

# GPR

GEORGIA POLITICAL REVIEW  
spring 2014



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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Break out the cake and candles: this semester marks Georgia Political Review's third birthday, and we have a lot to celebrate.

Since our founding in Spring 2011, GPR has grown from a small publication run by a few talented undergraduate writers into a university-wide conversation starter. In less than the amount of time it takes a typical student to earn a bachelor's degree, GPR's staff and circulation have more than tripled. Our writers hail from every corner of campus, with majors ranging from horticulture to accounting to romance languages. Beyond the press, GPR has carved out a prominent place in campus life.

This year, in particular, GPR has played an active role in enhancing political and cultural dialogue in the Athens community. By partnering with organizations such as the Roosevelt Institute, Athens Political Union, the Center for International Trade & Security, the University of Georgia College Republicans and Young Democrats, and the Honors Program Student Council, GPR has hosted various campus events and carried conversations well beyond the printed page.

Though GPR has grown and changed substantially over the past six semesters, our writers and editors have not abandoned the publication's founding philoso-

phy of providing an objective platform for all ideologies. Conservative, liberal, anarchist – we welcome submissions from any and all perspectives that are well developed and well researched. We strive to produce content that rises above partisan prattle and offers fresh outlooks on the issues of our time. With our website's new "guest submissions" tab, we invite all UGA undergraduates to join the conversation.

To celebrate three years of campus and community engagement, we have a present for you: our most diverse, colorful magazine yet. This edition offers a sampling of student perspectives on local, national, and international stages, with articles covering the Student Government Association, Snow Jam 2014, and the PC16. Our culture section explores issues from asexual identity to the modern-day relevance of "Downton Abbey." In the spirit of anniversaries, the cover story examines and compares the first State of the University addresses given by Presidents Michael Adams and Jere Morehead.

On behalf of the GPR staff, I am thrilled to share the sixth edition of our magazine with you. I encourage you to read, critique, and respond to the articles printed upon these pages so that we may, with your help, continue to promote informed discussion



Megan White

at the University of Georgia. "Like" us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and keep up with us throughout the year on our website, [www.georgiapoliticalreview.com](http://www.georgiapoliticalreview.com).

Thank you for sharing our third birthday with us. I hope this edition will be the icing on the cake.



## Georgia Political Review

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# The Ice that Drove Old Dixie Down

**Chet Martin**  
*Managing Editor*

“Never make a mistake they can take a picture of” was the cardinal rule of William Hartsfield, Atlanta’s famous former mayor. Governor Nathan Deal and Mayor Kasim Reed made mistakes that spawned Internet slide shows.

The week of Jan. 29—Snowmageddon, South Parked, Snowjam ’14, take your pick—made Atlanta a global laughingstock and a symbol of Dixie’s incompetence in handling winter weather. A paltry two to three inches of snow crippled America’s ninth-largest metro area and eighth-largest state. A city built as a transportation hub couldn’t even move a couple miles.

Everyone has their own horror story. It took my father 26 hours to travel the 30 miles between Decatur, Ga. and Suwanee, Ga. a 10-hour trek at the walking speed of an average adult. Children were trapped in school buses on the frozen wasteland of I-285. A baby was born on the interstate (it’s only up from here, kid).

Southern hospitality graced us with open arms. Local companies like Chick-fil-A gave away food; Home Depot and Kroger kept their doors open all night to offer coffee and heating. Chipper Jones, the closest thing to a mascot Atlanta has, deposited even more goodwill by tweeting his four-wheeler assisted rescue of current Braves all-star Freddie Freeman.

But Chipper Jones’ heroics do not substitute for region-wide emergency preparedness. Despite what your indignant co-worker might tell you, the Department of Transportation salted bridges and had snow plows at the ready. The process might have lacked northern efficiency, but that’s to be expected from a Sunbelt boom town. The Atlanta-based Weather Channel accurately predicted the severity, location, and time of the storm.

Scientists and bureaucrats knew this was coming.

The problem was that no one else did. Rather than prepare the public for calamity by two frozen inches, Deal and Reed spent the middle of the day at a luncheon honoring the Atlanta mayor as “Georgian of the Year.”

Easy as it is to criticize their unfortunate scheduling, it is symptomatic of the casual response the governor and mayor took to the storm. State offices were open the morning of the snowstorm, as were Atlanta schools. Reed and Deal both argued that school closures are the responsibility of local school boards, and businesses may open and close as they please. That’s true. But in times of inclement weather, most businesses take direction from elected officials; school boards would have probably closed if advised to do so by the governor and mayor. Nothing shut down that Tuesday morning because no warnings had been issued.

The scene was set: 1.25 million people in the urban core of a city with notoriously bad traffic and scarce public transit options flooded the streets when the weather turned ugly at 2 p.m. Atlanta’s typical three hours of peak traffic were condensed into an instant. Gridlock begot gridlock as emergency vehicles were unable to address accidents, abandoned cars, and ice. Anyone want to re-think their vote on T-SPLOST?

The seminal article on the city’s disaster, “The Day We Lost Atlanta” by Atlanta Magazine editor Rebecca Burns in Politico, lays out how the city was uniquely unprepared for any sort of stress to its traffic system. Discussing the region’s dozens of municipalities, she writes, “Atlanta the city, became—and despite a slow uptick in population, remains—the commercial district to which people commute from Atlanta, the suburbs.” When we say “Atlanta”, we usually mean a massive region that compromises much of north Georgia; when Kasim Reed governs “Atlanta,” he’s controlling an area that isn’t even everything inside the perimeter. Anyone who has left a Braves game in the ninth inning knows what that means.

Furthermore, cars are all we’ve got. For most people in the region, MARTA (Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) is a transit to the Georgia Dome and airport rather than a reliable way home; it doesn’t even touch the bedroom communities of Gwinnett and Cobb County. On top of that, the voters of the metro area declined to pay a penny more in sales tax in order to fix our single mode of transportation when they shot down T-SPLOST.

Loose talk about political death for Deal and Reed took center stage following the release of a poll which found wide support for left-of-center candidates and causes during the snow storm, as if Georgians are “just add frozen water” Yankees. The two managed to salvage their reputations by being over-prepared for the ice storm the state experienced in February.

The storm that began Jan. 29 is likely a once-in-a-generation event, one that will haunt public officials for the near future. We’ll be better prepared. But as Atlanta continues to grow, we have to question our city’s infrastructure and management, and whether a dozen counties of suburbs can call themselves a city at all.

# IN ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNIVERSITY

Uzma Chowdhury  
Staff Writer

Out of 34,000 students at The University of Georgia, only 3,604 voted in last year's Student Government Association elections. In other words, a little more than 10 percent of the UGA student body voted in the University's current executive board and senators. The previous year had a higher voter turnout – 14 percent – but even that number does not seem to align with the aims of the organization intended to be the “voice of every Dawg.” The apparent student apathy implied by these numbers is something SGA members struggle with year after year, and not just at the University of Georgia. In a macro sense, institutional apathy plagues our government, which boasts a mere 57.5 percent turnout for presidential elections and even smaller turnouts for local elections. Voter turnout in the December 2013 runoff election for the Atlanta Board of Education, for instance, was 6.2 percent for citywide representatives – a 13.6 percent decrease from turnout in the previous month's general election.

Even at our peer universities in the South Eastern Conference (SEC), voter turnout remains low. At the University of Alabama, an institution that has historically lead SEC schools in voter turnout, about 17 percent of the 33,602 member student body voted, and the University of Florida saw a turnout of 18 percent and 20 percent during their fall and spring elections, respectively. In 2013, the University of Tennessee (UT) saw a 25 percent voter turnout—a UT SGA record—a number that is still low in terms of representation. While these numbers exceed the University of Georgia's SGA voter turnouts, they consistently remain low. The question, then, is why?

What in the nature of Student Government Association or in the nature of students makes SGA seem so irrelevant to students? Is it a matter of communicating what SGA does, or that SGA does not do enough, or is it that SGA is not doing

the right and necessary things? In an attempt to remedy the apathy with which SGA in the SEC is viewed, let's answer the following three questions: What does SGA do? What can SGA do? What should SGA do?

SGA at UGA functions similarly to the U.S. government – a senate composed of elected and appointed members acts as the official opinion of the student body, a judicial branch that is tasked with maintaining internal accountability, and an executive branch that oversees various programs, projects, and initiatives, including freshman programs. SGA leadership serves as the direct liaison between students and administrators, serving as student representatives on key decision-making committees at the University. These basic premises are similar for the SGA at each SEC institution. However, SGAs at SEC institutions, including the one at UGA, are plagued with candidates' desires to have measurable results at the end of their terms.

The culture at UGA and other SEC SGAs has been for candidates to run on a platform of tangible goals. Unfortunately, these goals have proven to be less impactful than intended. This April will see new SGA elected officers begin their year-long term. However, transition time and long breaks between semesters only allow SGA officers to work at full capacity for about seven months. Considering this short amount of time alongside full class schedules and other extracurricular commitments, the nature of tangible platform points often translates to “less impactful” platform points. As a result of this short time frame and the partial commitment of SGA members, tangible results tend to take the form of projects the student body finds unnecessary, and labels as “pet projects.”

This year's SGA administration ran on a platform consisting of pet projects (including a bike sharing program, a business professional attire lending closet, and a campus



safety application) as well as intangible initiatives such as internal reform and increased accountability. While all of these programs and initiatives could improve the quality of student life and the student experience, it is clear that student voices should play a role in addressing far bigger needs on university campuses.

Last semester, for instance, the University of Georgia community felt the sting of online bigotry when an unknown individual posted derogatory slurs on the social media accounts of various student organizations including the LGBT Resource Center, the Black Affairs Council, and the Black Faculty and Students Association. This aggression speaks to how SGA should and could be working to create a more inclusive and welcoming campus for all. In addition to diversity engagement and minority empowerment, SGA can tackle women's issues, academic issues, sustainability issues, and financial issues. All of these issues are more broadly policy-based, and while they are not within the means of a single SGA administration's abilities to complete, furtherance of these causes would be far more impactful than a pet project.

Current UGA SGA President Austin Laufersweiler says "student government works best when it works within its means. Developing large-scale projects and services for your term can be alluring, but it may distract from vital advocacy." But the means are there—as of today, SGA has a budget of about \$50,000, more manpower than most organizations (about 200 members at full capacity), and direct connections to the administration. Even without decision-making power, those resources are enough to make a meaningful difference on our campus.

The questions remain: what should SGA do? What do students want? What do students need? A member of the current University of Kentucky executive board calls SGA "a

tool for success for any party engaging in it." She says that their SGA focuses on "[striving] to give students a real experience that will transcend beyond the boundaries of campus when they graduate. The skills they develop in SGA will be substantially more useful to them than any paragraph they could craft on a resume."

This is problematic in that an SGA should not exist to serve its own members—an SGA should exist to serve and protect the student interest. Samantha Green, who was involved in Missouri Student Association (MSA) as legislative advocacy officer when she was an undergraduate, agrees: "SGA does teach you some great skills that are far more valuable than a resume line. But the point we're making is that it has to be bigger than that—bigger than what you get out of it."

We need critical thinkers. We need visionaries. We need leaders with enough humility to know that change that matters will not happen in their term. We need leaders who prioritize protecting the student interest. We need leaders who are okay with being forgotten as long as their hard work improves the campus. We need leaders who are self-critical and transparent. We need leaders who prioritize change over personal gain and the improvement of the University over the surface upkeep of the institution of SGA.

So what's the takeaway? According to Samantha Green "I think that the mindset needs to be changed—instead of people remembering your name, just leave them a better campus to call home. When SGA is at the top of its game, the school gets the credit, and that's the way it should be, because SGA is about serving your school, your campus, your home...not getting credit. That's the bottom line."

# Majoring in Eligibility

How NCAA Policy is Harming the Student-Athlete

Chris Lewitzke  
*Staff Writer*

In 2014, over 600,000 fans will pack into Sanford Stadium to watch dozens of 18 to 23-year-olds play a football game. These so-called “student-athletes” will generate the majority of the \$100 million the UGA Athletic Association expects in revenue for fiscal year 2014. Across the country, college football and basketball programs generate billions of dollars for collegiate athletic departments. The March Madness basketball tournament alone provides over \$800 million for the NCAA. Amidst all the money, fanfare, and media coverage of major college athletics in the 21st century, it is far too common that dollar signs drive decision making, and the student aspect of being a student-athlete is left in the dust.

Beginning in 2011, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (UNC) became infamous in national headlines after the Raleigh News & Observer reported that during the summer of 2011, 19 football players were given permission to take the course AFAM 280: Blacks in North Carolina. Every student was given credit for the course without ever actually meeting or completing any coursework over the summer.

The lack of academic substance for basketball and football players at UNC goes far

beyond fake classes. Mary Willingham, a former learning specialist for student-athletes, researched the reading levels of 183 basketball and football players at UNC from 2004 to 2012. In January, Willingham reported that among these players, 60 percent were reading between a fourth and eighth grade level and 8 percent were reading at a third grade level (UNC officials say Willingham’s study was flawed but have admitted some institutional shortcomings). Of the student-athletes admitted to the

**It is far too common that dollar signs drive decision making, and the student aspect of being a student-athlete is left in the dust.**

fifth-best public university in the country, according to U.S. News and World Report, many were clearly not up to the academic admissions standards set by UNC.

Universities across the country have yet another weapon at their disposal to boost the strength of their athletic recruiting classes: “special admits.” Under NCAA guidelines, a recruit is eligible for admittance at a Division I school if he or she maintains a high school GPA above 2.0 and earns a combined SAT or ACT score that

matches his or her GPA on a sliding scale. For test scores, the sliding scale lowers the required score a recruit must earn if that recruit has a higher GPA. For example, someone who has a high school GPA of 2.4 must earn a combined 860 on the SAT (critical reading and math) or 18 on the ACT. A recruit with a GPA of 2.8, though, only needs a 700 on the SAT or 14 on the ACT to be eligible for admission and athletic participation. Whether or not a recruit meets the general admission standards set

by the university, he or she will be allowed to enroll under this “special admit” status.

While this pathway to easier admittance may have initially been designed to provide higher education opportunities to those who struggled in high school and to

standardize recruiting among all NCAA Division I programs, the implications of special admittance simply set student-athletes up for failure. The University of North Carolina is not an anomaly in that a high percentage of its athletes in revenue-generating sports (generally football and basketball) still read at an elementary or middle school level. It is unreasonable to expect these students who enter their first year so far behind other students to be able to keep up and succeed in the classroom while also



sports. These majors vary from school to school and change over time, but they generally have no entrance requirements and greater scheduling flexibility. Whether or not athletes actually want to pursue a degree in these fields, academic advisors strongly encourage them to major in areas such as general studies, sociology, or social sciences. Advisors will also tell athletes to take specific classes they know to be easy, such as AFAM 280 at the University of North Carolina. According to a USA Today survey of 142 universities with major athletic departments, “83 percent of the schools (118 of 142) had at least one team in which at least 25 percent of the juniors and seniors majored in the same thing. Thirty-four percent of the teams had at least one such cluster of student-athletes.”

Because these students enter their first year at such disadvantaged reading and writing levels, they are forced to choose majors that don't interest them and don't have good career prospects, but do allow them to maintain their eligibility. Clearly, schools are choosing the short-term benefits of keeping players eligible for the season over the long-term benefits of actually nurturing them academically, so they can succeed later in life. As UGA Sport Management Professor Billy Hawkins said in a CNN article, “They're graduating them. UGA is graduating No. 2 in the SEC, so they're able to graduate athletes, but have they learned anything? Are they productive citizens now? That's a thing I worry about. To get a degree is one thing, to be functional with that degree is totally different.”

Implementing several key institutional changes could keep student-athletes from being forced into this no-win situation of majoring in “eligibility.” First, by putting a cap on the number of special admits a school can offer per year, each of those student-athletes would be much more likely to be successful. Those students would have better access to tutors and other academic resources. While helping dozens is unreal-

istic, a school can work to close the gap for a handful of students. Iowa State University currently has a policy in place that requires all special admits to enroll in classes during the summer following their high school graduations. Allowing the students extra time in the classroom when their sport isn't in season gives them an opportunity to catch up to other students before the general student body sets foot on campus. NCAA institutions could drastically benefit from

## FUNCTIONAL ILLITERACY in the NCAA

A person must score either:

**400**

SAT critical reading

or

**16**

ACT Reading

According to  
CNN research

**7 to 18%**

of athletes in revenue-generating  
sports are not college literate

spending several hours each day dedicated to their sport. The fact of the matter is that there are student-athletes who are not reading at a college level upon entering university and who struggle to maintain their eligibility every semester.

Universities do not, however, reserve special admittance for a few top recruits each year. According to a CNN study conducted earlier this year with data gathered through open records access, the University of Georgia admitted 317 football, men's basketball, and women's basketball players between 2007 and 2012. Of those 317 students, 24 players, or 7.5 percent, did not meet the generally accepted level of college literacy, which is a 400 on the SAT critical reading section or a 16 on the ACT's reading component. Compared to the other 20 schools CNN was able to collect data from, an illiteracy rate of 7.5 percent is on the low end. Based on all the data collected, between 7 and 18 percent of athletes in revenue-generating sports enrolled at public Division I schools are reading at an elementary school level. There are success stories in which student-athletes make up this gap and graduate with meaningful degrees, but the majority of special admits struggle to maintain the requirements to keep playing and are pushed toward “majoring in eligibility.”

Nearly every college has a few majors that are disproportionately filled with student-athletes from revenue-generating

Iowa State's policy. Finally, student-athletes should be given the option to take less than the required 12 credit hours to stay eligible during the semester they are in season. Student-athletes will be better off taking three more difficult but practical classes than taking four easy classes in an area they aren't interested in pursuing as a career.

While these changes may seem relatively small, they are steps in the right direction toward refocusing NCAA policy on benefiting the student-athlete inside the classroom. Big-time college basketball and football will never go away and the revenues and commercialization will only keep growing, so it is important that student-athletes are actually given the opportunity to succeed in this climate, rather than being exploited for their talents.



# “The Defining Challenge of our Time”

Alex Edquist & Chris Neill  
*Staff Writer and Senior Editor*

When did economic inequality become such a hot-button issue? Pope Francis made headlines in November when he railed against economic inequality, asking, “How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points?” President Obama also made waves when he called economic inequality “the defining challenge of our time.” The 50th anniversary of Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty brought attention to the state of the poor today. Republicans, too, have joined in the discussion about reducing poverty and economic inequality.

Five years ago, almost all Americans were in the same (sinking) economic boat. In 2009, almost 3 million homes were foreclosed, the unemployment rate hit 10 percent, and the value of stocks dropped to \$9 trillion from \$22 trillion. In contrast, today’s economy, by many metrics, has not only recovered from the recession, but has also grown past its pre-recession levels. In 2013, real gross domestic product per capita exceeded its previous high in 2007, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average broke not only its nominal record from 2007, but also its inflation-adjusted record from 2000.

However, the gains from the economic recovery have not been evenly spread. The wealthiest 7 percent of American households saw their net worth rise 28 percent between 2009 and 2011, while the other 93 percent experienced a decline in their net worth. While the economy is slowly adding jobs, 58 percent of the added jobs are low-wage jobs, even though 60 percent of the jobs lost during the recession were middle-wage jobs. Overall, the richest 1 percent of Americans captured 95 percent of the economic gains of the recovery.

Even before the Great Recession, the economic trend was toward growing income inequality, but unemployment was low and house prices were high, which helped both the working and middle classes. The recession hit everyone hard, no matter where they were on the income scale. In contrast, the recovery has exacerbated the income inequality that existed before the recession. For example, the Federal Reserve responded to the weak economy with quantitative easing, which helped widen income inequality by boosting the capital gains of the wealthy. The economy is good once again for those at the top, but it is still stagnant for those below. Corporate profits and stocks have skyrocketed, but real wages and median household incomes have barely budged for decades, and unemployment is still stubbornly high.

The average American has not seen his or her economic situation improve much, and technology is largely to blame. Many middle-class jobs have either been replaced wholly or partially with automation or have been sent abroad because of technological advances.





High-skill, high-wage jobs are not so easily replaced, and low-skill, low-wage jobs are still cheaper to perform with people than machines, so the job market has seen a “hollowing out” where middle-skill jobs are scarcer and high-skill and low-skill jobs are more prevalent.

The same has also helped lead to great inequality of opportunity. The United States has less economic mobility than most other developing countries, and the southern United States has particularly low levels of mobility (according to a study done by Berkeley and Harvard researchers, only 4 percent of those born into the bottom 20 percent of income distribution in Atlanta makes it to the top 20 percent). Today’s well-paid jobs mostly demand high skills and education levels, but inequalities in primary and secondary education as well as expensive colleges mean that children of the wealthy are able to acquire the needed skills more easily than the children of the poor.

In the past five years, the U.S. economy has seen two growing problems: income inequality and opportunity inequality. The issue becomes inherently political through disagreement over language. Traditionally, the left would take issue with income inequality – that is, inequality of outcome – while the right would take issue with a lack of mobility – that is, inequality of opportunity. President Obama has shifted closer to the latter framing, though the strong class distinctions and implications of wealth redistribution latent in the former appeal to fewer voters. A Jan. 2014 Pew Research Center survey found that 65 percent of Americans believe that in the past 10 years, the gap between the rich and everyone else has increased. The same survey also found that 53 percent of Americans believe that the government should do a lot to reduce poverty while only 43 percent believe that the government should do a lot to reduce the gap between the rich and everyone else. This means that Americans are increasingly cognizant of inequality of some sort, but more reluctant to see the problem as an inequality of outcomes.

The language used to frame the issue plays a crucial role in shaping public perception and garnering support for any relevant positions. “I would not, if I were [President Obama], hit hard on income distribution,” Vin Weber, Republican strategist and former congressman told the New York Times, “because everybody

goes to their ideological corners right away and we’re at war.” The Occupy Wall Street movement adopted the “inequality of wealth distribution” position in its “1 percent” mantra. The movement’s detractors on the right were quick to deride this position as nothing short of class warfare. Such detractors’ position rests on the notion that as long as all citizens have similar opportunities to succeed, whatever outcome occurs in distribution of wealth is acceptable.

While the distinction in language may seem arbitrary, the framing of the issue has real policy implications. Those who focus on opportunity suggest that the government should do little, and that an unfettered market will lead to a thriving private sector that will create those very opportunities. This tends to manifest in policy discussion over tax and spending cuts, which would purportedly lessen the governmental burden on the private sector. Those who focus on opportunity argue that cutting taxes on wealthy individuals and corporations leaves them with more cash on hand to invest in future growth and put more citizens to work.

Conversely, supporters of income redistribution suggest that the government should play a more active role in redistributing wealth through taxation and social welfare policy. Democrats have proposed a more progressive tax code, raising taxes on corporations and individuals to fund support for the poor. Calls for increased spending on education, infrastructure, and social safety net programs also come from this position. Since the 2013 State of the Union address, the idea of raising the minimum wage has gained traction with Americans, 73 percent of whom support raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour from its current level of \$7.25 an hour.

Whether they choose to focus on income or opportunities, Americans are increasingly seeing economic inequality as a problem in their country. From the President to the Pope, people have acknowledged that the problem has only gotten worse since the recovery from the Great Recession. In a highly polarized country represented by an even more highly polarized legislature, agreement on the causes and solutions to the defining problem of our generation does not come cheap.



# next on the docket:

# OUR CIVIL LIBERTIES

Rob Oldham & Andrew Roberts  
Staff Writers

Constitutional questions on civil liberties, which are so important to the American people, are heavily stacked on the 2013-2014 Supreme Court docket. Here are a few of the pressing cases:

## Town of Greece v. Galloway

*Town of Greece* discusses whether or not prayer at a town council meeting violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. This case rests heavily on the previous precedent *Marsh v. Chambers*, in which the Court upheld legislative prayer. While hiring a chaplain to lead prayer before a legislative session might seem like clear governmental endorsement of religion to some, the town argued, citing *Marsh*, that it does not violate the Establishment Clause because of the historical nature of legislative prayer. Congress hired a chaplain to lead prayer just days before they passed the First Amendment. On the other hand, the offended citizen Galloway argued the prayers were uniquely Christian and coercive in nature. The town council in question was known for having almost entirely Christian chaplains and, as the Justices pointed out, very few prayers are likely to be acceptable to all religions and the non-religious. Further, if a citizen wanted to participate in the town council meeting—to request a permit, for example—Galloway said that the citizen is essentially coerced into participating in the prayer by having to be present and silent.

As noted in *Marsh*, legislative prayer is an American tradition. Congress and state legislatures across the nation open their sessions with daily prayers, a practice that could be threatened if the Court rules broadly in favor of Galloway. On the other hand, many would like to see legislative prayer struck down entirely. While legislative prayer is an American tradition, so is the understanding that government will not endorse one religion over another, or religion over non-religion. While neither of these broad rulings is likely, it is possible that the Justices could strike down a certain degree of legislative prayer, or at least make requirements for how the prayer is conducted.

## Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action

The Court will deal with unfinished business in *Schuette* after declining to definitively rule on racial preferences in university admissions last session. Michigan voters approved Proposal 2 in 2006, which amended the state constitution to end affirmative action in the public sector, including university admissions. Plaintiffs sued on the grounds that it violates the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit agreed.

Michigan holds that Prop 2 repeals preferences, not equality. The University of Michigan would be right to address campus diversity by eliminating preferences for the children of alumni and giving more consideration to lower socio-economic classes rather than taking race into account. Practical considerations also come into play. Statistics show that minority enrollment for UM has only marginally decreased (about 0.5 percent) during the law's brief existence. Moreover, a similar 1996 policy in California has been extraordinarily beneficial to minorities, with enrollment increases at nearly every university and higher GPAs and graduation rates. The opposition maintains that the Fourteenth Amendment was put in place to protect minorities and the fact that 99 percent of African-American voters disapprove of Prop 2 exposes its discriminatory nature. Justice Anthony Kennedy ardently questioned both sides about how Prop 2 holds up to the political process theory. The theory takes into account that many different groups (races, ethnicities, children of alumni) seek admission to the university and that laws which make it more difficult for any given group to gain admission should be subject to strict scrutiny. Kennedy's role as the court's decisive swing vote means that this will probably be a consideration in the decision. The Court's ruling will supplement the growing body of law dealing with government's role in protecting minorities from discrimination and at what point these protections do more harm than good.



## Navarette v. California

*Navarette* revolves around a complex Fourth Amendment issue, specifically relating to search and seizure rules. Police officers received a tip from an anonymous individual that a car had run him or her off the road. The tip gave the location, direction, license plate number, and physical details of the car. Police responded by following the car to verify details from the anonymous tipper, but they did not see any evidence of reckless driving. After verifying the physical details, the police pulled the car over and, upon smelling marijuana, searched the car and found four large bags of marijuana.

Navarette tried to have the evidence excluded from trial, as the police did not verify any reckless driving before pulling him over (evidence seized illegally is, in most cases, excluded from court). The Court will decide whether or not police can act on an anonymous tip, even if police have not verified the misconduct in question. Navarette argued that if police can act on an unverified tip then individuals could call in tips just for the sake of getting people in trouble, and that many people would be searched without probable cause. The state, however, argued for public safety. It argued that reckless driving, and drunk driving by extension, is so dangerous that the police should be able to respond to protect the public if they have reasonable suspicion from the anonymous tip.

This case has clear implications for civil liberties. Imagine, for instance, that two individuals get into a fight at a dinner party. One of them knows that the other had several drinks at the dinner party and knows the other's car details and route home. As brought up in oral arguments, if the Court rules in favor of the state, the disgruntled individual could call in an anonymous tip to get the other individual in trouble, even if police have never seen misconduct. Conversely, if someone has knowledge of a person with an atomic bomb driving towards a major city, also brought up in oral arguments, and the Court rules in favor of Navarette, this misconduct might not be stoppable unless verified. It is unlikely that the Court will rule this broadly in either direction, but the results of this case are clearly still very important.

## McCutcheon v. FEC

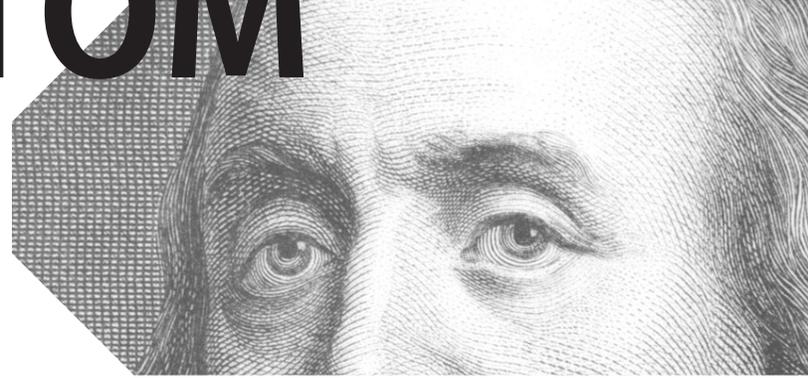
*McCutcheon* is concerned with the blurry line between campaign finance laws and restrictions on the First Amendment rights to free speech and association. The Roberts Court is no stranger to the challenges of campaign finance constraints, with high profile rulings in *Citizens United* (2010) and *Wisconsin Right to Life* (2007) both overturning statutory restraints. The plaintiffs in *McCutcheon* are challenging the aggregate donation limit, which caps the total amount that any one person can contribute to campaigns and political parties in a two-year election cycle at \$117,000. They are arguing against the Federal Election Commission's claim that aggregate limits save government from "an appearance of corruption."

Base limits already stifle individual contributors at \$2,600 to individual candidates, yet individuals are free to donate up to \$5,000 to any number of PACs which can independently spend without limit. This begs the question of what the aggregate limit accomplishes beyond forcing contributors to be more creative and unnecessarily restricting a citizen's support of a political cause. However, the FEC holds that the aggregate limits serve as a check on affluent elites dominating campaign seasons. If only base limits existed, any individual could contribute up to \$3.5 million each election cycle. If just 500 donors contributed that amount, they would blow away the 2012 cycle's \$1.5 billion in donations. This potential swell of political clout raises legitimate questions as to whether politicians would represent the wealthy few at the expense of average citizens.

During oral arguments, the justices wavered between supporting the limit and criticizing it as an ineffective impediment to political speech. While the Roberts Court has a history of striking down campaign finance restrictions in a 5-4 manner, the government's worries of quid pro quo corruption disrupting representative democracy seemed to resonate with the justices enough so that at least part of the aggregate limit will remain intact. Their decision will weigh these worries against the freedom to monetarily support individual convictions in an electoral system increasingly dependent on cash intake.

# STARTED FROM THE BOTTOM

Aashka Dave and Kathleen Wilson  
*Associate Senior Editor and Staff Writer*



**G**lobalization is your “American-made” car that, though assembled in the United States, contains parts from India, China, Thailand, and many other countries. It is your trip through the grocery store aisle: the roses are from Columbia, the orange juice from Florida, and the Haribo gummy bears from Germany. Thanks to globalization, you can browse Facebook and connect with friends from around the world while reading the latest world news and streaming a foreign radio station. Globalization sounds great on the surface, but is there another, overlooked, narrative as well?

## “BAD ROMANCE”

The post-World War I redistribution of African and Ottoman colonies is considered by many to be the last major act of Western colonialism. However, the practice, which dates back to the 16th century, has continued well into the 21st century in the form of globalization. For many non-Western nations and their citizens, globalization has become synonymous with Americanization and Westernization; it is simply a tool used to spread the Western mindset.

This cultural imperialism can be attributed to Western media and its far-reaching scope. Approximately three-quarters of the world population owns at least one television, and one-third has access to the Internet. Thus, with a simple click of a button, a person can watch shows like “16 and Pregnant” or “Jersey Shore” on MTV, which broadcasts in 28 languages and 168 countries worldwide.

Western media like MTV has deleterious effects on native cultures. Foreign languages, competing with the prevalence of English, must adapt and either produce mixed languages such as “Spanglish” or abandon their indigenous languages altogether. Traditional cultural dress must compete with Western clothing to the extent that some countries such as Saudi Arabia, desperate to preserve their cultural values, develop ultraconservative political regimes in response to the threat of these Western ideals. Others, such as those countries affected by the Arab Spring, undergo civil unrest as a response to changing cultural norms and Western influence.

## “\$100 BILL”

Just as Western institutions have a cultural impact on the world, so too do they have an economic impact. Foreign aid institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, though promote global integration and economic cooperation, have frequently been criticized for taking advantage of developing countries and working solely to benefit developed ones. The Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) advocated by these institutions often cripple the domestic economic production of developing countries. SAPs, based on the idea that free trade has economic benefits for both producers and consumers, require that countries who accept IMF or World Bank loans restructure their economies through lower tariffs on imports, removal of subsidies, and more business deregulation. Consequently, developing countries prohibited from using trade protectionism cannot compete in international markets against developed countries that are allowed to use such barriers.

The United States, for example, spends \$3.4 billion per year to subsidize 25,000 cotton farmers, resulting in higher product yields and lower prices. Meanwhile, the more than 10 million cotton farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa, many of whom are inhabitants of loan-receiving countries, cannot use any subsidies or tariffs to protect their crop prices. Thus, even though these farmers may live in countries that receive aid money from the IMF or World Bank, SAPs prohibit these farmers from producing cotton crops that stand up to the competition of international markets.

Many countries also participate in “race to the bottom” behavior, a process through which they offer tax breaks or exemptions to multinational corporations (MNCs) in an attempt to gain more wage-earning jobs. This behavior, though successful in bringing MNCs (and employment opportunity) to the desired regions, results in low-wages and poor working conditions for the resident labor force. The MNCs eventually relocate to other cities or regions where cheaper labor can be found, thus perpetuating a cycle of economic hardship for workers in developing countries

## “RADIOACTIVE”

Coupled with poor working conditions are poor living ones. Say it takes five minutes to read this article; in that case, 300 acres of forestry in the tropics have just been felled. Over-fertilization has created more than 200 dead zones in the world’s oceans thus far. And that’s just the beginning.

Attendant with globalization comes humanity’s need to expand; to fell more trees to build more homes, to grow more food, to burn more fuel. Increases in production and consumption go hand-in-hand with an ever-expanding population.

The vast majority of technological products consumed by what is still largely the Western world are created in China, under factory conditions that have been lambasted time and time again. There is a poetic irony, then, to the fact that many of these objects eventually return home when they are no longer wanted—outmoded and antiquated as they have become. China has become the world’s trashcan of sorts, playing host to 70 percent of the world’s technological waste despite the fact that shipment of such waste to developing countries like China and Vietnam has been roundly forbidden by the United Nations.

Hundreds of thousands of workers in Chinese towns such as Guiyu then become experts at dismantling technology, often in unsafe conditions. Their tools are advanced enough that they break apart iPads and televisions with relative ease: hammers, shovels, and manual labor. Plastic accumulated from these modern-day gold digs is then sold to companies like Foxconn – a company contracted by many others, including Apple, Dell, and Hewlett Packard. The cycle then repeats itself; workers reap toxic harvests from the objects they touch, harvests that provide them with money, the most essential of substances.

Yet, those harvests also deprive them of their very lives. Manually breaking down technological products exposes workers to a number of chemicals including mercury, arsenic, and lead. These substances can also make their way into the local food chain, all the way down to the very fish locals eat at the end of a long day.



## “PARTY IN THE U.S.A.”

The image is a bleak one. The behest and influence of Western countries creates a vicious, self-perpetuating cycle. Globalization is encouraged, yet the development of developing countries is hindered. Western ideas are strongly promoted, creating unrest and instability – if not of a political sort, then certainly of the cultural variety. Finding themselves at a loss to maintain cultural identity, developing nations turn to facilitating Westernization in a bid to move forward. Eventually, they find themselves held back once more as their resources – natural and labor – are once more exploited.

To say that globalization is an utter atrocity is inaccurate. But to say it represents the end-all, be-all of the future is a misrepresentation at best, a falsity at worst. Rather, the countries it pulls down must be taken into consideration. They too represent a portion of this globalized world.



# THOSE JOBS AREN'T COMING BACK

Park MacDougald  
*Staff Writer*

It has been nearly six years since the onset of the Great Recession, and the United States is still grasping in the dark for a return to normality. Conditions have improved since the worst days of the crisis—GDP grew at a respectable 3.2 percent at the end of 2013, and unemployment dropped to 6.6 percent—but significant problems remain. U6 unemployment, which measures underemployed and discouraged workers, is stuck around 13 percent, and nearly one out of every six millennials is without a job. Real GDP in 2013 was barely 5 percentage points above

my in general” to be the most important problem facing the United States (federal debt/deficit received only 8 percent), and the question of economic management was front and center in the 2012 election. Finger pointing over the current conjuncture abounds, from the wild-eyed debt millenarianism of the Tea Party to liberal criticism of tax cuts and de-regulation. A number of prominent commentators—Larry Summers, Paul Krugman, and Martin Wolf—have warned of the prospect of “secular stagnation,” or a long term, more or less permanent decline in growth rates. Meanwhile, the divided government lurches from crisis to self-inflicted crisis, seemingly incapa-

better. Hourly real wages for non-managerial workers peaked in 1973, the same year that the U.S. poverty rate hit its all-time low. The previous decade had seen the expansion of anti-poverty programs, social security, and public education, and in 1974 organized labor still contributed more to political campaigns than corporations. In some sense, it seemed that the only way to go was up.

What followed this peak, however, was a long, slow decline for the average American that has continued to the present day. The social contract behind New Deal/Great Society liberalism had been a relatively straightforward compromise between capital and labor. The

## **The origins of the present crisis, however, lie not with Barack Obama and George W. Bush, but in the distant past of the 1970s.**

its pre-crisis high. Moreover, what recovery has occurred has been uneven, to put it kindly. Since 2009, the average real income per family of the top 1 percent has increased by 31.4 percent, and that of the rest by 0.4 percent. The worst crisis since the Great Depression has not been enough to buck the four-decade-long trend of growth at the top and stagnation or regression below.

Given the current state, it is no surprise that the economy dominates public debate. A recent Gallup poll found that 43 percent of Americans consider “Unemployment/Jobs” or the “Econo-

ble of basic managerial competence, let alone proactive maneuver.

The origins of the present crisis, however, lie not with Barack Obama and George W. Bush, but in the distant past of the 1970s. The '70s were a decade of contradictions. The victories of the 1960s social movements—Civil Rights, feminism, environmentalism—mixed with a deep sense of pessimism, which was intensified by the blood-soaked debacle of Vietnam and dark stain of Watergate. Despite the “malaise” in the cultural sphere, however, the average American had never had it

global economic boom of 1945-1973, and American industry’s privileged position within it, provided rates of growth high enough for rising wages, an expanding welfare state, and corporate profitability to exist side-by-side. As long as living standards and profits rose together, the system was stable. By the early 1970s, however, the post-war boom was grinding to a halt. Businesses faced not only a rising wage bill, but increased taxation, environmental regulation, and competition from the rebuilt industries of Western Europe and Japan. Capital was

simply not making enough money to fulfill its end of the social contract. The system was tottering. In 1973, the shock of the oil crisis and stagflation signaled its collapse.

What followed was the swift reassertion of the interests of business. An unprecedented amount of corporate money began to flow into American politics—by the mid-1980s, corporate campaign contributions doubled those of labor, with party platforms adjusting accordingly. Taxes, social programs, and regulations were slashed over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, while government pump-priming shifted to defense spending and maintenance of low interest rates. Technological advancement and free-trade agreements allowed struggling American industry to replace workers with robots, or else flee to Mexico's maquiladoras and China's Export Processing Zones, and wages and productivity decoupled. Meanwhile, capital was increasingly displaced into a booming financial services sector. This explosion of debt and finance was accelerated by persistent current-account deficits abroad and changing consumption patterns at home. Shifts in trade and social policy meant that median real wages were stagnating, at a time when the global economy depended on the purchasing power of the American consumer. The solution was, at first, the entry of women into the labor market to supplement household incomes, and second, the explosion of private debt, in the form of

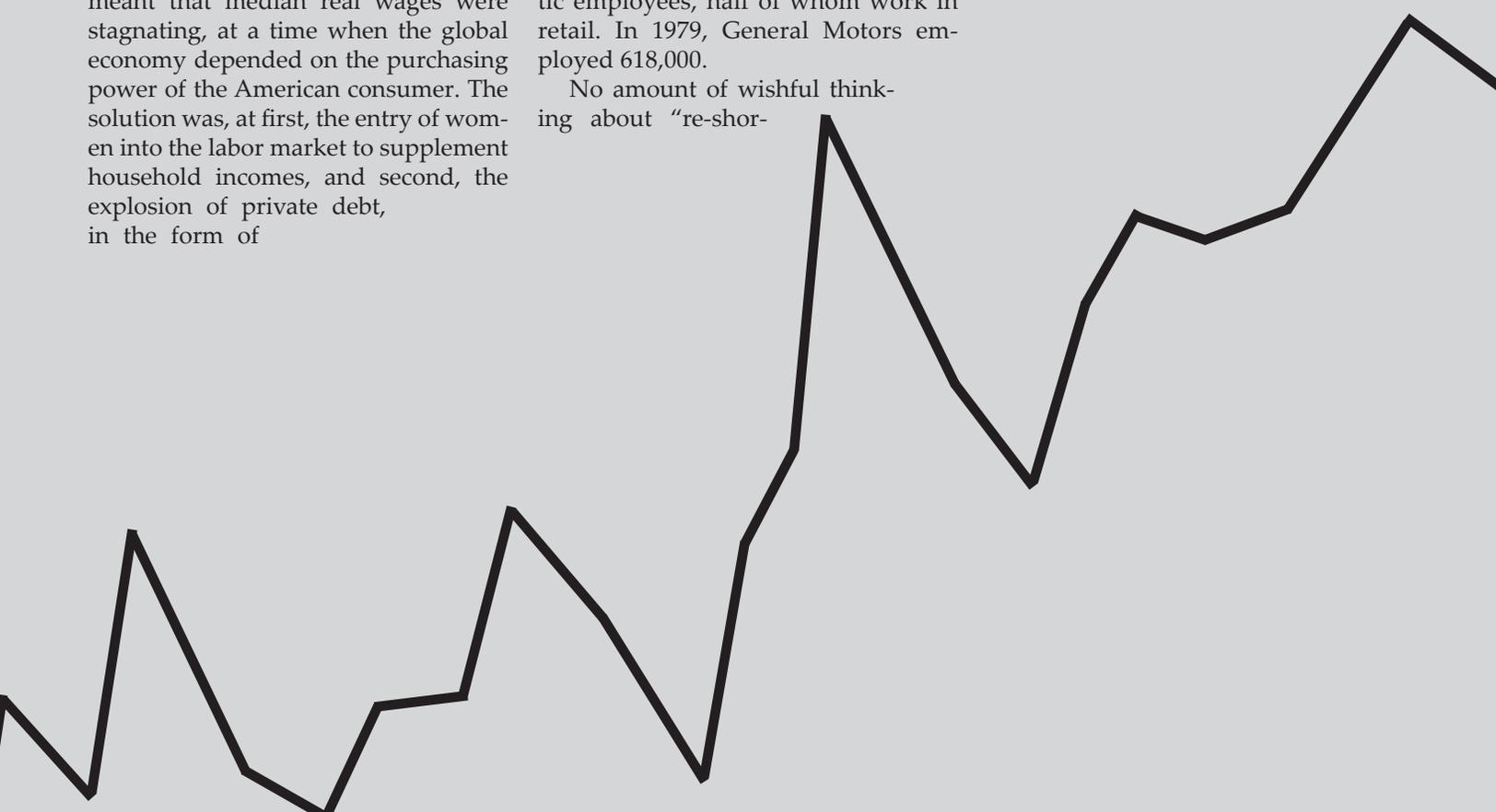
credit cards, student loans, and mortgages. Widespread indebtedness and a housing price bubble were able to create an illusion of prosperity even as the foundations of the economy rotted, but the bust of 2007-8 brought a reality check.

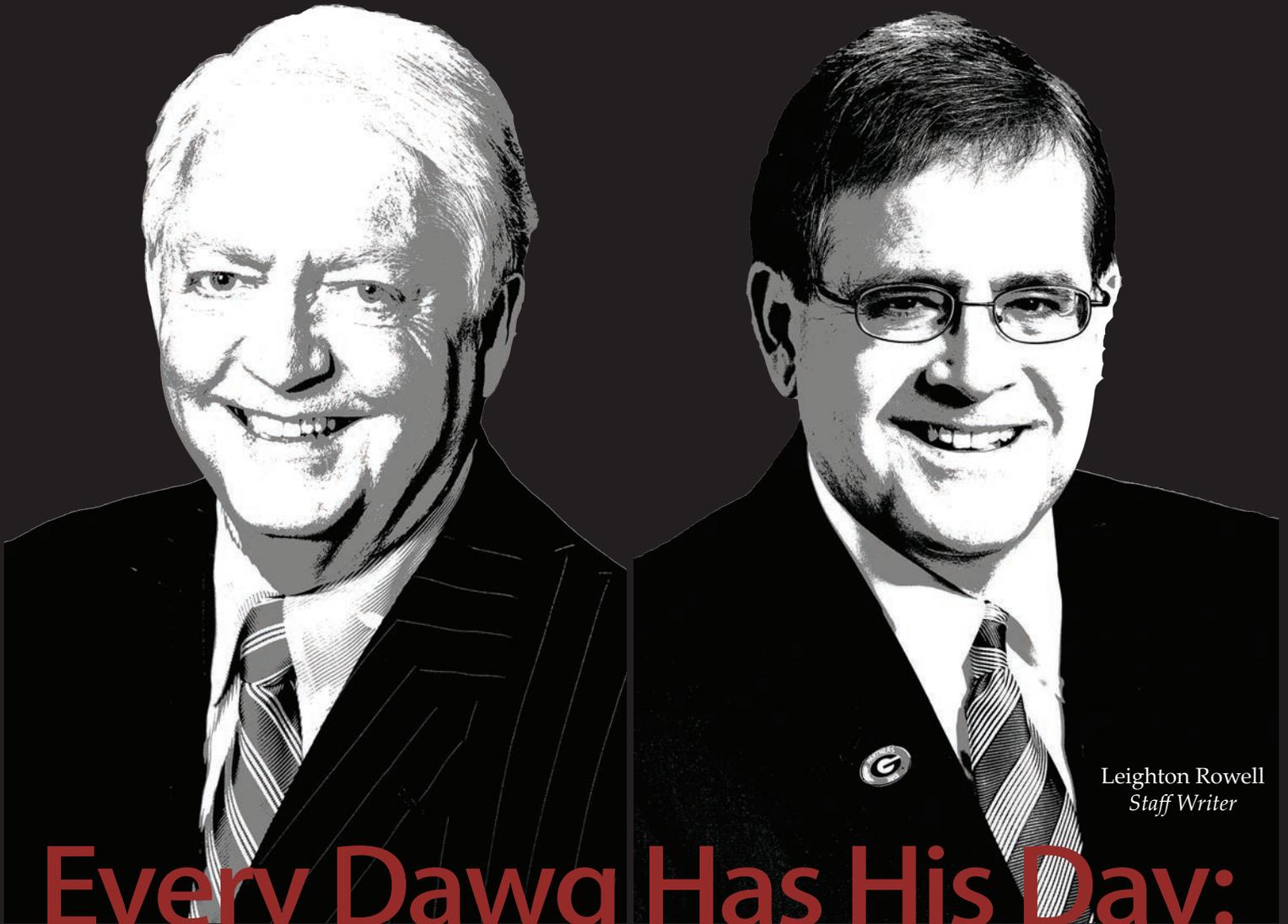
The problems we face today—unemployment, inequality, insecurity—are therefore not the products of a recession that will magically be solved by a return to growth, but long term structural changes that require a political response. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, some of the highest-growing jobs in the coming decade will be retail sales, food preparation, and home health aides: all low-paying, low-benefit, and, following the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, likely to be part-time. Meanwhile, advances in technology will subject increasing numbers of white-collar jobs to computerization. According to a pair of recent studies, up to 49 percent of U.S. jobs could be automated within the next 20 years, while 22 percent could be offshored. It is true that technology creates new jobs—think computer programmers—but not at the same rate it eliminates them. Apple currently has about 80,000 domestic employees, half of whom work in retail. In 1979, General Motors employed 618,000.

No amount of wishful thinking about "re-shor-

ing" industry will return the United States to the era of mass manufacturing employment. As Austin Powers once said, "that train has sailed." Even so, an economy bifurcated into Apple engineers and Wal-Mart greeters is not a sustainable solution. Consumption is crucial to economic growth, and absent increased wages or indebtedness, many Americans will be forced to rely on the government to maintain a decent standard of living. The technocratic solution-du-jour, a Guaranteed Minimum Income, might help, but if Mitt Romney's "47 percent" comment is any indication, the obstacle to such an answer will be mostly political. The 53 percent, after all, would surely resent their tax dollars going to literal cash handouts for the poor.

There are no easy solutions to our current conjuncture. Economic growth is critical to our society, but if the past decades are any indication, a rising tide does not automatically lift all boats. Prescriptions for our ailments will vary based on ideological stripe, but it should be clear that merely more of the same will not suffice. What is required is ultimately a political, not merely an economic solution.





Leighton Rowell  
Staff Writer

# Every Dawg Has His Day: The State of the University Then and Now

"The people of Georgia deserve a flagship research institution every bit as good as that of the people of California or Michigan or Virginia," said Michael F. Adams in his first State of the University (SOTU) address in 1998. "This is not a place that will settle for second best."

Now will the University of Georgia settle for second best under President Jere W. Morehead, who said in his own first SOTU address, "the University of Georgia must be more than it has ever been."

The University of Georgia's two most recent presidents have embraced many of the same missions, though they have their differences. Morehead has served the University for the past 27 years, first on the faculty in Terry and later in the administration. He also attended the University as a law student. Adams, however, was an outsider when he became President in 1997. It was fitting, then, that he quoted the Greek philosopher Heraclitus in his first address, stating, "the only constant is change."

Indeed, change is what Adams brought to the University of Georgia throughout his 16-year tenure. In his 1998 address, Adams announced several ambitious objectives for the direction of the University. The newest capital priority, he promised, would be "a modern learning center in which to better serve students," for which Adams hoped the state legislature and former Gov. Zell Miller would provide resource funding. This became the \$43 million Miller Learning Center, dedicated in 2004.

Adams also advocated for an "administrative structure that is team-based, non-paternalistic, understandable, and efficient" and expressed a desire to create positions for a senior vice president of academic affairs, a senior vice president for finance and administration, and a senior vice president for external affairs. Adams succeeded in establishing these new administrative roles with current University of Georgia President Jere W. Morehead by his side, who was at this point senior vice president for academic affairs.

"While I do not like to think of universities in corporate terms, the fact remains that we are today a massive business," Adams said.

Adams also believed that the University, as a business, needed to strengthen its "economic development leadership in some of Georgia's underdeveloped counties and initiate programs that reassert that the state is our campus." One of his initiatives, a partnership with

the Medical College of Georgia (now Georgia Regents University), came to fruition with its first class of medical students in 2010.

Adams' vision was not limited to the state of Georgia, though. When he took office in 1997, approximately 2 percent of UGA undergraduates studied abroad prior to graduation. From the beginning of his presidency, Adams made it clear that he intended to "do more to introduce our students to the global community."

"As the world shrinks in time and relative size," Adams said, "our capacity to know and understand different cultures, languages, and religions has never been more real."

Ever a man of his word, the University began its first residential year-round program at the University of Oxford in 1999 under Adams, followed by the establishment of study abroad facilities in Costa Rica, France, and Italy in 2004. Today, 25 percent of graduating seniors have studied abroad for credit towards their UGA degrees.

Perhaps most importantly, Adams affirmed students' centrality to the University of Georgia's mission.

"The student—not the administration, not the faculty, and not the support staff, as important as all of those elements are—is central to the core of any university, and service to that student is, at the most basic level, our reason for being," Adams said.

That proclamation should sound familiar to those who attended President Jere W. Morehead's first State of the University address Jan. 23, 2014, or to anyone who has followed news about the University administration since Morehead was named sole finalist for president one year ago. From the beginning of his presidency, Morehead made his focus clear: "students are the core academic mission of the University."

It is certainly telling that Morehead's first act as President was to meet for breakfast with various student leaders, among them representatives from University Judiciary, the Student Government Association, athletics, UGA Miracle, and Shop with a Bulldawg. For his second act, President Morehead addressed first-year students participating in the Freshman College summer program.

Morehead reiterated his focus on students in his first SOTU address.

"I have said since I became President that my guiding principle is this: Everything we do should accrue to the benefit of our students," Morehead said.

That being said, President Morehead announced a major initiative: University Housing and Food Service rates for the 2014-2015 academic year will be frozen at this year's rate. This step, significant and unprecedented in its potential to keep a University of Georgia

education affordable, sends a much larger message—that beyond being reasonably priced, the University of Georgia under President Morehead should be an inclusive community. In an equally unprecedented and admirable move, Morehead acknowledged, "not every experience has been positive," while alluding to hateful comments posted last semester by a UGA student on the LGBTQ Resource Center and Black Affairs Council Facebook pages.

"However, I also remember in the days that followed a spirit of unity as our campus came together and rejected that criminal activity," Morehead said. "This is a better university when we foster and support a culture of openness and inclusiveness."

These factors—affordability and inclusivity—seem the keys to attracting outstanding high school students, who will ideally raise the University's already high academic standards should they matriculate here. Once again, this past fall the University of Georgia enrolled the most qualified freshman class yet, with an average SAT score of 1280 and a 3.86 grade point average. Among other academic accomplishments, the University was also ranked 10th on the Kiplinger 100 Best Values in Public Colleges list and made the list of Public Ivies for the second consecutive year.

"To be consistently ranked among the best values in public higher education speaks to the quality received by students in relationship to the cost," Morehead said. "For if there is no quality in the education provided, the cost is irrelevant."

Quality of education depends on more than quality students, though, and those who matter most in this regard are the educators themselves.

"I believe that the most critical element in reaching new heights of excellence rests with preserving and growing the quality of the faculty," Morehead said. "The academic core of this university depends extensively upon the faculty we are able to recruit and retain."

In recent years, however, the University has "not been able to compensate adequately our faculty for the very good work they do," and for this very reason, valued professors have left the University of Georgia. In response to this dilemma, the administration has declared its top legislative priority a salary pool for faculty and staff. The University also announced a \$2.2 million interdisciplinary hiring initiative in November, creating 16 new faculty positions that cross college, school, and departmental lines. Still, the University of Georgia trails peer institutions like the University of Florida in terms of endowed professorships and the endowment.

"I don't like trailing Florida in anything," Morehead said.

Just as ambitious as Michael F. Adams was when he took the helm, President Morehead has big plans for the University's future, many of which he has already set in motion. On campus, President Morehead directed \$3.3 million to student scholarship and endowed professorships. It is clear that he has the support of the UGA Foundation and entities like the UGA Athletic Association, which in the past year has provided millions of dollars toward additional scholarship funds. Morehead's endeavors also have the support of Governor Nathan Deal, who included in his budget recommendations to the Georgia General Assembly that funds be allocated for a \$44.7 million Science Learning Center, which "will provide modern, efficient, and flexible space to educate our growing population of students in the STEM disciplines."

Like Adams, Morehead believes "a strong Georgia economy is essential to the future of this university, just as a strong University of Georgia is important to the future growth and development of the state's economy and citizens." To stimulate this growth, and to ensure that the University's public service and outreach efforts align with the needs and goals of the state, last July Morehead and his administration established an economic development office in Atlanta. Beyond state borders, the UGA Foundation has purchased a facility to permanently house the Washington Semester and Honors in Washington programs, "placing us alongside other leading universities with a significant presence in Washington."

In closing his address, President Morehead thanked the University community—including faculty, staff, students, and alumni—for the opportunity to serve alongside them. This seems to embody his vision of how the University of Georgia will continue down the path to excellence. The University of Georgia needs a "strong student body; a respected and talented faculty; a dedicated and energetic staff; and an economically growing state" to accomplish its most important goals, but above all it needs a determined president. In President Morehead, we have found the insightful, innovative, and experienced leader that this University deserves. If his first State of the University address is any indication, with a clear vision and "unwavering focus" Morehead will undoubtedly build upon the legacy of his predecessor's 16-year tenure. Michael Adams' presidency was one characterized by milestones for the University of Georgia, and so too will be that of Jere W. Morehead.

**Marco Roca**  
*Operations Manager*

In the popular imagination, Venice has become inseparably intertwined with images of winding waterways and resplendent byzantine and gothic architecture. Even the name “Venice” has an aristocratic resonance to it—and for good reason, considering its rich history and widely regarded reputation as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Unfortunately, the “Queen of the Adriatic” is facing a slew of issues. If Venice manages to stay afloat amidst its problems, it might well serve as a case study for how to approach a number of global challenges in the coming years. Not bad for a city of 60,000 residents built on a few sticks in the mud.

Before Venice became one of the world’s mightiest city-states and long before it was an international tourist and jet-setter hotspot, it had a humble start as a society of refugees fleeing Germanic and Hun invasions in the early 400s. After spending years under siege across the Italian peninsula, the original Venetians saw the 117 islands in the lagoon as a desirable bulwark against aggressors. Since most of these “islands” were little more than tiny plots of sand, mud, and clay, the lagoon’s new residents needed to find a way to fortify the islands’ foundations so that they could support a future empire. The Venetians arrived at the solution of driving wood pilings gathered from the forests of modern day Slovenia, Croatia, and Montenegro into the mud. Since the wood pilings were quickly built upon, the wood was submerged, avoiding oxygenation and subsequent rotting. Remarkably, the constant flow of mineral rich lagoon water caused the wood to petrify. As the wood pilings solidified over the years, so did Venice’s power and reputation. And just as Venice’s grandiose buildings began to seemingly jut directly out of the water, the Venetian Republic suddenly propelled itself into the center of the Renaissance and world affairs.

Although the enterprising group of onetime displaced refugees had spent their history up to this point hardly surviving on the fringes of society, the spotlight zeroed in on Venice for the first time during the Renaissance. After about a millennium of development, Venice rose to the occasion and led the Western World in creativity and innovation. While some may accredit the assembly line to Henry Ford, it was actually the Venetian navy that first conceptualized and in-

stigated the assembly line for ship production. This predated the Industrial Revolution and Mr. Ford by several centuries. Publications worldwide should also pay their respects, as the Venetian Republic fostered the first newspaper. With additional innovations such as the opera house, the casino, and what later became modern-day fabric, Venice also takes credit for, unsurprisingly, the invention of patent law. In terms of human capital, Venice produced a number of tremendously influential individuals during this time period: Marco Polo, Titian, Salieri, and Vivaldi were all native Venetians. Thus, in a very tangible sense, anyone who lives in the western hemisphere, works in manufacturing, or reads the paper can thank the Venetian Republic.

Given Venice’s laudable contributions in shaping the modern world, it is of critical importance to salvage this great city. It is no secret to most that Venice is sinking, and studies published in 2012 show that the rate has increased to five times greater than originally thought. Rising tides are obviously the main culprit, but a newer discovery is potentially even more troubling. The wood pilings that have served as the city’s foundation for centuries and the limestone and brick built upon them have begun to rot and corrode.

Another key problem Venice faces on a daily basis is the effect of pollution. Whereas only a few decades ago people openly swam in the canals, today it would likely take a madman to dip his feet into the polluted and overcrowded water. Speeding jet boats, which were coincidentally invented in Venice, cruises, and the motor-powered boats that now congest the canals both pollute the waterways and suck out vital cement and mud from building foundations. Paolo Costa, the current president of the Venice Port Authority and

ex-mayor, posits that the ideal number of tourists is no more than 7.5 million. Venice is currently mobbed with 30 million visitors each year, which is about as many tourists as the entire country of Germany receives annually.

Luckily, the enterprising people of Venice have proposed several solutions to their problems with the environment and overpopulation. For €4.7 billion, or about one-tenth the cost of the recent Sochi Olympics, the MOSE Project is

underway to keep rising tides from flooding the city. The project is currently 80 percent complete and shows great promise. If successful, other coastal cities such as Miami, Boston, New York City, and Los Angeles, all of which face the risk of rising tides in the next century, could have a reliable model to use in formulating their own anti-flood plans. The answer to overpopulation is murkier, but a few ideas include an application system and a waiting list to visit the city. Whatever comes of this may also lay the groundwork for successful immigration and visitation policies around the world. Unlike the brackish lagoon around Venice, these waters are untested and unexplored. Dried up funding and a debt crisis similar to the one in the United States, however, certainly make matters more difficult. Despite the challenges ahead, history tends to repeat itself, and Venice may very well flourish again under global scrutiny and continue to lead the way in innovation.

**If Venice manages to stay afloat amidst its problems, it might well serve as a case study for how to approach a number of global challenges in the coming years.**

# SOVIET SKITSCH

should what happened in the 20th century stay in the 20th century?

**Megan White & Victoria Barker**  
*Editor in Chief and Staff Writer*

The 2014 Sochi Olympics began with a bang, or, rather, an avant-garde industrial boom. A three-hour-long spectacle, the Opening Ceremony ferried viewers through a millennium of Russian history, highlighting the country's cultural and scientific achievements along the way. While the performance covered national treasures such as Tolstoy's "War and Peace" and Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake," condensing a thousand years into one sitting inevitably requires that some details be left out. As the ceremony moved into the Soviet era, the narrative drew immediate criticism from the international media for an idealized presentation of history that, according to Time magazine's James Poniewozik, "skipped over the bloody excesses of Stalinist Russia in favor of a bit of World War II and a whole lot of Soviet '50s teenyboppers."

The purpose of the Opening Ceremony, however, was not to provide a history lesson, but to celebrate proud moments in a tumultuous national past. Just as the United States would not have paraded images of the Trail of Tears, slavery, or internment camps across the international stage, Russia had every reason to speed skate through a smoothed-over version the 20th century. While the Olympic Opening Ceremonies is not necessarily the time or the place to come face-to-face with a painful history, a nation cannot hide behind a sugarcoated narrative forever: it eventually needs to step into the ring and grapple with the past. When the Soviet Union collapsed in late 1991, 15 countries were left to sift through the rubble of approximately 70 years and build new national identities. Nearly a quarter century later, eyewitnesses are aging, monuments are falling into disrepair, and the memory of life in the Soviet Union is fading under a thick layer of time. As time continues to press forward, these 15 countries must decide how and if they will remember the less than rosy moments of the past, and whether they should embrace the Soviet legacy or to let history be history.

Immediately following the 1991 implosion of the Soviet Union, the former republics faced the daunting decision of how to move forward politically. For 70 years, a massive and highly centralized government had overseen all domestic and foreign policy. Suddenly, 15 new governments were left to carve an identity somewhere between the old and the new. Adding further urgency to the decision was the ongoing economic crisis that had pushed the U.S.S.R. to the brink. In Europe, where GDP declined by as much as 50 percent, countries such as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania took steps to politically distance themselves from the past, joining the European Union and maintaining an almost spotless democratic record. Farther east and at the other end of the spectrum, countries such as Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan could hardly be considered post-Soviet: they remain today under the same leaders who ushered them out of the U.S.S.R. 25 years ago. In much of the former Soviet Union, particularly in threshold countries such as Ukraine, Moldova, and Russia, however, the past's role in political orientation remains in limbo. But when building a new country atop the controversial and sometimes painful history of another, political orientation is only part of the battle.

As the newly formed governments puzzled over post-Soviet politics, the people of the former republics were left with a more complex question: what to do with the Soviet cultural legacy. While a government or an economic policy can change overnight, culture tends to be more inelastic. Under the doctrine of socialist realism, imposed by the Statute of the Union of Soviet Writers in 1934, Soviet public culture was essentially a government-controlled enterprise for 60 years. As independent states moved away from the Soviet Union, statues of happy, muscular peasants and workers continued to symbolically tower over the respective capitals. Today, in places such as Vilnius, Lithuania, the foundations of these statues are both literally and figuratively crumbling.

Generally, three different approaches to the Soviet cultural legacy have emerged from 1991. In countries such as Belarus and the five Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), a Soviet culture presence persists and is somewhat embraced. Since declaring independence in August 1991, Belarus has renamed only a few of its streets that commemorate Soviet war heroes, has maintained Russian as its de facto language, and has left Soviet symbols such as the large hammer and sickle adorning Minsk's "Lenin's Square" metro station unmolested. Though the post-Soviet countries of Central Asia have seen a resurgence of pre-Soviet traditions and Islam, the USSR looms large in the practice of state-mandated culture.

A second approach, which is most clearly mani-

festated in Russia, is the softening of the Soviet legacy. In Moscow, for example, tourists can shop for KGB t-shirts and Communist Party shot glasses beneath the watchful eyes of a Vladimir Lenin statue. Later, they can try on army uniforms in one of the city's many Soviet kitsch museums or visit the embalmed body of Lenin himself in Red Square. The Soviet legacy remains alive and well in Russia, but perhaps more as a pop-culture phenomenon than as an exercise in historical remembrance. Kitsch-culture is not necessarily politically motivated, but is rather the byproduct of an aging generation's nostalgia for youth. Still, there are signs of change: only one in four Russians thinks that Lenin's body should remain ensconced in Red Square, and the number of Russians nostalgic for the USSR has decreased by 10 percent.

While post-Soviet cultural angst has made only ripples in some former republics, it has churned waves in the Baltic States, where feelings toward the days of the USSR are chilly, at best. In Estonia, 100,000 ethnic Russians remain stateless, effectively barred from receiving Estonian citizenship. Latvia maintains a similar rule.

Lithuania, on the other hand, is currently embroiled in debate over what to do about the decaying statues on Vilnius' Green Bridge. Some, such as Parliament member Kestutis Masiulis, believe that the statues should be demolished altogether, claiming that they glorify an ugly past and citing recent laws that prohibit the public use of Soviet symbols. Vilnius officials flatly rejected the mayor of Moscow's 2010 offer to pay for the statues' restoration. Despite public aversion to all things Soviet, Vilnius city officials have argued for a more complicated approach. By mounting plaques beneath the statues that explain the brutality of the Soviet invasion, officials hope to simultaneously honor history and pay respect to its victims.

This more complicated approach appears to be the answer in peaceful memory politics. History is often messy and stained. Wiping it clean or even buffing out the worst scuffmarks only clears away the context of a people's proudest moments and the roots of who they are today. Though the 15 successor states to the Soviet Union have moved in different directions politically, some aligning with the past and others drawing away, they will always share a common cultural history. Glorifying that history without any understanding of the less than glorious moments trivializes the sacrifices of the past. Razing that history out of shame does the same, and is an act somewhat Soviet in of itself. Identity emerges from a full picture of history. Walking the balance beam between the past and the future while juggling remembrance, respect, and renewal, though, should qualify as an Olympic event.

# ECONOMIC PARADISE LOST (and found)

**Michael Ingram**  
*Staff Writer*

The Chinese economic miracle cannot continue indefinitely. The limits of its export-driven growth are quickly approaching as workers demand higher wages, but the crisis of economic identity may already be happening. Inside China, there is little recognition of this fact.

Ghost cities built for millions sit empty as mass urbanization plans fail to pan out. Party leadership fixates on milking the present situation and cannot fathom an economic downturn similar to Japan's in the 1990s. Foreign investment is declining, and businesses search for greener pastures. For the past 30 years, low wages fueled the manufacturing juggernaut, but the global race to the bottom leaves China outpaced by poorer nations.

Since reformist leader Deng Xiaoping's opening of the economy in 1978, China has seen continuous double-digit economic growth. Low-wage manufacturing supplied by its 1.3 billion-person population transformed a state reeling from the internal chaos of the Cultural Revolution to a country on the cusp of superpower status. However, China's skyrocket of growth is losing steam, and the multi-trillion-dollar question is where it will launch next. One answer is Stratfor Intelligence Group's collective known

as the Post-China (PC)-16.

What is the common thread through a group so culturally diverse, geographically disparate, and hitherto lacking influence on the global stage? The answer is their relative poverty. Their comparative advantage for export manufacturing stems from the ability to supply large quantities of low-cost labor. Want to be an export powerhouse? Give

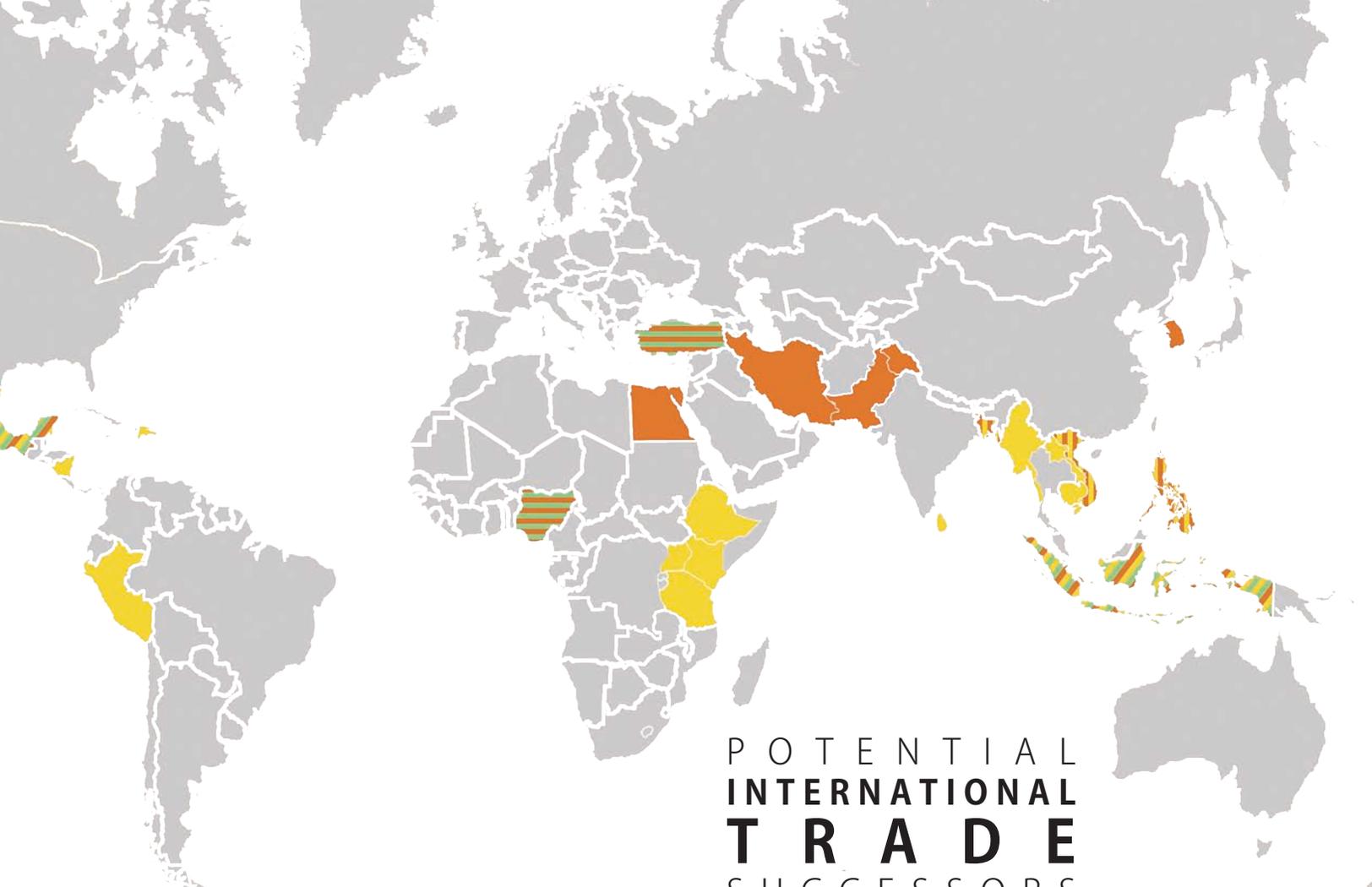
**What is the common thread through a group so culturally diverse, geographically disparate, and hitherto lacking influence on the global stage? The answer is their relative poverty.**

foreign companies the lowest input prices possible. China's manufacturing renaissance did not depend on technology or education, but a cheap and colossal labor pool. As a whole, the PC-16 rival China in size and beat China in price.

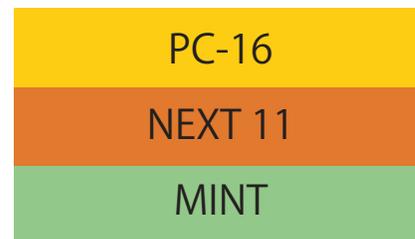
In terms of sheer size, though, India incorrectly appears as the logical next step. While India is projected to overtake China in terms of population, its economic engine runs on domestic consumption. A focus on exports separates the PC-16 from megalithic states

like India – a net importer. The kind of growth China from which developed cannot take place domestically in India, where citizens make a fraction of first world per capita income, assuming they can even find employment. Size alone is not enough to replace China.

With a combined population of 1.1 billion, the PC-16 does possess the labor supply necessary to rival the massive labor pool of China. Where they will usurp China's export mo-



## POTENTIAL INTERNATIONAL TRADE SUCCESSORS



nopoly is in the manufacture of textiles. These cheap goods are the bedrock of industrialization. “Made in China” tags may soon be replaced by tags reading “Made by a member of the PC-16.”

China’s successors are truly a mixed bag. Indonesia, Mexico, and the Philippines are newly industrialized nations, but the collective includes emergent economies like Vietnam all the way to underdeveloped countries like Bangladesh. Uniform analysis is difficult with such a bevy of governmental, cultural, and geographical variance. Generally, nascent entrepreneurship must blossom to leverage inherent capabilities. The deciding factor will be the ability for governments to act efficiently. China’s strong-handed state capitalism steered development forward, though often at the expense of human rights and worker happiness.

While governments and entrepreneurs will enjoy the benefits, factory life subjects workers to hellish conditions and little to no upward mobility in the short term. Pushback is to be expected as common folk seek to retain the comfort of their traditions and lifestyles in the face of societal restructuring by capitalism. But in the long run, developing through exports is essential to establishing a middle class. Economic freedom does not always give rise to political freedom, but it does give more power to the common people.

Success for political leaders and entrepreneurs depends on future-proofing their countries. Infrastructure is essential to providing for world markets, and investors will not take their business somewhere with tenuous access to the outside world. Secondly, these are not capitalist societies; entre-

preneurs must navigate the economic wilds ruled by custom to form some semblance of order from the chaos. Furthermore, the political climate in many of these states is far from calm. Narco-conflict plagues the Latin American aspirants like Mexico and Nicaragua. Sectarian violence frequently upends society in Bangladesh, Kenya, and the Philippines. Corruption is a widespread menace threatening to gut gains made from exports in every member of the collective. But while development is treacherous, it is not impossible.

In the persistent battle of comparative advantage, the PC-16 may yet morph from the economic backwaters into the next generation of capitalist success stories. Yet some states will succeed where others will falter. The PC-16 are just one of many economic classifications like Goldman Sachs’s BRICs, MINTs, and Next 11, but clearly, the future of international trade will be driven by many different nations. China’s decline will ultimately empower a whole new swath of the world, and new opportunities for Western business will arise from emergent markets.

# The Middle-Eastern Exception

Holly Boggs  
*Staff Writer*



The Pilgrims strode off the Mayflower 394 years ago in an effort to escape a religiously intolerant government. The weight of their first steps onto American soil cemented a bedrock principle—separation of church and state—in the American people’s hearts. This principle of secularization has caught on like a fever spreading across the globe. Today, secular states dominate the world map. Philosophers such as Auguste Comte, Max Weber, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud theorized that with modernization would come widespread secularism. Looking purely at the numbers, this might seem true. But one very concentrated section of the map serves as a stark contradiction to this theory: the Middle East.

Political Islam has risen to prominence in the wake of the Arab Spring, despite huge strides forward in terms of modernization in the region. Secularization has a negative connotation for many nations of the Middle East that dates back to colonial rule. In his book, “The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality,” John L. Esposito explains that “modernization was seen as a legacy of European colonialism perpetuated by Western-oriented elites who imposed and fostered the twin processes of Westernization and secularization.” In Egypt, from 1882 to 1952, for example, the British replaced Egyptian self-government with their own “advisers” and rooted governance in the idea of secularism. The French colonial government in Syria and Lebanon reformed religious schools to follow a secular curriculum, and employed a “divide and conquer” strategy to break apart religious and cultural commonalities among the colonized peoples and coerce them into submission. The West justified its colonial project with the ideology of the “white man’s burden” to uplift supposedly backward countries with modernization, whether it was welcomed or not.

At the same time that secularization was gaining a bad reputation in the region, political Islam became increasingly associated with the ideals of reform and anti-imperialism. Indeed, religiously motivated reformers, such as Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, were oftentimes the only ones with a significant following. Oppressive, authoritarian leaders in Iran led an undemocratic (yet secular) government that clamped down on religious expression and cultural practices from 1925 to the end of the 1970s. When the Iranian people finally rebelled and overthrew the regime during the Islamic Revolution of 1979, it was under the guidance of Islamic fundamentalists who

replaced it with a theocratic government.

In these examples, secularization was used as a tool by oppressive leaders to control their subjects, and political opposition rooted in Islam was often the most viable alternative. The notable exception is Turkey, where Mustafa Kemal Ataturk rose to power in the wake of World War I and enforced Western practices of secularization and quickly modernized the country. Most Turkish people admired Ataturk and embraced his Western concepts. It could be argued that his popularity has been a driving force behind the maintenance of secularization in the country.

Even the Turkish story of secularization has limitations, though. From the beginning, Islamic groups have attempted to challenge Ataturk’s reforms, and they have been growing in popularity in recent years. Tayyip Erdogan became prime minister of the country in 2002 and has been accused of promoting an Islamist agenda. Many fear that he aspires to reverse the principles of democracy and secularization. In May 2013, protests erupted in Taksim Square, sparked by outrage towards the government’s violent eviction of peaceful sit-ins in the park. At the heart of the matter, though, was a demonstration of public disapproval of Prime Minister Erdogan’s policies and conduct. Erdogan’s religiously affiliated policies, such as the right of women to wear headscarves in universities are thus far innocent enough. Nonetheless, there still remains a heightened sensitivity to any policy that might fly in the face of Ataturk’s secularizing project due to the rising tide of Islamists throughout the region.

Where did the secularization thesis go wrong? The history of secularization for Western nations, such as the United States and France, has generally carried a positive connotation associated with freedom and reform. It is easy for the West to assume a correlation between modernization and secularization because the pairing has a strong basis in its historical consciousness. The Middle East, though, has a very different history with the concept. Secularization has typically come hand-in-hand with external domination and domestic oppression. Modernization leading to secularization has not been the iron rule scholars once predicted it would be. The only true theory that scholars can agree on is that the world is simply too complex to be summed up in any one blanket generalization.

# The INVISIBLE ORIENTATION

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“I started using the word ‘asexual’ when I was about 13 or 14...Everyone around me was experiencing things that I wasn’t, and it was scary and disorienting. I assumed there was something wrong with me. Something broken.”

David Jay

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**Carson Aft & Michael Land**  
*Assistant Senior Editor and Staff Writer*

According to modern understanding, human sexuality is best understood as a spectrum. Alfred Kinsey first proposed such a model in 1948, when he assigned people a number ranging from 0 (purely heterosexual) to 6 (purely homosexual). However, he also assigned an “X” to a small percentage of people who lacked any “socio-sexual contacts or relations.” It is now believed that Kinsey was describing asexuality.

Asexuality is a sexual orientation defined as the lack of sexual attraction toward other people, regardless of gender. Asexual people, or “aces,” may still form romantic relationships with others, and may identify a romantic orientation in addition to their sexual orientation. For example, those who prefer to form romantic attachments solely to people of the opposite gender will identify as heteroromantic rather than heterosexual. It is possible for asexual people to form successful romantic relationships with sexual people, though the disharmony in sexual preferences can cause problems.

Because of the discrimination faced by all sexual minorities, it would seem as though the asexual community and LGBT advocates would be natural allies. Since the creation of AVEN (the Asexuality Visibility and Education Network) in 2001, founder David Jay has advocated for inclusion in the LGBT community. According to Jay, 90 to 95 percent of asexuals consider themselves LGBT or LGBT allies. This alignment, however, may not be quite that simple.

While some LGBT communities are fully accepting of asexuality as a non-normative orientation, others have accused asexuals of trying to co-opt the gay rights movement.

Controversial gay rights activist Dan Savage has drawn criticism for his statements about asexuals: “...you have the asexuals marching for the right to not do anything. Which is hilarious. Like, you didn’t need to march for that right. You just need to stay home, not do anything.”

Though he is an outspoken voice in the LGBT community, Savage does speak for his entire movement. On a local level, attitudes toward asexuals have been much more positive. In February 2014, UGA’s Lambda Alliance updated its constitution to include asexuals as a recognized sexual minority. The organization now prefers to use the term LGBTQA in order to reflect the diversity of its members. Nationally, asexual activists have shared similar sentiments. “Asexuality is very much a part of the broader conversation in our society about gender and sexual diversity. [It’s] certainly queer, and it’s certainly part of the LGBT community,” said activist Sara Beth Brooks. But there are difficulties beyond inclusion.

In addition to the inherent difficulties of forming romantic relationships with sexual people, asexuals often face challenges because of the lack of public knowledge about their orientation. The 2011 documentary “(A)sexual” explores people’s experiences with asexuality. The film opens with interviews of random passers-by. Most people associate the word “asexual” with bacteria and/or plants, and some assert that there is no such thing as an asexual person. Such responses are quite common, and many asexuals describe similar reactions after attempting to come out to their families and friends. Problems such as these necessitated the creation of organizations for support.

In 2001, activist David Jay founded AVEN with the goals of facilitating the growth of an asexual community and cre-

ating public acceptance and discussion about the orientation. Today, the website hosts the world's largest forums on asexuality, and serves as a resource center for asexuals, friends, allies, and researchers.

Unfortunately, ignorance is hardly the only issue that asexuals face. When she was 19, blogger and asexual activist Julie Decker was sexually assaulted by a male colleague. Decker believes that her experiences are indicative of a wider problem faced by the queer community: the belief that asexuals and other sexual minorities are "broken" and that having sex with the right person (consensually or not) can "fix" them. According to Decker, "We are perceived as not being fully human because sexual attraction and sexual relationships are seen as something alive, healthy people do... People who perform corrective rape, they believe that they're just waking us up and that we'll thank them for it later." Regardless of the relatively low level of media attention given to these issues, they are still real problems that impact thousands of people.

In an attempt to understand these issues, researchers at Brock University published a groundbreaking study regarding prejudice against sexual minority groups. This was the first known study to compare discrimination against asexuals with discrimination against homosexuals and bisexuals. According to the authors, heterosexuals are likely to discriminate against asexuals in a way that strongly correlates with their discrimination against other sexual minorities. This trend is particularly strong among religious and social conservatives. Along with other sexual minority groups, asexuals are often viewed as lacking characteristics that make them "uniquely human," and can be seen as mechanistic and cold. Furthermore, the study indicates that discrimination against asexuals has significant consequences; heterosexuals are significantly less likely to employ or rent an apartment to someone who identifies as asexual. Despite these detriments, inclusion within the prominent rights movements is still often difficult.

"There are a lot of gay folks who get angry when we suggest asexual people belong [in the LGBT community]," said Julie Decker. "And that's primarily based on the supposition that asexual people do not experience oppression and that any prejudice, discrimination or discomfort we experience is not 'as bad' as theirs, which I think is odd because queerness is not – or should not be – defined by negative experiences."

As Decker states, negative experiences are a poor metric upon which to base a group identity. The strength of the asexual community should be derived from the positive experiences of its members. As asexuality becomes more widely recognized, the community will face further challenges on the road to full social equality.

Ultimately, the major hurdle to equality lies within visibility and understanding. Ignorance often denies aces of their romantic identity, creating dangerous cultural issues. The movement is not without hope, however. As more men and women identify as asexual, the pressure on culture to change grows, as well as the potential for true equality. Inclusion and acceptance still lie at the end of a long road, but no race can be completed without the first step. The invisible sexuality must no longer remain invisible.

**In addition to the inherent difficulties of forming romantic relationships with sexual people, asexuals often face challenges because of the lack of public knowledge about their orientation.**





THE PIOUS PATRIARCH  
vs.  
The Wolf of Washington



**Sarah Smith**  
*Staff Writer*

On Sept. 22, 1999, a new kind of political drama premiered on NBC. “The West Wing,” pioneered by “A Few Good Men’s” Aaron Sorkin, followed the presidency of Josiah Bartlet and his administration. For seven seasons, viewers kept pace with the inner workings of the Bartlet White House. From the director of communication’s cynicism to the deputy chief of staff’s steadfast optimism, over 10 million viewers tuned in every week to see how the West Wing would handle the next American crisis.

Having won three Golden Globes and 26 Emmys, “The West Wing” is now considered one of the greatest political dramas of all time. Viewers were drawn to the show’s idealism and sentimentalism, traits which showcased an administration truly working for the greater good. Alongside a team of policy wonks and ethical politicians, Martin Sheen charmingly led his White House down a righteous path. His role as commander-in-chief was a position the American people admired, respected, and supported.

Sorkin’s “*cri de coeur*” portrayal of White House politics was juxtaposed with President Clinton’s own moral messiness. While President Clinton maintained a 60 percent approval rating in 2000 (the year the show truly took off), the father figure portrayed by Sheen’s character gave viewers a beacon of hope on the Hill. From President Bartlet’s whimsical quotes to his keen interest in his staff, Sheen’s character played a paternal role in his administration. This gave millions of viewers and voters a government they were proud to watch, especially when compared to one writhing in scandal.

“The West Wing” had all the components necessary for a successful television series. Sometimes referred to as the “antidote of Bush,” even the opening credits of Sorkin’s masterpiece are marked by an inspirational tune and images of each actor hued by golden chiaroscuro. Even when the show’s reign ended in 2006, every character’s storyline concluded perfectly, wrapped up with a bow on top. A new president, different from Bartlet but just as vivacious, was left in the Oval Office to herald democratic crusades for the next four to eight years.

Fast forward seven years and two presidencies, and television has a new political figure to admire. Instead of Presi-

dent Bartlet’s pious oversight, however, this show’s figurehead is the villainous anti-hero of American politics. Netflix’s first original series, “House of Cards,” premiered alongside the woes of another U.S. president: as President Obama began his second term in office, approval ratings sat below 50 percent.

In a stark contrast to “The West Wing’s” cheerful opening, “House of Cards” begins with images of an ominously foggy Washington. While “The West Wing” brings light to politics, “House of Cards” takes that light away. From the first episode, Rep. Francis Underwood (played by Kevin Spacey) draws viewers in with cynical insight as his master plan unfolds. Underwood’s diabolical scheming and cool Southern charm leave viewers wanting more, which Netflix’s all-you-can-watch access model granted by releasing 13 episodes in one fell swoop.

political environments the shows portray. The pre-Bush “West Wing” is full of optimism; the post-Bush “House of Cards” is full of cynicism. In what has been described as “post-hope” politics by the New York Times, Underwood navigates a world of manipulation and malice. His Richard III-style conversation with the audience breaks the usual fourth wall barrier of viewership. In comparison, the traditional television style of “The West Wing” filled viewers with hope every week by highlighting the merits of democracy. We laughed, cried, and cheered with Bartlet’s administration. In many ways, each show gives the audience exactly what it is seeking from political dramas given the politics playing out in the real world.

As approval ratings plummet among government shutdowns and fiscal cliffs, “House of Cards” is the type of drama



**While “The West Wing” illustrated a government Americans were proud of, “House of Cards” showcases the nihilistic environment of D.C. politics.**

“House of Cards,” which had its first taste of success as a BBC miniseries in the 1990s, reached the pinnacle of fame when screenwriter Beau Willimon adapted the show for American audiences. Lord Michael Dobbs, a former Tory peer and author of the book “House of Cards,” recalls how he originally thought of Francis Urquhart, or “FU,” the fictional chief whip of the Conservative Party during the Thatcher era in an interview with the *Huffington Post*. FU’s character was the premise from which the BBC developed their miniseries, also titled “House of Cards.” Dubbing his vindictive chronicle, “‘The West Wing’ for werewolves” Lord Dobbs details how Spacey’s character (in the U.S. version of ‘House of Cards’) is the drug D.C. needs to fix its paralysis. Unlike the good-guy-doing-good image presented in “The West Wing,” Dobbs’ FU is a fictional representation of the American government feared to be reality.

The style and theme of both “The West Wing” and “House of Cards” reflect the

relevant to today’s demographic. While “The West Wing” illustrated a government Americans were proud of, “House of Cards” showcases the nihilistic environment of D.C. politics.

The vanguard of the all-you-can-watch model of streaming, Francis Underwood rests among America’s other favorite anti-heroes. Similar to Dexter’s many escapes and Heisenberg’s triumph over Gus Fring, viewers root for Francis and Claire to succeed as they pave their path to power. The Underwoods provide the American public with an overt extension of the darker parts of themselves, manifested in the political arena.

Perhaps the turmoil in the Middle East and recent economic downturn have made viewers bitter, similar to the way Underwood felt when he was denied the Secretary of State position. Viewers enjoy watching the betrayed become the betrayer, and watching Underwood’s butchery build a house of cards out of American politics enthralls them.

# Deciphering

# Downton

Jacqueline Van De Velde & Suchi Goyal  
*Staff Writers*

Ask any Anglophile for a TV recommendation and you'll likely hear the same response: "Downton Abbey." The BBC-produced British drama, now in its fourth season in the United States, is a celebration of and a tribute to the English aristocracy. "Downton Abbey" follows the lives of the lords and ladies of a landed estate in the early 20th century. Winding its way between stories from the upstairs (the aristocracy) and the downstairs (the servants who wait upon them), the show explores the shrinking distance between the haves and have-nots in 1913 Britain.

"Downton" has proven extremely popular, both in Great Britain and in the United States. According to The Washington Times, the season three finale of "Downton Abbey" drew 12.3 million viewers and was the highest rated show of the night on all of television.

What kind of show can inspire 12.3 million people to tune in on a Sunday night and draw 6.8 million viewers to PBS even during the Super Bowl? "Downton's" popularity seems to be reflected in its content. The show explores class issues, women's rights, race relations, and a host of other hot-button topics that are just as pertinent today as they were in 1913.

One particularly important issue around which "Downton" revolves is class. The divide between the servants and the aristocracy is extremely wide. The aristocracy dresses in finery for dinner and entertains itself with cricket; servants worry about marriage, unemployment, imprisonment, and rape. Access to opportunity is drastically different between the floors of the Abbey, though the show seems to indicate that the advance of the 20th century may bring changes for the wealthy, landed aristocrats.

Income inequality is something that Americans know well. The Occupy movement introduced the United States to the idea of the 1 percent of Americans who hold a concentrated amount of income and wealth. Filmographers have been working on the issue, too; former U.S.

Secretary of Labor Robert Reich recently premiered a hit documentary, "Inequality for All," tracking income inequality in the United States. President Obama's most recent state of the Union was devoted to the problem. In fact, the comparison between "Downton Abbey" and the U.S. economy has been drawn at the highest levels of policy. White House economic adviser Lawrence Summers wrote in The Financial Times that "the share of income going to the top 1 percent of earners has increased sharply," and "the United States may well be on the way to becoming a 'Downton Abbey' economy."

"Downton Abbey" may showcase an income inequality gap that is familiar in the United States, but it also makes very strong comments on the validity of that gap. The rigid class structure present at "Downton" harms everyone involved – not only the servants, but also Matthew and Mary (the lord and lady who will inherit the estate). Viewers are able to see the negative impacts of the class system because the show deliberately spends the same amount of time showcasing the goings-on upstairs as those downstairs. Princes are given just as much screen time as paupers, and the result is that viewers recognize the humanity in both groups. Analysts such as Bryce Covert, the editor of the Roosevelt Institute's New Deal 2.0 blog, have argued that "Downton Abbey" preaches an extremely progressive change to the current class system in the United States through the way it treats the class dynamics in World War I-era Britain.

As "Downton" Abbey navigates viewers through the economics and social mobility of the early 20th century, it also considers the evolution of gender roles in the era. The series' initial conflict rests on the frustration of the ladies of "Downton Abbey," who, according to British law, cannot inherit their father's estate, making them dependent upon husbands, fathers, and uncles for livelihoods. Gender dynamics play an equal role in the lives of servants, who challenge precedent by seeking employment as secretaries rather than maids. As the storylines progress over the course of a decade, viewers witness the women of "Downton" grow increasingly willing to rebuff the expectations of society. Following the abrupt

change of social dynamics during World War I, the women become involved in politics, opinion journalism, and property management.

The struggle to establish themselves in “a man’s world” is one women continue to face a century later. In a time when gender inequality should be an outdated topic reserved for history books, women make up only 18.3 percent of the U.S. Congress. And while the number of females receiving higher education and participating in the workforce has increased steadily since the 1960s, the glass ceiling has yet to be shattered. Life on the Hill looks unsettlingly similar to life at “Downton Abbey.”

However, the positive changes in the lives of women shown on “Downton” are reflective of the slow but steady changes in the present day. Foreshadowing today, when men are no longer considered the “heads of the house” by default and women are the primary breadwinners in 40 percent of households, “Downton Abbey” follows one of the daughters as she successfully fights to inherit and manage the estate – despite the social pressures surrounding her gender. “Downton Abbey” women also become feminist columnists for a national newspaper, join political rallies, and work as nurses during the war – just as women today serve as active bloggers, participate in protest movements, and volunteer to promote social change. “Downton” also touches difficult issues of abortion and rape, portraying women who are navigating the social pressures and personal turbulence that accompany making difficult emotional decisions. It is easy to equate the strong women of “Downton” with important characters on the modern social scene such as Texas State Sen. Wendy Davis or New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez – women who aren’t afraid to stand up for their viewpoints.

“Downton” may raise tough social issues on purpose, inviting American audiences to draw comparisons to their own political progress. The show’s popularity highlights the fact that severe income inequality and well-defined gender roles continue to be widespread issues in current society. The social progress of the last 100 years is not enough if major conflicts from the last century are still relevant today. Here’s hoping that “Downton Abbey” serves not only as a guilty historical drama pleasure, but also as an impetus for creating the social change that women and socio-economic classes have been fighting a century for.

**The social progress of the last 100 years is not enough if major conflicts from the last century are still relevant today.**



# Ne[x]t for Google

Tomorrow's Technology at America's Most Ambitious Company

**Andrew Peoples**  
*Staff Writer*

The future is coming soon, and it will belong to Google. Cars that drive themselves. Airborne wind turbines that never have to land. Robots of every shape, size, and purpose. While the common element in these items may have once been their conception in the realm of science fiction, today they belong together as the products of the second-most valuable company in the United States.

From a series of often outlandish development projects to a massive string of start-up acquisitions, Google has shown an interest in hardware and technology development unparalleled by any other company. Expanding outward in every direction, Google is attempting to revolutionize human life the same way it changed Internet browsing.

Google's research and development department is driving much of this futurism, especially its semi-secret laboratory wing, Google X. Home to the driverless cars as well as Google Glass, Google X has become the expression of the company's push to develop world-changing technology.

Embracing an attitude that encourages researchers to tackle improbable projects with supposedly little thought for the company's bottom line, Google X's mandate is to simply come up with inventions that belong in a science-fiction novel. The lab grew out of the driverless cars endeavor and was officially founded in 2010, when Google co-founder Sergey Brin appointed that project's leader, Sebastian Thrun, to be its first director. Shortly after the lab's inception, Thrun oversaw the creation of the prototype for Google Glass.

Part of the idea behind Google X is to let talent come and go as needed, and Thrun himself moved on to a new start-up in 2012. Brin replaced him with Eric Teller, another scientist, who articulated

Google X's mission of trying to tackle "anything which is a huge problem for humanity." Researchers under Teller's leadership have considered issues such as asteroid mining and teleportation in conjunction with more present-day endeavors such as the autonomous cars. Google X has also been partially responsible for the multitude of recent acquisitions by its parent company. Google acquired Makani Power, the airborne wind turbine manufacturer, at Teller's suggestion last year, and several other companies have been integrated into Google X as well. However, the laboratory is behind only part of the \$17 billion Google has spent on acquisitions in the past two

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years. The extensive series of purchases is part of Google's greater strategy, one that works in tandem with Google X's plans. Taking no chances regarding the ownership of emerging technologies, Google is snapping up those founded outside the company while it simultaneously produces other technologies from within.

Google has acquired companies in just about every promising sector of emerging technology, and has even snatched quite a few patents that seem far less promising. Artificial intelligence, 3-D printing, and robotics are represented many times over in the company's purchases, alongside patents for devices such as projectable keyboards and walking sticks with cameras. The diverse list

of new companies being absorbed into the larger corporation seems random at first, but information gathering may be the unifying theme. Many of these companies, for instance, produce technologies that can help companies learn more about consumers. Nest, a thermostat company that Google acquired for \$3.2 billion, for instance, gathers information from its thermostats that Google may one day find useful for advertising.

Larry Page, Google's other co-founder, communicated another unifying theme when he became CEO again in 2011. Page expressed a desire to develop more services that pass the "toothbrush test." These services include anything that nearly everyone uses at least twice a day, like a toothbrush. Many of Google's newly acquired companies fit this requirement, positioning Google in such a way that it profits from the "internet of things," or the communication between most consumer devices and their owners. By owning technologies ranging from thermostats to cloud computing, Google stands ready to lead the way in synchronizing the world's technology.

Google is taking a multi-pronged approach toward the future. The company is developing technologies that it hopes will address the biggest issues facing mankind in conjunction with its acquisitions of other technologies aimed at the most mundane aspects of human life. Google spends billions on in-house research and billions more on buying the research of others. These different approaches could suggest dysfunction within Google, but it is more likely that the company is simply dreaming big while hedging its bets. Google wants to influence every aspect of the world of tomorrow, and its leaders plan to do so in any way possible.



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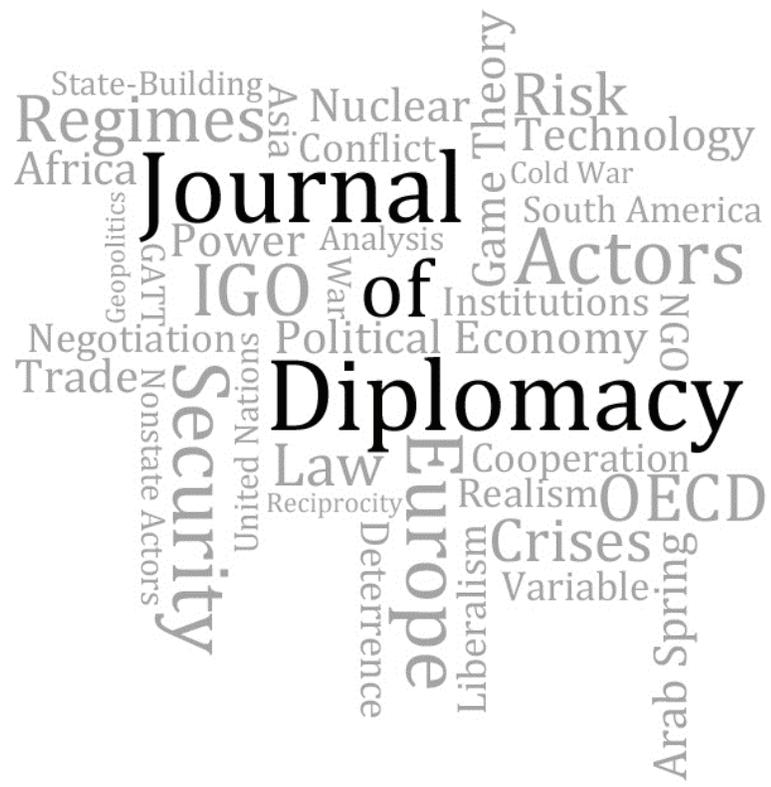
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