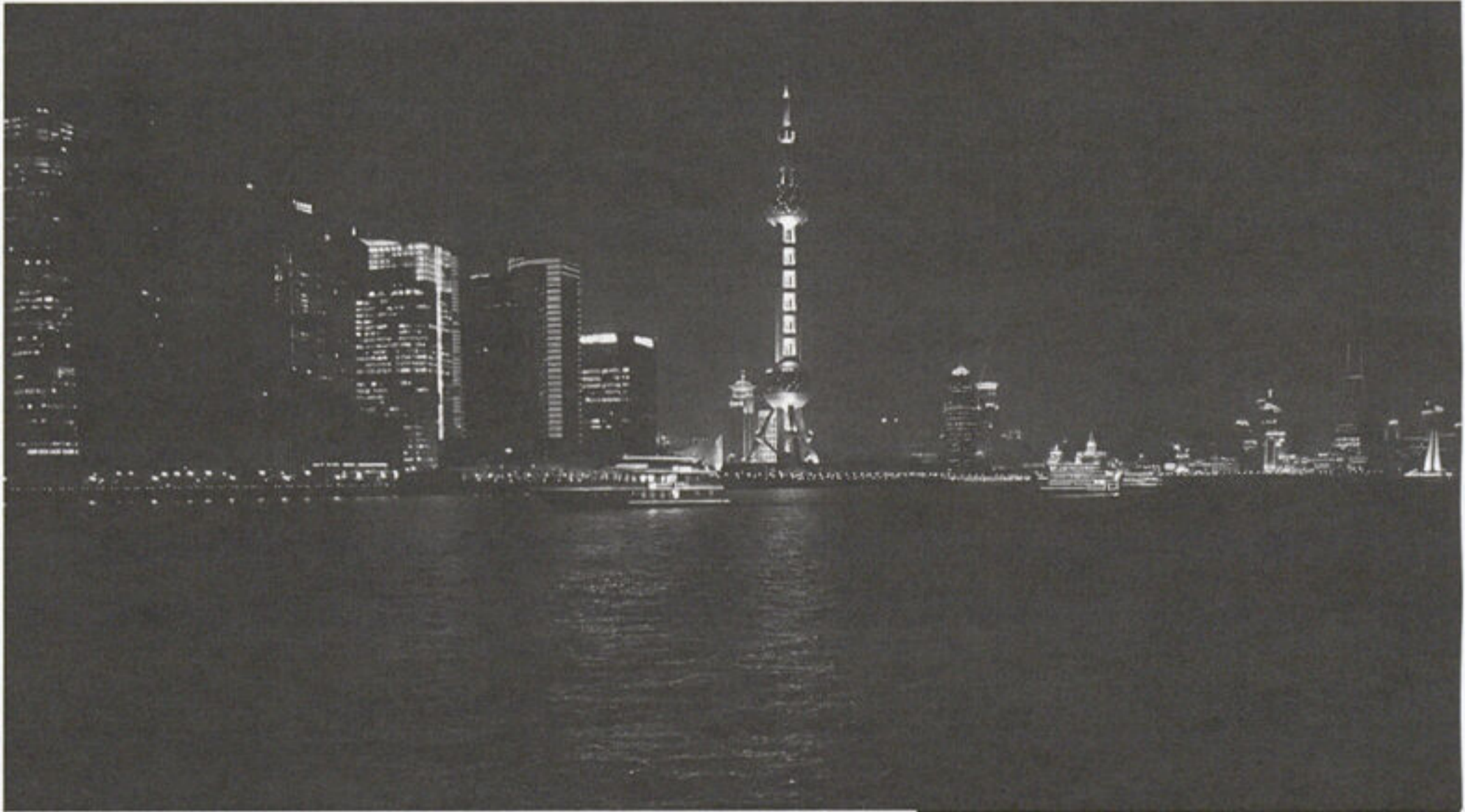
Picking a Path to Internationalization

In the longer term, China has two options for internationalizing the RMB. Neither is mutually exclusive.



"Although stimulating domestic demand is important as Western economies deleverage in the wake of the financial crisis, China needs to ensure that the appreciation of the RMB does not lead to higher inflation, which will undermine its ambition to increase real incomes."

Photo: flickr/Krystal T



If the government decided to promote the RMB toward the status of an international reserve currency, it would need to implement specific reforms. First, it should reform China's financial and banking sector, such as by recapitalizing state-owned enterprises and banks laden with toxic, underperforming assets. Although Chinese GDP expansion has varied, but within a high band, Chinese bad bank loans, underperforming debts, and write-offs for local government lines of credit have risen steadily. In 2012, the Chinese banking industry gradually reduced outstanding debt and wrote off billions of dollars of debt.⁴ Secondly, the government should deregulate the financial sector to enable the expansion of liquidity and greater issuing of equities, such as "dim sum" bonds. Importantly, this would require the Party to institutionally distance itself from the PBoC, and formally enhance its independence. Thirdly, the government should undertake reforms to increase labor mobility and widen the social safety net, ensuring that China's economic growth does not regress.

The second option that China could pursue to internationalize the RMB is to first promote the growth of the currency region-

"In 2012, the Chinese banking industry gradually reduced outstanding debt and wrote off billions of dollars of debt."

*Above: Shanghai
Photo: flickr/Dainis Matisons*

ally, especially in East Asia. The government should continue to foster intra-regional trade, which China already dominates. If such a trade zone becomes the centerpiece of Chinese trade policy, the RMB could become the major regional currency of choice outside the U.S. dollar—a feat that the yen could not achieve. This would directly benefit Chinese domestic firms because the use of the RMB as a medium of exchange would lower import and export costs within the trade zone. Also, it will encourage foreign investors to reinvest profits into the local economy.

Looking Ahead, with Patience

Irrespective of which option the Party decides to pursue, there is still a long way to go in the process of internationalizing the RMB. But it should not be rushed; convertibility should not be pursued purely for the sake of prestige. Moreover, the Party's position on internationalizing the RMB should not be overtly politicized, either for domestic or foreign policy goals. The lack of transparency of Party functions and the Party's tight control of legal, political, social, and economic institutions will not only continue to erode investor confidence, but also undermine trust that the currency is free from Party interference. News reports that the head of the PBoC, Zhou Xiaochuan, had pulled out of International Monetary Fund talks in Tokyo in October 2012 amidst Chinese-Japanese tensions reinforces the perception that the Central Bank, and macroeconomic policy, is at the whims of state control and party politics. If actions such as this persist under Xi's administration, the path to RMB internationalization will be buffeted not only by the need to address internal structural imbalances but also by political considerations.

Ultimately, China should continue to consolidate its global identity as an economic, political, and military super power, but this will require considerable time and effort. It should not come at the cost of stable, inclusive economic growth.

As Deng Xiaoping said, it is time to "cross the river by feeling stones." ❖

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Misdiagnosis and Malaise:

Why the Federal Reserve Has Failed to Aid the Job Market

by Lauren Paer

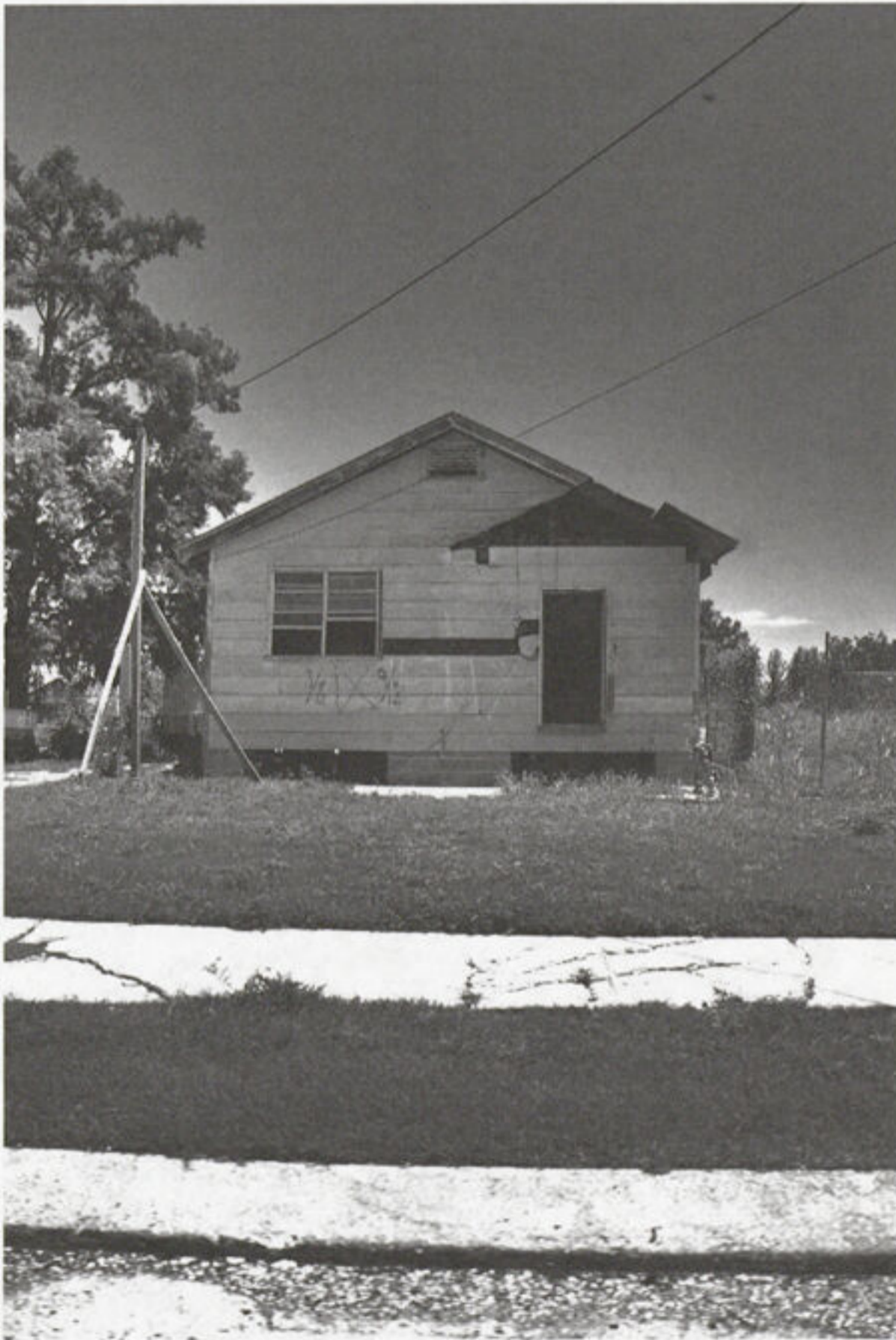


Photo: flickr/Christian Banck

IN SEPTEMBER 2012, the U.S. Federal Reserve announced the third round of quantitative easing (QE3) since the onset of the financial crisis. Quantitative easing refers to the Federal Reserve's policy of digitally printing dollars to buy long-term bonds and mortgage-backed securities (MBS) to drive interest rates down. In contrast to previous rounds where the Fed announced the program's size (QE2 was \$600 billion, for example), this round the Fed upped its commitment by calling for "indefinite QE." The Fed is now buying \$85 billion in U.S. Treasuries and MBS every month, or just over \$1 trillion a year, and the plan is to continue at this pace until unemployment hits 6.5 percent (as long as inflation isn't too high). To put this in perspective, in late 2007, the country's entire monetary base stood at approximately \$800 billion. It has increased fourfold in fewer than five years as a result of QE—an unprecedented growth rate in the United States' monetary history.

The assumption underpinning the Federal Reserve's action is that lowering interest rates raises asset prices (buying bonds pushes bond prices up and yields/interest rates down), making consumers feel richer, which means they'll spend more. And it encourages businesses to expand. Those two elements will increase demand. These benefits, the Federal Reserve contends, justify the massive increase in the monetary base and outweigh the costs associated with QE. However, it is far from clear that these assumptions hold.

Two days before the Federal Reserve announced QE3, Duke University published the quarterly results from an ongoing research project survey that included 887 chief financial officers (CFOs) from large U.S. companies. The survey asked how the CFOs would respond to falling interest rates. Ninety-one percent indicated that a 1 percent fall in interest rates would have no impact on their business plans, and 84 percent said a 2 percent fall would have no impact.¹ The results of the poll are notable because a 1-2 percent drop in

interest rates is far more than the Federal Reserve can hope to achieve with even massive amounts of QE, given that ten-year treasuries were yielding under 2 percent prior to the QE3 announcement. Campbell Harvey, the founding director of the survey and a finance professor at Duke, concluded, "The CFOs are saying that it is naïve for the Federal Reserve to think that dropping interest rates will spur investment in current economic conditions." He added that it was "amazing that all the focus is on interest rates when they are already at fifty-year lows."²

And yet, the official line from the Federal Reserve was that QE was being deployed to address the ailing labor market. Furthermore, members of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), the group that meets to shape monetary policy, stated that "if the outlook for the labor market does not improve substantially, the committee will continue its purchases of agency mortgage-backed securities, undertake additional asset purchases... until such improvement is achieved."³ In other words, if the strategy doesn't appear to be working, the Federal Reserve plans to do a whole lot more of it.

So why exactly has the Federal Reserve concluded that QE will translate to more jobs, given that the country's top CFOs say that it won't? The ideological background of the Federal Reserve's leadership sheds some light. Chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke is often depicted as a Keynesian; in reality, Bernanke is a monetarist, a disciple of Milton Friedman. Bernanke gave the keynote speech at Friedman's ninetieth birthday. "Among economic scholars," he began, "Friedman has no peer. . . . [His work] has become the leading and most persuasive explanation of the . . . Great Depression." Bernanke continued that his own work was always "an embellishment of the Friedman-[Anna] Schwartz story; it in no way contradicts the basic logic of their analysis."⁴

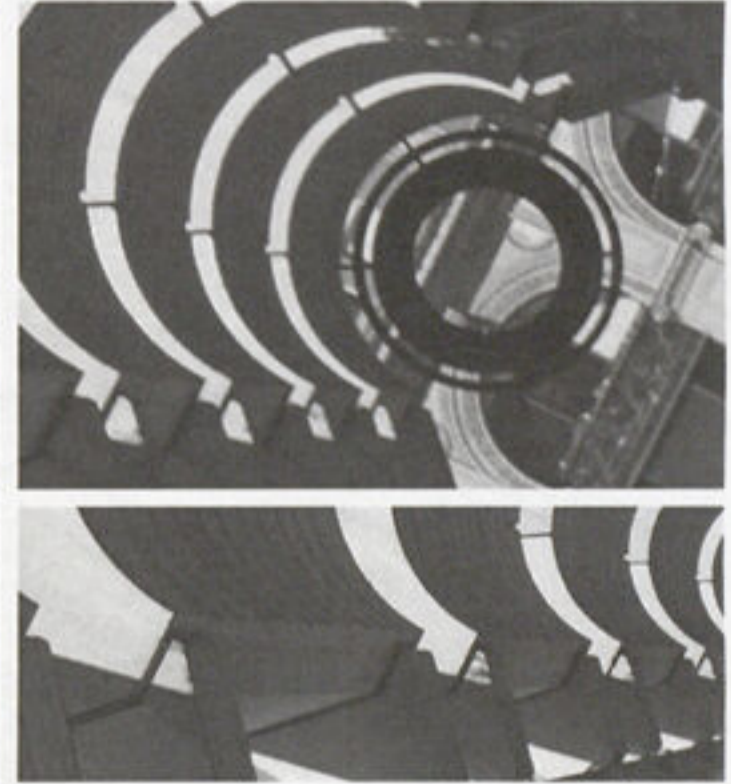
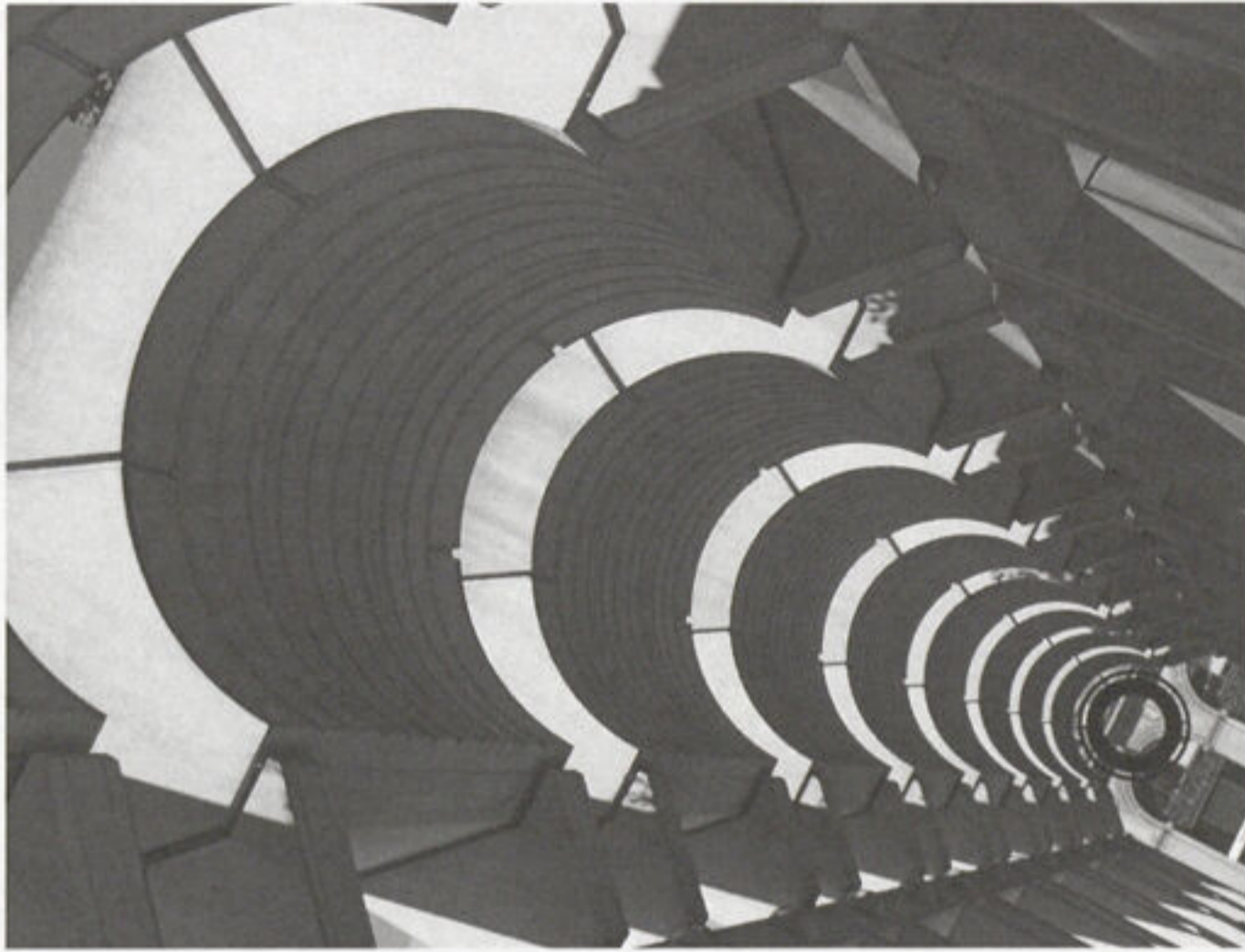
The crux of the Friedman and Schwartz story is that the Fed caused the Great Depression by inappropriately raising interest rates in 1928 and keeping monetary policy too tight throughout the Great Depression. The

Fed raised rates in 1928 to curb what it saw as rampant speculation on Wall Street. It also raised rates at several points during the Great Depression (after lowering them) to protect the dollar and limit gold outflows. Although the Fed doubled its government holdings after the market crash of October 1929 and gradually lowered interest rates thereafter⁵ (save the increases mentioned above), it was too little, too late as far as Friedman and Schwartz were concerned.

Moreover, the market crash had a profound impact on the national psyche. It stoked fear, the lifeblood of bank runs.

What Friedman and Schwartz chose not to emphasize in their analysis is interesting. A free-market enthusiast to his death in 2006, Friedman ruled out the rampant speculation the Fed observed on Wall Street as a core cause of the Great Depression. Private banks were lending to speculators on only a 10 percent margin.⁶ When the market crashed, many of these loans went bad, contributing to bank failures.⁷ Moreover, the market crash had a profound impact on the national psyche. It stoked fear, the lifeblood of bank runs. Bank runs led to bank failures, more fear, hoarding, and deflation.

Friedman also considered unemployment largely unimportant because he believed it had little impact on consumption/demand. The permanent income hypothesis (PIH), an abstract theory of consumption he pioneered, posits "transitory" events such as temporary job loss have little impact on consumption. For this to be true, Friedman had to further assume households face no liquidity constraints. In other words, they would have no trouble getting a bank to lend them money to finance their consumption if they lost their job. Friedman had a brilliant mathematical mind but a weakness for making questionable assumptions that were necessary for his abstract theories' tractability.



Federal Reserve Building,
San Francisco, CA
Photo: Frank Kovalchek

Because they believed the Great Depression was caused by a mismanaged/declining money supply, Friedman and Schwartz's policy prescriptions dealt solely with the money supply—not financial regulation or job creation. They argued the Fed could have avoided the Great Depression by increasing the money supply via printing money, buying assets, and preventing bank failures.

In light of Bernanke's subscription to Friedman's narrative, the Federal Reserve's previously mystifying strategy makes sense. They are following Friedman's playbook, which amounts to printing money to make up for the money supply contraction caused by private loans going bad and supporting the banks to avoid bank failures. That's precisely what the Federal Reserve policy has done through QE and a variety of other policy interventions.

Bernanke should be basing the massive QE expansion he's spearheading on more than just theory, though, because it relies on unrealistic assumptions and is not supported by recent experience. In 1998, Friedman offered the same diagnosis and prescription to Japan as he did to the Great Depression-era United States. Japan followed his advice to a tee. It doubled its monetary base to buy bonds in the early 2000s. But growth did not follow. Jobs did not follow. In an article on the subject, op-ed columnist for the *New York Times* Paul Krugman

observed, "Friedman was all wrong about Japan—you can argue that he was also wrong about the Great Depression, for the same reason."⁸ And you can argue for the same reason that Ben Bernanke is all wrong today. So four years out, what evidence does Bernanke have—outside of demonstrably faulty theory—to support the claim that QE will boost demand and can be used to target the job market (a claim not even Friedman made)? Not a lot.

In the press conference announcing QE3, one reporter asked why Bernanke expected QE to help job growth now when it appears that similar Federal Reserve actions taken earlier had not. Bernanke referred to a speech he had made in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, saying his assessment of the research literature was that QE was working.⁹

Going through the research reports cited in the relevant section of his Jackson Hole speech, the first thing that stood out was that all the papers that touched on employment and consumption (some did not) were highly theoretical. Their models assumed consumption smoothing and a range of other assumptions whose assessment is beyond the discussion in this article. None of them dealt with empirical or survey jobs data. Their results should be taken with a huge grain of salt given theoretical economic models' abysmal performance leading up to—and during—the crisis. As Jean-Claude

Trichet, president of the European Central Bank through 2011, observed, "Macro models failed to predict the crisis and seemed incapable of explaining what was happening to the economy in a convincing manner."¹⁰ After leafing through these highly theoretical research reports, it became apparent that the original question—why QE would work now when it hadn't earlier—was completely outside the scope of any of them.

Later in the press conference, a Reuters reporter pointedly asked about the transmission mechanism from QE to benefits in the real economy, stating that whilst many people agreed that QE caused interest rates to drop and the stock market to rise, they had not seen evidence that it helped the broader economy; Bernanke responded, "[w]hat we're about here is trying to get jobs going."¹¹ Bernanke explained that the transmission mechanism was higher in home and stock prices, which should make consumers feel wealthier and get them to spend more. He added that "the issue here is whether or not improving asset prices generally will make people more willing to spend."¹² Indeed, that is the question. What Bernanke is notably lacking is any data or survey evidence to suggest that it does. The poor and the middle class are the big spenders (relative to their incomes) compared to the wealthy,¹³ so in order for Bernanke's proposed transmission mechanism to be remotely efficient, the country's poor and middle class would have to own a significant percentage of the country's assets. But they don't. The bottom 50 percent of Americans owned a paltry 1.1 percent of the nation's wealth in 2010.¹⁴ And the bottom 60 percent owned an astonishingly low 0.3 percent of the nation's non-housing wealth.¹⁵

Although the distribution of QE's benefits is not something the Federal Reserve has investigated, the Bank of England (BOE) has. According to its report, "the total increase in household wealth stemming from the Bank's £325 billion of asset purchases up to May 2012 of just over £600 billion [is] equivalent to around £10,000 per person if assets were evenly distributed across the

population."¹⁶ It continues, "In practice, the benefits from these wealth effects will accrue to those households holding most financial assets. Evidence from the 2011 survey by NMG Financial Services Consulting . . . suggested 'the median household held only around £1,500 of gross assets, while the top 5 percent of households held an average of £175,000.'"¹⁷

In other words, the average household in the top 5 percent benefited at least a staggering one hundred times more than the median British household from QE-induced asset appreciation. Taken together with the wealthy's lower propensity to spend, this helps explain why the United Kingdom has not seen meaningful job growth, despite a QE program totaling more than 20 percent of GDP.¹⁸ Most of the benefits are flowing to the wealthiest, but they aren't spending it.

In an independent study released a year earlier, BCA Research, a private British research firm, reported that "the evidence

When you buy debt, you are supporting the activity that debt finances. If the Federal Reserve is serious about supporting jobs, it should buy bonds financing projects that create new American jobs.

suggests that QE ends up overwhelmingly in profits, thereby exacerbating already extreme income inequality and the consequent social tensions."¹⁹ BCA explicitly says what the BOE's data suggests: QE is increasing the country's already high inequality. This is a notable issue because—as a growing body of literature suggests—inequality stifles economic growth and stokes political and social dysfunction.²⁰

Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz is leading the charge on bringing awareness to the economic costs of inequality. In his recent *New York Times* op-ed titled "Inequality Is Holding Back the Recovery,"

The bottom line is less and less of the country's economic benefits are being delivered to labor and more are going to capital, which is held by the wealthy. And QE is reinforcing this troubling trend.

Stiglitz explains that there are four primary reasons why inequality hampers economic growth: it reduces demand, it leaves the middle class less able to invest in their future, it lowers tax receipts, and it is associated with more violent boom and bust cycles.²¹ A study undertaken by Andrew Berg at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also asserts that inequality prevents sustained growth. According to Berg, starting growth via stimulus measures is fairly easy, but in a sufficiently unequal economy, growth often falters when government support stops. His research suggests that America's high level of inequality is playing a role in its inability to turn the boost from stimulus efforts into self-sustaining growth.²²

And by most measures, U.S. inequality is growing. If the numbers are bad, the trends are worse. The percentage of the nation's wealth controlled by the bottom 50 percent plummeted almost 60 percent between 2007 and 2010, from an already low 2.5 percent to 1.1 percent.²³ The middle class and the poor are struggling. National Public Radio recently reported that 44 percent of Americans don't have enough savings to stay out of poverty for more than three months if they lose their jobs, and almost one-third of Americans don't even have savings accounts.²⁴ At the same time, a weak job market is putting pressure on wages, which were already on a downward trajectory, falling from 49 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000 to 46 percent prior to the crisis to under 44 percent today.²⁵ A recent study found that 40 percent of Americans make less than the 1968 inflation-adjusted minimum wage.²⁶ And fewer Americans are working—the

labor force participation rate is down from over 66 percent in early 2007 to just over 63 percent today.²⁷ Meanwhile, corporate profits in absolute terms and as a percentage of GDP are at all-time highs.²⁸ The bottom line is less and less of the country's economic benefits are being delivered to labor and more are going to capital, which is held by the wealthy. And QE is reinforcing this troubling trend.

The Federal Reserve is convinced if it can get Americans to feel rich via higher asset prices and borrow at pre-crisis levels again by pushing interest rates to rock-bottom levels, it will get the economy back on track. But borrowing and spending prior to the crisis was wildly unsustainable, with the bottom 80 percent of Americans spending 110 percent of their incomes pre-crisis.²⁹ Furthermore, the middle class's wealth has deteriorated significantly in the last five years, leaving them less capable of shouldering higher debt levels. With wages declining, a weak job market and debt levels still relatively high, pushing Americans to take on more debt is nothing short of irresponsible. Americans need more income, not more debt.

If the problem is a lack of income and jobs (which even the Federal Reserve now publicly admits), we should enact direct and measurable job-creating policies. We've tried policies based on abstract theory with vague transmission mechanisms. It hasn't worked. It's time to get less clever and more concrete. The Federal Reserve does not have fiscal authority, but it can promote job creation via targeted bond buying/asset purchases. When you buy debt, you are supporting the activity that debt finances. (The Federal Reserve obviously understands this because when targeting the housing market, it bought mortgage-backed securities.) If the Federal Reserve is serious about supporting jobs, it should buy bonds financing projects that create new American jobs.

Our crumbling infrastructure provides an ideal opportunity. Economists can't agree on much, but the necessity of good infrastructure to seed future economic growth

is fairly uncontroversial. That American infrastructure is in need of serious investment is equally uncontroversial. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the United States a D+ grade in its 2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure and estimated we need to invest \$3.6 trillion in infrastructure by 2020.³⁰ Yet the Build America Bonds program totaled \$181 billion, less than 8 percent of QE to date. But it's not too late to change course.

A Put America to Work bond buying program should be a collaborative effort between the Obama administration and Federal Reserve officials. There are a number of forms the program could take, but critically, these bonds should require a quota of new jobs created per \$1 million of bonds purchased and specify a minimum percentage of the funds that must be spent on payroll. If the Fed targeted the \$1 trillion of QE it's on pace to spend this year on infrastructure bonds and required one-third of the funds to go to payroll, assuming an average salary of \$75,000, that would create between four and five million jobs. The funds could be distributed across states based on population, unemployment metrics, and poverty statistics. The ASCE's Web site provides a comprehensive state-by-state rundown of top infrastructure priorities, which is a great starting point for organizing this nationwide infrastructure initiative.³¹ Detailed, though not onerous, surveys for workers could be included in the terms of employment, giving Federal Reserve researchers and other academics valuable data to study the program, assess its effectiveness, and work to improve it.

Such a program would not be a silver bullet, but it could help soften the blow to the middle class while providing the United States with an infrastructure upgrade it desperately needs. It should also be noted there are real risks to dramatically expanding the monetary base through any QE program. How long and to what degree QE should be continued are important questions that are beyond the scope of this article. If we are going to take the risks inherent in

QE, though, we should be reasonably confident the policy is having the intended effect of improving unemployment.

Given it's a relatively short mental hop from supporting the housing market by buying mortgage bonds to supporting the job market by buying job bonds, it is surprising that no prominent politicians or economists have publicly proposed the idea. A chorus of voices made up of politicians, journalists, and even some economists—from former U.S. President Bill Clinton to researchers at

It's time to get less clever and more concrete.

the San Francisco Federal Reserve—have called for more infrastructure spending to boost jobs and aid the recovery. And there is much discussion about QE, but few have married the two. A couple of journalists have recently proposed the idea, though, suggesting that it's beginning to percolate into the public consciousness.³²

That QE is providing little help to the middle class and poor is increasingly uncontroversial. One definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. If buying government bonds hasn't fired up the job market after two years, it's unlikely to start working now. So isn't it time to try something new? ❖

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America's New Gilded Age:

A Review of Chrystia Freeland's *Plutocrats* and Christopher Hayes's *Twilight of the Elites*

By Ethan Wagner



Photo: Flickr/Tim Pierce

“We must make our choice,” warned the American jurist Louis Brandeis nearly a century ago, writing on the state of American society. “We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few—but we can’t have both.”¹ A few years later, as Brandeis joined the U.S. Supreme Court, the country was undergoing a major economic transition. With the passage of the federal income tax amendment, an increase in labor union membership, and the advent of the forty-hour workweek, the United States would soon leave behind the Gilded Age, an era when the titans of industry accumulated enormous wealth while the masses toiled for meager wages. In its place arrived the Great Compression, a period characterized by greater economic equality, shrinking income and wealth gaps between the rich and poor, and the rise of the American middle class. Between 1945 and 1974, incomes grew at a nearly uniform 3 percent each year for people at every level of society.²

To most economists, the Great Compression was a welcome development, albeit an unsurprising one. Hewing to the ideas of Simon Kuznets—the Nobel Prize-winning economist who theorized that income inequality is low in pre-industrial economies, sharply rises during industrialization (as happened during the Gilded Age), then drops in the post-industrial

age—mainstream economic thinking assumed that post-WWII America would enjoy steady growth and prosperity shared by all.

Then something happened. America’s ride down the pleasant slope of the Kuznets curve bottomed out; sometime in the mid-1970s, the Great Compression began to unravel and then reverse itself. In 2013, wealth distribution is even more unequal than during the height of the Gilded Age. Between 1979 and 2008, all income gains in the country went to the top 10 percent of earners, and more than 87 percent of those income gains went to the top 1 percent. During the same period, average income for the bottom 90 percent actually declined.³

Chronicling this reversal—and what it portends for our society writ large—come two new books with somewhat differing takes on how our growing economic disparity is transforming public life. In *Plutocrats: The Rise of the New Global Super-Rich and the Fall of Everyone Else*, Chrystia Freeland insists that we must overcome our discomfort and squeamishness about discussions of class if we hope to address the challenges that widening income and wealth gaps pose to social cohesion. Meanwhile, *Twilight of the Elites: America After Meritocracy* by Christopher Hayes provides a tour of an America that has not only become less economically equal, but has also suffered

an unprecedented crisis of authority. According to Hayes, who writes for the *Nation* and hosts his own show on MSNBC, virtually every pillar of American society—from government officials and business executives to athletes and the media—has profoundly lost the trust of the citizenry through incompetence and corruption, or both.

Freeland, a Harvard alum; managing director and editor, Consumer News, at Thomson Reuters; and former business journalist for the *Financial Times*, offers a solid primer on the history of income inequality and shifting levels of wealth, both in this country and around the world. She summarizes the groundbreaking work of economists like Angus Maddison, the aforementioned Kuznets, and in more recent years,

In 2013, wealth distribution is even more unequal than during the height of the Gilded Age.

Emmanuel Saez and Thomas Piketty. The data featured by Freeland supports popular conceptions of the United States—at least historically—as a land largely free of the class distinctions that divided the European social order. From the country's founding until the Gilded Age—even through its unconscionable era of slavery—America could boast one of the most equitable income distributions among all developed countries.

Unfortunately, that is no longer the case. As economist Robert Reich has observed, by 2005 the two richest men in America together possessed greater wealth than the bottom 120 million combined.⁴ Freeland guides readers through the most likely explanations for our yawning income gap, ranging from the decline of unions to the wave of deregulation, from downward pressure on wages due to international trade and outsourcing to the advent of technologies that have increased productivity while obviating the

need for human labor. Citing the works of renowned economist Joseph Stiglitz, political scientists Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson, and journalist Timothy Noah among others, Freeland does a thorough job of summarizing the most persuasive theories, given the breadth and complexity of research on the topic and the lack of a clear explanatory consensus.

There is, however, widespread agreement on how society views the growth in inequality. Freeland cites a Duke University survey in which American respondents are shown wealth distribution spreads from two unnamed countries. In the first country, the richest 20 percent own 84 percent of all wealth; in the second, that top quintile owns just 36 percent; 92 percent of respondents say they prefer the wealth distribution of the latter. The first country is the United States; the second is Sweden. The study also asks respondents what the ideal wealth distribution should be. On average, respondents think the richest 20 percent should possess 32 percent of national wealth.⁵ From 2009 to 2010, 37 percent of income in the United States went to just 15,000 Americans—or the richest .01 percent.⁶ This discord—between the lofty vision we have for our society and the far harsher reality—is why, Freeland writes, “it is not just the super-rich who don't like to talk about rising income inequality. It can be an ideologically uncomfortable conversation for many of the rest of us, too. That's because even—or perhaps particularly—in the view of its most ardent supporters, global capitalism wasn't supposed to work quite this way.”⁷

After a strong start, the rest of *Plutocrats* drifts a bit from fact toward anecdote and reads like an updated version of *Richistan*, Robert Frank's pre-crisis book that gawked incredulously at how the other half-of-a-percent live. Freeland colorfully treads familiar ground, describing the tendency of the uber-wealthy to build self-contained worlds unto themselves, replete with concierge doctors, private jets, and personal chefs. Many of these denizens of Davos consider themselves of no one country but of many, or of the world. A succession of technological innovations—air travel, television, digital music, Internet communications—have enabled not only financiers and chief executive officers (CEOs), but athletes, musicians, and even tailors to vault from the ranks of the modestly well-off into the class of what bankers refer to as UHNWIs (ultra-high net worth individuals).

In contrast to Freeland's book, *Twilight of the Elites* focuses less narrowly on the economic split

between the rich and the rest and more on the broader disillusionment of what Hayes terms “the fail decade,” in which American society “applies the principle of accountability to the powerless and the principle of forgiveness to the powerful.”⁸ For Hayes, the key distinction is not between rich and poor but between what he terms the institutionalists, who generally think the status quo serves us well and are loathe to disrupt the existing order, and the insurrectionists, who “not only think there is something fundamentally broken about our current institutions and the social order they hold up, but [that] the only way to hold our present elites accountable is to force them to forfeit their authority.”⁹ To put the stakes of our predicament in stark

these new, well, plutocrats who may have achieved their success through merit but have since become a self-perpetuating class unto themselves, pulling up the ladder once they’ve scaled it so that the same opportunities are no longer accessible to the rest. Ralph Waldo Emerson’s observation that “the existence of an upper class is not injurious, as long as it is dependent on merit” would find no sympathy with Hayes.¹⁰

After staking out such a counterintuitive position, Hayes frustratingly ends his book with that trite hallmark of respectable centrists everywhere: a rote call to put aside ideology and partisanship for the sake of society’s betterment. There are many missed opportunities when Hayes could engage more sub-



Chrystia Freedland

Photo: Center for American Progress/ Ralph Alswang



Chris Hayes

Photo: flickr/Matthew Yglesias

relief, Hayes notes a 2010 Pew poll reflecting that our present lack of trust in institutions spans Congress, banks, corporations, media, labor unions, the Supreme Court, the United Nations (UN), and almost every other institution except the military.

Hayes is also alarmed by rising economic inequality, but he reserves his most fervent opposition for an unlikely group: those who have attained their success through merit—or as he wryly fashions it, “merit.” Of course, it’s an uphill battle to persuade American readers that focusing on merit is a cause for concern, and Hayes seems to understand this. He prefaces his broadside against “meritocracy” by conceding that society is unquestionably better off in the present day than it once was, when race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation disqualified many segments of society from reaching positions of power and success. The specific subjects of the author’s ire are

stantively with the legitimate philosophical arguments of his opponents; why, for example, is an estate tax a just method of raising revenue? But Hayes elides the rationale and assumes most readers already know and agree with him, rather than engaging with opposing views.

Often left out of discussions of income equality is a fundamental question, to which both Freedland and Hayes give somewhat hasty treatment: why does it matter? Incumbent upon those sounding the alarm on income inequality is explaining why it should concern us, especially if society is still providing for the basic needs of the poorest. Put another way: why should we concern ourselves with the height of the ceiling so long as there is an adequate floor?

After all, even Hayes concedes that our wealthiest citizens are not a landed gentry, but self-made men and women. Aside from the Walton and Mars heirs

(Wal-Mart and Mars candy company, respectively), not a single person among the fifty richest Americans in 2012 inherited his or her wealth.¹¹ In 1916, the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans earned only one-fifth of their income from paid work; today that figure is nearly two-thirds.¹² “As a consequence,” observe economists Saez and Piketty, “top executives (the ‘working rich’) have replaced top capital owners (the ‘rentiers’) at the top of the income hierarchy during the twentieth century.”¹³ Even Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein, villain of the Occupy Wall Street protests, was born in a housing project in East New York. Furthermore, is income inequality more deserving of our attention than poverty? Viewed alongside

cerned about the growing gap here at home, when so many around the world are emerging from poverty?

Here’s why: the gulf between the rich and the rest has widened so much that it now threatens to dissolve the already tenuous links that bind our society together. To illustrate, consider the case of John Paulson, the notorious hedge fund manager who made more than \$5 billion in 2010. That works out to \$159 every second or \$2.4 million an hour.¹⁶ That’s more than the median American worker, with an annual income of approximately \$50,000¹⁷ will earn over the course of an entire forty-year career. We see stirrings of upheaval in the Tea Party’s anger over bailouts, the Occupy movement’s protests against the income

Our present lack of trust in institutions spans Congress, banks, corporations, media, labor unions, the Supreme Court, the UN, and almost every other institution except the military.

the rest of the world, the United States is doing quite well; to the vast majority of humanity, are our discussions of income equality little more than quibbling between the haves and the have-mores?

Succinctly expressing this view is the Chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management Jim O’Neill, whom Freeland quotes at length:]

Globalization may widen inequality within certain national borders, but on a global basis it has been a huge force for good, narrowing inequality among people on an unprecedented scale. Tens of millions of people . . . are being taken out of poverty by the growth of their economies. While it is easy to focus on the fact that China has created so many billionaires, it should not be forgotten that in the past fifteen or so years, 300 million or more Chinese have been lifted out of poverty. . . . Rather than be worried by such developments, we should be both encouraged and hopeful. Vast swaths of mankind are having their chance to enjoy some of the fruits of wealth creation. This is the big story.¹⁴

Data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) supports this view, with projections indicating that the world’s middle class will grow from two billion today to almost five billion by 2030.¹⁵ So again, why should we be con-

cerned about the growing gap here at home, when so many around the world are emerging from poverty? gap, and the emerging research on the physical and emotional toll long-term unemployment has taken on a large segment of the population. British social scientists Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson have documented convincingly that income inequality leads to social decay.¹⁸ They provide evidence that the size of the gap between rich and poor, rather than simple poverty levels, is a far greater factor in driving drug use, violence, teenage pregnancy, and a variety of other ills that eat away at our social cohesion.

Income inequality has also contributed to the corruption of the American political system. Our political process is overwhelmingly responsive to the preferences of the affluent at the expense of the rest of the population, ineluctably undermining our democracy. Freeland and Hayes both cite Princeton political scientist Martin Gilens, who writes:

There has never been a democratic society in which citizens’ influence over government policy was unrelated to their financial resources. In this sense, the difference between democracy and plutocracy is one of degree. But by this same token, a government that is democratic in form but is in practice only responsive to its most affluent citizens is a democracy in name only.¹⁹

This brings to mind Anatole France’s caustic observa-

tion that “the law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich and the poor alike to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread.”²⁰ In a 1999 speech, economist Finis Welch delivered a full-throated defense of income inequality. Welch went on to note that an unequal society only risked danger when “the low-wage citizenry views society as unfair, when it views effort as not worthwhile, when upward mobility is impossible or so unlikely that its pursuit is not worthwhile.”²¹

Inequality—and its close cousin, lack of economic mobility—matters because we are drifting perilously close to the society Welch described. Despite the presence of all those self-made billionaires atop the *Forbes* list, the data tell a different story: that the vaunted, venerable American dream is, to put it bluntly, becoming a fairy tale. A landmark study by Daniel Aaronson and Bhash Mazumder at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago showed that after rising for three decades after 1950, intergenerational income mobility has fallen precipitously since 1980, roughly the same time when income inequality in the country began to worsen.²² Today, economic mobility is two and a half times higher in Canada and three times higher in Denmark than in the United States.²³

Many have weighed in with proposals of how to combat income inequality. But whatever the remedy, time is short before this growing wealth gap produces irreversible changes in our nation, and the economic dispossession afflicting ever-larger segments of our population metastasizes into something corrosive to our entire society. For it is not only power that corrupts. So, too, does powerlessness. ❖

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Existential Heroines:

Zero Dark Thirty and *Homeland*

By Irene Shih

Photos by flickr/Tomas Fano

Much has been made this year about *Zero Dark Thirty*, Hollywood's first stab at dramatizing the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) hunt for Osama bin Laden. Even Graham Allison, professor of government and founding dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, has written about the Oscar-nominated film. A distinguished national security expert, Allison addresses the moral obligation filmmakers have to respect and present facts when narrating true events that have far-reaching political implications.

In the weeks following *Zero Dark Thirty*'s release, journalists and bloggers drew parallels between *Zero Dark Thirty*'s female protagonist, Maya (portrayed by Jessica Chastain), and another contemporary heroine of the post-9/11 spy genre: *Homeland*'s Carrie Mathison (portrayed by Claire Danes). Some suspect that Carrie and Maya are in fact based on the same woman—a CIA agent (pseudonym Jen) who worked extensively on the final mission to capture bin Laden. Since research for the two productions involved similar data sets, this conjecture may be

reasonable. If so, Maya and Carrie have separately evolved into rather different characters. They share an impassioned core but diverge sharply in personality and personal life.

Countless articles have critiqued and commended how *Homeland* and *Zero Dark Thirty* portray their female leads. Both are brilliant agents in their own right, and both join a rare collection of female geniuses in film and television history. Leading parts for women remain few and far between in Hollywood; female roles that achieve critical acclaim during awards season tend to emerge from those few scripts every year that attempt to write women with any complexity and presence. Needless to say, thousands of qualified actresses compete for a handful of truly substantial parts—even fewer of which subvert mainstream narratives about women. That Carrie and Maya should enter mainstream representation in a post-bin Laden world is significant not only for women, but also for how our culture frames terrorism and how we might envision the work that lies ahead in dismantling its forces.

Maya and Carrie: A Tale of Two Devices

Zero Dark Thirty's Maya is a singular force to be reckoned with and, as the film suggests, is something of a lone wolf—twisting the arms of superiors to keep the hunt moving, baring her teeth at a conference table to get an operation approved, forever eating lunch alone since the death of her one friend in the CIA (also a woman). To invent Maya, *Zero Dark Thirty's* research team interviewed several protected female operatives, most prominently the aforementioned Jen. Maya is equal parts prototype and device. As prototype, she embodies—singularly—the combined contribution that women may claim in the bin Laden mission. As device, she drives the plot to its known destination and—dare we say—makes it a nail-biting affair. Hers is an underdog's tale and a winning one at that: one female maverick caught in a cage fight with all of male bureaucracy, her pending success synonymous with our nation's victory. The poetic image is compelling.

Yet *Zero Dark Thirty* is, perhaps unfortunately, bound to reach an ending we already know. This binding commitment, combined with the time restraints of film, prioritizes Maya's functionality as a device over her richness as a character. Not only a lone wolf, Maya is also an existential subject. She seems to come from nowhere, as we know so little about her—only that she was recruited into the CIA straight out of high school and that she has no personal life to speak of. This framing deliberately serves the film's plot. We need Maya as an entry point into the story: she humanizes the stakes and gives us someone to root for. We might even need a woman to soften the tactics of war and investigation, to lend controversy a feminine morality. But too much focus on Maya's person would be

We admire the idea of who she is; our love affair with her requires no depth, and it ends when credits roll.

Mission accomplished.

indulgent; the film carries a weightier agenda, one that would suffer from extended periods of fictionalized perspective. What results is a measured lead character who serves her narrative purpose but doesn't overshadow what is being narrated. Maya is, quintessentially, an existential heroine. We admire the idea of who she is; our love affair with her requires no depth, and it ends when credits roll. Mission accomplished.

Homeland's Carrie Mathison is equally singular and headstrong, though not quite the island of solitude that Maya represents. Her family members and one friend, CIA Middle East Division Chief Saul Berenson, make regular appearances in her life. But Carrie, too, twists arms and breaks rules to follow her instincts, and no personal relationship ranks above her work. Early on, Carrie betrays Saul's trust to spy on U.S. Marine Sergeant Nicholas Brody, a returning prisoner of war

(POW) that she (and she alone) suspects for colluding with Al-Qaeda. While Saul and Carrie's family provide a structural familiarity that allows us to access and identify with Carrie, she herself stands at arm's distance, more connected to her work than to the closest people in her life. Unlike Maya, she has a paper trail and the trappings of history and context. But she, too, lives a detached life, replacing who she *is* with what she *does*. If Maya is the existential heroine, then Carrie aspires to be one.

Like Maya, Carrie is a device, but one that functions differently. Maya exists to carry her story to its foregone conclusion; Carrie exists to embody the ambiguity of that conclusion. Her brashness is a staple conflict in *Homeland*: how much can she get away with, and how often is she right to push those boundaries? Unlike *Zero Dark Thirty*, *Homeland* plays with our allegiances. Sometimes we support Carrie fervently, infuriated on her

represents the debunking of that conclusion. Her ambiguity forces us to question our mission and doubt our method and suggests that we are a long way off from resolute accomplishment.

Female Representation: Thematic Versus Social Narrative

How do these characters map onto familiar stories about women in positions of influence? Conflict often arises between thematic and social narratives. Writers want to tell a particular story or send a specific message; to do so, they create characters that carry these ideas to fruition. Characters usually begin as devices, serving plot, serving theme, but rarely serving their own existence. Yet, the audience receives far more than just a thematic overture. We absorb the characters on television and in film, thinking of them not as devices but as humans. We are compelled to consider how characters representing mar-

How can terror have a human face?

behalf as male superiors rebuff her requests for action; other times we bite our knuckles, all but reaching across the screen to stop her often self-destructive behavior.

Much like the ambiguity of our times—where notions of security are illusory, where heroes and villains blend and blur, where neighbors become nemeses at the drop of a hat—Carrie, too, is ambiguous. She is also bipolar. Her ambiguity and her mental disorder make us question: What is perceptive and what is paranoid? How can we know? In a post-9/11 world, we've defined security along these very lines. Intelligence work and controversial methods of extracting information, for instance, can be guided by perceptiveness or by paranoia. It matters deeply whether our leaders are perceptive or paranoid, and it is profoundly troubling if we cannot know the border between the two.

Thus, if Maya represents foregone conclusion and a mission accomplished, Carrie

ginalized social narratives—women and minorities—appear on our screens. Those with invested perspectives ask: Are they three-dimensional? Do they fall prey to stereotype? Are these representations fair?

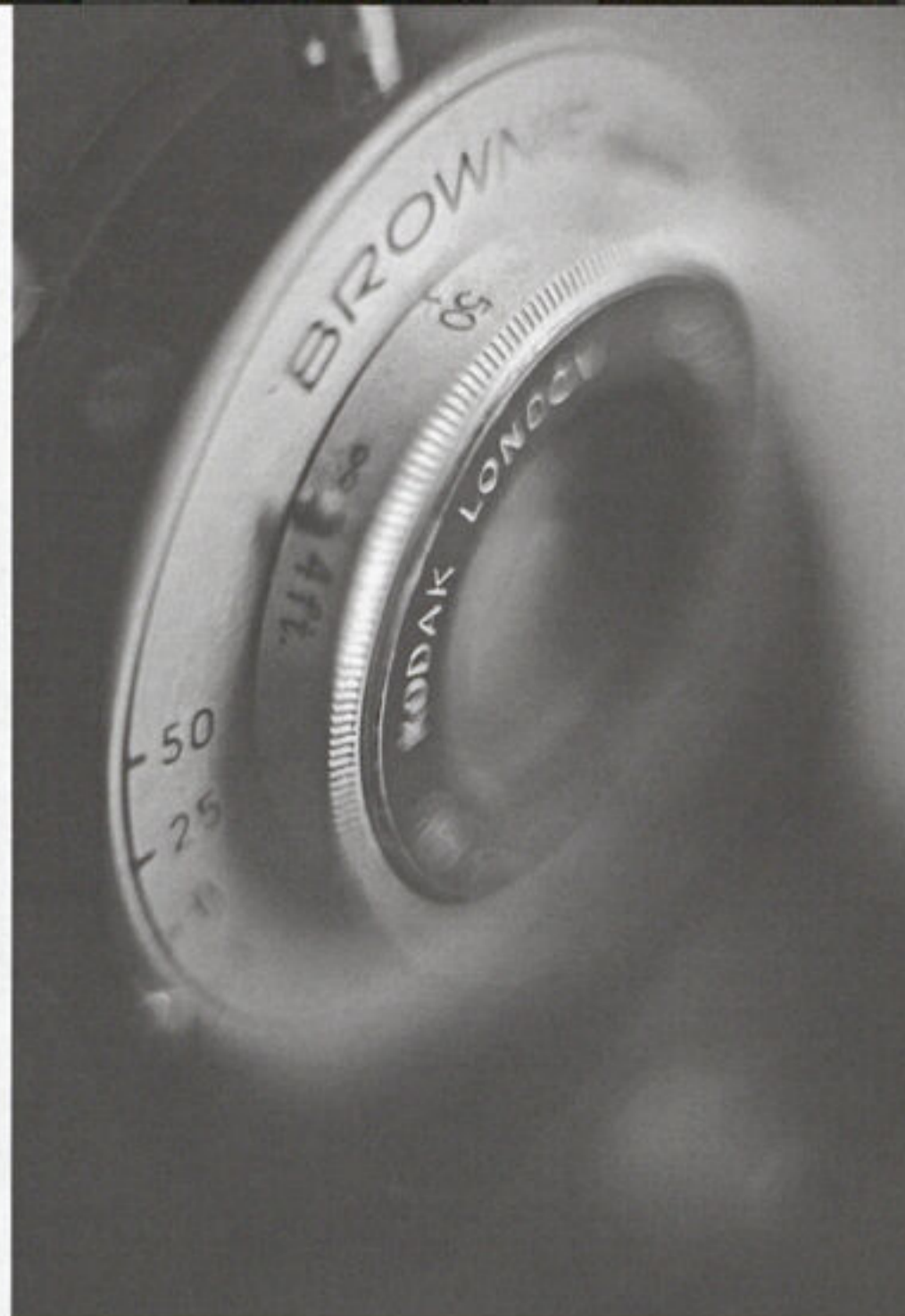
On the one hand, the fact that Maya and Carrie exist at all should be a point of pride. The creators of *Homeland* went out of their way to write Carrie into existence. The show is based on *Hatufim (Prisoners of War)*, an Israeli television show that did not have a Carrie-type figure as its lead. The writers of *Homeland* insisted that the American version include and center on one woman's perspective. In early drafts of the pilot, Carrie was brilliant but not bipolar. The creators eventually decided that mental illness would complicate tensions and grant Carrie an ambiguity similar to that of Sergeant Brody. While his is a moral ambiguity, hers is a mental one.

That complexity in a female character might immediately imply psychological

instability is an association worth examining. After all, Carrie could also have been written as a double agent, possessing moral ambiguity to match Brody's. Historically, it is par for the course to portray intelligent women as plagued with mental illness; Shakespeare did as much with Ophelia, and Tennessee Williams with several iconic females. In recent decades of film, we rarely honor substantial women except those that also meet their mental demise: *Iris* (2001), *Sylvia* (2003), *The Iron Lady* (2011), to name a few. Television has adopted a simplistic view of intelligent women as "hot messes." Smart women are portrayed as complex only because they are all somewhat unstable. Perhaps it's time for a new story.

Kathryn Bigelow, the first woman to win a Best Director Oscar (and only the fourth to be nominated), sits at the helm of *Zero Dark Thirty*—a fact to inspire our confidence in the progressiveness of her female lead. And Bigelow does not condescend. Her Maya is capable, forceful, and reliable. Still, Maya also confirms that powerful women cannot have it all. In the last shot of *Zero Dark Thirty*, Maya boards a transport plane by herself, and the camera offers us a close-up as she weeps in solitude on the fading screen. What is she weeping about? I believe she is weeping for the loss of the only adult life she ever knew, a life dedicated to one pursuit that has finally ended. Perhaps she is even wondering, "Who am I, except for what I do?" Different viewers will subscribe to different conjectures about her melancholy. In truth, what do we know about her that would give us any insight to hazard a guess? Who we think Maya is has everything to do with what *we* believe and who *we* are. At the end of the day, she is but a vessel for our own convictions.

For the sake of intrigue, Carrie cannot have a stable mind to accompany her professional prowess and messy personal life. For the sake of plot, Maya cannot have a personal life to go along with her professional one. We see them kick down doors and chew their way through red tape to become effective leaders, but the cost of that achievement almost makes their success seem empty. Such is the danger



That Carrie and Maya should enter mainstream representation in a post-bin Laden world is significant not only for women, but also for how our culture frames terrorism and how we might envision the work that lies ahead in dismantling its forces.

of weaving thematic narrative through representatives of marginalization; when push comes to shove, creative minds choose story over social progress.

Representation of Terror and Islam

Carrie's ambiguity forces us to question assumptions about rights and wrongs in the act of war. On a broader level, *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Homeland's* explorations of terrorism and Islam create similar ambiguities. Much of the controversy surrounding *Zero Dark Thirty* focuses on the waterboarding scenes, which have since been dismissed by chairs of two U.S. Senate committees as false portrayals. For so long, our country focused its political narrative as a single, unidirectional story about triumph over evil: terror as an unfathomable "Other," alien in its philosophy and in direct opposition to all we stand for as Americans.

Homeland begins to tear that notion down. It gives us Nick Brody, a White soldier and perceived American hero whose alliance with Abu Nazir—*Homeland's* fictional version of bin Laden—is rooted in fatherly love for Nazir's son Issa. (Brody bonded with Issa during his years in captivity as a POW.) Brody loves America, but he abhors the terrors committed by his own country; Issa was killed in a drone strike ordered by the vice president of the United States. Brody complicates our notion of terror. By aligning himself with Nazir and by doing his bidding, he is a terrorist. But how can terror have a human face and a human motivation? How can terror be perpetrated by "one of us"?

The safest way to complicate our understanding of terrorism is to pair it with what we already know. We know the Brody prototype, the commercial image of an American soldier. *Homeland* bestows us this image, then turns it on its head. Brody anchors us as we come to grips with the psyche of terror, no longer as alien as we once assumed. He delivers a deeply unsettling reality about terror: that it makes perfect sense in the mind of its perpetrators and that its perpetrators are as human as any of us.

Every society produces iterations of the

It matters deeply whether our leaders are perceptive or paranoid, and it is profoundly troubling if we cannot know the border between the two.

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"Other." How that looks might vary across regions, within communities, and among individuals, but Other-ing is a shared practice. We are complex, multifaceted, distinguished from one another, and rich in our stories; *Others* are simple, uncomplicated in how alike *they* are to each other, absolute in how different all of *them* are to *us*. We have endless stories; *they* only have one.

The familiar terrorist in *Homeland*—White American Brody—is permitted complexity and may merit our understanding. But this complexity is not extended to his Other, as represented by Abu Nazir. We spend two seasons chasing Nazir, yet it is Brody who mourns for Issa. Nazir, at most, may be summed up by a wall of color-coded, classified documents. Nazir's final moments don't force us to reckon with a man; rather, they confirm his monstrosity, his terrifying Other-ness. Not all terrorism may be held equal. Nazir remains a diabolical cartoon, too foreign to be understood in our language.

Homeland makes another bold attempt: to dissolve Islamophobia by portraying Brody as an Islamic convert. But again, our culture sterilizes perceived danger and exoticism by pairing them with the familiar. Only Brody can make Islam palatable, and only Brody can make terrorism complex. Is this brave storytelling, or is it feeding us only what we can digest? In the end, probably a lot of both.

The Danger of a Single Story

The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete.

—Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, author of *Half of a Yellow Sun*

The trouble with *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Homeland* is not that they attempt to write

about heroines, nor that they hope to deepen our understanding of terrorist psyche and Islamic faith. The trouble is that they attempt these progressive models while seducing the audience with familiar tropes, hoping that a spoonful of sugar will help new medicine go down. But that muddles the message. Yes, Maya and Carrie are important narrative devices, soliciting our allegiance with their missions and even forcing us to consider the risk of staking our lives and our country's character on choices made by ambiguous leaders. Maya and Carrie serve essential, thematic functions; they are the very pillars upon which their stories rest. But viewers don't think of them as mere device; viewers want to see them as people, as women representative of other women. With still so few images of influential women, Maya and Carrie shoulder the legacy of single stories, made in the spirit of progress, yet drawn from a fountain of stereotypes. These characters have never been seen before. Yet somehow, they are more of the same.

The single story plagues our politics, where every war is remembered as the final countdown between hero and villain; where social progress remembers history in the past tense, disowning how it lives on in present tense. Poverty is the picture of a Black child, the future is a poster of Apple cofounder Steve Jobs holding an iPad, and evil is the face of terrors committed against us. Poverty, the future, and evil. We reserve the single story for that which we do not fully understand: in the case of *Homeland* and *Zero Dark Thirty*, it is the unknowable face of evil. It forever stands on the other side, conveniently opposing all that we stand for.

We often criticize cultural mediums for telling single stories. Inevitably, most who challenge a single story are implicated by that story, feeling beholden to and trapped by an image that does not summarize who they are and what they can be. As Adichie says, these single stories may be true—for some. The travesty is not that they are represented; the travesty is that *only* they are represented. Third-wave feminism emerged from the ashes of the second, with transnational women

at the helm, determined to paint a picture different from women's rights activist Betty Friedan's White, middle-class housewife. Their second, third, and *n*th story does not negate the first. Instead, these "new" stories add to a canvas that, in theory, has room for each and every story.

So what is the ethical and artistic path to take? Should *Zero Dark Thirty* have done more with Maya, eschewing her functionality as a device for her significance as a woman in power? Should *Homeland* have given us a Carrie without mental illness, trading a convenient form of ambiguity for something truly new? Should *Homeland* have gone one step further to humanize Abu Nazir, to feed us new medicine without the sugar? Was there a way to dismantle Islamophobia without pairing it to Brody's apple-pie American-ness? Arguably, an American audience would simply turn away from these "radical" images, refusing to consider them. Stories like these might not sell, seeming too progressive. But shouldn't art force us out of our comfort zones? Isn't that the ethical thing to do?

In theory, yes. Except, of course, that film and television are not perfect examples of art. They come to our screens because someone believed they might be marketable, and they stay relevant in our lives when we embrace the message they deliver. The question isn't *should* we move the needle, but *how far*? How radical can art and entertainment be—in their representations of women, of terrorism, and of Islam—and still be heard? As an American audience, what are we ready to accept? *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Homeland* certainly moved the needle, but only enough to surprise and still keep their audience. Perhaps that's just not far enough. ❖

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The Regularity of Irregular War

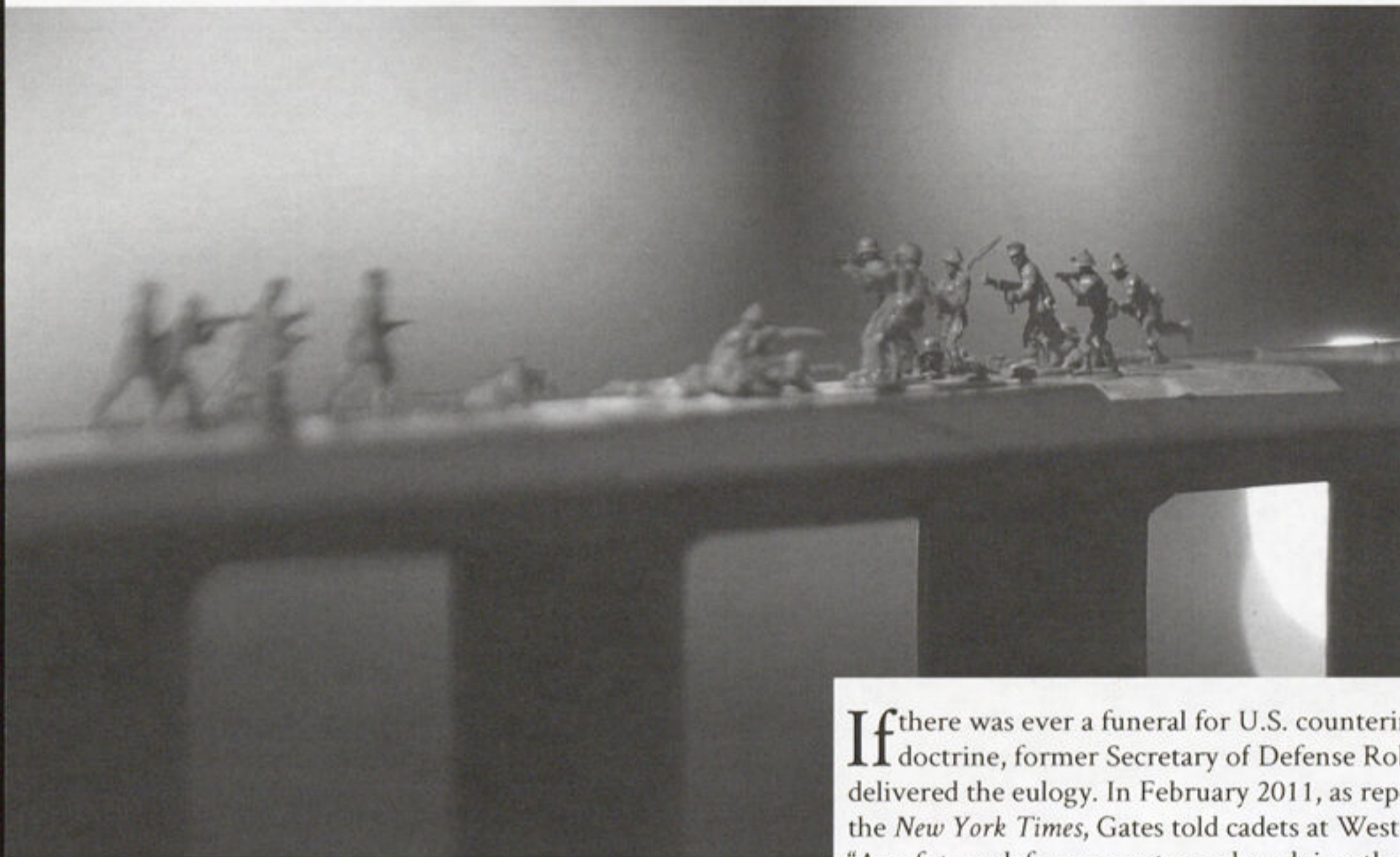


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A Review of *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present* by Max Boot

Reviewed by Jonathan E. Hillman

If there was ever a funeral for U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates delivered the eulogy. In February 2011, as reported in the *New York Times*, Gates told cadets at West Point, "Any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should have his head examined." The message from the man who had been tasked with righting the wrongs of two such wars was simple: never again.

Two years later, it's even more tempting to declare counterinsurgency doctrine dead. The Iraq war has ended. The war in Afghanistan is winding down. America looks toward the Asia Pacific region, but mostly within. Nation-building has been domesticated. Drones, special forces, intelligence, and cyber capabilities promise to protect American interests at lower cost than large ground forces. So goes the growing consensus in Washington, DC.

Then again, history has a way of, well, having its way. Less than a year before September 11 and America's subsequent (re)entry into the nation-building business, then presidential candidate George W. Bush said in a debate, "I don't think our troops ought to be used for what's called nation-building. I think our troops ought to be used to fight and win war." If truth is the first casualty of war, "ought to's" regarding defense planning and the deployment of military force are a very close second.

None of this should come as a surprise, according to Max Boot, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. His latest book, *Invisible Armies*, carries many lessons, but one is more fundamental than the rest: there is nothing irregular about irregular war. Since ancient times, established powers have frequently clashed with opponents too weak to field conventional armies and, therefore, have been forced to adopt guerilla “hit and run” tactics. Conventional warfare, or battle between well-defined forces, has been the exception, not the rule.

Some people aspire to climb mountains, but Boot has built one. At first glance, his 784-page history of guerrilla warfare and terrorism appears as welcoming as Mount Everest. It is organized into eight “books,” which collectively span five-thousand years of unconventional warfare. Armchair generals, social scientists, and aspiring revolutionaries will be happy to find an appendix containing a database of insurgencies and their outcomes since 1775. It bears mentioning that Boot, who has been known to launch his own small wars from the

surgeons have been getting better at tapping into public sentiment and eroding the will of states to fight insurgencies—battles that are rarely as cheap, fast, or easy as often promised. From the Greeks in the 1820s, to the Algerians in the 1950s, to Hezbollah today, the battle for the public narrative has, in Boot’s words, “become more important than the actual combat in determining the course of events.”

The centrality of public opinion carries huge consequences. Today, war crimes and human rights abuses are uncovered not only by international organizations like Human Rights Watch and the United Nations but by any passerby or onlooker with a cell phone. Civilian support can be won and lost through YouTube and Twitter. Consequently, for liberal democratic states, the option of no-holds-barred, scorched-earth operations has been effectively taken off the table. Ethically, this is a reason for celebration. Tactically, this puts a heavy burden on counterinsurgents.

Population-centric counterinsurgency seeks to operate within these limits. Popularly known by the

The most important development in guerrilla warfare since World War II, he argues, is the growing importance of public opinion.

op-ed pages of the *Wall Street Journal* and in the *Weekly Standard*, has no partisan axe to grind here.

In most hands, such an undertaking would result in a sleep-inducing encyclopedia, an ornament to be displayed and seen on coffee tables rather than actually read. But reading *Invisible Armies* is meeting some of history’s most interesting personalities. The cast of characters includes, for example, a young and reckless Fidel Castro, who is more familiar with Ernest Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls* than the classic guerilla texts. Lesser-known figures like British General Gerald Templer, who led a successful counterinsurgency campaign in Malaya during the 1950s, are given their proper place in history.

Having done the historian’s heavy lifting, Boot is able to draw a number of important connections between insurgent and counterinsurgent tactics across the ages. The most important development in guerrilla warfare since World War II, he argues, is the growing importance of public opinion. Aided by technology, in-

phrase “winning hearts and minds,” this school of tactics emphasizes policing and controlling civilian populations. It recognizes that the use of indiscriminate force can backfire by producing more new enemies. The goal is to separate the insurgents from the civilians, eliminate or dissuade the former, and provide protection and legitimate governance for the latter. In practice, this can entail everything from providing sweeteners like bribes and basic services to coercive measures like forcibly relocating populations.

Boot doesn’t claim that these methods amount to a magic elixir for states with insurgency pains, but neither does he fully define the risks and limitations of such an approach. To his credit, Boot notes that insurgencies are long-lasting—by his count, ten years on average since 1775—and that building legitimate governments in foreign lands is no easy task. Yet the central question for him is degree of difficulty rather than feasibility. At times, *Invisible Armies* gives the impression that the right mix of creativity, capital, and commitment can

empower counterinsurgents to overcome any barrier—hundreds of years of history and cultural divides be damned. Left unaddressed is the question of where difficulty bleeds into impossibility.

And therein lies the fatal flaw with population-centric counterinsurgency: when applied, it's difficult to know where to stop. As exemplified by the American experience in Afghanistan, which has included everything from building roads to replacing opium with pomegranates, mission creep seems to be hardwired into this more humane way of war. Boot approvingly quotes French military officer David Galula's observation that "a soldier must be prepared to become a propagandist, a social worker, a civil engineer, a schoolteacher, a nurse, a boy scout." But in many circumstances, this seems an order too tall, even for the most powerful and capable military in the history of the world.

Unfortunately, Boot gives less attention to the war in Afghanistan (roughly half a page) than he does to the Battle of Beth-Horon in A.D. 66. His views on the war

are available elsewhere, of course, and it's possible that he wanted to avoid appearing to politicize the volume. Still, this is a gaping hole in an otherwise extensive survey. At the end of the day, however, perhaps the best compliment for the author of a nearly 800-page work is encouraging him to add to it. And if history is any guide, future editions of *Invisible Armies* will include battles not yet fought. Great powers might wish to be done with counterinsurgency, but as Boot shows, it's not likely to be done with them. ❖

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*Photo:
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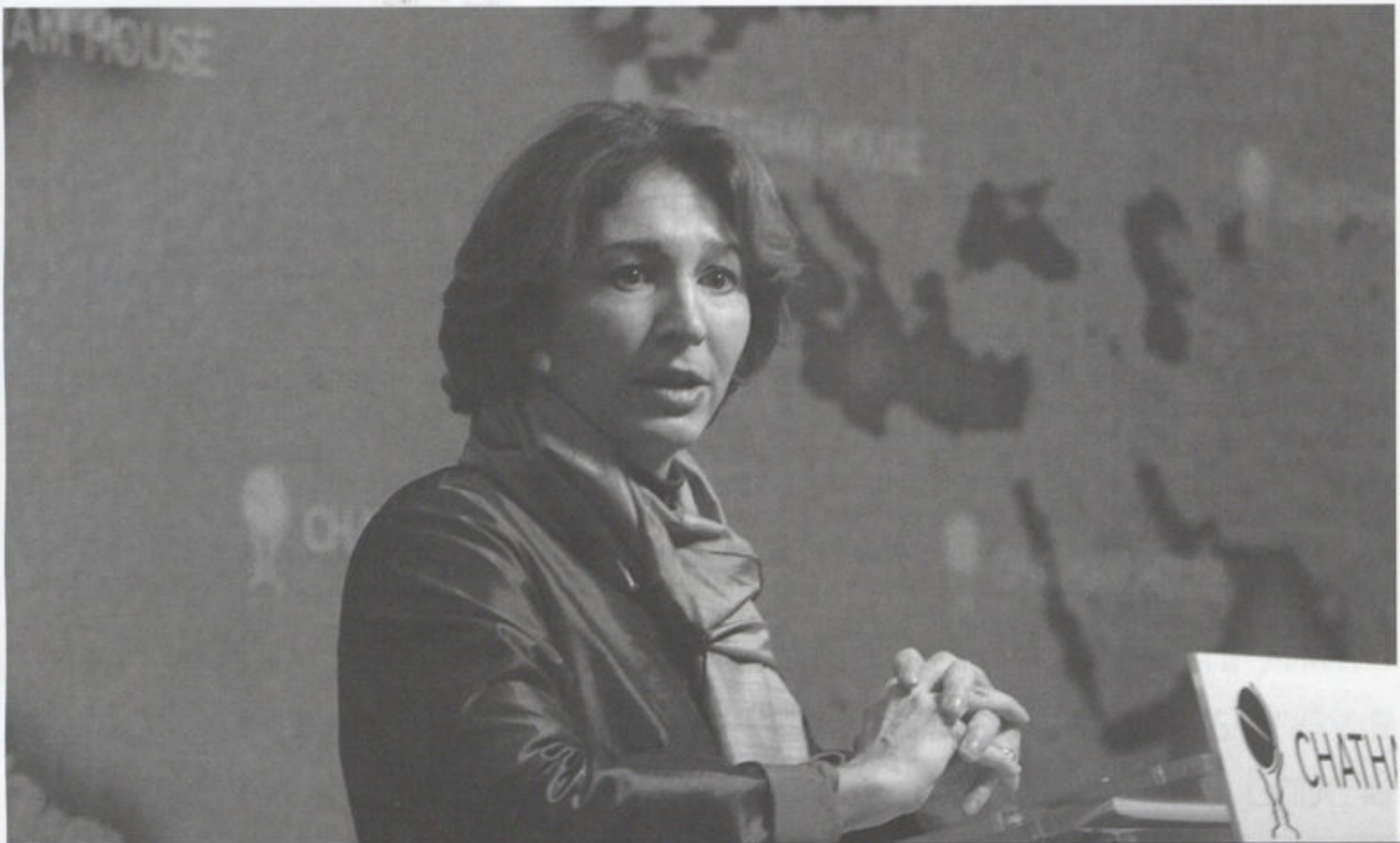


Photo: Flickr/Chatham House, London

Spotlight on Anne-Marie Slaughter:

A Conversation with the Foreign Policy Guru, Writer, and Feminist

Interview by Hanna Siegel

HS: Your project at the U.S. State Department, the first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), was met with much enthusiasm and billed as a way to restore civilian leadership in foreign policy yet it seems to have completely disappeared from view. Has there been progress on any of these reforms? For those that haven't moved forward, what are the obstacles to implementation?

A-MS: It's been very successful; 70 percent to 80 percent of the reforms have been put in place. David McKean, who was hired as Hillary Clinton's senior advisor, is formerly [U.S. Secretary of State John] Kerry's chief of staff and is the new director of policy planning so that is encouraging . . . that means Kerry will move forward with it. I think the biggest issues are of course budgetary. In some ways the cuts in the military budget . . . help this because civilian power is cheaper than military power, and what you really want is

building up civilian power while making sure that the core parts of military power are . . . advanced. That's a good environment for the ideas that the QDDR put out there.

HS: In a January 2013 Project Syndicate column on Iran, you said, "If the U.S. gives negotiations one more serious try (a credible offer and a genuine willingness to engage), gets rebuffed, and then does nothing, it will effectively declare itself a paper tiger. At that point, the sanctions coalition will most likely disintegrate amid a much broader loss of confidence in U.S. leadership. The U.S. has thus painted itself into a corner." What happens if President Barack Obama makes a genuine attempt at negotiations and is rebuffed? How can we keep from becoming a paper tiger?

A-MS: Well, this is why I think there is a quite significant likelihood of a military strike if we can't reach a deal. It depends on what

the negotiations look like. If Obama is just shut down cold and he can't negotiate . . . we have to decide, we either prepare to live with a nuclear Iran or we decide to take action . . . Iran is edging steadily and steadily closer to nuclear capability. It's this creeping progress that is very hard to fight because at any one moment a military response looks disproportionate but if you put it against where Iran was at the beginning of the century and where it is now and where it continues to want to go, the president has to make a decision. I do believe that he does not want any other state going nuclear on his watch.

a stable Afghanistan the most likely outcome? If Afghanistan were to begin to slip into a civil war, and given the United States' own domestic political constraints surrounding any further military action there, what should we do? What can we do?

A-MS: Our best hope for a stable Afghanistan is actually to be able to convene a meaningful regional conference. [We need] agreement among neighboring states on a plan going forward. . . . A lot of what's happening in Afghanistan has its roots in other countries, and the other issue that is relevant here is that

I think in terms of the long-term future of Afghanistan, there's a very large part of that scenario that depends on the countries around Afghanistan as well as what happens inside.

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HS: You've criticized President Obama's handling of the Syria conflict thus far. Now that we're into his second term, do you foresee a change? What would you like to see moving forward?

A-MS: I would like to see marshaled support for a strike on [President Bashar] Assad's air force, the one that's approved by the Arab League. We have to get regional approval, even if we can't get UN approval. . . . We're rapidly moving past the point where even groups . . . that stand for a pluralist Syria makes any difference. The country is disintegrating before our eyes, and we're going to live with the consequences for decades. The only thing that might be able to change the current dynamic is a bold action . . . a strike on the Syrian air force on the tarmac. [We need to] really cripple his ability to continue killing from the air.

HS: Do you think the administration is likely to employ that strategy?

A-MS: I think the White House is reassessing its policy, and I hope all options are on the table.

HS: On Afghanistan, what can we do after our troop withdrawal in 2014 to make

Iran is an important player there as well. And so this is another important reason to talk to Iran again. Iran really is an important regional player . . . [with] other central Asian states. We've been focused on what's happening within Afghanistan . . . but I think in terms of the long-term future of Afghanistan, there's a very large part of that scenario that depends on the countries around Afghanistan as well as what happens inside.

HS: What if Afghanistan descends into civil war after we leave? What do we do?

A-MS: We are basically saying that that is up to the Afghans, and we will do everything we can to leave the situation in as good a situation as we can and to train and support and to support diplomatically, but we certainly won't be going back in, I think pretty much whatever happens.

HS: You cochaired a report in 2006 on U.S. national security in the twenty-first century, which laid out a vision for facing modern security challenges. One aspect of it was reviving and creating innovative alternatives for global institutions, including the recommendation of creating a "concert of democracies,"

a more or less informal group of democratic nations that could legitimize the use of force without United Nations (UN) approval. This can be seen in the context of dilemmas raised by the Iraq War: an alternate third “way out” of the binary choice between either “going it alone” or subjugating U.S. foreign policy to the approval of a UN Security Council where China and Russia (countries seen as insufficiently rights-regarding or popularly accountable) wield veto power. How has the situation changed between 2006 and 2013, and do we need to build new international institutions or groupings, or just strengthen and reform the ones that already exist?

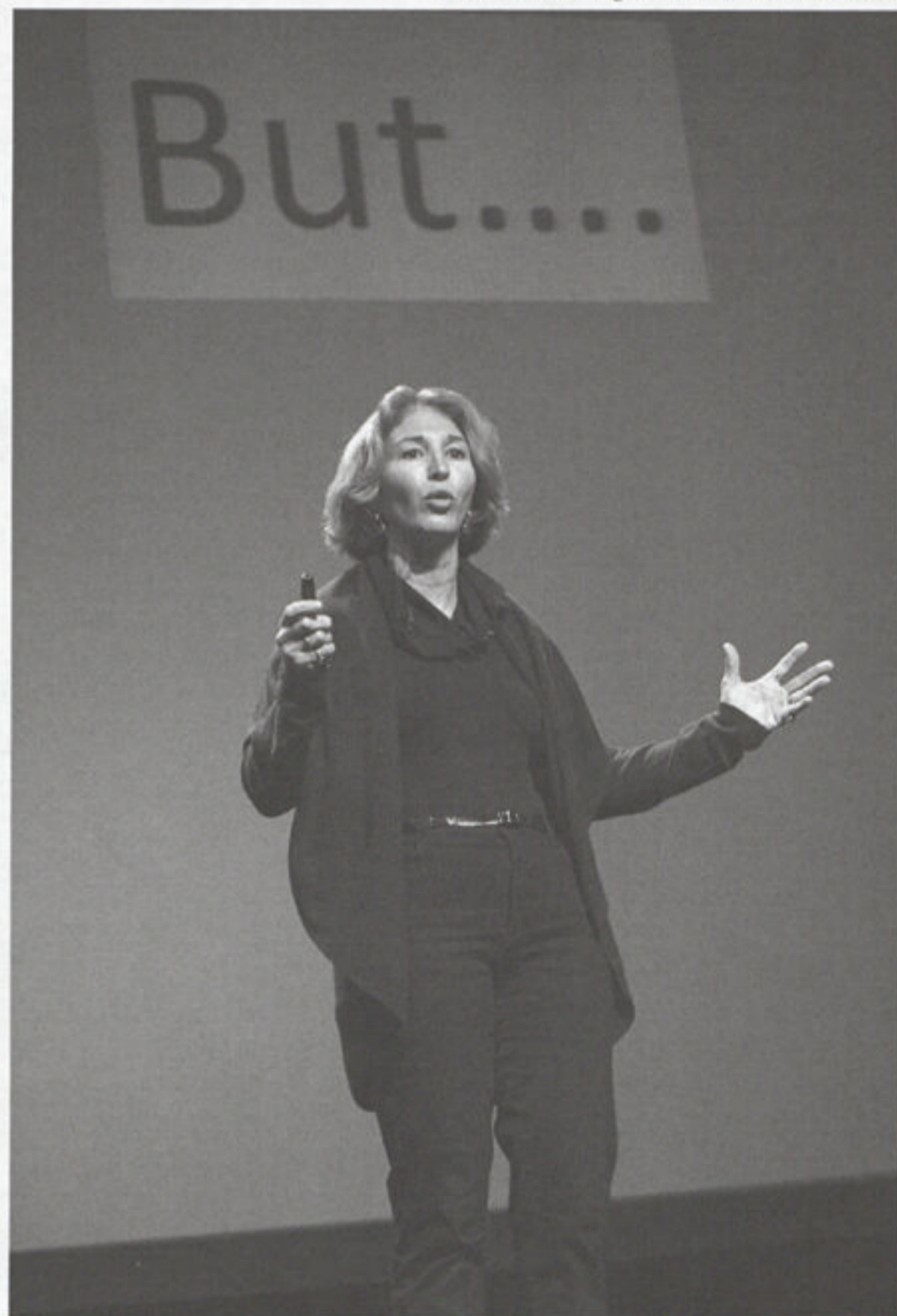
A-MS: I would not build a new set of institutions. The Obama administration has strengthened the community of democracies and more importantly has created the Open Government Partnership, engaging a wide range of countries without the democracy/non-democracy label. In the world we’re in, it makes more sense not to use the label. But I strongly support the Grand Strategy that John Ikenberry and Daniel Deudney have just put out . . . [to] emphasize reforming current national institutions to bring emerging powers on board. It happens that almost all [of the countries in that] are emerging democracies. We need to embrace twenty-first century democracies, not just twentieth century democracies.

HS: When you were at the State Department, you promoted the idea of international development as an important component for shaping U.S. foreign policy. How would you frame a short-term foreign policy or international security issue like Libya, or Syria, or Iran through the lens of development?

A-MS: This is exactly what we were trying to do with the State [Department] and the QDDR because in all of these, whether or not you have to use military force, and I’m not fan of using that for the sake of it but sometimes diplomacy needs [that support] . . . here clearly the problems are enormously rooted

in the living conditions for ordinary people, and one of the reasons the Iranian revolution was able to succeed in 1979 was they were perceived as caring far more about the lives of ordinary people than the Shah. In many ways the Arab revolutions . . . are grounded not in an abstract commitment to liberty and justice but a concrete desire for a better life. In those three examples [Libya, Syria, Iran] and in every other, U.S. foreign policy has to be as attentive to bottom-up conditions of ordinary people as it is to the traditional geopolitical balance power chess game. That’s where we need different tools and we need really to be emphasizing development. And frankly, we need to be marshaling all our assets, government as well as corporate and civic, to focus on how we solve these problems.

Photo: Kris Krüg/Flickr Creative Commons



HS: Your 2012 Atlantic article “Why Women Still Can’t Have It All” discussed how women can/can’t/should/shouldn’t make various work-family trade-offs. How can we actually change our system to support families instead of talking about the issue as just another thing women need to figure out for themselves?

A-MS: This is why I’m writing a book, to offer concrete strategies, solutions, and advice to make change so we move from conversation to action. But I think some immediate things we can do is to ask bosses to just experiment, not complete sweeping policy change, but “Can I work from home one day a week? Can we give that a try?” Incremental change. [There is] a lot more room to ask for what you need if you ask in an experimental way. Second, really educate yourself about what other companies are doing that are like yours so that you can say, “So and so has this policy, and it’s worked really well,” so there’s a peer pressure . . . because other firms are doing it. They’re going to be the firms much more effective about retaining talent. Fortunately, the demographics are pushing in the right direction; firms recruiting millennial talent need flexible policies.

HS: What piece of criticism, if any, has made you rethink your position in this piece?

A-MS: Salon’s Rebecca Traister’s criticism of the whole term “having it all” convinced me that it’s hard to get away from but I try not to talk about it in those terms now but instead much more in terms of breadwinners, caregivers, and equal opportunity. It’s less sexy but harder for people to caricature what you’re saying. And I’ve really been listening hard to men. I increasingly think that although this article needed to be written by a woman, and women are more systematically disadvantaged, this is a male issue as well as a female issue. Men who have written to say, “Wait a minute, look at the choices we face, it’s hard for us to be equal partners because we pay an equal or worse price if we try to get flex time or part time or make the accommo-

dations we need to be able to be a full parent and a full professional.” . . . So I’m looking as much at men as women.

HS: In your speech at the Harvard Kennedy School last year, you said the United States is becoming a closed society, because if equal means open then unequal means closed. But you said we have the free press that can hold us to those values we profess to share, and that’s where your speech ended. Do you think our press is actually doing that, and if so, is it having any effect?

A-MS: I think they are doing that, and it’s not enough, but thank goodness for our press. You think in the past year of the coverage of Occupy Wall Street and then Joseph E. Stiglitz’s book on inequality and the tremendous debates we are having around what kind of society we are. [Talking about] the 1 percent, the 99 percent, the press has made a very big difference. That’s a critical part of our democracy, and it prevents us from being closed in the way that we look at closed societies—Burma, North Korea—we’re not like that. But what I do think is unless we take this much more seriously from a government perspective, a society-wide perspective, and ask ourselves what are the consequences of this widening income gap, [this] social divide, [this] cultural divide, really two Americas, we risk closing ourselves off from some of the things that have really made us the country we are. ❖

Anne-Marie Slaughter is the Bert G. Kerstetter ’66 University Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. From 2009 to 2011 she served as Director of Policy Planning for the U.S. Department of State, the first woman to hold that position.

Hanna Siegel is a 2013 Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She currently serves as a strategy and communications consultant at the Partnership for a New American Economy. Between 2007 and 2011, she was a reporter and producer for ABC News in New York.



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