

précis

Fall 2021/
Winter 2022



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editor'snote

As this issue of précis was being finalized, we received breaking news on February 24 that Russia had invaded Ukraine. We were able to anticipate and respond to this with analysis from our Russia scholars and security studies faculty, a Starr Forum featuring some of those same analysts, and another seminar mounted by the Security Studies Program after the invasion. Several of our scholars were also featured on various news outlets. Our interest in Putin's Russia has earned several Starr Forums in recent years.

Activities and analyses from our research community are featured, and will be updated regularly, on our website in a special section dedicated to the war in Ukraine.

The implications and consequences of the Russian assault will be felt for years, particularly in Europe, but also in US-Russia relations, intensified by the 11,000 nuclear weapons the adversaries have aimed at each other. It is indeed a perilous time, and we will be closely involved via analysis, advice, and informing the public.

Elizabeth Wood on Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Peter Dizikes



Ukraine solidarity protest on February 24, 2022, at Berlin Pariser Platz with lighted Brandenburg Gate. Photo courtesy Wikipedia Commons

In its first days, Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in late February has been met with substantial resistance. It has also created civilian casualties, a refugee crisis, a global movement to sanction Russia, and intense concern among observers around the world.

Elizabeth Wood, a professor of history at MIT, evaluated the situation, as of the beginning of March, slightly less than a week after the invasion began.

Elizabeth Wood on Russia's invasion of Ukraine



Elizabeth Wood is a professor of history at MIT. She is the author most recently of *Roots of Russia's War in Ukraine*. She is co-director of the MISTI MIT Russia Program, coordinator of Russian studies, adviser to the Russian Language Program, and a CIS research affiliate. She co-chairs the Center's Focus on Russia event series.

Photo courtesy History Section

Q: What is your overall assessment of Russia's invasion of Ukraine right now?

A: At this scary moment, with the military conflict in Ukraine changing by the hour, it looks like the Kremlin could win the war but lose the battle for hearts and minds. In war one of the greatest dangers is overconfidence. We ourselves must be careful not to underestimate the Kremlin's and the Russian military's ability to dig in their heels and hold out for a long time in Ukraine. This could be a very long, very bloody siege war. At the same time, however, it seems clear that Putin and his small entourage of trusted advisors may have badly miscalculated. Their overconfidence in their own narrative may have blinded them to the realities not only on the ground but also in the entire surrounding region.

Q: Specifically, what are the miscalculations Putin seems to have made?

A: They can be seen in at least three principal areas: in his underestimation of the Ukrainians themselves, in his overestimation of his own playbook, and in his failure to recognize the degree to which other countries and their leaders feel solidarity with the Ukrainians.

Q: What is the nature of his miscalculation regarding the Ukrainian people?

A: Most of what Putin has said recently about Ukraine and Ukrainians was intended to motivate a war he had already decided on. And most of it is too odious to warrant repetition; it should be consigned to Trotsky's famous dustbin of history. At the core of all Putin's comments is an idea that is widespread among Russians and repugnant to Ukrainians, namely that Ukraine is "little Russia" and Ukrainians are "little Russians." Putin has said explicitly that he believes Ukrainians and Russians are "one people" who belong in one state. For him, this is justification for the war. But it is also based on an assumption that the Ukrainians are not capable of effectively and efficiently running their government and deciding their own affairs, including military ones.

Q: What is the "playbook" Putin is using, and how are events unfolding differently than he expected?

A: Putin has used a particular playbook for taking foreign territories quite successfully now for over 20 years: Hit hard and fast with massive force; try for as few civilian casualties as possible; emerge as bloodless and triumphant as possible. He first tried this in Chechnya starting as soon as he was named acting Prime Minister in August 1999, bombing Grozny, the capital city, in October of that year and causing massive civilian deaths, but denying that the Russian intervention was a "war." Journalists who covered it were killed outright, kidnapped, jailed, and/or banned from publication.

He tried it again in the five-day Georgian War of 2008 when Russian forces were positioned north of the Caucasus Mountains waiting for the slightest provocation from the Georgians in South Ossetia, their northernmost province. In that case they were able to seize South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and both of those republics were declared "independent," but their residents were granted Russian passports and encouraged to consider themselves citizens of Russia. And he tried it in Crimea, first positioning his own people in the Crimean Parliament and as mayor of Sevastopol by coup d'état, having those leaders ask for Russia's "help," declaring Crimea "independent," and

holding a referendum (with Kalashnikovs in every polling place) on Crimea “joining” the Russian Federation.

In 2021-2022, Ukraine presented a challenge, however, probably because of its sheer size. The Russians built up on three and a half sides of Ukraine for almost 11 months before they began the military invasion. The Russian playbook has also relied on divisions within the country they are attacking. This worked in Transnistria, Georgia, Crimea, and in the initial phases of the Donbas takeover. Unfortunately for them, there has been little division between “Russians” and “Ukrainians” in Ukraine. One point Ukrainian scholars have been making repeatedly is that “Ukrainian” has become a civic nationality, more than one of language, religion, or even political identification. Someone can be Ukrainian and speak Russian; they can go to the Russian Orthodox Church or Moscow Patriarchate; they can disagree vehemently about Ukrainian politics. But they agree on their nationhood. Putin has succeeded in uniting Ukrainians in a way that Ukrainians themselves sometimes seem surprised to see.

Q: Finally, how has Putin underestimated the response of so many other countries in the world?

A: Putin seems to have miscalculated that he could hit Ukraine now without serious resistance from the US and Europe. That turned out to be a chimera. Political theater has always been at the core of Putin’s style of rule. His advisers’ reading of Biden was no doubt based on Biden’s public appearances and speeches to the American people, [and assumed] Biden looked weak because of his explicit commitment to building coalitions, trying to make peace among American domestic foes. In the Kremlin’s macho-based view, a peacemaker is by definition weak. What they completely underestimated is the US president’s ability to reach out to world leaders and build some of the ties that the previous president had tried to rip up. The unity that has emerged against Russia is also a sign of the hunger of those world leaders to still work with the US.

Another key factor in the unity has been the degree to which leaders at the edges of Russia (Turkey, Finland, Poland, Czechia, Hungary) have taken up support for Ukraine. They have not sat on the sidelines as the Russian leadership no doubt calculated they would. Here Putin’s practices of bullying other leaders may be coming home to roost. He bullied Recep Tayyip Erdogan in 2015-16 for an entire year before finally admitting Turkey back into the fold. He has bullied the Finns for years, to the extent that now they say they wouldn’t wish Finlandization, ie, living quietly in the shadow of Russia, on their worst enemies. The Central European countries have the most to lose in opposing Putin—they could be next in line. But they have opened their doors to refugees; they have agreed in the decision to eject Russia from [the banking network] SWIFT, a decision that had to be taken unanimously by the 27 EU countries.

The leader whom Putin has most underestimated has been Volodymyr Zelensky. Often derided as a “TV comedian” who couldn’t possibly know how to lead a country in a major conflict, Zelensky has instead shown himself to be an astute, charismatic leader who has been speaking to his people twice a day, rallying them, engaging them, and showing his own fearlessness. Many have criticized him for his allegedly slow response in the build-up of the crisis when he kept urging calm, urging the world not to overreact. But in fact, the Ukrainian military was clearly preparing to rebuff the Russian incursion.

facultyfeature

On the constitutional void in Haiti

Malick Ghachem, Associate Professor of History, MIT



Malick Ghachem, a research affiliate at CIS, is associate professor of history at MIT. A historian and lawyer, his primary areas of concentration are slavery and abolition, criminal law, and constitutional history. He is the author of **The Old Regime and the Haitian Revolution** (Cambridge University Press, 2012), a history of the law of slavery in Saint-Domingue (Haiti) between 1685 and 1804, now out in French translation.



Malick Ghachem is an associate professor of history at MIT and a CIS research affiliate.

On May 19, 2021, Ghachem organized and moderated a CIS Starr Forum: The Haitian Constitutional Crisis and the International Community. The speakers included Robert Fatton, Georges Fauriol, Sabine Manigat, and Amy Wilentz. The video is available on the MIT CIS YouTube channel.

Photos (left) courtesy iStock and (above) courtesy SHASS

Speaking at the White House announcement of his retirement plan on January 27, 2022, Justice Stephen Breyer held up a copy of the United States Constitution and pondered the "miracle" of a country of more than three hundred and thirty million who have "decided to help solve their major differences under law." "And when the students get too cynical," he observed, "I say 'Go look at what happens in countries that don't do that.' ... People have come to accept this Constitution, and they've come to accept the importance of a rule of law."¹

Have they? Which people? And what countries does Justice Breyer have in mind by those that do not accept the "rule of law"?

Justice Breyer has long been one of the most avid and astute students of comparative constitutional law on the Supreme Court, and his ruminations on this topic are worth taking seriously, if not uncritically. Having had our attention directed in this way to the phenomenon of constitutionalism (or its lack thereof) abroad, it may be useful to consider what one foreign nation's recent experience with constitutional crisis actually looks like. Doing so can help us to understand the enduring agony faced by one of our closest neighbors—and perhaps, in the process, generate a more humble and sympathetic appreciation for our own constitutional strengths and weaknesses.

Haiti: A case study

Let us then take up the example of Haiti, as a case study worth analyzing for its own sake, and also for the opportunity it offers Americans to look themselves in the mirror.

First, some background on the current Haitian constitutional crisis, with an eye towards asking whether the fundamental problem, as Justice Breyer suggests, is that Haitians (for example) have not "decided to help solve their major differences under law."

As with the analysis of any crisis, the central question is, in a sense, how far back to take the story. There is no question that a nation with not-so-distant origins in the experience of slavery and revolution remains hampered by the path-dependent legacies of colonialism, not simply the early modern chapter under French sovereignty, but also the American occupation of the twentieth-century interwar period (1915-1934). That occupation paved the way for the country's authoritarian travails to come. A more proximate set of causes has to do with Haiti's ongoing emergence from under the shadow of the Duvalier dictatorship of 1957-1987. The three-decade reign of father and son François and Jean-Claude Duvalier brought a ruthless form of authoritarian violence and political persecution from which Haiti is still recovering. Among its other effects, the Duvalier dictatorship spawned a vast, far-flung diaspora of Haitian intellectuals and professionals in North America and parts of Europe, and ingrained a political culture of populist strongmen and gangsterism that has overwhelmed concerted efforts to introduce democratic governance into the New World's first independent black state.

The centerpiece of those efforts was the 1987 Constitution,² promulgated one year after Jean-Claude Duvalier's departure brought an apparent end to Haiti's seemingly forever reign of terror. That hope proved illusory, for Duvalier-style violence returned

facultyfeature

On the constitutional void in Haiti

with a vengeance in the form of a military junta that overthrew the democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991, less than a year after he took office. Repeated cycles of political instability, economic collapse, natural disaster, humanitarian assistance, and foreign military intervention have failed to crack the nut of Haiti's constitutional crisis.³

The most recent chapter of this stalled transition to democracy came to a head in early 2020 over the issue of the interpretation of the 1987 Constitution. Article 134 of Haiti's 1987 Constitution provides for a five-year presidential term that ends on the February 7 following the date of the elections. Though elected in 2016, Haiti's then-president, Jovenel Moïse, insisted⁴ that because an interim president occupied the first year of his five-year term, he was entitled to remain in office until February 7, 2022, rather than 2021. This claim brought massive numbers of Haitians into the streets of Port-au-Prince and other cities to protest Moïse's refusal to leave office.

As it has so often in the past, the so-called "international community" aggravated the domestic political strife. The US State Department, along with the United Nations and the Organization of American States, took the extremely unpopular position⁵ that Moïse was justified in holding office until early 2022. Beneath the constitutional dispute lay years of widespread discontent with Moïse and his Tèt Kale government, which has been implicated in financial scandal, support for armed gangs, and other abuses. The conflict deadlocked the country's system of government and brought its economy to a standstill.

That impasse would have been difficult enough to resolve on its own. In July 2021, however, Moïse was assassinated in a nighttime raid on his home in the hills above Port-au-Prince—an act that may have been carried out by Colombia paramilitary mercenaries hired by powerful Haitian businesspeople and politicians linked to the drug trade. According to reporting by Maria Abi-Habib⁶ of *The New York Times*, Moïse had been preparing to go public with the names of these individuals in the months and weeks before his assassination, and the hired guns made a point of retrieving the list of drug traffickers from the home of the late president when they murdered him. The caretaker prime minister whom Moïse appointed in the days before his assassination, Ariel Henry, is himself believed to have ties⁷ to one of the chief suspects in the killing, and Henry has dismissed from office the public prosecutor who wanted to interview him about these connections. Suffice to say that Henry's ties to both Moïse and to his suspected assassins have earned him few admirers in Haiti, all the more so since he has now asserted the right to remain as the functional acting head of state past February 7, 2022—the date that would have, by any account, brought an end to the regime of the president who appointed Henry.

Unsurprisingly in this context, the popular resistance previously directed at Moïse and his government is now channeled towards Henry, who insists that only he has the legitimacy to lead Haiti towards constitutional reform and long overdue elections later this year. In opposition to these (dubious) claims, a coalition of leading civil society organizations, trade unions, and political parties known as the Montana Accord has stepped forward⁸ to propose an alternative transition government and a path out of the country's constitutional and political vacuum. In a statement in late January,

Henry observed⁹ (with transparent reference to the Montana Accord) that "there is no legal or constitutional authority for anyone to claim the right to designate himself as interim president. I hope that [the Montana Accord signatories and other platforms] will come to understand that such initiatives only deepen our divisions." In a February 6 op-ed¹⁰ in *The Miami Herald*, he pressed this argument further: "A president cannot be named, appointed, or selected by any group of people or organization. Elections are the only way forward. I am governing by consensus to make up for an institutional void."

This line of reasoning is not unreasonable, except that Henry is unwilling to accept the logical conclusion of his premise: namely, that it undermines his authority no less than the authority of the Montana Accord. On one point, the acting prime minister is entirely correct: Haiti suffers from an "institutional void." This constitutional void is so thoroughgoing that, strictly speaking, there are currently in Haiti at most a handful of officials who can claim the legitimacy of having been popularly elected, and there is now a dispute as to whether the terms of even these officials—all of them members of the Haitian Senate—may also have ended.

A constitutional catch-22

Hence the catch-22 of the status quo: elections are needed to legitimate a functioning Haitian state in accordance with the 1987 Constitution, but there is no functioning Haitian state in place to hold the elections that would legitimate that state. Add to this a climate of systemic insecurity fostered by rampant kidnapping and gang violence, the failure to institute the permanent Electoral Council that alone is authorized to oversee and sanction elections, an energy and economic crisis that continues to spiral downward, and the debilitating effects of recurring natural disasters—and you have the makings of a domestic constitutional vacuum that seems to be distinctive in the contemporary world.

Except that this vacuum is not quite so domestic, nor nearly as exceptional, once you factor in the pervasive role of the international community and the thorny question of foreign intervention. In a 2002 article, Sanford Levinson and Jack Balkin¹¹ distinguished three kinds of constitutional crisis: recourse to a state of exception, excessive fidelity to a failing constitution, and struggles for power beyond the boundaries of ordinary politics. Keith Whittington distinguishes¹² between crises of constitutional operation—"when important political disputes cannot be resolved within the existing constitutional framework"—and crises of constitutional fidelity—"when important political actors threaten to become no longer willing to abide by existing constitutional arrangements or systematically contradict constitutional proscriptions."

These typologies fall short of capturing Haiti's complex predicament insofar as they do not account for supranational factors that are usually neglected in the literature of constitutional theory. Haiti's constitutional fate has long been shaped by the legacies of colonial rule and foreign intervention, the existence of a shadow government dominated by international organizations, major foreign powers, and NGOs, and the economic marginalization of the overwhelming majority of the country's people through commercial arrangements designed to serve elite and international interests.

These forces continue to constrain the options and free will of Haitian political actors. The constitutional struggle at the core of the current crisis involves all of the above.

Domestic and international contexts

This is not to say, of course, that Haiti's political elites (including the current de facto government) bear no responsibility for the country's institutional quagmire. Haitians have the capacity to shape their own constitutional future. In so doing, they can build upon a constitutional tradition that goes back to the country's struggle for liberation from colonial slavery and Haiti's very first constitution of 1801, promulgated by Toussaint Louverture at a time when Haiti was still formally a French colony (known as Saint-Domingue). But we will not understand the character of Haiti's constitutional vacuum unless we situate it in both its domestic and international contexts.

This interdependence of the foreign and domestic also has implications for how we understand the international community's role in and towards the current constitutional crisis. The US Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Brian Nichols (a former ambassador to Peru and Zimbabwe), recently told the *New York Times* that "[w]hen we look at the history of Haiti, it is replete with the international community reaching into Haitian politics and picking winners and losers. Our goal in terms of the US government is to avoid that."¹³

This is a prime example of American foreign policymakers learning the right history lesson for the wrong reasons, or in the absence of a sufficiently historical context. There is no "neutral" ground on which to stand given the long history of American and other foreign intervention in Haiti's domestic affairs, going back to the very beginnings of the country's independence. As the Montana Accord signatories have argued, by continuing to support the de facto Henry government (and, before it, the disputed Moïse government), the United States is effectively picking a winner.

Given this reality, the more productive—and in some sense less "interventionist"—stance would be to ask what foreign policy approach would give Haitians the best chance to implement democratic elections. Elections are not a panacea for all that ails Haiti, and they ought not to be held as soon as possible, regardless of the costs to democratic legitimacy in a larger sense. As many Haitian observers have argued, the current security climate does not permit the holding of meaningful democratic elections. Turnout for the last two presidential elections was less than one quarter of the electorate, and that number is likely to be significantly less if elections were to be held at any time before the end of 2022. The United States and the international community should focus their efforts on lending support to a broadly (if necessarily imperfectly) representative coalition of Haitian political actors, with the goal of holding elections when the vast majority of Haitians are once again prepared to venture out into the streets. This also means that, in the interim, the international community may well need to redouble its efforts to buttress the ability of the Haitian national police to reestablish domestic security and retake control of the country's streets and ports from the lawless rule of gang violence.

At the political level, such an approach means accepting the hard truth that continued support for the de facto government of Ariel Henry entails "neutrality" only in a superficial, increasingly counterproductive sense. The United States and the other Core Group powers would do well to put their backing behind the Montana Accord and its proposal for an interim government that can prepare the way for credible elections. And, once Haiti has begun to climb out of the constitutional void, there may well be a need to undertake some of the constitutional reforms that various political parties (including the Tèt Kale regime) have argued are necessary. This includes the lack of temporal alignment of presidential and legislative terms under the 1987 Constitution, and the need to clarify the complicated interrelationship between institutions that depend on one another for their very constitution: the legislature, the Supreme Court (Cour de Cassation), the executive, and the (still provisional) Electoral Council.

Finally, to complicate matters yet further, the international community will have to lend its weight behind those in Haiti working to confront the long-term social crisis¹⁴ that foments violence and instability. Instead of favoring the interests of Haiti's export-oriented business class, as it so often has in the past, the United States should devote its resources to ending the consignment of Haiti's poor urban majority to the desperation of life in the slums of Port-au-Prince, Cap-Haïtien, and Haiti's other major urban centers.

Only such a two-pronged approach—supporting the cause of political dialogue at the level of political elites and civil society organizations, while also addressing the needs of the least well off—stands a chance of long-term success. The international community must be willing to walk with and in support of Haitians along both of these paths at once. The complexity of the current situation is precisely that the country's constitutional void makes it very difficult to commit the domestic and foreign institutional resources that are needed to address the plight of Haiti's poorest. That is why the political strategy is a necessary predicate and component of any meaningful international engagement. But to neglect the social crisis afflicting Haiti's least well off is to invite the cycles of instability in Haiti to persist and the pendulum of international policy to continue swinging.

In conclusion

Commentators such as Georges Fauriol¹⁵ and Amy Wilentz¹⁶ have ably analyzed the tightrope that foreign policymakers will need to walk to pull off a more productive supportive role in Haiti. I want to end with a few thoughts in the spirit of constitutional self-reflection with which I began this essay. Justice Breyer's musings about the rule of law at home and abroad seem to imply that constitutional crises are a matter of "over there" rather than here. Or was the Justice trying, to the contrary, to warn us that what happens "over there" may well happen—and in fact is already happening—over here? We need not focus our attention exclusively on the disturbing events of January 6, 2021, to appreciate this convergence. As Robert Fatton has shown,¹⁷ Haiti and the United States share a common predilection for the ideology of exceptionalism when it comes to constructing national narratives.

Wargaming revival at MIT

Eyal Hanfling, précis Student Editor



Eric Heginbotham (pictured above center) co-convenes the Wargaming Working Group, mentors PhD students working on wargaming research, and continues to advance the field of wargaming methodology.

Photo courtesy Christopher Burns

Wargames take place in a “structured-unstructured environment,” according to Benjamin Harris, PhD student in the Department of Political Science and a convener of the MIT Wargaming Working Group at the Center for International Studies (CIS).

This means that the games operate at two levels—an overarching structure conditions what kind of moves players can make, but interactions among team members are unstructured. As a result, people with different backgrounds are forced to engage and learn from each other throughout the simulation. “The game goes where the participants take it,” says Harris.

Wargames and crisis simulations are exercises where participants make decisions to simulate real-world behavior. In the field of international security, games are frequently used to study how actors make decisions during conflict, but they can also be used to model human behavior in countless other scenarios.

MIT researchers have been developing the craft of wargaming since the late 1950s. In “The Pioneering Role of CIS in American War Gaming,” Reid Pauly PhD '19, now a CIS research affiliate, credits the origins of modern wargaming methodology in large part to MIT professor Lincoln Bloomfield and other faculty affiliated with CIS. Pauly is an assistant professor at Brown University.

Today, CIS is again at the center of new developments in the methodology, pedagogy, and application of wargaming. Over the last few years, CIS and the MIT Security Studies Program have responded to an increased demand for wargaming among students and from the policy community. This has resulted in new course offerings, student- and faculty-produced research, and on-campus simulations.

"Over the last few years, CIS and the MIT Security Studies Program have responded to an increased demand for wargaming among students and from the policy community!"

Learning through games

PhD student Suzanne Freeman and Harris started the Wargaming Working Group as a forum for students to engage with the wargaming community on campus and in policy spaces. Now in its third year, the group has developed a partnership with the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) that brings mid-career military officers and academics together for an annual simulation.²

Richard Samuels, Ford International Professor of Political Science and director of CIS, participated in his first crisis simulation in a game organized by Bloomfield, and subsequently organized nearly a dozen large-scale games at MIT in the 1990s through the early 2000s, mostly focused on Asia-Pacific security dynamics. Eric Heginbotham PhD '04, a principal research scientist at CIS, and Christopher Twomey PhD '05, were active participants. Together, they established the Working Group's partnership with NPS, where Twomey is an associate professor.

This year, participants worked through a crisis scenario centered on a nuclear reactor meltdown in Taiwan. Teams were assigned to represent Taiwan, China, the US, and Japan, and the game was designed to tease out how civilian and military sub-teams would communicate during a crisis. Freeman and Harris presented³ some of the findings from the wargame at Georgetown University in October 2021.

In addition to planning tabletop exercises at MIT, the working group invites speakers from universities and think tanks to present wargaming research, and held online wargames when MIT went virtual due to Covid-19. The working group has been especially successful at bridging the gap between academia and policy, allowing for PhD students and military officers to learn from each other, says Freeman.

For students hoping to further explore the history and practice of wargaming in a classroom setting, MIT now offers "Simulating Global Dynamics and War," co-taught biennially by Samuels and Heginbotham. Students participate in four wargames over the course of the semester—an operational wargame, a political-military crisis game, an experimental game, and a game designed by students as their final project.

While the class is designed for security studies students and military fellows, it has included students and practitioners from other fields interested in incorporating gaming into their work. Lessons from the course can be applied to issues such as a global pandemic or refugee crisis, says Heginbotham.

For MIT undergraduates taking coursework in political science, wargaming is also a pedagogical tool used to consider the implications of policy decisions. In fall 2021, students in Erik Lin-Greenberg's National Security Policy class participated in a simulation centered around a cyberattack on US soil. Students worked in teams to represent US government agencies at a National Security Council Principals Committee meeting. Lin-Greenberg is an assistant professor of political science at MIT.

Wargaming revival at MIT



Nina Miller, PhD student in security studies, presents a wargame design during a seminar course on global dynamics and war simulation.

Photo courtesy Michelle English

The revival of wargaming

Political scientists are increasingly considering how the method of wargaming can be improved and used in research and pedagogy. For scholars of interstate war and nuclear weapons, wargaming is an especially promising research tool.

Over the last decade, researchers have recognized that “wargames and crisis simulations may have had an outsized influence on Cold War policy makers,” says Samuels. “Close, archival, analysis of Cold War games could provide insight into how policy elites thought about nuclear war.”

At the same time, the rise of the experimental method for political analysis has coincided with the revival of wargaming as a research tool, according to Samuels. “Experimental wargames allow researchers to derive generalizations about leadership choice under stress,” says Samuels. However, scholars still face challenges related to external validity, or, the extent to which outcomes of wargames apply to real-world scenarios.

In addition to advances in experimental wargaming and nuclear simulations, Heginbotham adds that scholars are increasingly applying wargaming to emerging and non-traditional security challenges. “Wargaming allows scholars to model complex conflicts, change individual variables, and run multiple iterations,” says Heginbotham. For researchers trying to understand the dynamics of political events, gaming has a number of advantages.

In January 2022, Steven Simon, a former diplomat and National Security Council director now serving as a Robert E Wilhelm Fellow at CIS, wrote an opinion piece⁴ in the *New York Times* with Jonathan Stevenson about the need for wargaming focused on US democratic backsliding. For Simon and Stevenson, wargaming is a tool scholars can adopt while studying low-probability but high-risk events like the January 6 storming of the US Capitol.

They argue, “Wargames, tabletop exercises, operations research, campaign analyses, conferences and seminars on the prospect of American political conflagration—including insurrection, secession, insurgency and civil war—should be proceeding at a higher tempo and intensity.”

A bright future for wargaming

Lin-Greenberg BS/MS '09, joined the Department of Political Science and the Security Studies Program in 2020 after completing a dissertation that pioneered the use of experimental wargames in international security research.⁵ As part of his doctoral research at Columbia University, he ran a wargame with military audiences to understand how drones impact escalation dynamics. He wrote in *War on the Rocks*,⁶ “The experimental wargames revealed that the deployment of drones can actually contrib-

ute to lower levels of escalation and greater crisis stability than the deployment of manned assets.”

At MIT, Lin-Greenberg, Samuels, and Heginbotham co-convene the Wargaming Working Group, mentor PhD students working on wargaming research, and continue to advance the field of wargaming methodology.

With co-authors Pauly and Jacquelyn Schneider, Lin-Greenberg published “Wargaming for International Relations Research”⁷ in the *European Journal of International Relations* in December 2021. The article establishes a research agenda for wargaming and highlights some of the methodological challenges of using wargames.

The authors “explain how researchers can navigate issues of recruitment, bias, validity, and generalizability when using wargames for research, and identify ways to evaluate the potential benefits and pitfalls of wargames as a tool of inquiry.” One of these benefits, according to the authors, is the ability of wargaming to provide new data and help answer challenges and questions about human behavior and decision-making.

For Heginbotham, there is something unique about designing and participating in wargames where decision-making under pressure leads to learning. “The data you uncover in the process of designing a game and the lessons you internalize while playing the game would be very difficult to create in any other setting,” he says.

Likewise, Samuels is optimistic about the role of wargaming moving forward. He explains that the future of wargaming is bright so long as organizations—political, educational, industrial, military, and civic—continue to recognize the need to train future leaders in decision-making. Samuels is fond of quoting the Nobel laureate Thomas Schelling, a pioneer of civil-military wargaming while at Rand in the late 1950s and a partner of Lincoln Bloomfield at CIS, who once said: “Games won’t play music or cook fish, cure a man of stuttering, or improve my children’s French, just as they may not predict Pearl Harbor. But unless [critics] can show that games would have accentuated the tendency to ignore Pearl Harbor... [they] might have taught us something else useful.” ■

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précisinterview
Kelly M Greenhill



Kelly M Greenhill PhD '04, joined CIS as director of the Seminar XXI Program—one of the most successful post-graduate education programs in the national security arena. The program links policymaking and academia by bringing together military and civilian executives with scholars from MIT and beyond. Greenhill is a Seminar XXI veteran and has long served on its executive board.



Kelly M Greenhill, director of the Seminar XXI Program, is the 2020-22 Leverhulme Trust Visiting Professor, SOAS (UK); an associate professor of political science at Tufts University, a visiting professor at MIT, a senior research fellow at the MIT Security Studies Program, and a research associate at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center.

Photo left courtesy iStock

précis: You became director of the Center's Seminar XXI Program in fall of 2021. What has your experience been so far? What are some of the biggest challenges you're facing?

KMG: Each meeting so far this year has been intellectually rich and edifying, provocative and thought-provoking. The program boasts a superb cohort of fellows, an excellent slate of faculty, and a crackerjack staff and set of program advisors. Last year's interim director Ken Oye has played—and will continue to play—an integral role in the program, as he has for decades. All of which is to say, the strengths of Seminar XXI lie in the collective inputs of all of those who are a part of the program and make this important enterprise more than the sum of its parts.

Unfortunately, Covid continues to present an array of challenges and complications for fellows, faculty and staff alike that neither I nor anyone else associated with the Program could have anticipated when I agreed to become the next director back in fall 2019. How much has changed in the last 2.5 years! We are all hopeful that the decline in Omicron cases of late presages better times ahead, but also know that the virus's behavior has defied many previous predictions.

précis: What are your goals for Seminar XXI, and what is the role of programs like XXI in the current political environment?

KMG: I see my principal role as two-pronged: to simultaneously serve as a responsible steward and guardian of the program's long-standing mission and as a creative and risk-acceptant innovator, attentive and responsive to changes in the national and global environments and to shifts in material and ideological challenges. Such an approach will allow us to best address the also-evolving needs of our enormously talented fellows and the organizations they serve.

As has long been the case, Seminar XXI seeks to encourage regular and free-flowing intra- and inter-agency discussions and dialogue; the creation and utilization of new connections and networks across as well as inside and outside government; the expansion of our fellows' perspectives, knowledge and analytical toolkits—all of which can be particularly invaluable in fraught and complicated times.

In recent months, we have also been taking proactive steps to further enhance the diversity of Seminar XXI fellows going forward. In addition, Seminar XXI staff have been hard at work modernizing and streamlining the program's application process in ways that should benefit our sponsoring organizations and agencies; our future fellows; and Seminar XXI staff members.

précis: Have the goals of Seminar XXI changed since it started in 1986? Have the characteristics of the participants changed?

KMG: After the 1983 attack on the US Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, US policy-makers were eager to understand why the attack happened and to identify productive ways to respond that extended beyond traditional military options and, on both di-

précisinterview

Kelly M Greenhill

mensions, found themselves coming up short. It was to help fill this recognized vacuum that Seminar XXI was first founded. Then, when the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union collapsed, US policymakers faced a new set of challenges, in different parts of the globe. Consequently, Seminar XXI too had to adapt and respond, identifying new issues and areas that warranted close attention. The events of 9/11, in turn, brought yet another set of pressing issues and areas to the forefront, and so it goes...

At the same time, while topics and areas of scrutiny have shifted and evolved over time, the core goals of the program have remained constant: to help educate senior leaders in our country's national security sphere by bringing to them the best of social science theory and historical perspective.

As far as the fellows themselves, the number and nature of the organizations and agencies represented has expanded over time, and the number of civilians has grown as a percentage of total Seminar XXI participants. These increases have expanded the number and variety of perspectives the fellows can share and bring to bear in discussions, both in large group settings, in breakout groups, and in one-on-one discussions over drinks, meals and break times. Cohort sizes have also expanded over time, and every year the program receives more nominations and applications from candidates than the program can accommodate.

précis: What role do programs like Seminar XXI play in promoting healthy civil-military relations in the United States?

KMG: Since its inception, the program's focus has been international rather than domestic. However, fellows are exposed to theories that transcend borders, and there are almost always transferable, universal lessons that apply as much at home as they do abroad. Moreover, the program's long-standing goals of fostering inter-generational, cross-agency communications, breaking down silos and building networks can help foster and sustain healthy civil-military relations.

précis: How does Seminar XXI address "new security challenges" like cyber warfare, disinformation, and the consequences of climate change?

KMG: The program speaks to issues such as these in two ways. In some cases, we hold sessions specifically focused on functional issues such as these—for instance, we held a session on cyber and bio at the start of January. In other cases, we focus on related issues more tangentially—for instance, I spoke to the problem of disinformation as part of a talk on causal inference, biases and the evaluation of evidence.

précis: What are some of the greatest challenges in "bridging the gap" between academia and policy practitioners (like the participants in Seminar XXI)? Can the Seminar XXI model be adopted in other substantive research areas or academic/policy environments?

KMG: I might be wrong, but I don't think this is a significant issue for those participating in Seminar XXI, which has in effect been "bridging the gap" throughout its four and a half decade-long history. Program faculty are carefully chosen experts whose

"My research has four overlapping strands: the politics of information; migration and security; coercion, conflict and military operations; and asymmetric methods of influence."

research is often policy-facing, and many faculty have some direct engagement with and/or experience in the policy world themselves. Likewise, Seminar XXI fellows are carefully chosen and selected for nomination by their agencies if they are anticipated to benefit and be receptive to the academic theories, viewpoints and expertise offered by the faculty.

I expect the Seminar XXI model is adaptable to other areas and environments and could be quite beneficial where both more inter-agency interactions and external expert input could lead to more synergies and better policy outcomes.

précis: Could you tell us about some of the research you're currently working on?

KMG: My research has four overlapping strands: the politics of information; migration and security; coercion, conflict and military operations; and asymmetric methods of influence. I have active projects underway and/or publications in the pipeline in each of these areas of interest. These include a March/April 2022 *Foreign Affairs* essay on the weaponization of migration; a piece forthcoming on the security implications of disinformation-driven cognitive hijacking and other forms of psychological manipulation; a piece on unconventional sources of great power threat reassessments that I hope will soon be sent out for review; and a co-authored paper detailing our new dataset project on forced migration and diplomatic outcomes to be delivered at the International Studies Association meeting in March. I also have several fruitful ongoing collaborations with co-authors: one is centered around a concept we call "global security entanglement," and a second is a public opinion survey project that explores domestic political implications of shifts in threat perception in the greater Middle East. And, finally, I have two book projects out for review.

précis: Has your experience as a woman in the male-dominated security studies field evolved over the span of your career?

KMG: There are certainly more women in the field today, which is just great to see. Moreover, that CIS and the SSP Program have played instrumental roles in this expansion is something worth noting and applauding. The number of superb security studies female scholars and practitioners produced by MIT is striking.

As far as my own experience goes, yours is a good question to which I don't have a good answer. Since childhood, my sex and gender have never been primary identity markers for me. Both in my head and in my interactions with others, I am a person who studies and works in the security field, who just happens to be a woman. So, while there probably has been an evolution over time, it is not one of which I am especially conscious.

précis: What advice do you have for students (undergraduate and graduate) at MIT beginning careers in academia or policy?

KMG: I've shared some of these thoughts with the MIT community before, but I stand by them and, if anything, I guess I endorse them more strongly now, with more experience under my belt and greater hindsight.

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studentfeature

Surviving violence in Delhi: How control and predictability affect decision-making

Aidan Milliff, PhD Candidate, Department of Political Science



"People's assessments of control and predictability are part of an effort to make sense of chaos when facing political violence. And in the haze of conflict, not everyone makes sense of chaos in the same way."



Aidan Milliff is a PhD candidate at MIT in comparative politics and international relations/security studies. His work focuses on the cognitive, emotional, and social forces that shape political violence, forced migration, and the politics of South Asia. He is a predoctoral fellow at the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at George Washington University, and a USIP-Minerva Peace and Security Scholar.

This article is adapted from an essay that appeared in the *Hindustan Times* on September 30, 2021: “From 1984 to 2020, Delhi’s Response.”

Photos (left) courtesy iStock and (above) courtesy the Department of Political Science

In February 2020, Northeast Delhi saw India’s deadliest Hindu-Muslim riots since 2002, and the deadliest riots in the capital since the 1980s. Rioting killed 53 and injured hundreds in perhaps under 100 hours.¹ In the aftermath, some residents erected barricades or gates at the end of their streets. Others left their homes for relief camps in Delhi, or even returned to ancestral villages across India.

The week afterward, I was in West Delhi interviewing Sikhs who had survived the city’s last cataclysmic wave of communal violence, pogroms that occurred after India’s Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards on 31 October 1984.² In the four days after her death, over 3,000 people—almost exclusively Sikhs—died at the hands of mobs across India. Some 2,800 people died in Delhi alone.³

Like the survivors of 2020, the Sikh survivors of 1984 I interviewed also described a vast range of different strategies they had adopted to try and survive. Some hid in darkened flats for days, or cut their hair and beards—long hair is an important symbol of piety for many Sikhs, which also makes them very visible.⁴ Some wielded daggers and knives to defend their homes or neighborhoods, while others left Delhi for good.

During political violence around the world, ordinary people respond to chaos and danger in many different ways. For everyone who participates in a riot or mob, there is someone who has barricaded themselves in a closet. For every family that seeks refuge from insurgent violence or state terror in another neighborhood or state, another family tries to adapt to the danger and stay put. In many instances, there are not really noticeable differences between the people who choose radically different strategies when they confront danger.

Take an example from 1984 in Delhi: Two women in similar neighborhoods in South-west Delhi faced nearly identical mob violence on the same day, but responded in very different ways. One woman from the neighborhood of Palam saw her father taken from their home and set on fire (probably with phosphorous powder). Another woman, only 3km away in a neighborhood called Sagarpur, witnessed a mob take her father, brother, husband, and son from their home and beat them to death. The woman from Palam immediately left and resettled in Punjab. The woman from Sagarpur remained—she lives in Delhi today.

A new theory of civilian survival strategies

How do we make sense of these choices? In my research, I study the experiences of violence survivors, recorded in original interviews and oral history archives, to understand the decisions they made when facing violence. I use the stories of Indian Sikh survivors of 1984 to test a new theory, situation appraisal theory, that offers a new way to understand the forces that shape common people’s responses to violence across different religious groups, different types of violence, and different countries.

Even people who are very similar to each other often perceive and interpret a given violent situation in different ways. Different perceptions and interpretations in turn motivate people to respond differently to threats of violence. Two particular in-

terpretations (I call these interpretations situational appraisals) are important for understanding people's behavior: a person's appraisal of how much control they have over the outcome of violence, and their appraisal of how predictable the evolution of violent threats will be in the near future.

People who assess control and predictability differently tend toward different behaviors to keep themselves safe: People who feel uncertain about the future and believe they have no agency to mitigate threats to their safety (no control) tend to flee from violence. People who feel that they have control, but aren't confident in their ability to predict the future try to fight back against threats. People who feel the future is more predictable and understandable either try to minimize their exposure to threat by "hiding" or they try to engage constructively with the sources of danger, depending on how in-control they feel.

These appraisals guided the choices of many survivors of the 1984 violence in Delhi. In my own interviews with survivors in Delhi as well as many survivors who migrated to northern California, and also in mixed-methods analysis of an archive of over 500 video-taped oral histories of the violence from the 1984 Living History project,⁵ I find that people's assessments of control and predictability are strongly connected to the strategies they end up selecting.

People's assessments of control and predictability are part of an effort to make sense of chaos when facing political violence. And in the haze of conflict, not everyone makes sense of chaos in the same way. The women from Palam and Sagarpur, for example, saw their situations differently. The woman from Sagarpur believed she understood how the mobs worked. Before her father died, he described a theory of the violence: mobs were targeting those who were visibly Sikh (mostly men), and were especially brutal toward people who tried to fight back. This set of "rules" made the violence more predictable—though no less traumatic—for the woman from Sagarpur. Her perception of predictability led her to stay put in Delhi, where she still lives. The woman from Palam felt no such sense of predictability. Members of her family were basically tricked: her father was killed by people who had promised him safety. As soon as possible, the woman from Palam left the neighborhood, and Delhi all together. Even these two similar-seeming women, facing nearly identical violence on the same day, interpret their circumstances differently, and follow those interpretations to decide what they need to do to survive.

Informing security policy

What are the political implications of these deeply personal choices about survival during political violence? And how can a theoretical framework that focuses on variation in individual perception help inform policy to protect civilians during violence? This research has two lessons for policy-making in the future. First, once individual choices to fight, flee, or hide aggregate up, they can become massive policy challenges like ethnic cleansing,⁶ refugee flows, or deepening cycles of violence. I trace the roots of these phenomena back to individual perceptions, suggesting that policies to reduce escalation or encourage resilience-in-place ought to focus on making civilians' experiences of conflict less uncertain, and ought to encourage civilian agency.

Second, my work suggests a new answer to a puzzling question in US security policy: why have efforts to improve the lives of people living in conflict affected states not led to more stability? The US has spent \$145 billion on reconstruction in Afghanistan,⁷ \$60 billion in Iraq,⁸ plus billions in other states, and even more billions helping people who are already displaced. My research suggests that money, which mostly focuses on improving material conditions and physical security, might be misdirected. I show that whether a person ends up displaced, involved in violence, or trying to adapt depends heavily on their perceptions about how much uncertainty they feel during violence—perceptions are often more important than relative exposure to violence, or how much development aid they get.

Predictability and control are important determinants of people's choices, so it is important for policy makers to target those perceptions directly if they want to shape civilian behavior. Ultimately there might be circumstances where helping people feel more certain about the future or more agency in their own lives could be an appropriate—and efficient—way to increase resilience and adaptation during violence.

The Delhi riots in February 2020 never spilled across the Yamuna River into the center of the city, but rumors and fear spread all the way to Punjabi and Sikh neighborhoods in the city's West, like Dwarka, Janakpuri, and Tilak Nagar. In my interviews only a week after those February riots, people described the scenes of 1984 returning to their minds when they heard rumors that the 2020 riots were coming to West Delhi. Some prepared to correct "mistakes" they made in 1984 like not having access to weapons. Some cancelled weekend plans and kept their children home, fearful of having a son or daughter stranded across the city during a riot. Others talked about fleeing: what relative could take them in if the violence started? As in 1984, everyone saw something slightly different in the facts they could gather and made different plans accordingly. ■

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2 Virginia Van Dyke, "The Anti-Sikh Riots of 1984 in Delhi: Politicians, Criminals, and the Discourse of Communalism," in *Riots and Pogroms*, ed. Paul Brass (New York: Springer, 1996), pp. 201-220.

3 *Report: Justice Nanavati Commission of Inquiry (1984 Anti-Sikh Riots)*, (New Delhi: Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, 2000). Sikh activists maintain that these numbers vastly undercount the true death toll.

4 Bhupinder Singh, "The Five Symbols of Sikhism," *Sikh Formations* 10, no. 1 (2014): 105-172.

5 <https://www.1984livinghistory.org>

6 Chaim Kaufmann, "When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers and Partitions in the Twentieth Century," *International Security* 23, no. 2 (1998): 120-56.

7 John F. Sopko. *What We Need to Learn: Lessons from Twenty Years of Afghanistan Reconstruction*, (Arlington, VA: Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2021).

8 Stuart Bowen. *Learning from Iraq: A Final Report from the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction*, (Arlington, VA: Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, 2013).

Embarking upon a leadership journey

MISTI



David Dolev, managing director of MISTI's programs in the Middle East, reached out to three organizations that he had partnered with in the past to explore new ways of connecting MIT with the region. Middle East Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow (MEET), Our Generation Speaks (OGS), and Tech2Peace brought together their alumni alongside leaders in the industry to help explore how multi-disciplinary, transboundary cooperation can make an impact in the region. MISTI alumna Kathleen Schwind managed the project.

Current developments in the Middle East continue to challenge people in the region and open windows to make a sustainable impact. Challenges like water access, health care, IT, vocational training, and others can be addressed collaboratively with entrepreneurial and novel problem-solving capabilities. To do so, future leaders need to understand the challenges through a regional lens while learning how to collaborate across borders to develop potential solutions.

MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) combined 30 students, three Middle Eastern organizations, five industry leaders, and entrepreneurs to create "The Leader's Journey: In Times of Transition and Crisis." The program brought MIT students and young-to-mid-career Israelis and Palestinians together to address significant challenges in the Middle East.

Speakers were eager to engage with the next generation of leaders. At the same time, participants had a chance to have deep conversations about these challenges, and their potential solutions, while employing the techniques and skills they had learned.

MIT alumni, each a leader in their field, talked about a topic related to leadership and entrepreneurship, and answered questions from the participants. The program drew from MISTI's global network of industry leaders and organizations with attention to scientific, technological, and entrepreneurial efforts in the Middle East and the three organizations' extensive work in the region.

Robin Chase, American entrepreneur and the co-founder and former CEO of Zipcar, spoke about building on excess capacity to create novel global solutions and strategies. Next, Rhiannon Menn, the founder of Lasagna Love, joined for her talk "From local to national in six months: How to mobilize the masses?"

Brewster Kahle, founder of the Internet Archive, shared his insights on how to leverage openness to move toward transformative change. Camille Richman, a MISTI alumna and co-founder of Hamama, spoke about "Impact-driven research to make sure you have the right product." Christine Ortiz, Station1 founder and the Morris Cohen Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at MIT, rounded out the series with "How to make a transformative impact from within your organization."

Breakout discussion groups followed, in which MIT, Israeli, and Palestinian participants met to complete a project that drew from the program sessions, their experiences in the program, and their individual backgrounds, to develop five "pillars" for making an impact in the region. These pillars were inspired by the sessions and the speaker topics, and aimed to build a platform upon which projects can be built in the future.

Specific ideas generated by the groups included: implementing a model in which excess solar energy is redistributed to underserved regions, developing virtual workplaces to expand access to education and professional development opportunities, and addressing food waste through a research-execution-community-impact-maintenance model.

Graduates of the "Leader's Journey" program said they felt better-equipped to create positive change in the region by collaborating with a diverse set of individuals over new methods and ways of thinking.

"I learned how much knowledge we have as a group—even if we sit for one hour to talk about a topic we are passionate about, we can create amazing things together," one student said.

Participants noted that one of the program's most significant assets was the creation of a unique space to hold deep conversations with peers from a variety of backgrounds and interests. This space also allowed participants to contextualize and put into action the skills and feedback from the speakers. Participants also said they were inspired by learning from new people and felt more confident about turning their ideas into ventures, businesses, and positive community impact.

"During the past months, we were lucky to be part of this program and get this special opportunity to meet great entrepreneurs who did great work toward the global community, not only their local community," shared one group of students. "We fed our minds with great knowledge to develop ourselves and our communities. A special thanks to the Leader's Journey team for all of that."

"Overall, the program served as an opportunity for participants to learn from each other and consider their personal and professional goals in a multidisciplinary and international capacity, work in international and multidisciplinary teams, and sharpen their global leadership skills," said Dolev. "They were exposed to novel ideas from industry leaders, learned to frame those ideas in reality through conversations with fellow MIT students and Israeli and Palestinian peers, and learned how to turn those ideas into solutions in a changing and dynamic climate."

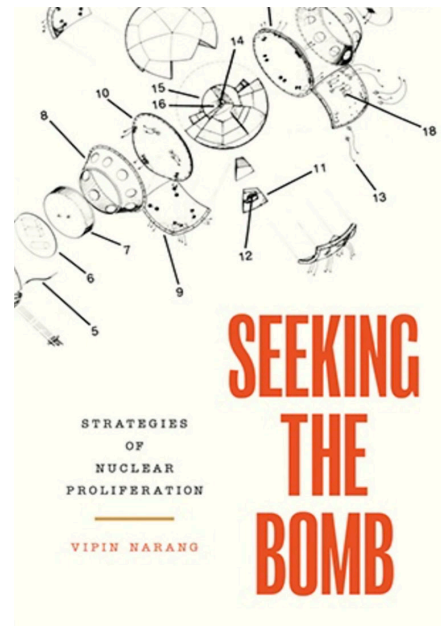
The quality and relevance of the ideas produced inspired MISTI and the three organizations to make this an annual course, which will be offered to MIT students this spring as a three-credit discovery course, SP.258 (MISTI: Middle East Cross-border Development and Leadership), which is open to all undergraduate and graduate students. Many attendees were so positive about their experience in the program they asked to be involved in the planning for next year.

"We are committed to working with our students to develop deeper understanding into how culture and regional factors impact our capacity to develop global solutions; connecting them to one another and building networks of future leaders; and enabling them to learn from current industry leaders and entrepreneurs. These three pillars will be their launching pad to collaborate with their peers around the world and together be the global change-makers the world deeply needs," said Dolev. ■

briefings

A look at how countries go nuclear—and why some do not

Peter Dizikes, MIT News



In 1993, South Africa announced to a largely surprised world that it had built nuclear weapons in the 1980s, before dismantling its arsenal. For the first time, a country outside of the elite world powers had obtained nuclear capabilities while keeping matters a secret from almost everyone else.

To this day, South Africa remains the only country to have pulled off that exact trick. Other countries have gone nuclear in other ways. A half-dozen countries with more economic and political clout than South Africa have built weapons on their own timetables. Three other countries—Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea—have developed nuclear weapons while being supported by larger allies. And many wealthy countries, including Australia, Brazil, Germany, Japan, and South Korea, have chosen not to pursue weapons programs.

In his new book, **Seeking the Bomb**, Vipin Narang looks at the variety of tactics countries use as they attempt to acquire nuclear weapons.

Image courtesy Bryce Vickmark

Recognizing these different paths to proliferation is an essential part of arms control: Grasping how one country is pursuing nuclear weapons can help other countries constrain that pursuit.

“There’s meaningful variation in how states have thought about pursuing nuclear weapons,” says Vipin Narang, an MIT political scientist and expert on nuclear strategy. “It changes how we think about stopping them. It changes how we think about managing them. It’s an important question.”

Narang believes that too often, we imagine that all countries pursue nuclear weapons the way the US and Soviet Union did during and after World War II— a swift race culminating in the rapid buildup of arsenals, leaving little room for intervention. But that paradigm applies to almost no other country.

“We think of proliferators as a stylized Manhattan Project,” says Narang, the Frank Stanton professor of Nuclear Security and Political Science at MIT. “But the US and the Soviet Union are really the only ones who had Manhattan projects, and the rest of the nuclear weapons powers look different.”

Narang has detailed these differences in a new book, “Seeking the Bomb,” published by Princeton University Press. In it, he develops a comprehensive typology of nuclear programs around the world; examines why countries take different routes to nuclear development; and outlines the policy implications.

“There is a growing likelihood that the United States will have to confront proliferation attempts from not just foes but friends and frenemies as well,” Narang writes in the book.

Sprinters and hedgers

In recent decades, scholarship has usually focused on why countries acquire nuclear weapons—with the leading answers being security, prestige, and domestic political dynamics. But Narang’s book centers the question of how, not why, countries seek to become nuclear-equipped.

“No one had asked how states pursue nuclear weapons, and examined the different ways they have to deal with nonproliferation [agreements], their own resource constraints, domestic politics, and states trying to stop them,” Narang says.

At least 29 countries have made efforts to become nuclear; 19 have specifically tried to develop nuclear bombs, and 10 have succeeded. Narang’s book puts all of them into four categories: countries he labels “sprinters,” “hedgers,” those benefitting from “sheltered pursuit,” and “hidiers.”

The “sprinters,” the simplest category to understand, consist of the US, Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, China, and India—big countries that could develop nuclear weapons independently, and did.

Then there are “hedgers,” the countries that have potential to develop nuclear weapons but hold off doing so, because of geopolitical considerations or a lack of domestic political support. Germany, Japan, and South Korea are US allies who are not eager to make themselves targets for nuclear-armed states, and instead work with the US on defense matters. Should US support waver, those countries might be more likely to pursue their own programs.

Seeking the Bomb actually details three subcategories of hedging. Japan and Germany are “insurance hedgers,” wary of American abandonment. “Hard hedgers,” such as Sweden or Switzerland, are not as close to the US but still decided not to pursue weapons acquisition. And “technical hedgers,” including Argentina and Brazil, have technological pieces in place for nuclear programs but have not weaponized those capabilities.

“Hedging is very prominent across countries, including Japan, South Korea, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran,” Narang says. “It’s a really meaningful category that is written out of the proliferation literature because we all focus on states that get the bomb, and not the ones that don’t know if they want it yet. They put the pieces in place to exercise the option quickly if they decide to.”

briefings

Women's rights and rising threats to press freedom worldwide

Michelle English, CIS



Ada Petriczko (center) stands with MIT professors Sally Haslanger (left) and Libby McDonald. Petriczko participated in their Gender and Development course at the MIT D-Lab.

On February 3, Petriczko explored autocracy's assault on free media at a CIS Starr Forum event featuring experts from Poland, Hungary, and Russia. The video is available on the MIT CIS YouTube channel.

Photo courtesy Ada Petriczko

To Ada Petriczko, being born a woman can be a matter of life or death. Hailing from Poland, she reports on sexual violence and gender injustices around the globe. As a human rights journalist, her mission is to amplify the voices of women who have been systematically silenced by their communities and governments. Their stories have to be heard, she argues, in order to reshape our societies. This includes reporting on her home country, where democratic stability and women's rights are increasingly under threat.

Petriczko joined the Center for International Studies (CIS) last fall as its Elizabeth Neuffer Fellow. The fellowship is awarded annually by the International Women's Media Foundation and provides its recipient with research opportunities at MIT and further training at the *Boston Globe* and the *New York Times*.

Recently, she sat down to discuss her guiding principles as a journalist, the challenges facing her craft, and the rewarding experiences of this

fellowship. She also weighs in on the rise of autocracy in Central and Eastern Europe.

Q: One of your fields of interest is ethics in journalism. What does it mean to be an ethical journalist to you? And what are some of the challenges that ethical journalism faces today?

A: I don't believe in objectivity, but I do believe in fairness. Ethical journalism is about being fair to the facts and being fair to the people you're writing about. Aidan White, an esteemed journalist who founded the Ethical Journalism Network, told me in an interview that there are about 400 different journalism codes of conduct in the world, but if you examine them closely, they all boil down to the same five core principles: accuracy, independence, impartiality, humanity, and accountability. I try to play by these rules.

I report on sexual violence and other human rights violations within vulnerable communities and have been in situations in which people don't want to share their experiences. I always respect their requests and back out, even if I've traveled far for the story. This can be a deal breaker in our current news landscape, which is extremely fast-paced and demanding. Ethical journalism takes more time and more thought. But I've found ways to talk about taboos without violating them. And that is oftentimes even more powerful.

We are facing a transitional moment in the information ecosystem. The rise of social media, and the obsolete financial models for media outlets, have negatively impacted

ethical journalism. Time and money are needed to support in-depth reportage, which is becoming increasingly limited.

The global rise of autocracy, of course, is also challenging democratic institutions, including the freedom of press and speech. And the Covid-19 pandemic has provided crumbling democracies the perfect excuse to do just that.

In Poland, for example, we're facing a humanitarian crisis on the Belarusian border where thousands of migrants are seeking refuge from horrific situations. Soon after the Covid-19 outbreak, the Polish government banned reporters from entering the border region to cover the crisis. This is without precedent in the post-war history of Europe.

NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] and multinational organizations around the globe are starting to address these issues as real threats. Maria Ressa, who received the Nobel Peace Prize for journalism, and whom I've recently interviewed for the *Boston Globe*, is championing an international fund for journalists. So this brings me an element of hope.

Q: You've partnered with journalists from other countries for certain projects, including Witch Hunt. Tell us more about this style of work — referred to as cross-border journalism—and why it is important.

A: In the cross-border method, journalists work as partners on one story but remain within their respective countries, cultures, and ethnicities. This kind of reportage allows a journalist to bring a unique perspective and expertise to the story without having to travel hundreds or thousands of miles. The Panama Papers is probably the most famous example of this kind of reporting; a global team worked together to expose the corruption of the offshore finance industry.

Cross-border journalism provides a cheaper, more culturally sensitive and ecologically conscious alternative to classic foreign reporting. That said, the traditional model has many benefits. There are stories in which the perspective of an outsider is simply priceless. I've spent the better part of my career on assignments in India and South America, and as much as I love working on location, I've realized over the years that this type of reporting is becoming unsustainable. The climate crisis and the other threats I discussed earlier, will make the traditional style of foreign reporting more and more difficult and rare.

On top of that, the cross-border model provides an opportunity to hear from journalists who are not part of the mainstream, usually Anglo Saxon media. We all read the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, the *Atlantic*, and the *Boston Globe*, which are amazing outlets with long traditions and high journalistic standards. But there's also an inherent bias at work there. Even though English is the lingua franca of today, a journalist who is not a native speaker has a very slim chance of getting hired as staff in one of these major outlets.

briefings

Networking on a global scale

MISTI



MISTI is MIT's flagship international education program, with internship and research opportunities spanning more than 25 countries across six continents. In a typical year, MISTI facilitates over 1,200 in-person student placements around the world. While the pandemic paused travel, programs doubled down on their commitment to creating connections between MIT and the global community.

intern host, the TATA Group, was a partner in the development of the series, and many of their executives attended as speakers for the sessions.

When it came to developing a virtual summer program, identifying an ideal host partner from one of MISTI's many programs was paramount. "TATA has traditionally been a very strong partner for the MIT-India program, but they also have lots of activity and work in the UK, so we thought this overlap would be a great way to engage students and constituents at TATA alike, as well as bringing in exciting UK partner organizations," says Barnes.

"The goal was to provide students with an opportunity to engage with industry leaders and hear their insights on trends and career advice from their respective sectors," continues Das. "It turned out that the perfect intersection of these industries lay with TATA and MISTI's UK partners."

Students from across campus were eager to get involved. "Being able to speak to industry leaders from different countries about the unique social and political issues they confront while developing new technology allows me to gain a less American-centric view of innovation, which I strive to do," said political science sophomore Leela Fredlund. "I would like to get their advice on my future career path so that I can make the best possible decisions given the opportunities presented to me," said electrical engineering and computer science sophomore Anish Ravichandran.

Each session was facilitated by a different group of students who were responsible for connecting with that week's speakers and developing a question-and-answer session. The program allowed the speakers to present an overview of their work, along with their own personal advice on career tips in today's industry. Speakers from the TATA Group (including TATA Motors, TATA Digital, TATA Consultancy Services, and TATA Communications), Arrival, Perlego, Bethnal Green Ventures, Mobilus Labs, and BT all offered unique in-the-field insights on how to begin careers in their industries.

While international travel continues to be limited in much of the world, MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) sought to capitalize on the increased digital connectivity brought about by the pandemic by developing cutting-edge virtual programs designed to allow students to be exposed to international education and build connections around the world.

MIT-India Program Manager Nureen Das and MIT-UK Program Manager Stephen Barnes came together to create the MISTI Career Conversations Series, a weekly virtual lunch meeting between current MIT students and top executives from the industries of electric vehicles, the digital economy, and telecommunications. MIT-India's long-time

Translating one's passion into a career path was a common theme among speakers. "Find what you're passionate about; otherwise, you're not going to have fun, and that's a problem," said G Napo Montano, vice president of mobile robotics at Arrival. Ankur Jindal, vice president and global head of corporate venturing and innovation at TATA Communications, echoed Montano's thought with a small caveat, urging students to be passionate about what they do, but remain flexible to the way their career may take shape. He warned against the old model of the 10-year plan, noting the rapidly changing market.

Another common theme in career tips was the importance of taking risks. "I'll say this very cliché, maybe 'Boomer statement,'" joked MIT alumnus Jordan McRae, now CEO and founder of Mobilus Labs. "Take as much risk as you can when you're young. I mean, you should always be taking risks throughout your life, but it's easier when you're younger and have less responsibility. So, take more." Rajarshi Purkayastha, head of pre-sales at TATA Communications, added that if one doesn't take chances, their career will stall. Failure, he noted, is often something of which to be proud.

Speakers also offered advice and insight regarding networking. "Networking is awkward—everyone thinks so," said Nelly Lavielle, portfolio manager at Bethnal Green Ventures. "But practice makes perfect," she added. Honey Bajaj SM '17, head of customer experience and insights at Tata Digital, was optimistic. "Follow your heart, and just go to anybody. Everybody, I think, in the world is approachable," said Bajaj.

Feedback from the students and speakers alike was overwhelmingly positive. "It helped me to develop a better picture of what different jobs look like," said computation and cognition sophomore Simon Radhakrishnan. "Up until now, I basically only knew about research jobs and my parents' careers, and now I know more about the possibilities for me."

"One of the biggest takeaways I had from this series on the sectors discussed is that innovation is driving all of them to change fundamentally and rapidly," noted mechanical engineering junior Aljazzy Alahmadi.

Alumni were also in attendance at several of the sessions, and benefited from participating in the discussions. Bajaj, a graduate of the Integrated Design and Management program at the MIT Sloan School of Management, reflects upon how special it was to connect with current students at MIT. "It was nostalgic for me, from an alumni perspective. In the future, we could do a session with alumni and current student cohorts for specific industry areas."

"As an alum working in finance, it was great to participate in the seminar series focused on ESG [environmental, social, and governance] innovations. Speakers and content were of uniformly high quality. Having students facilitate the sessions and asking thoughtful questions of industry leaders worked really well. The conversations were stimulating and engaging and provided excellent food for thought around the future of work," reflects Archan Basu MBA '99. "Renewable energy and ESG investing are close to my heart and are rapidly gaining importance."

What's the next chapter in Afghanistan?

Peter Dizikes, MIT News



The Starr Forum event, “US, Afghanistan, 9/11: Finished or Unfinished Business?” included (clockwise from top left) Carol Saivetz, Senior Advisor, MIT Security Studies Program; Barry Posen, Ford International Professor of Political Science, MIT; Vanda Felbab-Brown, Senior Fellow, Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology, Brookings; and Juan Cole, Richard P Mitchell Collegiate Professor of History, University of Michigan. The video is available on the MIT CIS YouTube channel.

Juan Cole, a professor of history at the University of Michigan who specializes in the Middle East, suggested that large-scale military ambitions in Afghanistan constituted a case of strategic overreach. The Taliban controlled much of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, providing a haven for the Al Qaeda terrorist group that carried out the September 11, 2001, attacks on the US. But any military activities beyond those aimed at dismantling Al Qaeda, he stated, were likely to be quixotic.

“The initial US attack on Afghanistan could be justified,” Cole said. “Al Qaeda had training camps there which were used to plot out 9/11, and so destroying those camps, making sure they couldn’t continue to operate, was a legitimate military mission.”

However, Cole proposed, “occupying an entire country of millions of people, and a difficult country to run and occupy” was “foredoomed to fail.” The US inevitably worked more closely with some ethnic groups and not others; local elites siphoned off foreign aid; and some militarized factions who had been aligned with the US reacted strongly against seeing foreign troops in the country. All this meant US expectations were soon “met with reality on the ground,” Cole said.

Felbab-Brown emphasized two long-running factors that helped undermine US efforts to build a new Afghan state. For one thing, she noted, neither the US nor any other country could reorient neighboring Pakistan away from its decades-long alignment with the Taliban.

“Essentially, the United States never resolved how to dissuade Pakistan from providing multifaceted support for the Taliban, down to the last days of July and August ...

After nearly 20 years, the US has withdrawn its troops from Afghanistan, and the Taliban has regained control over the country. In light of those developments, a panel of foreign-policy experts on Tuesday addressed two separate but related questions: Why did the US military action in Afghanistan fall short, and what comes next for the strife-ridden country?

The event occurred as observers are still digesting the rapid collapse of the US-backed national government in Afghanistan, which could not maintain power as the US undertook its military withdrawal.

“Even I didn’t think they would go down in 10 days,” said Vanda Felbab-Brown PhD ’07, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution’s Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology.

As to why the US could not help build a more solid state in Afghanistan given 20 years, the panelists offered multiple answers.

and throughout the entire 20 years, the material support, safe havens, and all kinds of other support," she said.

Secondly, in a country where 40 to 50 percent of income in the last two decades has come from foreign aid, Felhab-Brown noted, the US and its allies were not able to determine "how to persuade local governing elites to moderate their role" and create more satisfactory habits of local administration.

All that said, Felbab-Brown pointed to positive consequences of US efforts in Afghanistan over the last 20 years, including economic benefits and educational gains for women in particular. "There is still a big difference between the poverty of today [in Afghanistan] and the mass starvation and huge degradation of civil and human rights that was the case in the 1990s," Felbab-Brown said.

So, where is Afghanistan headed, assuming the Taliban consolidate control over most or all of the country?

"The worst outcome is rule that over time will come to look like the 1990s," Felhab-Brown said, referring to the highly repressive Taliban policies that provided virtually no rights for women and massive restrictions on cultural activity.

Alternately, Felbab-Brown suggested, "The best outcome is an Iran-like system, with both the political structures of Iran ... and a set of political freedoms where women can have education, can have jobs, can leave a house without a guardian, a crucial condition." That would still represent a restrictive state by Western standards, and as Felhab-Brown suggested, it is also possible that the Taliban will settle on a more restrictive set of policies.

The international-relations repercussions of a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan remain uncertain as well, noted Carol Saivetz, a senior advisor and Russia specialist with the MIT Security Studies Program. She observed that while some in Russia might take satisfaction in watching the US struggle while departing Afghanistan, Russia itself has long-running concerns about the spread of radical Islamic groups in its sphere of influence.

"I think that it's a short-term gain ... that longer-term I think could be very problematic for the Russians," Saivetz said. "I think they are really scared of any kind of threat of Islamist terrorism overtaking Russia again." Saivetz also observed that the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, which lasted from 1979 to 1989, indicated the difficulties of trying to transform the country, especially in its rural settings. "The Soviet experience in Afghanistan was really very similar to ours," Saivetz said.

In his concluding thoughts, Posen called the winding up of the US military presence "a tragic chapter in a 20-year book" and noted that with so much of the Afghanistan economy having consisted of foreign aid programs now seemingly about to end, outside countries still have difficult decisions to make about what sort of relationship they might pursue with the country's new leaders. "The West has a lot of deep ethical choices to make here, about its relationship, not just with the Taliban, but the Afghan people," Posen said. ■

Can the world change course on climate?

SHASS



Nazli Choucri is a professor of political science at MIT and a CIS research affiliate. The author and/or editor of twelve books, she is also the founding editor of the MIT Press book series **Global Environmental Accord: Strategies for Sustainability and Institutional Innovation**.

Photo courtesy Department of Political Science

Nazli Choucri is a professor of political science with expertise on climate, sustainability, international relations, and cyberpolitics. She is the architect and director of the Global System for Sustainable Development, an evolving knowledge networking system centered on sustainability problems and solution strategies. The author and/or editor of twelve books, she is also the founding editor of the MIT Press book series *Global Environmental Accord: Strategies for Sustainability and Institutional Innovation*. MIT SHASS Communications spoke with Professor Choucri this fall, soon after the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

Q: The impacts of climate change—including storms, floods, wildfires, and droughts—have the potential to destabilize nations, yet they are not constrained by borders. What international developments most concern you in terms of addressing climate change and its myriad ecological and social impacts?

Climate change is a global issue. By definition, and a long history of practice, countries focus on their own priorities and challenges. Over time, we have seen the gradual development of norms reflecting shared interests, and the institutional arrangements to support and pursue the global good. What concerns me most is that general responses to the climate crisis are being framed in broad terms; the overall pace of change remains perilously slow; and uncertainty remains about operational action and implementation of stated intent. We have just seen the completion of the 26th meeting of states devoted to climate change, the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26). In some ways this is positive. Yet, past commitments remain unfulfilled, creating added stress in an already stressful political situation.

Industrial countries are uneven in their recognition of, and responses to, climate change. This may signal uncertainty about whether climate matters are sufficiently compelling to call for immediate action. Alternatively, the push for changing course may seem too costly at a time when other imperatives—such as employment, economic growth, or protecting borders—inevitably dominate discourse and decisions. Whatever the cause, the result has been an unwillingness to take strong action. Unfortunately, climate change remains within the domain of “low politics,” although there are signs the issue is making a slow but steady shift to “high politics”—those issues deemed vital to the existence of the state. This means that short-term priorities, such as those noted above, continue to shape national politics and international positions and, by extension, to obscure the existential threat revealed by scientific evidence.

As for developing countries, these are overwhelmed by internal challenges, and managing the difficulties of daily life always takes priority over other challenges, however compelling. Long-term thinking is a luxury, but daily bread is a necessity. Non-state actors—including registered nongovernmental organizations, climate organizations, sustainability support groups, activists of various sorts, and in some cases much of civil society—have been left with a large share of the responsibility for educating and

convincing diverse constituencies of the consequences of inaction on climate change. But many of these institutions carry their own burdens and struggle to manage current pressures. The international community, through its formal and informal institutions, continues to articulate the perils of climate change and to search for a powerful consensus that can prove effective both in form and in function. The general contours are agreed upon—more or less. But leadership of, for, and by the global collective is elusive and difficult to shape. Most concerning of all is the clear reluctance to address head-on the challenge of planning for changes that we know will occur. The reality that we are all being affected—in different ways and to different degrees—has yet to be sufficiently appreciated by everyone, everywhere. Yet, in many parts of the world, major shifts in climate will create pressures on human settlements, spur forced migrations, or generate social dislocations. Some small island states, for example, may not survive a sea-level surge. Everywhere there is a need to cut emissions, and this means adaptation and/or major changes in economic activity and in lifestyle.

The discourse and debate at COP26 reflect all of such persistent features in the international system. So far, the largest achievements center on the common consensus that more must be done to prevent the rise in temperature from creating a global catastrophe. This is not enough, however. Differences remain, and countries have yet to specify what cuts in emissions they are willing to make.

Echoes of who is responsible for what remains strong. The thorny matter of the unfulfilled pledge of \$100 billion once promised by rich countries to help countries to reduce their emissions remained unresolved.

At the same time, however, some important agreements were reached. The United States and China announced they would make greater efforts to cut methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. More than 100 countries agreed to end deforestation. India joined the countries committed to attain zero emissions by 2070. And on matters of finance, countries agreed to a two-year plan to determine how to meet the needs of the most vulnerable countries.

Q: In what ways do you think the tools and insights from political science can advance efforts to address climate change and its impacts?

I prefer to take a multidisciplinary view of the issues at hand, rather than focus on the tools of political science alone. Disciplinary perspectives can create siloed views and positions that undermine any overall drive toward consensus. The scientific evidence is pointing to, even anticipating, pervasive changes that transcend known and established parameters of social order all across the globe.

That said, political science provides important insight, even guidance, for addressing the impacts of climate change in some notable ways. One is understanding the extent to which our formal institutions enable discussion, debate, and decisions about the directions we can take collectively to adapt, adjust, or even depart from the established practices of managing social order.

briefings

Can the world change course on climate?

"Climate change has been recognized as a global phenomenon. Imperatives for cooperation are necessary. No one can go it alone."

If we consider politics as the allocation of values in terms of who gets what, when, and how, then it becomes clear that the current allocation requires a change in course. Coordination and cooperation across the jurisdictions of sovereign states is foundational for any response to climate change impacts.

We have already recognized, and to some extent, developed targets for reducing carbon emissions—a central impact from traditional forms of energy use—and are making notable efforts to shift toward alternatives. This move is an easy one compared to all the work that needs to be done to address climate change. But, in taking this step we have learned quite a bit that might help in creating a necessary consensus for cross-jurisdiction coordination and response.

Respecting individuals and protecting life is increasingly recognized as a global value—at least in principle. As we work to change course, new norms will be developed, and political science provides important perspectives on how to establish such norms. We will be faced with demands for institutional design, and these will need to embody our guiding values. For example, having learned to recognize the burdens of inequity, we can establish the value of equity as foundational for our social order both now and as we recognize and address the impacts of climate change.

Q: You teach a class on Sustainability Development: Theory and Practice. Broadly speaking, what are goals of this class? What lessons do you hope students will carry with them into the future?

The goal of 17.181, my class on sustainability, is to frame as clearly as possible the concept of sustainable development (sustainability) with attention to conceptual, empirical, institutional, and policy issues.

The course centers on human activities. Individuals are embedded in complex interactive systems: the social system, the natural environment, and the constructed cyber domain—each with distinct temporal, spatial, and dynamic features. Sustainability issues intersect with, but cannot be folded into, the impacts of climate change. Sustainability places human beings in social systems at the core of what must be done to respect the imperatives of a highly complex natural environment.

We consider sustainability an evolving knowledge domain with attendant policy implications. It is driven by events on the ground, not by revolution in academic or theoretical concerns per se. Overall, sustainable development refers to the process of meeting the needs of current and future generations, without undermining the resilience of the life-supporting properties, the integrity of social systems, or the supports of the human-constructed cyberspace.

More specifically, we differentiate among four fundamental dimensions and their necessary conditions: (a) ecological systems—exhibiting balance and resilience; (b) economic production and consumption—with equity and efficiency; (c) governance

and politics—with participation and responsiveness; and (d) institutional performance—demonstrating adaptation and incorporating feedback.

The core proposition is this: If all conditions hold, then the system is (or can be) sustainable. Then, we must examine the critical drivers—people, resources, technology, and their interactions followed by a review and assessment of evolving policy responses. Then we ask: What are new opportunities?

I would like students to carry forward these ideas and issues: What has been deemed “normal” in modern Western societies and in developing societies seeking to emulate the Western model is damaging humans in many ways—all well known. Yet only recently have alternatives begun to be considered to the traditional economic growth model based on industrialization and high levels of energy use. To make changes, we must first understand the underlying incentives, realities, and choices that shape a whole set of dysfunctional behaviors and outcomes. We then need to delve deep into the driving sources and consequences, and to consider the many ways in which our known “normal” can be adjusted—in theory and in practice.

Q: In confronting an issue as formidable as global climate change, what gives you hope?

I see a few hopeful signs; among them: The scientific evidence is clear and compelling. We are no longer discussing whether there is climate change; or if we will face major challenges of unprecedented proportions; or even how to bring about an international consensus on the salience of such threats.

Climate change has been recognized as a global phenomenon. Imperatives for cooperation are necessary. No one can go it alone. Major efforts have and are being made in world politics to forge action agendas with specific targets.

The issue appears to be on the verge of becoming one of “high politics” in the United States.

Younger generations are more sensitive to the reality that we are altering the life-supporting properties of our planet. They are generally more educated, skilled, and open to addressing such challenges than their elders.

However disappointing the results of COP26 might seem, the global community is moving in the right direction.

None of the above points, individually or jointly, translates into an effective response to the known impacts of climate change—let alone the unknown. But, this is what gives me hope. ■

MISTI launches career connections energy course

Following the success of the MISTI Career Conversations: Energy lecture series in 2020, MISTI launched a 3-credit course—SP.257 MISTI Career Connections Energy—for the fall 2021 semester. The course was taught by MISTI program staff Nureen Das (MIT-India, South Asia) and Madeline Smith (MIT-Denmark). It was designed to give students interested in the energy sector an opportunity to engage with leaders and mentors from the field and explore related career paths. In addition to company representatives from MISTI's global network, students also heard from MIT alumni about the importance of an international mindset when considering the future energy landscape. Lourdes Melgar Palacios, PhD '92, and a 2016 Robert E Wilhelm Fellow at CIS, was among the alumni who spoke. She offered advice for working in the renewable energy sector and encouraged the students to persevere in their studies. She also shared about her own struggles while studying for her PhD at MIT. Melgar's concluding advice was for the students to pursue their passions and to lean into the alumni network and MISTI.

Contemporary military topics during IAP

This year's military fellows at the Security Studies Program (SSP) presented multiple talks on technical, doctrinal, and strategic developments from within the US Armed Forces during MIT's Independent Activities Period (IAP). The fellows program represents a unique opportunity for both scholars and practitioners of international security to produce policy-relevant research and academic programming. With representation from the four largest military service branches, the fellows serve as an essential resource for the SSP community and beyond.

Focus on Russia seminars offered as Starr Forums

Each semester the Center, together with the Security Studies Program, and the MISTI MIT-Russia Program, presents the Focus on Russia speaker series. The talks explore a number of current issues in Russian domestic and foreign policies. Recent events, which were co-branded as Starr Forums, included, "The Russian-Ukrainian conflict," with Dmitry Gorenburg (Harvard University), Olga Oliker (International Crisis Group), Serhii Plokhii (Harvard), Carol Saivetz (MIT), and Elizabeth Wood (MIT); "The future of US-Russian relations," with Barry Posen (MIT) and Dmitri Trenin (Carnegie Moscow Center); and "Navalny: Putin's nemesis, Russia's future?" with Morvan Lallouet (University of Kent) and Ben Noble (University College London). Focus on Russia is co-chaired by MIT's Carol Saivetz and Elizabeth Wood. The Starr Forum series also included multiple talks on a wide range of pressing global issues.

Visit our website and events calendar for a complete listing of fall 2021/winter 2022 activities. Many of our events are captured on video and available to view on our YouTube channel.

FEATURED

Human rights and technology fellowships

The Center's Human Rights and Technology Fellowship program awarded fellowships to the following seven graduate students, including one two-person team: Neil Gaikwad, PhD student in the Media Lab, will work on equitable design framework of humanitarian AI for sustainability and global inclusion; Eyal Hanfling, PhD student in political science, will work on social media as a tool for witnessing and documenting discrimination in South Asia; Anisha Gade and Wonyoung So, PhD students in DUSP, will work on tenant screening in public housing and housing vouching programs; Ambar Reyes-Lopez, graduate student in the Media Lab, will explore live streaming and crowd-sourced media production concerning how Latina-American migrants document, produce, and distribute information in times of crisis in NYC; Agrawal Surbhi, graduate student in DUSP, will work on a value-based approach for urban digitization; and Mona Vijaykumar, graduate student in DUSP, will explore technology as a double-edged sword.

Joint Seminar on South Asian Politics

The Center, along with Brown's Watson Institute and Harvard's Weatherhead Center and its South Asia Institute, offers the South Asian Politics seminars each semester. Recent talks include: "How do gender quotas impact accountability?" with Zuheir Desai (El University); "Vaccinating India against Covid: Lessons from history," with Harish Naraindas (Jawaharlal Nehru University); "The past and future of India-China relations," featuring Vijay Gokhale (Carnegie India), Shivshankar Menon (Ashoka University), Kanti Prasad Bajpai (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy), and Vipin Narang (MIT); and "Political misinformation in India: Evidence from experimental solutions," with Sumitra Badrinathan (University of Oxford).

Emile Bustani Middle East Seminar

Each semester the Bustani Seminar invites scholars, journalists, consultants, and other experts from the Middle East, Europe, and the United States to present recent research findings on contemporary politics, society, and culture, and economic and technological development in the Middle East. Recent talks included: "The US and Middle East: What went wrong?" with Steven Simon (MIT); "Gaza: Reflections on decades of research," with Sara Roy (Harvard); and "Greed, graft, and gridlock: The political economy of Lebanon's financial collapse," with Christophe Abi-Nassif (Middle East Institute).

SSP Wednesday Seminars

The Security Studies Program seminar series featured weekly talks on campus for the MIT community and virtually on YouTube for the public, including: "Strategies of restraint and US foreign policy," with Emma Ashford (Atlantic Council); "Then what? Assessing the strategic implications of Chinese control of Taiwan," with Arturo C Sotomayor (George Washington University); "US military innovation for the digital age," with Carla Norrlöf (University of Toronto); "The drivers of Chinese foreign policy," with Erica De Bruin (Hamilton College); and "The United States' dangerous lead nation obsession," with Paul Musgrave (University of Massachusetts, Amherst).

end

notes

PEOPLE

CIS Research Affiliate and Co-Director of the CIS Human Rights and Fellowship Program **Anat Biletzki** spoke on "Technology and the Changing Face of Political Activism" for the Boston-Bergen Forum on Digital Futures, an event series of UMass Boston's Applied Ethics Center and MediaFutures Bergen. The series, which took place in October 2021, was co-sponsored by the CIS Human Rights and Fellowship Program.

CIS Research Affiliate **Malcolm Byrne** discussed his book *Worlds Apart: A Documentary History of US-Iranian Relations, 1978-2018* at the Wilson Center on September 21, 2021.

Professor of Political Science **Nazli Choucri** was featured in "Can the world change course on climate?" by SHASS on December 10, 2021.

Ford International Professor in the Social Sciences and Director of MIT Sociotechnical Systems Research Center **Fotini Christia**'s work was featured in "Community policing in the Global South" by *MIT News* on November 29, 2021.

CIS Research Affiliate and SSP Alumna **Fiona Cunningham** received runner-up for the Best Research Article on US Foreign Policy and Grand Strategy by Johns Hopkins University's Kissinger Center's 2021 America in the World Consortium (AWC) for her article, "The Maritime Rung on the Escalation Ladder: Naval Blockades in a US-China Conflict," appearing in *Security Studies*.

Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science and Director of the MIT Security Studies Program **Taylor Fravel** spoke on "US-China first strike showdown: Rising nuclear tensions for the National Committee on US-China Relations" on December 5, 2021; and on "The impact of Covid-19 on China's military: A conversation with Taylor Fravel" for the Center for Strategic and International Studies on August 29, 2021. He was a task force member for *China's New Direction*:

Challenges and Opportunities for US Policy, published by the Asia Society Center on US-China Relations, UC San Diego, 2021.

CIS Research Affiliate and SSP Alumnus **Eugene Gholz** spoke on "Refusing to choose: Did the global posture review fail?" for Defense Priorities on December 10, 2021.

CIS Research Affiliate **Claude Grunitzky** was featured in "The Transformative Power of Social Capital" in *SheMoney* on February 2, 2022; and in "Equity Alliance, Investor in Minority- and Female-Led Venture Funds, Raises \$28.6 Million" in the *Wall Street Journal* on January 31, 2022. He moderated the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa conference on Africa's Youth on December 20, 2021.

PhD Student **Eyal Hanfling** received a Human Rights and Technology Fellowship from CIS.

CIS Principal Research Scientist **Eric Heginbotham** presented on "Roles and Missions in the US-Japan Alliance" for Sasakawa Peace Research Institute on November 9, 2021.

CIS and MISTI Research Affiliate **Steven Koltai** spoke at the Midcoast Forum on Foreign Affairs about the Infrastructure Bill and particularly its broadband-related provisions in September 2021. He will be advising and co-teaching with Associate Director of MISTI and Managing Director of MISTI's programs in the Middle East **David Dolev** in the spring course: Middle East Cross-border Development and Leadership.

CIS Research Affiliate and SSP Alumnus **Peter Krause's** co-edited book, *Stories from the Field: A Guide to Navigating Fieldwork in Political Science*, was named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title for 2021.

end

notes

SSP Administrative Assistant **Lynne Levine** retired from the Institute after close to 30 years of dedicated work at the Security Studies Program.

Total Professor of Political Science and Contemporary Africa and Director of the MIT-Africa Program **Evan Lieberman** was named director of the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI).

SSP Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow **David C Logan** was a panelist for the event "The US, China, and Nuclear Deterrence in the Hypersonic Era," hosted by the Jamestown Foundation on December 1, 2021.

Frank Stanton Professor of Nuclear Security and Political Science **Vipin Narang** spoke at a book talk, "How Do States Seek the Bomb?" for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on February 2, 2022. CIS Affiliate and SSP Alumna **Fiona Cunningham** moderated the talk. Narang and his recent book were featured in "A look at how countries go nuclear—and why some do not" by Peter Dizikes in *MIT News* on January 11, 2022. He spoke on "A nuclear threat from the Taliban?" for the media outlet *Thirteen* on September 21, 2021.

Associate Professor of Political Science **Richard Nielsen** moderated a Starr Forum: Global Jihad: A Brief History on September 21, 2021.

Professor of Political Science and former Dean of SHASS **Melissa Nobles** was appointed Chancellor of MIT. Her work was featured in "Putting ideas into action" by *Technology Review* on December 17, 2021.

CIS Elizabeth Neuffer Fellow **Ada Petriczko** moderated a Starr Forum: "Autocracy's Assault on Press Freedom" on February 3, 2022. She was featured in "Women's rights and rising threats to press freedom worldwide" in *MIT News* on February 2, 2022.

Ford International Professor of Political Science **Barry Posen** participated in a debate on "US Alliances: Fit for Purpose?" at the Realism and Restraint Conference in DC on November 3, 2021. He also spoke on "Maritime Power and NATO," at the Royal United Services Institute and Royal Navy Conference; and was a panelist at a Starr Forum: "US, Afghanistan, 9/11: Finished or Unfinished Business?" on September 14, 2021.

PhD Student **Apekshya Prasai** and PhD Candidate **Aidan Milliff**, were named 2021-22 Peace Scholars by the US Institute of Peace. They both received grants to continue their dissertation research. Prasai's research is on female rebel involvement in the Nepali Civil War. Milliff's research regards the strategies people pursue to keep themselves safe during complex, violent political events.

SSP Senior Adviser **Carol Saivetz** organized and moderated three Starr Forums/ Focus on Russia events: "The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict: A prologue to WWII or another frozen conflict?" on January 28, 2022; "The Future of US-Russian Relations: More of the Same or Something Different?" on November 9, 2021; and "Putin's Nemesis, Russia's Future?" on October 27, 2021. She spoke on "Where things stand between the US and Russia" for *NECN* on January 10, 2022. She spoke at the Starr Forum: "US, Afghanistan, 9/11: Finished or Unfinished Business?" on September 14, 2021.

Ford International Professor of Political Science and Director of the MIT Chile Program **Ben Schneider** was named an MIT 2021 Committed to Caring (C2C) honoree. C2C recognizes faculty members that go above and beyond in their mentorship of graduate students.

PhD Candidate **Meicen Sun** was featured in "Data flow's decisive role on the global stage," by MIT's Department of Political Science on September 13, 2021.

CIS Principal Research Scientist and Executive Director **John Tirman** moderated a Starr Forum: "The Unfinished Presidency of Jimmy Carter" on October 21, 2021.

end notes

SSP Senior Research Associate **Jim Walsh** made several media appearances including "China is not looking to start a war with US" for *Fox News* on November 14, 2021; "US general says China's hypersonic missile test is 'close' to a Sputnik moment" for *WBUR Here and Now* on October 28, 2021; "Gen Mark Milley faces criticism, support over call to Chinese counterpart," for *WBUR Here and Now* on September 17, 2021; and "America's longest war is over. What did the US gain from 20 years in Afghanistan?" for *WBUR Here & Now*, August 31, 2021.

Professor of History and Co-director of the MIT Russia Program **Elizabeth Wood** was an academic visitor at Balliol College, Oxford (UK) for fall "Michaelmas" term. While in England, she gave two talks: "Performing Putin: Crimea and the Spectacle of a Resurgent Empire in Russia, 2014-2018" (at both Oxford and Cambridge) and "Five Faces of Masculinity: How Masculine Image Making Has Served the Russian President" (at Oxford). She also co-chaired and spoke at a Starr Forum: "Russian and Ukrainian Crisis" on January 28, 2022. The MIT Russia Program (which includes Wood's Co-director David Gamarnik and Managing Director Katya Zabrovski) and the MIT Russian Studies Program, where Wood serves as faculty advisor, received grants from MIT Skoltech.

PUBLISHED

CIS Alumnus **Jamie Baker**, "AI for Judges: A Framework," Center for Security and Emerging Technology, December 2021. The Robert E Wilhelm Fellowship at CIS helped support this research.

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CIS Research Affiliate **Orkideh Behrouzan** (with Tara Sepehri Far), "The impact of sanctions on medical education in Iran," *Rethinking Iran*, The SAIS Initiative for Research on Contemporary Iran, Johns Hopkins University Washington, DC, 2021.

CIS Senior Research Fellow **Joel Brenner**, "Reflections on the IG's Role, Stellarwind, and the Information Sharing Fiasco," in Lessons for the next twenty years: what we've learned in the two decades since 9/11, *Journal of National Security Law & Policy*, Volume 12 Number 1—Special 9/11 20th Anniversary Issue, September 9, 2021.

CIS Research Affiliate **Malcolm Byrne** (with Kian Byrne), *Worlds Apart: A Documentary History of US-Iranian Relations, 1978-2018*, Cambridge University Press; Annotated edition (August 26, 2021).

Ford International Professor in the Social Sciences and Director of MIT Sociotechnical Systems Research Center **Fotini Christia** (with Graeme Blair & Jeremy M Weinstein), "Community policing is not one size fits all," *Foreign Policy*, November 29, 2021.

Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science and Director of the MIT Security Studies Program **Taylor Fravel** (with Task Force members), "China's military challenge," *China's New Direction: Challenges and Opportunities for US Policy*, Asia Society Center on US-China Relations, UC San Diego, 2021.

_____ (with **Fiona Cunningham**) "China's nuclear arsenal is growing. What does that mean for US-China relations?," *Washington Post Monkey Cage*, November 11, 2021.

CIS Principal Research Scientist **Eric Heginbotham**, "Is US foreign policy too hostile to China?," *Foreign Policy*, October 19, 2021.

_____ (with **Rachel Esplin Odell**) "Strait of emergency? Debating Beijing's threat to Taiwan," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2021.

Ford Career Development Assistant Professor in Political Economy and Urban Planning **Jason Jackson**, (with Aziza Ahmed) "Race, Risk and Personal Responsibility in the Covid-19 Response" *Columbia Law Review*, Volume 121 (3) April 1, 2021.

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Associate Professor of Political Science **Chappell Lawson** (with PhD Candidate **Sean Atkins**) "Cooperation amidst competition: cybersecurity partnership in the US financial services sector," *Journal of Cybersecurity*, Volume 7, Issue 1, 2021.

Assistant Professor of Political Science **Erik Lin-Greenberg** (with SSP and PhD Alumnus **Reid Pauly** and Jacquelyn Schneider), "Wargaming for International Relations Research," *European Journal of International Relations* 2022.

_____ (with Theo Milonopoulos) "Private Eyes in the Sky: How Commercial Satellites are Transforming Intelligence," *Foreign Affairs* (Online), 23 September, 2021.

SSP Research Candidate **Aidan Milliff**, "Facts Shape Feelings: Information, Emotions, and the Political Consequences of Violence," *Political Behavior*, Volume 43, October 2021.

Frank Stanton Professor of Nuclear Security and Political Science **Vipin Narang**, *Seeking the Bomb: Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation*, Princeton University Press (2022).

PhD Alumni **Cullen Nutt** and **Reid Pauly**, "Caught Red-Handed: How States Wield Proof to Coerce Wrongdoers," *International Security*, Volume 46, Number 2 (Fall 2021).

CIS Research Affiliate **Alessandro Orsini**, *Teoria Sociologica Classica e Contemporanea [Classic and Contemporary Sociological Theory]*, UTET Università, 2021.

CIS Elizabeth Neuffer Fellow **Ada Petriczko**, "Nobel Prize-winning journalist Maria Ressa won't be silenced," *The Boston Globe*, November 28, 2021.

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Ford International Professor of Political Science **Barry Posen**, "Ukraine: Unleashing the rhetorical dogs of war," *Just Security*, February 15, 2022.

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SSP Grand Strategy, Security, and Statecraft Fellow **Robert Ralston**, "US public prefers diplomacy over war on Ukraine," *Responsible Statecraft*, January 25, 2022.

_____ (with Ronald R Krebs), "More deferential but also more political: How Americans' views of the military have changed over 20 years," *War on the Rocks*, November 17, 2021.

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CIS Research Affiliate and SSP Alumnus **Erik Sand**, "Don't count your submarines before they're built," *War on the Rocks*, September 29, 2021.

Professor of Public Policy and Organization, Emeritus **Harvey Sapolsky** (with **Eugene Gholz**), "The defense innovation machine: Why the US will remain on the cutting edge," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Volume 44, Number 3 (2021).

CIS Robert E Wilhelm Fellow **Steven Simon** (with Jonathan Stevenson), "We need to think the unthinkable about our country," *The New York Times*, January 13, 2022.

_____ (with Daniel Benjamin) "Beyond forever war," *Foreign Affairs*, September 29, 2021.

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_____ "Reflecting on September 11, 20 years later," *MIT News*, September 9, 2021.

_____ (with Alan Richards), "Afghanistan was a Ponzi scheme sold to the American public," *Foreign Policy*, September 2, 2021.

PhD Student **Kunal Singh**, "Underplaying the China threat," *Hindustan Times*, November 11, 2021.

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PhD Candidate **Meicen Sun** (with Yasheng Huang), "Three Challenges to Manufacturing Digitalization and How to Overcome Them: Lessons from Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the People's Republic of China," in *Harnessing Digitalization for Sustainable Economic Development: Insights for Asia*, Asian Development Bank Institute, December 2021.

CIS Principal Research Scientist and Executive Director **John Tirman**, "History as it happens: Invisible carnage," *Washington Times*, February 8, 2022.

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Ford International Professor of Political Science **Stephen Van Evera** (with Michael O'Hanlon), "There is no NATO open-door policy," *The Hill*, January 27, 2022.

Professor of History and Co-director of the MIT Russia Program **Elizabeth Wood**, "Performing Memory and Its Limits: Vladimir Putin and World War II in Russia," in David L Hoffmann, ed., *The Memory of the Second World War in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia* (Routledge, 2021).

Elizabeth Wood on Russia's invasion of Ukraine

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According to media reports, one group for whom Putin's propaganda does seem to be working is a significant portion of Russians themselves. His control over the internal television media is now so complete that they are not even seeing the war. All media outlets are forbidden from calling the military incursion a "war," and the authorities are blocking ever more independent media that operate on the Internet, especially the TV station "Rain" and the program "Echo of Moscow." The "Fortress Russia" mentality that Putin has been building up for the last 10 years is working effectively, so that many (though definitely not all) Russians easily believe the official line that Russia is forced to respond to alleged NATO buildups in Ukraine and "Nazis" who have taken over the Ukrainian government. Harsh penalties for criticizing the war have been introduced, making it "treason" which is punishable by up to 20 years in prison. This makes it unlikely that widespread protests will have much effect on the Kremlin's decision-making.

With a 40-mile convoy bearing down on Kyiv, it is entirely possible that Russia will crush Ukraine, destroy the land they wanted to annex, and shed massive numbers of Ukrainian lives. They won't be able to claim the bloodlessness of their supposed victories in Georgia and Crimea. They may be able to suborn and oppress the Belarusian and Russian people as well, through sheer terror tactics. But it seems unlikely that they will be forgiven or understood or respected in the process. Respect has always been what these Russian leaders most want—to be respected on the world stage. Unfortunately, this war has completely undermined any hope of them attaining that respect. ■

On the constitutional void in Haiti

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A foreign policy informed by the sense that self-governance and the pursuit of equality has been and remains a struggle in both Haiti and the United States may go some way towards bringing about a more nuanced and constructive approach to Haiti's political crisis. And it might also help us in the United States to think a little more forthrightly about our own need for constitutional reform. The Constitution seems to carry with it (as it does in Justice Breyer's breast pocket) the status of an immaculate conception in our political culture. Haiti's constitutional crisis should also be an invitation for us to look hard at the extent to which our own institutions and traditions—the Supreme Court, the Senate, and state control of electoral policy, most conspicuously—can sometimes block the path towards more democratic governance and even send us veering frightfully close to the abyss of a constitutional void of our own.

At the same time, there is room to question the suggestion that a country like Haiti which finds itself pulled into the vortex of constitutional vacuum has only to blame its failure to accept the "rule of law." Only the thinnest and narrowest account of Haitian history can support such a conclusion. France and the United States, in particular, have had especially important roles to play in the ups and downs of the rule of law in Haiti, and they have rarely played these roles in the spirit of a disinterested friend. It may well be too late in the day for them to play such a role now. But a more humble approach to the complicated interplay of foreign and domestic histories that go into the making and unmaking of the rule of law in Haiti is still possible, and arguably necessary, if Haiti is to achieve at last the great promise of its democratic revolution. ■

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On the constitutional void in Haiti

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precis Interview: Kelly M Greenhill

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First, life is both long and short. With this oxymoron in mind, I would advise students to follow their instincts and listen to their guts. It can be really difficult to know *ex ante* if one is making the right career decision(s)—whether to pursue a policy job versus an academic one, whether to work in the public sector, go into government, or work in private industry. However, I have found that it is remarkably easy to know in one's gut if one is making a decision that feels wrong, shortsighted or driven by other people's expectations. So, I would tell students, first and foremost, to choose a career path that feels right to them and to aim to do work that feels important and consequential.

Second, an ever-growing mountain of research suggests that what one is doing tends to trump where one is doing it in terms of job satisfaction. So wherever one lands and whatever path one chooses, I recommend focusing on big (and underexamined) problems that matter and for which we lack good or sufficient solutions.

Third, it is remarkably easy to get overcommitted. I recommend learning early how and when you can say no. I have long been pretty terrible at following my own advice in this regard, which is why I can offer it with some authority! ■

A look at how countries go nuclear—and why some do not

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By contrast, countries undertaking "sheltered pursuit" use their alliances with superpowers to develop nuclear weapons. Israel, for one, could finish building nuclear weapons in the 1960s partly because of tacit support from the US. By 2006, North Korea had built its own weapons with the partial support of China.

"North Korea wouldn't have been able to get nuclear weapons without China giving it shelter," Narang observes.

Hide and seek

Very few countries find themselves in the situation where a powerful ally will tacitly endorse their nuclear program, however. And if a country wants nuclear weapons but cannot get help from a superpower, it is most likely to work in secret. These are the "hiders," in Narang's typology.

"If you don't have shelter, then your only option is to hide," Narang says. "And hiding is a very risky strategy, as most get caught along the way—Libya, Iraq, Syria."

In 2007, for instance, Israeli jets bombed a North Korea-designed nuclear reactor built in Syria, where President Bashar al-Assad had been pushing a nuclear program forward.

"No one thought Assad would try to hide a North Korean nuclear reactor above ground," Narang says. "He came within weeks of the finish line." Moreover, Narang adds of such leaders, "Oftentimes the calculation is they'll lose the program but not the regime," Narang says. "Assad lost the reactor, but he's still in power." In other cases, such as Iraq and Libya, US military action drove nuclear-minded leaders from power.

And yet, the case of South Africa indicates it is at least possible to push a covert nuclear program all the way through.

"South Africa is every hider's inspiration," Narang says.

At the time, the US had suspected South Africa was engaged in a nuclear program, and then-South Africa President P. W. Botha had told US leaders in 1981 that the country had expanding nuclear "capacities." But the US had little concrete information about what was really happening.

"South Africa's really the only hider that got out of the barn," Narang says. "Neither the US nor the Soviet Union wanted South Africa to get nuclear weapons, but because it was in the Southern Hemisphere, we didn't have good eyes on the program, and [the country] was very good at hiding and obfuscating what its enrichment and plant capabilities were."

So on the one hand, the South African case remains an anomaly. Still, "hiders" can be very dangerous to global stability.

"It's most likely they create the risk of a crisis when they're discovered and the great powers seek to end the program," Narang says. "And if they succeed, precisely the states you least want to have nuclear weapons, have nuclear weapons. Either way a hider is disruptive. ... It either ends poorly for them, or it ends poorly for us."

The future: Nuclear arms management

Seeking the Bomb includes a model Narang built incorporating certain factors—technical capabilities, domestic politics, strategic considerations—that should lead countries into one category of weapons development or another. Narang found the model correctly predicts over 85 percent of the historical cases correctly. That could help policy experts and other analysts assess future nuclear threats.

"I think there are two categories that are going to be particularly prominent in coming decades," Narang says. "In the Middle East, you're going to have a contagion of hedgers." At the same time, he says, "Hiders are getting smarter. ... I don't take it for granted that we'll be able to stop all hiders indefinitely. These hedgers and hiders are going to be the most prominent categories in the future."

Both "hedgers" and some "hiders" can be dealt with diplomatically, Narang observes, through means such as the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action [JCPOA] that limited Iran's nuclear program but has now been dropped by the US.

"The JCPOA is rare because there are very few instruments and vehicles that have pushed states back from hiding to hard hedging," Narang says. "For it to be torpedoed over domestic politics is just a tragedy. There's no guarantee we're going to get back to it."

"*Seeking the Bomb*" has been praised by other political scientists. Caitlin Talmadge, an associate professor of security studies at Georgetown University, called it "an exceptional book, one of the most important to come out in the field in decades," adding: "It will become the definitive work on its subject matter and be widely read by academic, policy, and general audiences."

For his part, Narang emphasizes the fraught nature of today's nuclear landscape. After a few decades trending toward disarmament, nuclear stockpiles are growing, and nuclear proliferation is less a problem that can be ended than an issue that needs astute management.

"Everybody wants a solution to the nuclear problem," Narang says. "I think my conclusion, while pessimistic, is realistic. While nuclear technology exists, nuclear weapons are unlikely to go away. It's not a problem to be solved, it's a problem to be managed. I think for the next several decades we'll be dealing with these problems." ■

Women's rights and rising threats to press freedom worldwide

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Q: What have you been working on during your fellowship?

A: I'm using the fellowship to dig deeper into the topics that I've been reporting on over the past three years. For example, I'm taking a class on the history of India, which has helped me better understand the impact that colonialism and partition has had on women's rights and violence in that region. This will provide invaluable context to my most important project—a nonfiction book on the 45 million women who are missing from the Indian population due to wide-spread sex selection. As part of my research in Boston, I interviewed Amartya Sen (forthcoming in the *Boston Globe*), a Nobel Prize laureate in economics, who was the first person to calculate that over 100 million women are missing from the world population. In my book, I'm trying to understand the implications of this phenomenon. How do communities cope with such a huge absence of women? Why does this scarcity give rise to even more violence against women? How does this impact the future of families in these communities?

At MIT, I've also been exploring freedom of speech in my part of the world—the Central European region—where we've seen a rise of autocracy.

At the *Boston Globe*, I was a member of the editorial board, which was a remarkable experience. And, in addition to interviewing two Nobel Prize laureates, I wrote opinion pieces and editorials on abortion rights in Texas and the humanitarian crisis in Poland. Now I'm preparing for my residency at the *New York Times*.

The biggest value for me is the opportunity to train under the mentorship of the finest editors and the academics in the world. This has boosted my confidence as a reporter and will hopefully make me a valuable voice in the public debate of my country, which has found itself at the crossroads between democracy and autocracy. Being in the US, where the democratic institutions are still robust, has helped me remember where my values lie. ■

Networking on a global scale

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"The MISTI Summer series was an excellent engagement between industry leaders and students at MIT," adds Aparna Jain, talent and leadership general manager at Tata Group. "The speakers greatly enjoyed the interaction, incisive questions about innovation, ESG, and more. The students had done their research before the sessions, and it was a rich exchange. We look forward to many more throughout the year."

As MISTI continues to straddle hybrid operations, programs remain committed to providing their students with enriching international experiences that allow them to explore academic and professional opportunities within an evolving global context. ■

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précis is published twice each academic year in order to familiarize readers with the work of the Center for International Studies at MIT.

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