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Applied History Project Newsletter

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The June 2025 issue of the Applied History Network Newsletter spotlights member-contributed news items for more than 500 leaders in the Applied History movement across 50 institutions.

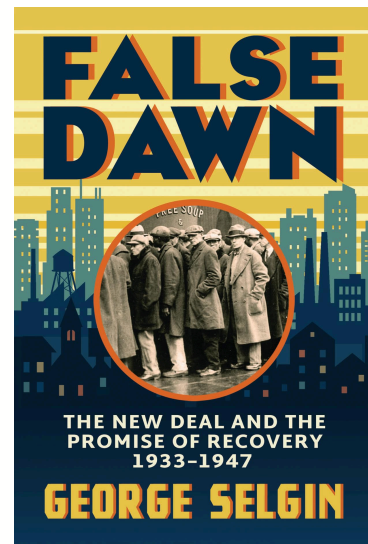
This newsletter is prepared by the Applied History Project at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center and edited by Jason Walter and Ivana Hoàng Giang. **If you would like to submit an item for next month's issue, please email it to igiang@hks.harvard.edu with the subject "July Applied History Update" before Wednesday, August 6.**

Latest History Books Illuminating Today's Headline Challenges and Choices*

Selgin Critiques the New Deal and Roosevelt

False Dawn: The New Deal and the Promise of Recovery, 1933-1947 by **George Selgin** (Senior Fellow and Director Emeritus, Center for Monetary and Financial Alternatives, Cato Institute) "asks if the New Deal's varied experiments produced the promised recovery." He concludes that, "with few exceptions," they did not. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, **Judge Glock** (Director of Research, Manhattan Institute) [states](#), "Using decades of economic research, *False Dawn* should long remain the definitive word on the New Deal's effectiveness." He cites the 1939 unemployment rate of 17 percent and an economy in the same year that was still "in worse shape than in any other recession of that century or the following one" as the consequences of FDR's ragged approach to the economic crisis. Inconsistent in his

monetary policy, FDR first banned the outflow of gold and reopened banks, increasing the money supply and producing a short-term economic boom. Then, concerned about inflation, the Fed began constricting the money supply and decided against using deficit spending to stimulate the economy. Although the government was bigger and the New Deal increased expenditures, deficits as a percentage of the economy did not differ materially from those at the end of the Hoover administration. Instead, FDR and his advisors restricted industrial production, thus causing prices to rise, and attempted the same with agricultural output to raise farm prices. Selgin does not discuss the New Deal's long-term reforms, such as social security and wage-and-hour regulations, whose "effects were not felt until later. Paradoxically, the failure to spur recovery led to more of these reforms and thus made the New Deal's influence on American life more lasting and substantial." Roosevelt's "bizarre experiments" seemingly had a purpose unrelated to economics, Glock writes. "As he told one of his advisors, 'to maintain a firm hold on the public I have to do something startling every once in a while. I mustn't let them take me for granted.'" It might have been a method of governing, but, Glock concludes, "It was no way to run an economy." Any similarities between FDR's strategy and what we are observing today are not likely to be coincidental.



Torigian Illuminates Father, Son, and China

The Party's Interests Come First: The Life of Xi Zhongxun, Father of Xi Jinping by **Joseph Torigian** (Associate Professor, School of International Service, American University) "is a scrupulously researched and keenly perceptive account of an important but, in the West, little-known historical figure." So [writes Robert B. Zoellick](#) (Senior Fellow, Harvard's Belfer Center; Former U.S. Trade Representative, Deputy Secretary of State, and President of the World Bank) in the *Wall Street Journal*. The arc of the elder Xi's life traversed the tumultuous decades from "the first phase of the Chinese Civil War, through World War II and the triumph of Mao and the Communists, to the post-Mao reforms



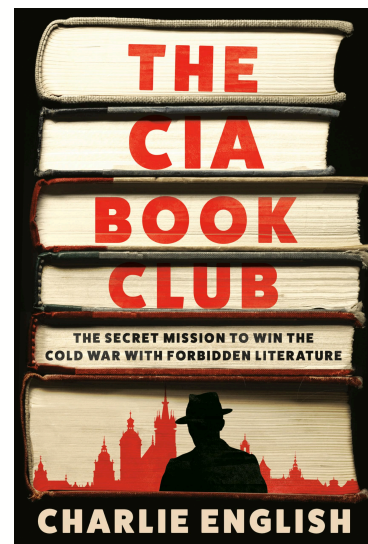
and the tragedy of Tiananmen Square in 1989.” As a loyal communist party member, Xi occupied the roles of revolutionary; leader in the “United Front” of the 1950s “to win allies, influence foreign governments, and undermine enemies;” ideological casualty in 1962, followed by sixteen years of imprisonment; and finally, trusted chieftain of Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms in the province of Guangdong. In the words of the author, Xi’s life “is a story about the politically explosive nature of competing versions of the past.” Xi was discredited in 1962 when he allowed the publication of a novel involving two purged party members, one of whom was portrayed as a hero. Zoellick states, “It is central to communist ideology that what people believe about the past determines their devotion, or lack of it, to the collectivist vision of the present.” Torigian suggests that today the younger Xi, like other “so-called princelings – party leaders who inherited their positions and prominence from the first generation of revolutionaries – bear a heavy sense of destiny and obligation... to overcome the century of humiliation, rule the country’s historical territory, honor its civilization and culture and assert China’s rightful place as a world power....” Concluding, Zoellick commends Torigian’s scholarship, which encompasses ideology, contingency, and the complexities and contradictions of individuals as factors in China’s history and future.

English Reveals the CIA’s Soft Power Strategy

The CIA Book Club: The Secret Mission to Win the Cold War with Forbidden Literature by **Charlie English**

(author; former head of international news, *The Guardian*) is “a riveting account” of the Agency’s operation to undermine Soviet censorship by smuggling books and articles—first into Poland in the turbulent 1980s, and later elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc. **Joseph Finder** (author) [reviews](#) the book in the *New York Times*

. Led by George Minden, a Romanian aristocrat turned CIA agent, the operation armed local dissidents “not with weapons but with ideas.” Minden avoided blatant propaganda, believing that “all books—political and literary—accomplish the political task of making the ideological isolation of Eastern Europe difficult and thus frustrate one of the communists’ main political objectives.” As the trade union Solidarity emerged at the center of Polish resistance, the operation expanded to provide radios and printing equipment, spawning a global propaganda effort. In the words of an underground Solidarity member, “The printing presses we got from the West during martial law



might be compared to machine guns or tanks during war.” Courageous dissidents managed the distribution, and books were wide ranging— “anything that might tickle a reader’s curiosity behind the Iron Curtain was fodder”—including *1984*, *Animal Farm*, *Brave New World*, and Carré’s spy novels as well as copies of the *New York Review of Books*, *Cosmopolitan* magazines, and the Whitney Museum’s *Three Hundred Years of American Painting*. Finder writes, “English’s book is a bracing reminder that, not so long ago, forbidden literature could help tip the balance of history” and “why the publication of *The CIA Book Club* feels perfectly, painfully timely.... George Minden types were convinced of the geopolitical force of ideals such as free expression and the rule of law because they actually believed in them.”

**The inspiration for this section of the Applied History Network Newsletter, currently written by Anne Karalekas, comes from Paul Kennedy. In an email chain triggered by his review in the Wall Street Journal of Nicholas Mulder’s Economic Weapon, he wrote, “I must confess that I enjoy doing these ‘history that illuminates the present’ book reviews for the general reader and international businessman. They are rather different in nature from the more scholarly pieces I would do in, say, The International History Review.” He went on to explain: “For many years, when I was still at the University of East Anglia in the U.K., I was one of the two main anonymous [!] book reviewers of all books in history and politics for The Economist . Although it was tough going because you didn’t know what was the next book that arrived in your mail, it was incredibly challenging. ‘Your task,’ the book review editor demanded, ‘is to explain in not more than 650 words to an IBM executive flying from Boston to Atlanta why a new biography of Bismarck is worthwhile—or not.’”*

Publications of Note

“[Meet the President’s Main Man](#),” by John Bew (Professor of History and Foreign Policy, King’s College London) in *The Observer*

Reviewing **Edward Luce’s** (US national editor and columnist, *Financial Times*) *Zbig: The Life of Zbigniew Brzezinski, America’s Great Power Prophet* , Bew praises Luce’s depiction of a man who gave “more far-sightedness and intellectual

rigour” to the foreign policy record of the Carter administration than most accounts acknowledge. Developments in the Cold War after he left the White House “ultimately vindicated Brzezinski’s work, explaining why Reagan was twice tempted to make him his national security advisor.” Even as the Cold War transitioned into a new era of international affairs, “he knew that history was far from over.”

“[The Long March of China’s Economy](#),” by Rana Mitter (Professor of US-Asia Relations, Harvard Kennedy School) for *Project Syndicate*

“It may be too early to declare the emerging international order a closed one, but the events and tensions unleashed by Trump’s global trade war point to a decisive inward shift,” Mitter argues. “In that sense, the period chronicled by both” Robert Suettinger and Jonathan Chatwin—in recent books exploring China’s “opening-up” in the 1980s and 1990s—now “feels like a long-bygone era.”

“[Trump Needs Creativity to Resolve the Iran Crisis](#),” by David Ignatius (Columnist) in *The Washington Post*

Writing before the U.S. became directly involved in the Israel-Iran War, Ignatius compares the crisis faced by President Trump to the dilemma John F. Kennedy faced in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Kennedy was able to resolve the confrontation with the Soviet Union through “a classic bit of diplomatic doublespeak that saved face for both sides.” According to Ignatius, “comparable finesse” will be necessary to reach an Iranian nuclear deal. Like the Kennedy-Khrushchev deal to remove American missiles from Turkey in exchange for the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba, Ignatius recommends “reconciling Tehran’s ‘right’ to enrich uranium with the reality that it can’t be permitted to produce fissionable material for a bomb.”

“[America’s Novel and Gratuitous Fiscal Crisis](#),” by Adam Tooze (Professor of History, Columbia University) in *The New York Times*

Compared to past societies “dealing with objectively difficult social and political crises,” Tooze writes, “fiscal dilemmas today are gratuitous.” He warns for the U.S. that the “vertiginous novelty” of its unbudging debt “corrodes not just credit ratings but also democratic legitimacy.”

**[“NATO Has Dodged Collapse Before. It’s Never Been This Close,”](#)
by Hal Brands (Professor of Global Affairs, Johns Hopkins SAIS) in
*Bloomberg***

Brands contextualizes recent American shifts against transatlanticism, pointing out that “from the beginning, NATO has been a contentious coalition: Its members have been at each other’s throats even as they have also locked arms.” West German rearmament, the Suez Crisis, budgetary fights in the 1960s and 1970s, and “arguments over arms races and arms control in the 1980s, all shook NATO to its core,” and yet it survived. While Trump’s damage to NATO’s “strategic cohesion and trust” makes the current crisis, in Brands’ view, the closest NATO has come to a real rupture, such a collapse is far from unavoidable.

**[“The Convergence of Political Risk, Economic Coercion, and De-Dollarization,”](#)
by Nicholas Mulder (Assistant Professor of Modern
European History, Cornell University) for Hinrich Foundation**

“Contrary to the idea that current US policy is without precedent, this paper examines 20th century economic history to study previous instances of US economic coercion.” Mulder’s analysis suggests U.S. policies now “will accelerate an ongoing second phase of de-dollarization that is likely to be slower, broader, and more permanent.”

**[“The Man Who Turned Right-Wing Politics Into Entertainment,”](#)
by Jennifer Burns (Professor of History, Stanford University) in *The New York Times***

Reviewing **Sam Tanenhaus'** (historian) biography of William F. Buckley, Burns recognizes Buckley's enduring influence on American politics: "More than a political journalist, Buckley was an unabashed activist who intuitively grasped the centrality of the media and the power of attention, and wielded both on behalf of his cause." His understanding of the media as "the primary battleground" in politics set the stage for successors like Steve Bannon to accelerate the rise of Donald Trump, leading Burns to title Buckley the "original influencer" of American conservatism.

"The End of the Long American Century: Trump and the Sources of U.S. Power," by Robert O. Keohane (Professor of International Affairs Emeritus, Princeton University) and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (University Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus, Harvard University) in *Foreign Affairs*

In a posthumous publication, Nye partners with Keohane to revisit their 1977 "asymmetric interdependence" thesis to explain how Trump's coercive tariff strategy erodes both hard and soft power: "By assailing interdependence, he undercuts the very foundation of American power." *Project Syndicate* also published an article by Nye, "[The Future of American Soft Power](#)," which frames the future of American influence against the backdrop of Trump's cuts to USAID, *Voice of America*, and his attitude toward key allies. Having observed American soft power's recovery after Iraq and Vietnam, Nye argues that "Restoring what he [Trump] has destroyed will not be impossible, but it will be costly."

"How Universities Die," by William C. Kirby (Professor of China Studies and Business Administration, Harvard University) in *Boston Globe*

While "the Trump administration's multifront assault on Harvard may be less violent (for now, at least) than the authoritarian takeovers of the University of Berlin and Tsinghua University," Kirby maintains that "it is no less dangerous." His key question: "Is Boston next?"

[“Strategizing With Ghosts,”](#) by Eliot A. Cohen (Professor Emeritus, Johns Hopkins SAIS) in *The Atlantic*

“Among the most important influences on the choices that countries make about war and peace are ghosts: memories—be they accurate, fanciful, or, more typically, something in between—of historical experiences and personalities from a remembered past, sometimes reaching back centuries,” writes Cohen. He highlights the cases of the UK, Russia, Ukraine, and Estonia, among others, who all rely on their historical memories when planning future strategy, sometimes to disastrous effects. He concludes that while “we can never quite escape the ghosts, be they benign or malignant, that surround strategists, it is also necessary to lay many of them to rest, if only to find the ways and means to protect this and later generations from murderous madness.”

[“Why Donald Trump Is Obsessed With a President from the Gilded Age,”](#) by Daniel Immerwahr (Professor of History, Northwestern University) in *The New Yorker*

Immerwahr argues that Trump’s embrace of William McKinley-style protectionism threatens to replay the tariff wars of the 1890s, with “the U.S.-led international order being demolished by the United States itself.” As he warns, “it’s the Gilded Age all over: disastrous tariffs, overheated imperialism, and jumpy Canadians.”

**“Applied History in the High School Classroom,” by Jay Barry
(History Teacher, Arlington High School) in *The New England Journal of History***

As a pre-college educator, Barry argues that “we must explicitly present history as a problem-solving discipline that enlightens, informs, and has practical applications, rather than cede that problem-solving ground to other academic disciplines.” By bringing Applied History into the high school curriculum teachers can make “clear to students that the history they learn will provide context for their understanding of the present,” justifying the continued study of history in a way that current modes of instruction often fail to demonstrate.

“The Life of the Party: Past and Present Constraints on the Future of the Chinese Communist Party,” by Yvonne Chiu (Associate Professor of Strategy and Policy, U.S. Naval War College), Isaac Kardon (Senior Fellow for China Studies, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), and Jason Kelly (Senior Lecturer in International Relations, Cardiff University) for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Chiu, Kardon, and Kelly assemble essays on the history of China’s ruling party that mark its centennial as an opportunity to identify “persistent patterns and new developments in Chinese politics since the party’s founding.” By “placing the present-day party into historical focus,” these articles, the editors write, “help readers look into the future by providing the breadth and context necessary to anticipate how the past is likely to shape the party’s organization, objectives, and hold on power over the years and decades to come.”

“The Geopolitics of the Present – A Second Cold War?” by Jeremy Black (Professor of History, University of Exeter) for *New Diplomatic History*

“The pace of change of the present is scarcely unprecedented, with 1945 and 1989 both seeing changes (and continuities) that were more transformative than those so

far this year,” writes Black. He warns against misusing this popular historical analogy: “For many reasons, the idea of a revived, continued, or second Cold War (all of these terms have been employed) is inaccurate.”

Interviews and Speeches

Allison and Toft Sound History’s Alarm Bells for Today’s “Unfolding Story” of Geopolitics at World Economic Forum

“During the last couple of years of his life, my aging mentor, Henry Kissinger and I would have a meeting or phone call. Repeatedly Henry warned: ‘Graham, I’m hearing louder and louder the echoes of 1914,’” [recalls](#) **Graham Allison** (Co-Chair, Harvard’s Applied History Project; Professor of Government, Harvard Kennedy School) during a panel discussion at “summer Davos” in Tianjin. If leaders conduct “business as usual, diplomacy as usual—we should predict history as usual.” Thucydides would say, according to Allison, that the U.S. and China are “‘Right on script.’ Almost perfect for the rising power, almost perfect for the ruling power, accelerating towards what he anticipates to be the greatest collision of all times.” Agreeing that today “the key competition is between China and the United States,” co-panelist **Monica Duffy Toft** (Professor of International Politics, Tufts Fletcher School) notes: “There’s been a return of spheres of influence, where there’s been an unsettling of the balance of power.... We see increasing strategic competition and, at this point, the competition is economic. But as Graham points out in his book, [*Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?*], it can easily slip into military competition. And let’s hope that that does not happen.”

Reinhart Considers Whether “This Time is Different” in *Econ Focus*

In an interview for the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond’s magazine, coauthor of *This Time Is Different: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly* **Carmen Reinhart** (Professor of the International Financial System, Harvard Kennedy School) [cautions](#) against assumptions that this year is unprecedented for the global financial

system. In a case she did recognize as exceptional, Reinhart explains that the COVID pandemic “led to the most synchronous decline in global per capita GDP in over a century.” In her research with coauthor **Kenneth Rogoff** (Professor and Chair, International Economics, Harvard University) comparing the annual shares of countries with decreased GDP per capita from 1900 onward, they found that “The share during COVID was close to 90 percent, which was higher than during both World Wars and the 1930s.” As for the issue of dollar dominance currently at hand, she says that “Historically, when there is a global crisis, we see a flight to the dollar.” Reinhart acknowledges that “we’ve experienced some global turbulence in recent weeks, and we haven’t seen that flight to the dollar this time,” leading her to conclude that “things might be changing, but that remains to be seen.”

Kaplan Laments American Historical Ignorance on *The Jay Martin Show*

Asked about the seeming decline in American military victories since World War II, **Thomas Kaplan** (Chairman, NovaGold Resources) [assesses](#) that “the historical ignorance of American policymakers” has meant that the U.S. “is great at winning battles, but has been unsuccessful in winning wars.” He identifies Vietnam as the key example of this phenomenon: the U.S. misunderstood “those three aspects that you need to have in order to have strategic empathy... understanding the history, the geography, and the politics of your rivals.”

Westad Draws out “The Ugly Lessons that History Had to Offer” on CGTN

To respond to **Wang Guan’s** (host, CGTN) question of whether there are “historical models for ‘managed rivalry’ that might offer guidance for major powers hailing from different ideologies and different cultures”—namely China and the U.S. today—**Odd Arne Westad** (Professor of History, Yale University) [refers](#) to the leadup to WWI. “In 1914, we didn’t manage to get this right, and the result was a terrible catastrophe worldwide.” Looking back, “One of the biggest problems in the pre-1914 world was the kind of economic warfare that many powers engaged in against each other—tariffs, for instance. It’s remarkably similar to what you see today,” Westad explains. “These approaches almost never work. They destabilized the international situation

for very, very little gain.” He is more optimistic about today, though: “What we didn’t have before 1914 but do have today are international organizations.” Engaging fully in these institutions, Westad argues, “is something that can help reduce the overall tensions that led to war 100 years ago. These are the kinds of lessons that we have to draw from the past.”

Ang and Frieden Outline “Contours of a New Economic Order?” at World Economic Forum

The key question for the “Contours of a New Economic Order?” panel in Tianjin: what “makes the new economic order new?” **Yuen Yuen Ang** (Professor of Political Economy, Johns Hopkins University) [answers](#) by contrasting the old—“late industrialization among developing countries—China being the largest case in point”—with the new—“reindustrialization among the most developed countries, with the U.S. being the largest case in point.” **Jeffrey A. Frieden** (Professor of International and Public Affairs and Political Science, Columbia University) says, “To understand where we are, I think it’s probably a good idea to begin with where we’re coming from.” The world as we have known it “is one that has been characterized by two pillars of the international economic and political order”—American leadership and multilateralism. “Both of those pillars,” Frieden argues, “are under challenge today.” Ang finds that “There is no tried and tested playbook for reindustrialization,” leaving the path forward driven by U.S. policy still uncertain. “With reindustrialization, the driving logic is not competitive advantage—it’s a combination of national security and populism.” Ang concludes that the criteria to determine U.S. end goals are “completely different from what we are familiar with in the past.”

Spohr Reflects on “Helsinki and Diplomacy: Power and Limitations” for European Network of Remembrance and Solidarity

Why do “certain agreements endure—the Helsinki Final Act or the Paris Charter, as we have it—and others do not?” **Kristina Spohr** (Professor of International History, London School of Economics) [muses](#), emphasizing the Helsinki Final Act “as an agreement and not a treaty.” She says, “I want to remind you that agreements and summit documents or acts—they are all the expression of multiple wills, not of a single unitary will... the point at which diverse interests and motivations converge.”

Considering “the underlying political and ideological tensions inherent in a compromise document” generally, the key question for Spohr about the Helsinki Final Act’s signing in 1975 is: “What brought these stakeholders to the table?” She suggests the UN Secretary General’s presence as an honorary guest in Helsinki symbolized the signatories’ buy-in of the UN Charter, which had just 30 years earlier seized on “a moment when we never again wanted world war.” United by that lasting sentiment, wide-ranging interests then came together “in the context of making the Cold War livable, perhaps transcending it, perhaps diffusing tensions, perhaps having more stability, predictability, and cooperation.” That spirit “was at the heart of the Helsinki Final Act.” Spohr’s remarks were part of an opening panel for the 13th European Remembrance Symposium & International Conference, which “explored the historical and contemporary significance of the 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe” and, this year, marked the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act.

Lepore Criticizes Overreliance on Kent State Analogy on *The Weekly Show with Jon Stewart*

How have presidential emergency powers evolved over time? **Jill Lepore** (Professor of American History, Harvard University) [says](#) Trump’s declaration of eight national emergencies in his first 100 days means “we are living in an era of an emergency presidency, and broadly in an era of emergency politics, but I do think it’s important to note that actually it’s Democrats who first turned to the emergency powers of the presidency.” She reminds listeners that “Carter declared one national emergency in his four years. Reagan six in eight years. But Clinton declared 17 national emergencies in his two terms.” So, while today’s events are still “extraordinary,” Lepore concludes that the “emergency presidency” did not come out of nowhere: “We’ve been living under an emergency presidency for about 20 years.”

Feaver Considers Military’s Role in Protecting U.S. Democracy on *CNBC*

Referencing the deployment of the National Guard and Marines to support immigration enforcement efforts in Los Angeles, **Peter Feaver** (Professor of Political Science and Public Policy, Duke University) [says](#) that “There is ample precedent for

using the military in domestic scenarios like this—from the very beginning days of the Republic for the last 250 years.” President Trump’s decision is “not unprecedented; however, it’s not a mission that the U.S. military likes to do,” Feaver argues. “It’s not what they train for, they’re not optimized for it, and in most of those historical cases, it’s gone sideways in some respect, and the military’s come out of it saying, ‘Well, we don’t want to have to do that again if we can avoid it.’” One month later, the military remains in Los Angeles after rotating the Marines and National Guard troops. “If it goes sideways,” Feaver says, “for instance, if we get something like the Kent State shootings that happened about 50-60 years ago during the Vietnam War, then the damage to the military standing with the public could be quite severe.” In an *NPR* interview, Feaver also [reflects](#) on the country’s first major military parade since the 1991 parade celebrating the conclusion of Operation Desert Storm: “The challenge of the parade all along has been how to celebrate the military’s 250-year contribution to the Republic, while avoiding the politicization that comes from our current polarized partisan environment. And that challenge is considerably harder when some units are seen parading on, and at the same time, other units are seen policing a public protest.”

Project Updates

Stanford’s Hoover Institution Launches “Hoover History Lab: Policy in Brief”

This new [initiative](#) by the Hoover History Lab will feature presentations from the Institution’s Fellows exploring “global policy challenges using history as a guide to inform effective solutions.” In an introduction to the initiative, **Stephen Kotkin** (Visiting Scholar, Harvard’s Applied History Project; Senior Fellow, Stanford’s Hoover Institution) highlights the importance of “consequential history”—the use of “history to address contemporary policy challenges”—and says that in practicing this the new initiative also seeks to “invest in our young people,” giving them an opportunity “to become practitioners in what we do.”

Applied History Article of the Month

“[The Historical Presidency](#): Essays on What the Global Past Reveals About Our Confounding Present” in *Foreign Policy*

Using historical analogs to understand Donald Trump’s presidency.

Donald Trump’s personality and governance style are frequent subjects of historical analogs. Finding these comparisons “terrific fodder for debate,” **Ravi Agrawal** (Editor in Chief, *Foreign Policy*) [writes](#) that the magazine “enlisted nine historians and thinkers to play the game of comparing and contrasting Trump with figures in history” for *Foreign Policy*’s summer 2025 issue. Opening the collection is **Ivan Krastev** (Chair, Centre for Liberal Strategies) and **Leonard Bernardo’s** (Senior Vice President, Open Society Foundations) essay, “Why Compare the Present to the Past?” They mount a strong defense for reasoning by analogy despite the pitfalls of doing so, arguing that historical analogies “are crucial to overcoming a crisis of orientation” and enable policymakers “to see the unfamiliar as familiar” in a way that few other analytical devices do.

In commissioning a collection of essays on such varied topics as Trump’s focus on his legacy (by **Stephen Walt**, Professor of International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School); parallels between his administration’s assault on academia and China’s Cultural Revolution (by **Julia Lovell**, Professor of Modern Chinese History, Birkbeck, University of London and **Nicholas Guyatt**, Professor of North American History, University of Cambridge); and Jimmy Carter’s success or failure in creating “The Human Rights Presidency” (by **Samuel Moyn**, Professor of Law and History, Yale University), *Foreign Policy* gives readers a convenient introduction to Applied History. Participating authors look at both specific policies (“How Low Can the Dollar Go?” by **Kenneth Rogoff**, Professor and Chair, International Economics, Harvard University) and broad trends (“Is Trump’s Use of Executive Power Really So Different?” by **Julian E. Zelizer**, Professor of History and Public Affairs, Princeton University) in Trump’s second term, making the case for the use of Applied History in analysis and offering diverse examples of its practice that provide a comprehensive analysis of this presidency. By focusing on Applied History for the cover package of a quarterly issue, *Foreign Policy* has set itself apart as an exemplar for championing the use of history to understand today’s policy challenges and choices.

Applied History Quote of the Month

“The problem with being ‘too busy to read’ is that you learn by experience (or by your men’s experience), i.e. the hard way. By reading history, you learn through others’ experiences, generally a better way to do business, especially in our line of work where the consequences of incompetence are so final for young men.”

– **General James Mattis**, email to a subordinate, 2003

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