Are the U.S. and China Destined for War?

Graham Allison on Thucydides’s Trap

When a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power, alarm bells should sound: extreme danger ahead. As the ancient Greek historian Thucydides explained in his history of the Peloponnesian War, “It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable.”

Today, an irresistible rising China is on course to collide with an immovable America. Identifying clues from history to prevent violent conflict between Washington and Beijing has been the focus of a five-year research project led by Belfer Center Director Graham Allison, culminating in the May 30 publication of his latest book, Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?

Allison’s research—the pioneer endeavor of the Belfer Center’s budding Applied History Project—uncovered a deadly pattern. Over the past 500 years, a rising power threatened to displace a ruling power 16 times. In 12 of those cases, the outcome ended in war. The fact that war was averted in four cases demonstrates that the outcome is not foreordained. But avoiding war between the United States and China will require statecraft as subtle as that of the British in dealing with a rising America a century ago, or the “wise men” who crafted a Cold War strategy to meet the Soviet Union’s surge without bombs and bullets.
In The Wall Street Journal recently, a man named Bob Greene related how he reconnected with his first-grade teacher, Patti Ruooff. After stumbling upon a black-and-white photo of his teacher as a little girl, Mr. Greene, now an author, called Ms. Ruooff—twice widowed and 88 years old—out of the blue to thank her for instilling in him the love of reading. Their exchange gave me goosebumps:

I said that if I’ve ever written a graceful sentence, if I’ve ever appreciated a turn of phrase in a good book, if I’ve ever found comfort in a beautifully told story, it all began with her. I told her that hundreds of other boys and girls who once passed through her classroom likely have reason to be just as grateful.

And I told her I was sure that many other men and women, now grown, must have called to thank her over the years.

There was a slight pause, and then she said: “None.”

She said: “No one ever has.”

That story got me thinking about a professor who taught me Ancient Greek when I was a freshman at Davidson College. Much of that course consisted of learning a new alphabet, vocabulary, sentence structure, and grammar. But Professor Laban dangled a “prize” for those who studied hard and excelled: reading Thucydides.

I can still hear the exuberance and reverence in his enunciation: Thucydides! For Professor Laban, classical Greece represented the first great steeple of civilization. Thucydides, he taught us, was not only the father of history but also the pioneer of what we now call realpolitik, or realism, in international relations. Since I was a budding student of world politics, I became all the more determined to claim Professor Laban’s prize—which I ultimately did.

When I became Dean of Harvard’s Kennedy School, my dad joked that he had sent his son away to study at Harvard and he had still not left school to get a real job. By his calculation, I was entering the 28th grade. Today, as I finish 71st grade and publish a book that draws heavily on Thucydides—Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?—I have thought often about Professor Laban. Did I ever thank him directly for sharing his love of learning with me?

Giving proper thanks to those who taught and inspired me is just one of many pursuits I look forward to giving higher priority as I begin to think about rebalancing my mindshare after handing the Center’s reins to Ash Carter and Eric Rosenbach on July 1. Lest there be any doubt: I am not retiring. Indeed—freed from administrative duties—I look forward to being more productive in thinking, writing, teaching, and being a better mentor.

At the top of my immediate agenda will be pushing Destined for War as a vehicle for promoting its key ideas. Unless and until thinking Americans—and Chinese—understand that the current relationship poses a grand historic challenge of Thucydidean proportions, we will never summon the strategic imagination and courage to do what is required to escape a trap that has led many predecessors into war.

I have agreed with Ash and Eric that I will chair the Belfer Center’s International Council and serve as the primary point of contact with a number of the non-resident senior fellows. I am especially looking forward to having more time and energy to advance the Applied History Project, which I co-direct with Niall Ferguson; the China Working Group, which I co-chair with Larry Summers and Hoss Cartwright; and the Stanton nuclear security program of which I am the principal investigator.

In sum: I am handing the baton to Ash and Eric for the next lap of the race, confident that the best for the Belfer Center is yet to come.
Samantha Power Returns
Will Head New International Peace and Security Project

Samantha Power, United States Ambassador to the United Nations from 2013 until 2017, has been named to a joint faculty appointment at Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard Law School. At the Kennedy School, she will direct a new Belfer Center initiative—the International Peace and Security Project—and will be a senior member of the Center and member of the board. She will also be affiliated with the Kennedy School’s Carr Center for Human Rights Policy.

Power first came to the Belfer Center in 1998 as Project Director of the Human Rights Initiative. That initiative grew quickly and became the Carr Center, where she was named the founding Executive Director.

On her return to the Kennedy School, Power will serve as the Anna Lindh Professor of the Practice of Global Leadership and Public Policy. At Harvard Law School, where she earned her J.D. in 1999, she will be Professor of Practice.

Prior to becoming UN Ambassador, Power served for four years as President Obama’s Special Assistant for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights on the National Security Council. At the UN, she negotiated the toughest sanctions in a generation against North Korea, became the public face of U.S. opposition to Russian actions in Ukraine and Syria, lobbied to help secure the release of political prisoners around the world, and spearheaded UN reforms, including of peacekeeping efforts.

Before her academic career, Power served as a foreign correspondent, contributing to The New Yorker, New Republic, and New York Review of Books. Her books include the 2003 Pulitzer Prize winning A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide, which examined U.S. responses to genocide in the 20th century.

“We could not be prouder to welcome Samantha home,” said Belfer Center Director Graham Allison. “She has been a source of inspiration and insight, and her extensive service both in Washington and as Ambassador to the United Nations will inform and enliven the intellectual life at the Center.”

Former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, who will succeed Allison as Belfer Center Director in July, said, “Few have championed human rights and international law with the rigor and real-world accomplishments of Sam Power. She is a huge asset to the Belfer Center.”

“I am very excited to return to Harvard, as I believe it is essential that we do all we can to ensure that graduates have the skills they need to succeed in messy geopolitical and multilateral environments,” Power said. “Given the daunting challenges we confront—whether from terrorism, rising nationalism, climate change, or mass atrocities—it is essential that in academia draw lessons from experience, devise practical approaches, and prepare the next generation to improve their communities, their countries, and the world.”
“Graham Allison is quite simply a living legend. Graham has not only been a great director of the Belfer Center, but also the man without whom there would be, quite literally, no Kennedy School...This is and always will be the house that Graham built.”

—Ash Carter

“Leveraging science, technology, and policy to confront hard problems and better people’s lives has been the aim of my family’s philanthropy for decades. At Harvard Kennedy School and the Belfer Center, this aspiration becomes achievement. Year after year, under Graham Allison’s leadership, the Center mobilizes the very best minds to make the world a safer place for our children and grandchildren.”

—Robert Belfer

“Graham has influenced generations of students, catalyzed generations of faculty members (including me), and himself produced essential scholarship that has changed the world. There are few thinkers or doers in history who have so consistently demonstrated the relevance of ideas to the real world, while at the same time injecting constant reality checks into the classroom and the academy. There is only one Graham Allison.”

—Samantha Power

“Graham Allison has the credibility to recruit the best thinkers to Belfer and the creativity to help them inspire students and influence policy. He has the brains to master complexity and the communication skills to help us understand it. I view Graham as the Paul Revere to warn us of nuclear terrorism and tell us how to prevent it.”

—Sam Nunn

“My adviser and mentor Professor Allison’s faith in me has given me the courage to reach for goals beyond my imagination. He was generous with his time and advice, always pushed me to think bigger, prayed for me, warned me against entering civil war zones, and taught me that good people are fundamental to effective policy.”

—Jieun Baek

“Graham’s intellect, knowledge, energy, and enthusiasm are inspirational and, it appears, contagious. Under his leadership, the Belfer Center has set the standards of excellence for research, education, and influence in the field of science and international affairs.”

—Albert Carnesale

Diplomatic Discussions: Secretary of State John Kerry discusses critical world issues with Belfer Center Director Graham Allison during a conversation with faculty and students at Harvard in October 2015.
Graham Allison: Making the Belfer Center “The Best There Is”

Far from retiring, Graham Allison is set to redouble his research, teaching, and writing in July, when he hands the Center’s reins to Ash Carter and Eric Rosenbach. Allison’s impact as Director of the Center has been extraordinary—“impossible to overestimate” in the words of Harvard Kennedy School Dean Doug Elmendorf. Here, we raise our editorial glass in a toast to an exceptional leader.

Throughout his 22 years as Director, Allison has worked unrelentingly to carry out the Center’s mission: to advance policy-relevant knowledge about the most important international security issues and other critical issues where science, technology, environmental policy, and international affairs intersect, and to prepare future generations of leaders for these arenas.

With vision and determination, Allison has built an impactful Center featuring some of the world’s top thinkers and doers. From nuclear weapons and climate change to energy markets and the future of diplomacy, the Center programs and projects he built are united by a record of uncommon impact – and by a common purpose to build a more secure, peaceful world. Under Allison’s leadership, the Belfer Center has:

- Been named by the University of Pennsylvania as the world’s No. 1 university-affiliated think tank—four years in a row.
- Become Harvard’s preeminent center for foreign policy, national security, and science and technology.
- Recruited in the past few months a who’s who of science and security all-stars: Ehud Barak, Alan Bersin, John Carlin, Ash Carter, James Clapper, John Holdren, Laura Holgate, Douglas Lute, Lisa Monaco, Ernest Moniz, Samantha Power, Mike Rogers, Eric Rosenbach, Jake Sullivan, and Jon Wolfsthal.
- Helped drive the agenda for some of the world’s most consequential summits in recent years, including the climate pact between China and the United States, COP-21 in Paris, and the Global Nuclear Security Summits.
- Been praised by Democrats and Republicans alike for providing the best facts and the best analysis on the most important foreign policy debate in recent years: the Iran nuclear deal. One senator called the Belfer Center’s timely report “the gold standard.”
- Published International Security, a quarterly journal that ranks highest for “impact factor” among 87 journals around the world, including Foreign Affairs.
- Expanded programs and projects from three in 1995 to more than 20 today—providing policy-relevant research in areas ranging from nuclear and cyber security to energy and climate issues and challenges around Russia, China, and the Middle East.
- Enhanced program recruitment of top research fellows, from a dozen in 1995 to more than 60 today. Center alumni fill leadership positions at the highest levels of government, academia, and organizations worldwide.
- Convened thought-provoking and influential seminars with the brightest, most experienced global practitioners and thinkers.
- Created a new Allison Scholarship endowed by the Belfer family for exceptionally qualified HKS students focusing their studies on the most pressing issues of technology and global affairs.
- Attracted an unequalled concentration of faculty and former senior government and military officials who combine the best of scholarship and policymaking.

The heart of the Belfer Center’s success lies in its remarkable community of staff, students, fellows, and faculty, which includes: Matthew Bunn, Nicholas Burns, William Clark, Daré Kay Cohen, Niall Ferguson, Jeffrey Frankel, John Holdren, Calestous Juma, Juliette Kayyem, David Keith, Robert Lawrence, Henry Lee, Fredrik Logevall, Tarek Masoud, Venky Narayanamurti, Joseph Nye, Meghan O’Sullivan, John Park, Samantha Power, Gary Samore, Daniel Schrag, Robert Stavins, Lawrence Summers, and Stephen Walt.
Mowatt-Larssen Succeeds Ryan
Will Lead Intelligence/Defense and Saudi/Gulf Projects

Rolf Mowatt-Larssen, a former senior fellow with the Belfer Center and long-time intelligence officer, has been named Director of the Center’s Intelligence and Defense Projects and Project on Saudi and GCC Security. He succeeds Brigadier General (ret) Kevin Ryan, who joined the Center in 2005.

Mowatt-Larssen has been affiliated with the Center as a senior fellow since 2009, following his service as Director of the Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence at the U.S. Department of Energy and as head of the Central Intelligence Agency’s WMD and counter-terrorism efforts. Prior to his appointment to the top intelligence position in the Department of Energy, Mowatt-Larssen served for 23 years as a CIA intelligence officer in various domestic and international posts, including as Deputy Associate Director of Central Intelligence for Military Support and Chief of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Department and the Counterterrorism Center.

A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Mowatt-Larssen is the recipient of a number of awards including the CIA Director’s Award, Distinguished Career Intelligence Medal, Commendation Medal, and Secretary of Defense Civilian Distinguished Service Medal.

Kevin Ryan joined the Belfer Center in 2005 as a senior fellow and in 2009 founded the Center’s U.S.—Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism. He served as the Center’s Executive Director for Research from 2010 to 2013, at which time he became founding Director of the Center’s Intelligence and Defense Projects.

Ryan will continue as an associate at the Center working on intelligence and defense issues with a focus on Russian military and security issues. He will also remain, along with Mowatt-Larssen, part of The Elbe Group, which Ryan launched in 2010 to maintain open communications between high-level defense and intelligence officials in the U.S. and Russia.

“We will greatly miss interacting with Kevin on a daily basis,” said Belfer Center Director Graham Allison, “but we are fortunate to have Rolf taking his space as head of our intelligence and defense and Saudi/GCC initiatives and as manager of our Recanati-Kaplan Foundation Fellows Program. We have benefited for a number of years from Rolf’s insights on intelligence, nuclear security, and other issues, and look forward to having him here full-time in his new position.”

“I am looking forward to continuing the cutting-edge work of the Belfer Center,” Mowatt-Larssen said, “bringing intelligence and defense issues of policy relevance into focus for students, experts and researchers, in the U.S. and internationally.”
Allison’s book was not written with current events in mind. But if Hollywood were producing a blockbuster pitting China against the U.S. on the road to war, central casting could not dream of a better lead for Team America than President Trump.

“My goal is not to predict the future but to prevent it,” Allison says, warning that business as usual will lead to history as usual. “My hope is that the argument can impact the minds of thinking Americans and other internationals, alerting them to the extreme danger of these Thucydidean conditions, and rousing them to the level of strategic imagination and courage required to make this the fifth case of no war.”

Judging by advance praise, Destined for War is already making an impact. James Winnefeld, former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, calls it the “most important foreign policy book of our time.” Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum Klaus Schwab says it could “save the lives of millions of people.” Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power called it “a gripping book that decision-makers and citizens alike must read, digest, and act upon.” Members of Congress, policy officials, diplomats, and military generals, meanwhile, are increasingly citing Allison’s big idea of Thucydides’s Trap in their comments on U.S.-China relations.

While emphasizing that war between Washington and Beijing is not inevitable, Allison worries that politicians in both nations do not fully grasp the severity of the structural stress between them. To their credit, Allison says, Presidents Barack Obama and Xi Jinping at least raised the concept of Thucydides’s Trap at their state summit in 2015. Going forward, Xi, Trump, and their successors must face hard questions about the U.S.-China relationship, including: Is China serious about replacing the U.S. as the dominant power in Asia in the foreseeable future? Could Americans accept becoming No. 2? How will Trump’s vow to ‘Make America Great Again’ impact this epic rivalry? Could a trade conflict or accidental collision in the South China Sea cascade into war?

“My goal is not to predict the future but to prevent it.”

In Destined for War, Allison explains why Thucydides’s Trap is the best lens for answering these questions—and for understanding the most critical foreign policy issue of our time. Allison plans to talk about his book in cities around the world, beginning with stops in New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco, Charlotte, and Boston.

Copies can be pre-ordered at http://amzn.to/2krhOY6
Opportunities for U.S.-China-Korea Cooperation

On February 17, the Belfer Center co-vened the inaugural round of the “Trilateral Dialogue: Opportunities and Challenges for U.S.-China-Korea Cooperation” in Seoul, South Korea. Hosted by the Korea Foundation for Advanced Studies (KFAS), the international conference also included a delegation from China’s Peking University’s School of International Studies (SIS). The 18 international relations experts exchanged perspectives on U.S.-China relations in transition, efforts to denuclearize North Korea under the new United States administration, and the new economic and trade order in East Asia.

KFAS President In-kook Park gave welcoming remarks. KFAS Chairman Chey Tae-won, First Vice Minister Lim Sung-nam (Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Executive Director for Research Gary Samore (Belfer Center), and Dean Jia Qingguo (SIS) gave keynote remarks.

“At this critical juncture, platforms for exchanging ideas, such as the Trilateral Dialogue, are essential.”

—Lim Sung-nam

In his address, First Vice Minister Lim stated that all three countries are undergoing political changes domestically while facing external challenges such as North Korean nuclear provocations and reconsiderations about free trade arrangements. “At this critical juncture,” he remarked, “platforms for exchanging ideas, such as the Trilateral Dialogue, are essential for transforming challenges into opportunities.”

The Belfer Center-led U.S. delegation also included Victor Cha (Center for Strategic & International Studies), Evan Feigenbaum (Paulson Institute), Douglas Paal (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), and the Belfer Center’s John Park and William Tobey.

The partner organizations will convene the next round of the Trilateral Dialogue later in 2017.

Conference Focuses on U.S., Japan, and Rise of China

A group of top-level American and Japanese academics and officials gathered for a Belfer Center conference in March to discuss the U.S.-Japan alliance and the rise of China. Moderated by Center Executive Director for Research Gary Samore, the event included participating scholars from Harvard and other area universities, the U.S. Naval War College, Consul General Rokuichiro Michii, and other members of the Japanese Consulate in Boston.

Belfer Center Director Graham Allison discussed the rise of China and the danger of “Thucydides’s Trap,” a concept that describes the inevitable structural stress that occurs in international relations when a rising power challenges a ruling power.

Keynote speaker Seiichiro Takagi, Senior Research Advisor at The Japan Institute of International Affairs, provided the core of the discussion. He expressed confidence that Thucydides’s Trap can be avoided, but warned that Japan must help maintain the global rules-based order in the face of China’s rise.

Takagi argued that today’s negative China-Japan relations are primarily the result of increasingly assertive foreign policy behavior and protectionist attitudes by the Chinese government.

“A U.S.-China war can be avoided. But is avoiding war enough?...As far as I’m concerned the real question is not whether a power transition takes place, but what kind of international order will result,” Takagi said.

Panelists Joseph Nye, Taylor Fravel, and Toshi Yoshihara provided a lively discussion of how the rise of China can be managed with the help of the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Nye discussed the importance of managing fear, perception, and misperception in handling China’s rise. Fravel described the U.S.-Japan alliance as a strong deterrent to Chinese aggression, and suggested helping Japan build its own defenses, especially coast guard forces.

Yoshihara noted that geography makes Japan central to U.S. strategic interests, and suggested the U.S. do more to enable Japan’s self-defense capabilities.
Experts Launch Dialogue on U.S.-Pakistan Relations

In April, a Belfer Center delegation met with former Pakistani nuclear officials in Istanbul, marking the start of a track 1.5 dialogue. The talks focused on two important goals: strengthening strategic stability in South Asia and improving U.S.-Pakistan bilateral relations. The meeting came at a time of transition for both countries—the new administration in Washington, D.C., is still formulating its South Asia policies, while Pakistan’s National Command Authority (NCA), which oversees Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal, is undergoing changes within its own offices.

Participants discussed a number of issues, including the state of strategic stability in South Asia, pathways that could lead to the use of nuclear weapons, fissile material production in South Asia, nuclear security policies and practices of each country, and trends in the overall U.S.-Pakistan relationship. Participants identified areas of possible cooperation to strengthen the bilateral relationship, and steps that could contribute to regional peace, security, and stability.

The Belfer Center’s Gary Samore welcomed attendees to the first day of meetings, along with Lt. Gen. Khalid Ahmed Kidwai, former Director General of the NCAs Strategic Plans Division. The U.S. delegation also included Belfer Center Senior Fellows Gen., James Cartwright and William Tobey, the International Security Program’s Steven Miller, and the Project on Managing the Atom’s Matthew Bunn and Martin Malin. Mansoor Ahmed, a Belfer Center post-doctoral fellow, joined the meetings as part of the Pakistani party.

The Pakistani group included: Lt. Gen. Asif Yasin Malik, former Secretary of Defense; Zamir Akram, Ambassador and former Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva; and Syed Muhammad Ali, a Senior Research Fellow at the Center for International Strategic Studies.

The two-day workshop served as the first of a series of meetings aimed at generating publications on strategic issues and policy proposals for both the U.S. and Pakistan. The delegations plan to continue their discussions.

Developing S&T Research in the Gulf States

A Belfer Center science and technology team traveled to Kuwait in March to take part in a collaborative workshop with the Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Science (KFAS) on “Science and Technology in the GCC: Building Research Capacity and Vital Linkages.” The Center team included Venkatesh Narayanamurti (Benjamin Peirce Research Professor of Technology and Public Policy), Laura Diaz Anadon (Research Associate in the Environment and Natural Resources Program at the Belfer Center and University Lecturer at the Department of Politics and International Studies, Cambridge University), Afreen Siddiqi (Visiting Scholar at the Belfer Center), and Rebecca Stern, former Research Fellow in the Center’s Energy Technology Innovation and Policy research group and graduate student at Harvard’s School for Engineering).

The key objectives for the workshop were to explore current challenges in conducting high-quality research in Kuwait and to discuss strategies for creating university-industry linkages. Among the participants from the Middle East were Amani Albedah (Director, Directorate of International Relations and Knowledge Management—KFAS), Khaled Mahdi (General Secretary, Supreme Council for Planning and Development), Salem Al-Hajraf (Executive Director, EBRC, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research), and Kuwait University Professors Taher Al Sahaf and Haitham Lababidi.

The Harvard team made a series of presentations summarizing key findings of their research studies funded by two successive grants from the Kuwait Program at Harvard Kennedy School. The team examined the trajectory of research in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, emerging trends in national research capacity, international collaborations, and the nature and effectiveness of industry linkages with national universities. They also discussed key findings they have published and highlighted the importance of building research capacity in key areas relevant for national development and public welfare such as energy and environment. A series of presentations were also made by faculty and administrators from institutions in Kuwait. The workshop concluded with a panel discussion on connecting local education and research efforts to national development goals.

For more, see belfercenter.org/ScientificWealth
Russia’s Role: Former National Intelligence Director James Clapper (left) and former U.S. Representative Mike Rogers, both Belfer Center Senior Fellows, talk with the Center’s Natasha Yefimova-Trilling after their JFK Jr. Forum, “Russiagate: Everything You Wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask,” in May.

Puaskan Perception: Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhry (center), Pakistan’s Ambassador to the United States, and Adil Najam, Dean of the Pardee School at Boston University, discuss Pakistan’s increasing role in multilateral relations in an event moderated by the Future of Diplomacy Project’s Cathryn Clüver.

World Vision: Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (center) makes a point during a JFK Jr. Forum with Belfer Center Director Graham Allison (left) and Harvard Distinguished Service Professor Joseph Nye. Ban Ki-moon, who discussed his tenure as Secretary General, is the Angelopoulos Public Leaders Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School.

WMD Reductions: Ambassador Laura Holgate, former United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office–Vienna and a Belfer Center Senior Fellow, speaks about reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction during a Belfer Center Director’s Lunch.

Congressional Insight: Kelly Ayotte, U.S. Senator representing New Hampshire from 2011-2017 and Belfer Center Visiting Fellow, speaks on issues of national security, the budget, Neil Gorsuch, and the Senate, during a Belfer Center Board Lunch also attended by former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Honoring JFK: Former U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy (center right) shares a light moment with Belfer Center representatives (from left) Nicholas Burns, Graham Allison, Meghan O’Sullivan, and Joseph Nye during a JFK 100 symposium celebrating the
FK Jr. Forum with Belfer Center Director Graham Allison (left) and Harvard Distinguished Fellow, is the Angelopoulos Public Leaders Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School.

Interlocking Issues: Congressman Seth Moulton (right), U.S. Representative for the Sixth District of Massachusetts, joins Nicholas Burns, Goodman Family Professor of the Practice of Diplomacy and International Politics, to speak about congressional efforts to craft an effective national security policy.

Hidden Revolution: Jieun Baek, doctoral candidate at the University of Oxford and a former Belfer Center fellow, examines how the information underground is transforming North Korea, the topic of her recent book North Korea’s Hidden Revolution, during a Belfer Center Director’s lunch.

First Days: Stephen M. Walt and Meghan O’Sullivan discuss foreign policy and the direction it is being taken by the Trump administration during a Harvard Kennedy School Dean’s Discussion. The event was one of three Kennedy School events focusing on the first 100 days of the Trump administration.

light moment with Belfer Center representatives (from left) Nicholas Burns, Graham Allison 100th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy’s birth.

Top Spy: Tamir Pardo, former Director of Mossad, Israel’s intelligence agency, greets students prior to delivering the 2017 Corliss Lamont Lecture, ‘The New Iran Empire.’ Belfer Center Director Graham Allison hosted the event at the Harvard Kennedy School.
Secretary Clinton Discusses Challenges in Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe During Harvard Visit

On March 3, former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Harvard University at the invitation of Professors Nicholas Burns (HKS), Robert Mnookin (HLS), and James Sebenius (HBS) in one of her first public engagements since last autumn.

While on campus, she met with Harvard undergraduates during a morning event organized by Harvard’s Institute of Politics. The remainder of her visit was dedicated to interviews and a luncheon as part of Harvard’s American Secretaries of State Project. Project faculty chairs Burns, Mnookin, and Sebenius interviewed Secretary Clinton at Loeb House where they discussed the challenges the United States faces in Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe.

The American Secretaries of State Project is a joint initiative of the Future of Diplomacy Project at Harvard Kennedy School, the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, and Harvard Business School. Professors Burns, Mnookin and Sebenius previously interviewed former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, James Baker, Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice about the most consequential negotiations they conducted while serving in the nation’s highest foreign policy office. They plan to interview Secretary John Kerry in the autumn of 2017 at Harvard.

Currently, the professors are completing a book, with Sebenius as lead author, entitled Kissinger the Negotiator: Lessons from Dealmaking at the Highest Level (forthcoming, HarperCollins). In addition, they plan to publish a comprehensive book about the lessons learned from their interviews with the former Secretaries. They also will create teaching case studies for Harvard and will produce a series of documentary films focused on their interviews and research.

For more information about the American Secretaries of State Project, please visit belfercenter.org/american-secretaries-state
**Spotlight: Calestous Juma**

**A Lifelong Champion for “Inclusive Innovation”**

by Josh Burek

When he was 12 years old, **Calestous Juma** got an unusual notice from his priest: official dispensation to miss mass. The reason? Kenyan locals near Lake Victoria had come to depend on Juma to fix household items, including radios—and that was his only time to make repairs. The priest agreed he was “doing God’s work.” Neighbors would drop items on the way to church and pick them up after. “It was a lot of pressure,” Juma recalls. His savvy with electronics made him a minor celebrity. More important, his first experience with DIY repairs and entrepreneurship taught him the most critical skill of all: learning how to learn.

“When people talk about technology, they tend to...ignore the social and human aspects.”

Today, Juma is still learning and fixing things—just on a much broader scale. As director of the Belfer Center’s Science, Technology, and Globalization Project, Juma works to better leverage scientific and technological knowledge for poor and vulnerable communities around the world. From STEM education and agricultural innovation in Africa to 3D printing and mobile cook stoves, he embodies the Center’s commitment to advancing science and technology to build a more secure, peaceful world. In June, Juma will accept the prestigious Breakthrough Paradigm Award for his scholarship and thought leadership in biotechnology and innovation.

At a time of growing anxiety over artificial intelligence, robot workers, and self-driving cars, Juma’s 2016 book, *Innovation and Its Enemies*, reminds us that fights over technology are hardly new. Drawing on case studies from over 600 years of technology history, including coffee, the print-press, margarine, refrigeration, and recorded music, Juma chronicles a recurring pattern of public skepticism and social adjustment.

“When people talk about technology, they tend to see an object,” Juma says. “They ignore the social and human aspects that go into shaping that technology.” He learned that the hard way when he helped engineer a cook stove for developing communities. To improve efficiency, Juma concluded that the prototype’s metallic cylinder should be replaced with a clay lining. But then metal makers complained about losing jobs.

Meanwhile, he had built the stove to minimize smoke. But users balked at early models. The reason? Smoke kept mosquitoes away. He redesigned the stove accordingly, using both clay and metal. “We miss this human element all the time,” Juma says, stressing the need for “inclusive innovation.”

The 19th century Harvard naturalist Louis Agassiz wrote that every great scientific truth goes through three stages. “First, people say it conflicts with the Bible. Next, they say it has been discovered before. Lastly, they say they always believed it.” In Juma’s corollary, first people say new technology excludes the poor; then governments want to control it; finally, we can’t imagine life without it. He recalls that when mobile phones emerged, development experts said these toys for the rich would have no impact on society. Then prices started to drop—and government started to worry. A Nigerian intelligence agent told Juma his country did not want to see mobile phones adopted widely because government would lose surveillance access. Today, cell phones are indispensable. “When technology becomes infrastructure, then good things happen,” Juma says.

But bad things happen, he warns, when policy is crafted without scientific thinking. “A large part of the debate over the environment,” he says, “is because the majority of people have not had scientific training; they think all growth is linear. But we don’t consider exponential growth.” Many of the world’s toughest challenges—from climate change and famine to deadly pathogens—require the ability to deal with exponential threat projections. “We can’t solve these without science.”

Today, this former soccer captain is not slowing down. From viral social media posts to his upcoming autobiography, his writing remains prolific and infused with the humor of a man whose laugh can be heard across the Center’s hallways. A recent tweet—a quote from Plato—reads: “One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.”
Nye Lauded for Cybersecurity Leadership

Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor and former Harvard Kennedy School Dean Joseph S. Nye was honored by the Center’s Cyber Security Project in April for his leadership and contributions to cybersecurity through the Belfer Center’s cybersecurity initiatives. Nye has announced his retirement at the end of the semester.

Michael Sulmeyer, director of the Center’s Cyber Security Project and host of the event, praised Nye for his leadership in identifying and exploring solutions to current and future cybersecurity challenges and for increasing awareness of cyber issues through his teaching and Belfer Center activities.

“On this occasion,” Sulmeyer said, “we honor Joe’s dedication to stitching ‘cyber’ into the fabric of the Belfer Center and paving the way for the project we have today. Despite his upcoming retirement, we look forward to roping him into the study of cybersecurity at the Belfer Center and the Kennedy School for many years to come.”

Nye began working on cyber issues with others at the Center several years ago when serious study of cybersecurity was in its infancy. He said he was reluctant at first to launch into a field that he knew little about, but he became convinced that he might be able to help raise awareness of the growing importance of cyber in national and international security.

In addition to Sulmeyer, several other members of the Center community who work on cyber issues—including Ryan Ellis, David Sanger, and John Holdren—toasted Nye for his continuing contributions to the field.

The event also honored Nye’s long-time assistant, Jeanne Marasca, who plans to retire this summer.

Ambassador Douglas E. Lute Named Senior Fellow

Former NATO Ambassador Douglas E. Lute joined the Belfer Center in April as a Senior Fellow with the Center’s Future of Diplomacy Project.

At the Kennedy School, Lute will initiate a research project focused on NATO and transatlantic relations that will address the multiplicity of challenges facing the Alliance as it approaches its 70th anniversary, said Nicholas Burns, Faculty Director of the Future of Diplomacy Project. Lute will also share his expertise in security and diplomacy by conducting seminars and study groups with students and fellows.

“I am proud to welcome Ambassador Doug Lute to the Kennedy School’s Future of Diplomacy Project,” Burns said. “As a former U.S. Ambassador to NATO myself, I look forward to working with him on the project to strengthen our vital NATO alliance and transatlantic ties.”

Appointed by President Barack Obama, Lute served as the United States Permanent Representative to NATO from 2013-2017. During this period, he was instrumental in designing and implementing the Alliance’s responses to the most severe security challenges in Europe since the end of the Cold War. He received the State Department’s Distinguished Honor Award for his work.

A career Army officer, Lute retired from active duty in 2010 as a Lieutenant General after 35 years of service. In 2007, President George W. Bush named him Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor to coordinate the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Retained by President Obama to focus on South Asia, he served six years in the White House.

“Doug has served the nation with distinction under two administrations and before that with 35 years of military service,” said Belfer Center Director Graham Allison. “It’s an honor to have such a distinguished public servant join the Center and share his experience and insights with the Harvard community.”

“I look forward to working with [Lute] on the project to strengthen our vital NATO alliance.”

—Nicholas Burns
International Council Debates Critical Global Issues

A lively discussion of “Russiagate” at the JFK Jr. Forum on Tuesday, May 2, launched the 2017 annual meeting of the Belfer Center International Council. The Forum event, Russiagate: Everything You Wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask, was the focus of a discussion between Center Senior Fellows James Clapper, former National Intelligence Director, and Mike Rogers, former U.S. Representative, with Center Director Graham Allison moderating. Clapper and Rogers weighed in on Russia’s interference in the 2016 campaign as well as best practices for congressional oversight.

At a reception following the Forum, International Council President Albert Carnesale raised a toast to Allison for his many contributions during 22 years as Center director.

On the following day, Allison officially welcomed the International Council members. He shared recent highlights such as the Center’s No. 1 ranking among university think tanks and the additions of former senior government officials including Samantha Power, Ernest Moniz, Laura Holgate, James Clapper, John Holdren, Eric Rosenbach, and Ash Carter.

Allison’s welcome was followed by a number of presentations by Center experts and discussions with the Council on critical issues facing the U.S. and world. The discussions covered issues ranging from national security and economic growth under the new administration to challenges with Russia and China and the Center’s expanded focus on homeland security.
Nadia Marzouki
deconstructing Islamophobia by emphasizing individuality

by Bret Hauff

Nadia Marzouki grew up in Tunisia surrounded by politics. Her father, an oppositional politician who eventually succeeded former authoritarian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, held political meetings in their living room. Police snooped in windows and tapped their phones.

She left the north African country for France before she finished high school; police imprisoned her father for his political activity. That was 1995.

"All this has remained in the background of my own trajectory," the Middle East Initiative fellow said.

Since then, Marzouki has studied Islam and how those who practice it are perceived in the United States and France, where she began her research.

The French-Tunisian political scientist said Islam is often seen as a problem in western society: a hegemonic identity that outsiders project as the sole determinant for the whole of another's behavior (addressed in her latest book, Islam: An American Religion.)

"For people to identify as Muslim is something that has a political dimension," said Marzouki, who practices Islam. "As soon as you identify as such, it creates a lot of emotions, questions; it triggers lots of insecurity around people you speak to."

The trouble is that many people don’t recognize an individual’s autonomy within the overarching structure of Islam, Marzouki said. Not all Muslims have an opinion on the hijab, terrorism, or the Palestinian conflict—but these political issues are often attributed to the Islamic identity.

"You're immediately made accountable for a series of political processes that have nothing to do with your daily life," Marzouki said.

It’s this distorted perception of the Muslim identity that Marzouki is working to dissolve. Her research focuses on society’s perceptions of Muslims in an effort to deconstruct ignorance about Islam through emphasizing individuals’ autonomy to accept—or reject—societal structures.

"With the context of populism everywhere, and authoritarianism in Turkey and Russia, nuance and complexity is not very popular," Marzouki said. "As academics, it’s important for us to continue fighting against over-simplifications of groups and communities and always try to tell multiple stories, with data and nuances and details."

Ben Buchanan: From Strategy Games to Middle East Analysis to Cyber Security

by Josh Coe

When Ben Buchanan received his first computer for Christmas 17 years ago, much of the appeal was the computer games—especially strategy games.

"My first exposure to strategy was through these rich and deep games," says Buchanan, "and I started thinking about strategy and design when I started making them." Such was his fascination and creativity that the designers of his favorite, Command & Conquer, flew him out to California to advise them on how to improve gameplay.

Now 27, Buchanan is a postdoctoral fellow with the Belfer Center’s Cyber Security Project as well as an author. The Cybersecurity Dilemma: Hacking, Trust and Fear Between Nations, published in February, is based on his doctoral thesis for King's College, London, where he received a Ph.D. in War Studies as a Marshall Scholar. "The goal in the Ph.D. was to bring together cyber security and international security in a way that both camps would learn something," says Buchanan.

Cyber security, however, was not always a component of his research. After studying government and Arabic at Georgetown University, Buchanan saw for himself a career in Middle Eastern counterterrorism, but he would soon come up against an obstacle: his knowledge of computers.

"I kept getting hired for positions doing Middle East stuff," recalls Buchanan, "and then they would find out I had technical skills." As an intern for the New York Police Department’s counterterrorism unit, for instance, they had hired him for Middle East analysis. Then, on day one, the department discovered he was adept at computer technology and had him transferred to the department’s Lower Manhattan Security Initiative. There, he worked on the city’s Domain Awareness System, a project combining technology and policing.

"In a strange way, a lot of the technical skills that I use now are skills I learned before I went to university," says Buchanan. "It just so happened that computer things really came to the fore in international relations and international security." While Buchanan cautions that playing video games will not lead to postdoctoral fellowships, they can be a starting point for interest in technology and broad strategy.
For two hours on a March afternoon, Harvard Kennedy School’s Bell Hall buzzed as Kennedy School students huddled for 15-minute one-on-one sessions with Belfer Center fellows and project directors to get career advice and to ask questions about the others’ career trajectories, research, and methods.

Salleh organized the event to give students an opportunity to interact individually with experts in the field.

About a dozen students took part in this first-come, first-served “speed-networking” event. They moved around the room, talking with Belfer Center research fellows Scott Anderson, Christopher Anzalone, Matthew Buehler, Morgan Kaplan, and Constantine Lainas, and with Cyber Security Project Director Michael Sulmeyer, Intelligence and Defense Projects Director Kevin Ryan, and Faculty Affiliate and Korean Working Group Director John Park.

The networking event was the idea of Izran Salleh, Kennedy School student (MPP) and chair of the Kennedy School’s International and Global Affairs PIC. Salleh organized the event to give students an opportunity to interact individually with experts in the field to help them think through their career goals and get tips on the best ways to reach their goals. A similar event that he attended, Salleh said, changed the course of his own studies and career plans.

The students who took part in the speed-meetings represented different professional and personal backgrounds, including student organization leaders, political activists, UN and international NGO workers, policy analysts, and academic researchers.

Anzalone, a research fellow with the Center’s International Security Program who studies the structure and support networks of violent groups such as Islamic State and Al-Shabab, said questions he got from students centered around a few main areas: (1) how to locate and collate primary source materials and how to use these together with other forms of data collection, such as field work and local news sources; (2) how to evaluate available news media sources and become aware of slants or biases they may have; and (3) regarding his research, how the increasing focus on the most extreme and violent Islamist organizations, like Islamic State, has impacted the wider coverage and academic study of political Islam.

“I encouraged the students I spoke with to...consume as many primary sources as they could so as not to only read about, say, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood or the Afghanistan Taliban, but to also see how these movements/organizations portray themselves.”

“I encouraged the students I spoke with to develop a list or database of reliable and in-depth news reporting and secondary sources from which to follow those areas of the world that they are most interested in or focused on in terms of their professional work,” Anzalone said, “as well as to consume as many primary sources as they could so as not to only read about, say, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood or the Afghanistan Taliban, but to also see how these movements/organizations portray themselves.”

“I encouraged the students I spoke with to...
In *Fragile Rise*, Xu Qiyu offers a Chinese perspective on the course of German grand strategy in the decades before World War I. Xu shows how Germany’s diplomatic blunders turned its growing power into a liability instead of an asset. Bismarck’s successors provoked tension and conflict with the other European great powers. Germany’s attempts to build a powerful navy alienated Britain. Fearing an assertive Germany, France and Russia formed an alliance, leaving the declining Austro-Hungarian Empire as Germany’s only major ally.

Xu’s account demonstrates that better strategy and statesmanship could have made a difference—for Germany and Europe. His analysis offers important lessons for the leaders of China and other countries.

“Full of critical insights for a how a newly rising power in today’s world can appropriately manage Great Power relations, consolidate domestic society, and coordinate foreign policy.”

— Mei Zhaorong, former Chinese ambassador to Germany and former President of the Chinese People’s Institute of Foreign Affairs

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The Arab states of the Gulf, currently heavily reliant on oil and gas exports, have stated their intention to promote economic diversification and have embarked on reforming existing institutions for higher education, scientific research, and technology innovation. The region has witnessed huge population growth in recent decades, and in some cases (e.g., Saudi Arabia) almost half the population is under the age of twenty-five and in need of access to quality education and meaningful employment opportunities. This book provides an in-depth discussion of what is needed to accelerate the development of science, technology, and innovation in the Gulf. Among other issues, the authors discuss the need for regional collaboration and tackle systemic challenges such as immigration policies, career incentives for GCC citizens, and increased inclusion of women in the workforce.

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International Security Program

By Nadia Marzouki, Research Fellow, Middle East Initiative

Columbia University Press (April 2017)

*Islam: An American Religion*

Marzouki provides a unique approach to contemporary American political discourse surrounding Islam and documents vital results likely to remain relevant to readers in the United States and Europe for quite some time.”

— Denise A. Spellberg, University of Texas at Austin

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Many of the world’s states—from Algeria to Ireland—are the result of robust national movements that achieved independence. Many other national movements have failed in their attempts to achieve statehood, including the Basques, the Kurds, and the Palestinians. In *Rebel Power*, Peter Krause offers a powerful new theory to explain this variation focusing on the internal balance of power among nationalist groups, who cooperate with each other to establish a new state while simultaneously competing to lead it.

“Rebel Power makes a crucial contribution to our understanding of when and why national liberation movements succeed and use violence. Peter Krause offers a theoretically innovative and empirically rich interpretation of the ecology of nationalist civil wars.”

— Tanisha M. Fazal, University of Notre Dame
Nunn Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

Former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, a member of the Belfer Center’s International Council, received Emory Law School’s Centennial Lifetime Achievement Award at the School’s Centennial celebration in April. An alumnus of the School, Nunn was honored for his many legislative accomplishments including the Department of Defense Reorganization Act and the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, which provided assistance to Russia and the former Soviet republics to secure and destroy their excess nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

Holgate Awarded Kazakh Independence Medal

Laura Holgate, former Ambassador and U.S. Representative to UN-Vienna and IAEA, a senior fellow with the Belfer Center, was awarded the Kazakhstan 25th Anniversary of Independence Medal during a ceremony in April at the Kazakh Embassy in Washington, D.C. Kazakhstan Ambassador to the U.S. Erzhan Kazykhanov presented the award to Holgate for her many years of work with Kazakh officials to secure nuclear weapons and materials left in the country following the breakup of the former Soviet Union.

Moniz Receives Richard E. Neustadt Award

Former Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, now a senior fellow with the Belfer Center, was honored in April with the Richard E. Neustadt Award. The award, presented to Moniz by Harvard Kennedy School Dean Douglas Elmendorf, is bestowed annually to honor individuals who have created exceptional solutions to significant problems in public policy. Moniz was praised for advancing energy technology innovation, nuclear security and strategic stability, and environmental stewardship. He also played a major role in developing the Iran nuclear agreement.

Sanger Wins Pulitzer for Reporting on Russia

David Sanger, New York Times National Security Correspondent and the Belfer Center’s Senior Fellow for National Security and the Press, won a Pulitzer Prize for international reporting as part of a Times’ team that wrote “Russia’s Dark Arts,” an investigative series that chronicled the covert and sometimes deadly actions taken by President Vladimir Putin’s government to grow Russian influence abroad. The series, which began last spring, included Sanger’s co-authored article, “The Perfect Weapon: How Russian Cyberpower Invaded the United States.”

Dobriansky Receives Martha Washington Medal

Former Ambassador and Under Secretary of State Paula Dobriansky, a senior fellow with the Center’s Future of Diplomacy Project, received the Martha Washington Medal from the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. The medal, which was presented during a ceremony in April, is bestowed on women in recognition of their outstanding public service. Dobriansky was also guest speaker for the event.

International Security

International Security is America’s leading journal of security affairs. The International Security journal is edited at Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center and published quarterly by the MIT Press. Questions may be directed to IS@harvard.edu.

The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence

Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press

Nuclear deterrence has long depended on nuclear arsenals’ ability to survive an adversary’s first strike. Technological advances, however, are undermining deterrence by eroding arsenals’ survivability. Thus, the United States should enhance its counterforce capabilities and avoid reducing its nuclear forces.

Bullets for Ballots: Electoral Participation Provisions and Enduring Peace after Civil Conflict

Aila M. Matanock

Which peace agreements are most likely to prevent civil conflicts from recurring? Agreements mandating that both rebels and government participate in elections have a greater chance of succeeding, because such elections attract monitoring by international organizations that can enforce agreements.

Would China Go Nuclear? Assessing the Risk of Chinese Nuclear Escalation in a Conventional War with the United States

Caitlin Talmadge

Would China escalate to nuclear use in a conventional war with the United States? It might if it believed that U.S. conventional attacks threatened the survivability of Chinese nuclear forces or that a U.S. counterforce attack was imminent. The United States will face difficult trade-offs in managing escalation risks.

The Illusion of International Prestige

Jonathan Mercer

The conventional wisdom that prestige enhances states’ authority is wrong. Policymakers rely on their feelings about their state to evaluate its prestige rather than analyzing other states’ views, and they discount other states’ prestige. States should thus avoid costly pursuits of prestige.

Ethnic Cleansing and Its Alternatives in Wartime: A Comparison of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian Empires

H. Zeynep Bulutgil

When do states carry out mass violence against minority ethnic groups colluding with adversaries during wartime? Comparing the policies of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian Empires during World War I shows that states with influential political organizations reflecting non-ethnic identities are less likely to pursue mass killings.
Elizabeth S. Rogers

Elizabeth (Beth) Rogers, a Belfer Center alumna, friend, and colleague of many at the Center, passed away in February after a lengthy illness. A number of Center colleagues attended a celebration of her life in early April.

Rogers first joined the Belfer Center in 1997 as an International Security Program (ISP) research fellow. She was an ISP associate from 1997-2000 and again from 2005-2010.

She taught political science and international relations at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland and later at Harvard Extension School and remained active in the international relations field.

Rogers was married to another former Center alumnus, Stephen Van Evera, a professor at MIT.

“Beth Rogers was a wonderful colleague—warm, generous, enthusiastic, and optimistic,” said Steven Miller, Director of the International Security Program. “It was a pleasure to have her in our community.”

Thomas C. Schelling

Harvard Kennedy School faculty and staff joined with other colleagues, friends, and family of Thomas C. Schelling on May 1 to celebrate the life of a man who was a major figure at the Kennedy School and throughout the world. Schelling died December 2016 at the age of 95.

Schelling was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2005 for his work in game theory analysis, a then new way of looking at issues ranging from nuclear strategy to climate change and addictive behavior. His work on nuclear deterrence helped shape Cold War strategies. At the height of his influence on public policy in the 1960s, he advised President Kennedy during the Berlin crisis and came up with the idea of a hotline between Washington and Moscow.

Among his many achievements, Schelling also was a major figure in shaping the Kennedy School. In 1969, he helped design a new curriculum not for public administrators, but for a new generation of leaders literate in public policy.

“Tom was the most lucid, most incisive, most insightful mind among the stellar band of founding fathers of Harvard’s Kennedy School,” said Belfer Center Director and former Kennedy School Dean Graham Allison.