

GPR

GEORGIA POLITICAL REVIEW

SPRING 2015



AN
immigrant
EDUCATION

Undocumented Students and Higher Education in Georgia

THE INFORMED STUDENT'S GUIDE TO

Iran's Sexual Revolution

A Look at Changing Norms in the Islamic Republic, Page 30

The Next Civil Rights Movement

The Shades of Jim Crow in the U.S. Justice System, Page 22

The Standardized Testing Controversy

How Our Education System Is Failing Us, Page 10

VOL. VIII



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LETTER from the EDITOR

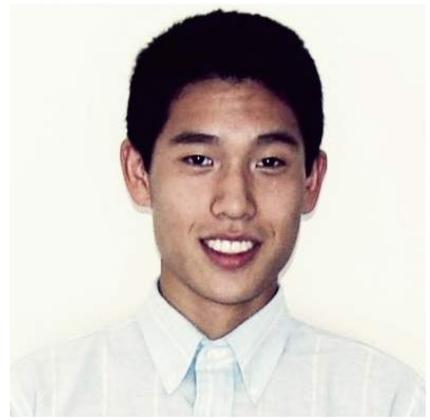
Since its inception in the spring of 2011, the Georgia Political Review has maintained a steadfast dedication to providing its readers an unbiased analysis of current events. We promise a nuanced and critical review of issues you may not be familiar with, from angles you may not have considered. And in this, the eighth edition of our magazine, we continue to uphold that promise. Within these pages you will find an insightful take on the reasons for Charlie Hebdo's salience in the media, even while terrorist groups like Boko Haram wreak much greater havoc under the radar. You will discover the startling sexual revolution taking place behind closed doors in Iran and find an analysis of the plight of undocumented students in Georgia. Whatever the story, GPR is committed to providing you the story from all angles.

In our fourth year on campus, GPR has innovated even as we strive to remain

faithful to the nonpartisan spirit of our founders. We've continued to grow our influence on campus, hosting events like a Q&A session with the SGA Executive candidates as well as a panel discussion with respected university law professors dissecting prominent Supreme Court cases. Additionally, we've expanded our online presence, from our burgeoning Facebook and Twitter (@GAPolitical) to the daily offerings from our website, georgiapoliticalreview.com.

This semester, we've also introduced the GPR Memo, a weekly email newsletter designed to make staying abreast of current events as easy as checking your inbox. All of these initiatives aid us in our efforts to inform our audience and become the premier undergraduate political review in the country.

However, these ambitious goals would not be attainable without our incredible members. Over the last four years, the GPR team has grown from a small group of writers to an extensive staff complete with writers, designers, and marketers. The GPR family is surely a house divided, with liberals, conservatives, and students of all colleges and majors living under one roof. But it is this diverse set of voices and outlooks that allows us to be so successful in our mission. I am



BRUCE LI

unbelievably grateful for my hard-working editorial board and dedicated writers, without whom this magazine would not be possible. So, it is with great pride that we present to you the eighth edition of the Georgia Political Review magazine. May it introduce you to new perspectives and ideas, challenge you to think differently, and most importantly, prompt you to join the conversation.

GPR
GEORGIA POLITICAL REVIEW

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THE OPENING OYSTER

What E-Reading Subscription Services Mean for the Book Industry

Shuchi Goyal
Managing Editor

The public library became my second home early on in my life. I happily visited my library for weekly doses of a seemingly endless selection of books, without worrying about the possibility of bankruptcy. When Amazon released the Kindle in 2007, I scoffed at the concept of paying for books I could simply borrow from the library. Still committed to paper-and-ink reading, I, like many of my peers, favored nostalgia and waxed poetic about “that irreplaceable thrill of turning to the next page.”

College, however, has limited the time I have to venture to the library. For the first time, I understand the appeal of e-readers that allow me to download books on a whim, but I am still reluctant to purchase every book I want to read. Then, I heard about Oyster.

Think of Oyster as a streaming service for books. For a fee of \$9.95 per month, Oyster subscribers can borrow books from a library of over a million titles to read on their smartphones and web browsers. Oyster embodies the independent spirit of the digital age. Launched in 2012 as a New York-based start-up receiving seed funding from a venture capital firm, Oyster has since catapulted to success. The company has deals with major publishing houses such as HarperCollins and Simon & Schuster, as well as with several smaller firms. While Scribd and Amazon’s Kindle Unlimited introduced similar services in 2013, tech outlets have singled out Oyster for its attractive user interface and ease of navigation.

Some question the feasibility of Oyster and other e-reading subscription businesses. Pew Research Center reported that the typical American read only five books in 2013. For this “typical American,” spending \$119.40 for a year-long subscription to Oyster in exchange for five books is probably irrational. But, Oyster’s marketing does not target “typical Americans.” Rather, it targets a younger generation of literary enthusiasts. For instance, the company’s website features a banner that rotates through descriptions of a person who might enjoy Oyster. All begin with “You might be an Oyster reader if you’ve ever...” and end with qualifiers like: “skipped a party to read in bed alone” or “dated someone purely because of their taste in books.” The marketing technique is unique and effective. Kindle Unlimited and Scribd advertise themselves as products for all ages and types of people, and their customers often believe that these products will motivate them to read more. In contrast, by acknowledging that it is not for everyone, Oyster creates a sense of exclusivity for its

customers, thus successfully broadening its appeal.

The driving concept behind Oyster is familiar; media subscription services have steadily gained popularity since the beginning of the 21st century. About 40 percent of households currently subscribe to companies like Netflix and Hulu for access to a wide selection of movies and television shows. Meanwhile, Spotify has now reached 60 million users, including 15 million subscribers, for its music streaming services. While subscription services have increased the accessibility of media nationwide, however, other businesses face negative consequences. Netflix’s growth was a primary cause of Blockbuster’s bankruptcy in 2010, and earlier this year the Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau estimated that online video subscription services were responsible for up to 40 percent of the decline in television ratings in the last quarter. iTunes has reported dropping revenue from album sales. With the rise of Oyster, could similarly grim futures await libraries and bookstores?

Oyster’s threat to libraries is dubious at best. According to the American Libraries Association, public libraries operate on a budget depending primarily on local government funds, with the federal government contributing a smaller portion. Less than 8 percent of the library’s budget comes directly from patrons through overdue fees or fines for lost or damaged books. Therefore, the growing number of Oyster’s subscribers provide no foreseeable risk to the funding available for libraries.

Bookstores, which already faced uphill battles following the introduction of e-readers and during the recession, are another story. Barnes and Noble, one of the last major chains standing, managed to survive by releasing the Nook in the e-reading market. Yet, similar to Spotify’s impact on iTunes, the introduction of e-book subscription services may result in fewer purchases of individual books on Nooks and Kindles over the next few years. And just as rumors buzz that iTunes may soon launch its own music subscription service, companies such as Barnes and Noble will probably release their own products in time to compete with Oyster and stay in business.

Most industry analysts agree that it is too early to definitively assert Oyster’s danger to other book dealers. Publishers and consumers still believe in the reliability of printed text, which is why libraries continue to exist and why bookstores can anticipate a long life ahead. And this is a good thing, because I’m not done feeling that irreplaceable thrill of turning to the next page.

A Splintered Movement

A Debate on Feminism

Baylee Culverhouse
Staff Writer

Last fall, I drove to my local polling station to cast my vote for my gubernatorial and senatorial choices. As I checked in with the poll workers, it hit me: if it had been 100 years earlier, I wouldn't have been able to do this. Thanks to the efforts of early feminists, women were legally granted the right to vote by the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. In fact, if it had not been for the actions of brave women's rights leaders, I would not even have been able to attend the University of Georgia.

The beginning of the feminism movement in the United States can be traced back to the mid-19th century and was focused on gaining political, social, cultural, and economic equality for women. However, the feminism movement has since split into several different categories: liberal feminism, radical feminism, conservative feminism, libertarian feminism and more. This division has created a more fractured view of feminism; while most people would agree with the basic principles, some of the ideologies are causing irritation to the movement as a whole.

Radical feminism, the branch of feminism that focuses on the persecution of women in patriarchal societies, has been gaining immense popularity ever since its rise in the 1960s. In firm opposition to standard gender roles, radical feminists believe that a complete reordering of society is necessary in order to relieve oppression of women. While addressing economic and social inequality would reverse conventional gender roles to some extent, absolute opposition to traditional roles may detract from the broader movement's original intent.

Recently I was sitting at lunch with my mother and one of her friends, and the conversation turned to my mom's choice to leave her job to raise my sister and me. The friend laughed condescendingly at my mother's sacrifice—at her choice to leave her career for a life of changing diapers, living with cabinet locks, and disciplining two unruly children. Has motherhood become a dirty profession?

Many radical feminists challenge traditional gender roles by arguing that being a mother or a wife is equal to submitting to male dominance and approving an oppressive patriarchal society. While motherhood does present disadvantages for women that need addressing (lost work time, child care costs, etc.), most radical feminists take the solution a step farther than others.

In "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity," Judith Butler argues that feminists should work to break the linkage between sex and gender so that gender can be "flexible, free-floating, and not caused by other stable factors."

However, while people are free to choose what gender they wish to identify with, women are the only people

biologically equipped to reproduce; therefore, it is not an issue of gender roles, but rather of biological ability.

Another hotly debated topic for feminists is how to address rape and sexual assault, an issue heavily present on college campuses. The CDC reported that in 2012 nearly one in five women reported experiencing rape at some time in their lives. That is an alarming statistic, especially considering that many rapes go unreported (both male and female). But what exactly defines sexual assault?

Presently, sexual assault is defined by the United States Department of Justice as "any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient." That's a straightforward answer; however, the grey area remains under the idea of explicit consent. What is acceptable explicit consent is a frequently debated topic, and alcohol is a major complication in the delicate task of determining the difference between consensual, drunken hook-ups and clearer rape cases.

According to the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, approximately one half of sexual assault cases involve alcohol consumption by the victim, the perpetrator, or even both. Consuming alcohol significantly raises one's risk of being sexually assaulted due to its dramatic, dampening effects on the brain's ability to make decisions and to determine risks. Alcohol opens up a drove of debate: how drunk is considered too drunk to give consent? What if both the perpetrator and the victim are too intoxicated to understand the outcomes of their decisions? And just how much does alcohol affect the overwhelming rape statistics that are brought up at nearly every college orientation and D.A.R.E. program in schools?

Until this debate is dissected and colleges comprehensively address exactly what defines explicit consent, radical feminists should avoid portraying this issue as solely a product of male domination. While the majority of perpetrators are male, it is very evident that this terrible problem affects both males and females. All genders should unite to fight this issue together. We need an international, unified effort to rid society of rapists and assaulters.

Both the war on mothers and the lack of clarity in the sexual assault definition detract from the power of the women's rights movement as a whole. The radical feminism movement can unknowingly take energy and attention away from the empowerment of women and could create a steep divide between the genders. We must remove the splinter in order to move forward at a healthy pace.



Kathleen Wilson
Staff Writer

Feminism is the radical notion that women deserve equal political, social, and economic rights to their male counterparts. Not to be confused with misandry, a contempt or prejudice against men, feminism seeks to remove the structural and societal barriers that perpetuate gender inequality.

Our feminist foremothers have paved the way for a society that would be vastly different without their work. Take a second to imagine a world in the absence of feminism. Had first wave feminists such as Susan B. Anthony and Alice Stone Blackwell not established the Suffragette movement and fought for women's rights to vote, our American democracy might only represent the voices of men. Without feminists such as Marlene Dietrich who rebelled against societal pressures for women to only wear skirts and dresses, public schools may still ban girls from wearing pants, as was practice in the 1950s. If feminists had not pushed for gender equality in higher education, schools like Georgetown University, Princeton University, and Yale University —that didn't admit women until the 1960s could still only cater to men.

Let us not forget the women of color who have both been critical fighters in the push for gender equality and in the need for feminism to be a space inclusive to minorities and their identities. Coretta Scott King not only participated in the Civil Rights Movement but also devoted much of her life to founding NOW (National Organization for Women) and continuing to press for gender equality, across racial lines. Author bell hooks, in her books "Ain't I A Woman? Black Women and Feminism" and "The Feminist Theory," developed the framework for analyzing women's oppression with a race-based lens. Poet Maya Angelou used her writings to speak out against racial injustices and gender oppression.

One could — and some do — argue that we no longer need feminism. Some argue we already have gender equality, while others claim upending gender roles is dangerous for society. While we have definitely made great progress in the advancement of women's rights in the past century, gender inequality is still rampant.

The statistics speak for themselves. Women only hold 20 percent of the seats in the Senate and 19.3 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives. According to the AAUW, women are only paid 78 percent of what their male counterparts are paid. This pay gap exists across career fields, whether one compares the earnings of women to men in teaching, in STEM fields, or in the entertainment industry. This gap cannot be entirely "explained away" by women's personal choices or preferences. One year after college graduation, with all other variables controlled for, a woman will make seven percent less than her male counterpart; ten years later, this gap will have grown

to twelve percent. In the film industry, only 30 percent of speaking characters are women. In business, women only hold 4.6 percent of CEO positions at S&P companies.

The feminist movement not only plays an integral role in advocating for gender equality but also actively works to reform pervasive societal issues such as rape and sexual assault, of which women are disproportionately victims. National campaigns such as It's On Us and Know Your IX, born of the labors of feminist activists, have been working to change the narrative about student safety, consent, and rape. According to the Department of Education, reporting rates for sexual assault on college campuses are at a five-year high, a figure indicative of the feminist movement's success in empowering survivors of sexual assault to come forward and seek help.

As for the argument that feminism dangerously attacks traditional gender roles, this view is rooted in half-truths. The feminist narrative does challenge the norm that women belong in the home, as mothers and homemakers. However, it does so not to reject the validity of the choices of women who do want to stay at home but rather to expand the opportunities for women who desire alternative career paths. From a feminist viewpoint, a woman should be encouraged to work within the home as a mother if that is what she wants. Conversely, if a woman does not want to submit to these traditional, gendered expectations, she should be encouraged and empowered to pursue other career options that suit her needs. Feminism is about options; it is about removing the societal structures that tie women to strict gender roles and prohibit them from having the same professional, economic, and societal options as their male counterparts.

When I visited my grandmother for her ninetieth birthday, she inquired why I was still in college when I should be prioritizing finding a husband, getting married, and starting a family. On more than one occasion, she asked about my career path: nurse, teacher, or secretary — which one would it be? While those are entirely valid options for young women, they should not be the only options. Women should not be limited to a certain set of societally-approved career choices. Their success should not be limited by a lack of female leadership and representation or by a pervasive pay-gap across fields.

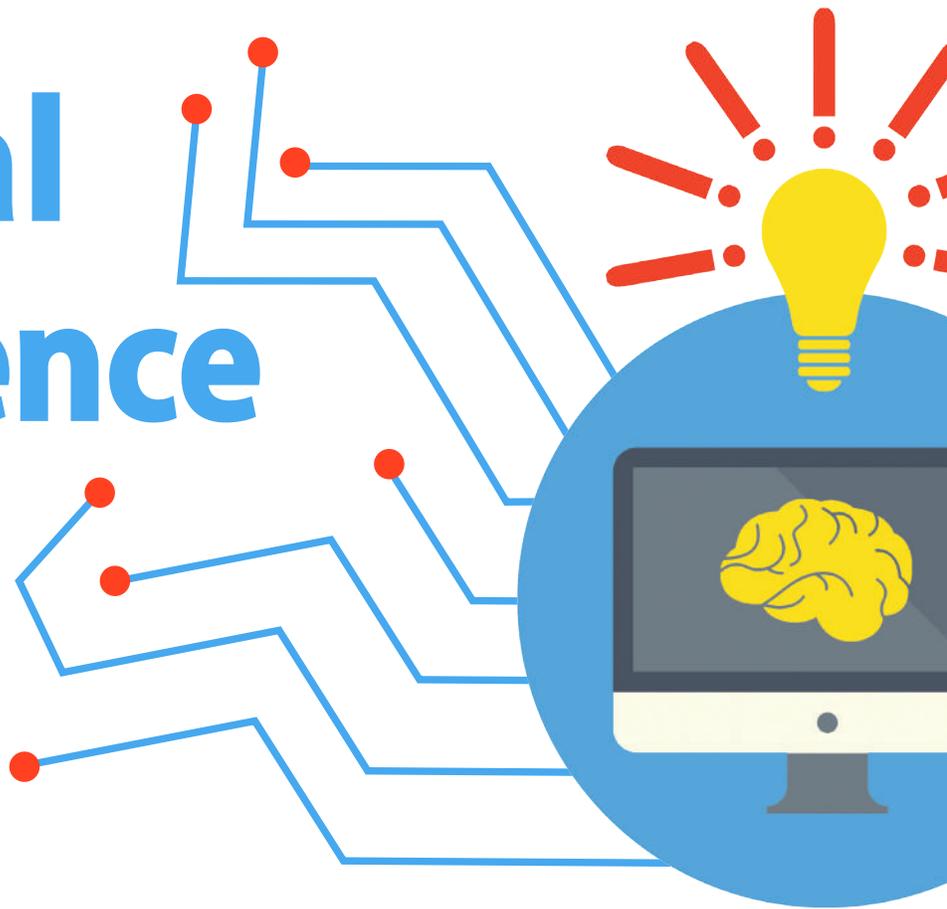
Feminism is invaluable for all men and women. Its success in the 20th century led to the abolishment of many sexist practices; yet, gender inequality still remains. Feminism will be an integral social movement throughout the 21st century, empowering both women and men to make the most appropriate decisions for themselves and to fight against restrictive gender norms.



Artificial Intelligence

A Double-Edged Sword

Nathan Li
Staff Writer



On January 28, 2015, Bill Gates held an “Ask Me Anything” on Reddit, where he expressed concerns over artificial intelligence (AI). This event heralded Gates’s admittance to the club of brilliant minds who have drawn attention to the potential dangers of AI. Stephen Hawking has theorized how highly advanced AI could “spell the end of the human race,” and Tesla founder Elon Musk has compared the development of AI to “summoning the devil.” While films like “I, Robot” and “The Terminator” bring to mind images of intelligent machines taking over the world, real-world AI is represented more benevolently by accident-avoidant cars and robots that can perform life-saving surgeries. All of these conflicting representations ultimately beg the question: What exactly is artificial intelligence?

The term artificial intelligence was first coined in 1955 by computer scientist John McCarthy to describe “the science and engineering of making intelligent machines.” These machines are built to imitate human intelligence, based on the claim that human intelligence “can be so precisely described that a machine can be made to simulate it.” The first AI projects developed computer programs that could play checkers, solve algebra, and even prove mathematical theorems. Throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s, the use of AI grew exponentially and has become an important part of today’s society.

An example of modern AI technology is self-parking cars. Although current self-parking cars are not completely autonomous – they require the driver to shift gears and control the speed of the vehicle – they do make it easier for drivers to parallel park. The AI computer installed inside the car controls the wheel and can

maneuver the car into a parking space. While doing so, it signals the driver when to stop and shift the car into drive or reverse. Attached to these cars are transmitters that generate airwaves which bounce off objects surrounding the car and reflect back. The system calculates the time it takes for those signals to return and can determine both the distance and location of the objects. Using that information, the computer steers the car into place.

AI has also affected other industries such as speech recognition software, the stock market, and property management. Nick Bostrom, a philosopher at the University of Oxford, had this to say: “A lot of cutting-edge AI has filtered into general applications, often without being called AI because once something becomes useful enough and common enough it’s not labeled AI anymore.” A great example of this is Apple’s personal assistant application for its iOS system, Siri. This widely-used technology utilizes voice recognition to help users with things like checking movie times, finding restaurants, and scheduling appointments.

To have a better understanding of the power behind AI, look at Watson, IBM’s new super intelligent machine. Watson is unique in that it utilizes a question answering (QA) system. IBM executive Craig Rhinehart explains on his blog:

“The key difference between QA technology and document search is that document search takes a keyword query and returns a list of documents, ranked in order of relevance to the query (often based on popularity and page ranking), while QA technology takes a question expressed in natural language, seeks to understand it in much greater detail, and returns a precise answer to the question.”

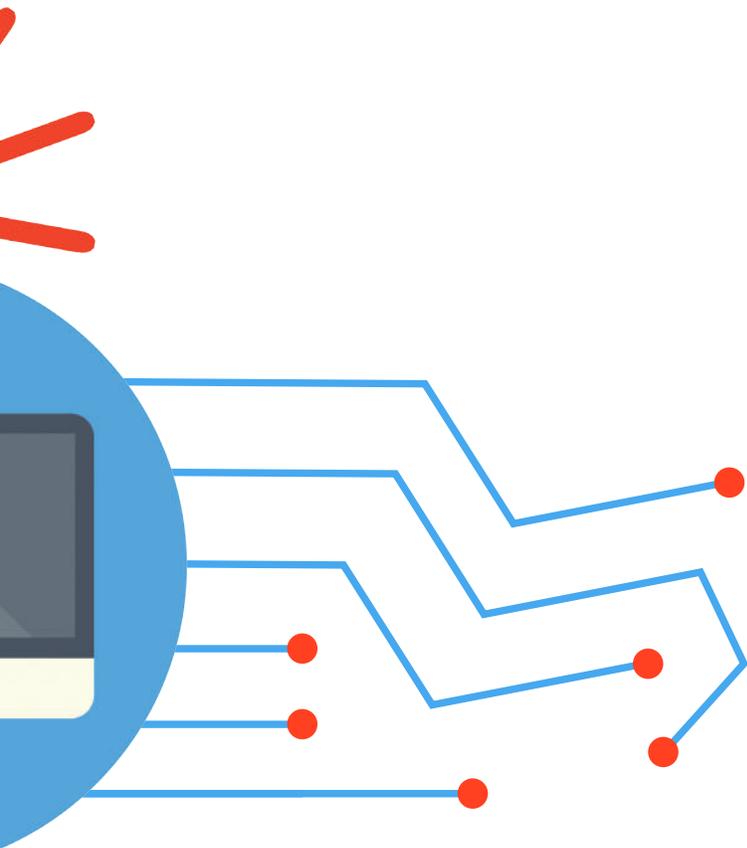
In a demonstration of the answering system Watson easily

1955

Term “AI” coined

1990s

Boom in AI use



defeated two previous Jeopardy champions in a game show exhibition match. Watson is also used in healthcare as a clinical decision support system. It aids doctors by analyzing a patient's medical and hereditary history, examining data sources such as clinical studies or journal articles, and then eventually coming up with hypotheses that provide a list of individualized, confidence-scored recommendations for treatment.

Watson's computing ability has stunned the world, but it has also led to bigger questions about the consequences of giving machines independent minds. Computational creativity, also known as artificial creativity, is by definition "a multidisciplinary endeavor that combines artificial intelligence, cognitive psychology, philosophy, and the arts." Its essential goal is to create a program that is capable of human-level creativity. Creativity is defined as "the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relations" and "create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, and interpretations." But creativity is far more complex than its definition. Experts have debated for decades whether creativity is a state of mind, a talent, an ability, or even a process. Even more confusing, AI programmers are having trouble determining how exactly to evaluate creativity. For systems that are attributed as "creative," the question then becomes whether the creativity is the result of the system itself or that of the system's designer.

In a 2007 article written by John McCarthy, he described exactly how close AI was to reaching human-level intelligence. "A few people think that human-level intelligence can be achieved by writing large numbers of programs," he said. "However, most AI researchers believe that new fundamental

ideas are required, and therefore it cannot be predicted when human-level intelligence will be achieved."

There have been past demonstrations of computers that are approaching human-level intelligence. In 1997, IBM chess computer Deep Blue successfully defeated reigning world chess champion Garry Kasparov in a six-game chess match. After his defeat, Kasparov admitted that he "saw deep intelligence and creativity" and believed he played against a machine that "could experience human intuition." Critics of the machine state that while Deep Blue's winning moves may have seemed creative to humans, its approach was nothing but blindingly obvious as their systems are essentially built on logic. The possibility of adding creativity to computer programs still remains an elusive topic. McCarthy has argued that AI might eventually be able to "bootstrap itself to higher and higher level intelligence," but such technology is not yet ready to begin that process.

Even if the technology is not there yet, computer developers have not been dissuaded from trying to create human-level intelligence. Recently, the original inventors of Apple's Siri announced they are close to finishing a new program called Viv – a "radical new AI that does anything you ask." Siri is limited in that it only performs tasks it is programmed to do. Viv, however, breaks those constraints by teaching itself. Through a series of sophisticated algorithms, Viv will follow three principles: "It will be taught by the world, it will know more than it is taught, and it will learn something every day." As more people use Viv and it gains more knowledge, Viv will then be able to, as American journalist Stephen Levy writes, "sift through that vast trove of data and find new ways to connect and manipulate the information."

While AI and all of its devices and programs seem promising, Martin Ford, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, argues that AI poses a threat to the job market and has potential to completely disrupt the entire economic system by rendering human workers unnecessary. Ken Jennings, one of the contestants defeated by Watson in Jeopardy wrote an article after the exhibition saying, "Just as factory jobs were eliminated in the 20th century by new assembly-line robots, Brad and I were the first knowledge-industry workers put out of work by the new generation of 'thinking' machines." He further said that while "'Quiz show contestant' may be the first job made redundant by Watson... I'm sure it won't be the last." Although some experts say there is no real concern because technology always creates new jobs while eliminating old ones, AI has already begun to replace paralegals, assembly-line workers, and financial analysts. As self-driving technology improves, we could even see human truck drivers being put out of work. While these jobs won't completely disappear, AI technology will certainly reduce the need for them.

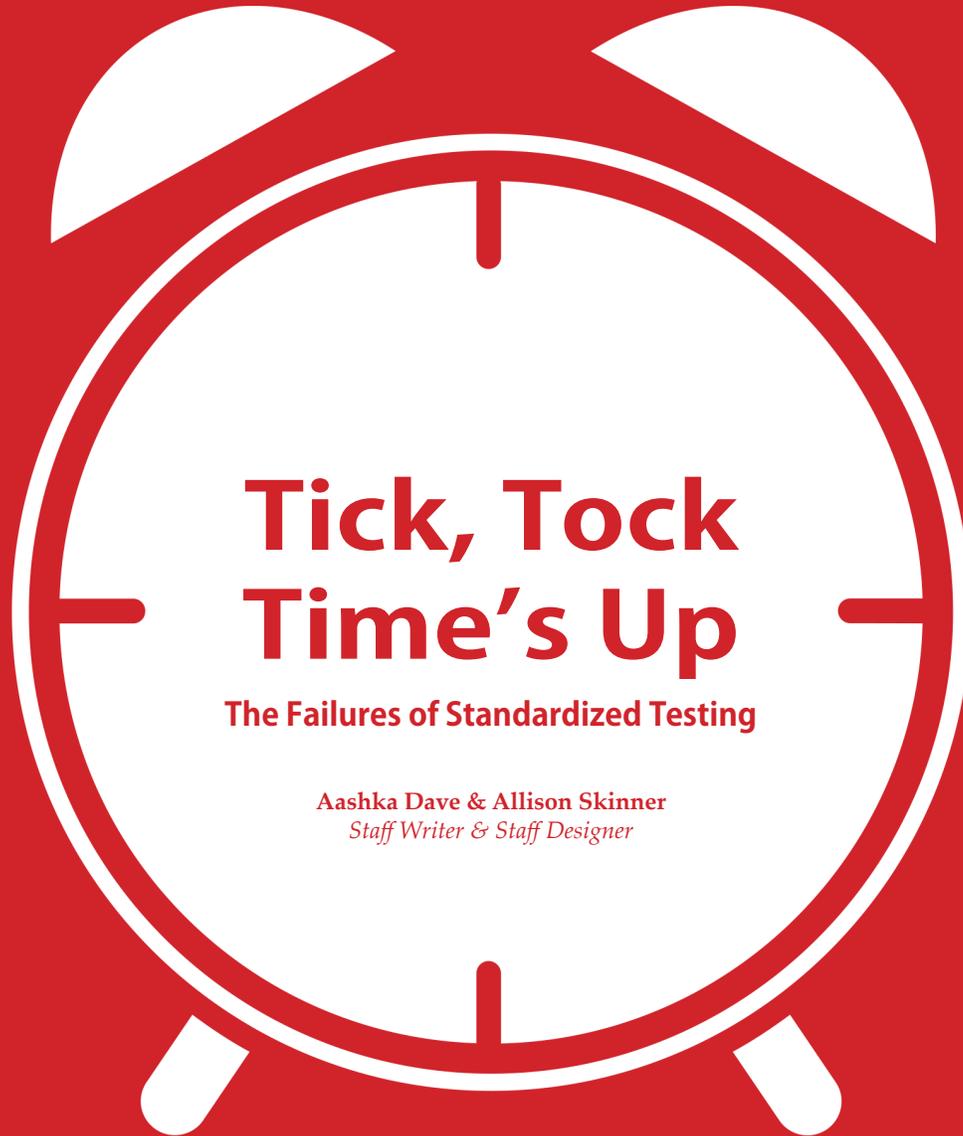
AI has become such an integral part of human lives. It excites us because it makes daily life easier by turning science fiction into reality. At the same time, AI is changing the way human intelligence is viewed and may eventually revolutionize the job market and economic system. AI has grown exponentially and will continue to dramatically affect our daily lives, so it is important to start questioning the future impact of machines now. Who knows? We could be just a few short decades away from the self-driving cars and friendly computer sidekicks seen in science fiction films. The only question is whether or not there will really be a hero to protect us if things go wrong.

1997

Deep Blue defeats reigning chess champ

2015

Gates voices concerns over AI



Tick, Tock Time's Up

The Failures of Standardized Testing

Aashka Dave & Allison Skinner
Staff Writer & Staff Designer

The Clock Struck One

Since its advent in 7th century China, standardized testing has become the educational method of choice for assessing student learning and progress. It is efficient and fair (in theory), making it a potentially effective way to determine how much a large group of students have learned at one time.

The present-day iteration of standardized testing began in 1934 when IBM created a prototype for a test-scoring machine. Today, standardized testing is highly contested on a number of grounds. Although it can seem like an effective solution, the reality is that policy and good intentions don't always translate into a functional reality.

The actuality of standardized testing is complex: race and class are clearly at play, as are other factors including teacher funding and resources. Ultimately, standardized testing is a larger indicator of the complexity surrounding the US educational system. As monetary and human investment grows, finding a solution becomes even more difficult.

WHAT IS A STANDARDIZED TEST?

- A. An objective, fill-in-the-blank or multiple choice exam
- B. An exam that ranks test takers using a percentile ranking system
- C. Criterion-referenced tests in any format that provide definitive scores
- D. An exam that requires all test takers to answer the same questions in the same way
- E. An exam scored in a consistent manner to facilitate skill-level comparisons
- F. A, B and C
- G. C, D and E but neither A nor B
- H. All of the above

Answer: H

The Road to Hell is Paved with Good Intentions

Standardized testing came into its own during the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson, who enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965. The ESEA was aimed at raising student learning levels and making education an equitable, accessible opportunity for every student by holding educators accountable for student progress.

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan's National Commission on Excellence in Education released a report delineating the dire straits facing American education, which had "lost sight of the basic purposes of schooling, and of the high expectations and disciplined effort needed to attain them." Steps needed to be taken to rectify the situation; standardized testing was the most notable solution presented.

Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton also attempted to reform the educational system, but ultimately did not make much progress. Although these politicians addressed the task with such lofty goals as having American students rank highest worldwide in math and science scores, their efforts were mired in congressional inactivity, funding challenges, and reticence on the part of the states.

To Infinity and Beyond!

President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act into law in January 2002. Passed with astonishing congressional support—381-41 in the House of Representatives and 87-10 in the Senate—NCLB was a political tour de force, largely modeled off educational policies enacted while Bush was governor of Texas. For the first time, it appeared that a president had been able to reform the educational system in an effective manner.

NCLB initially required annual math and reading testing

for students between grades three and eight. States were free to design the standardized tests they implemented, but if yearly progress wasn't made toward the goal of a 100 percent passing rate for all students, the consequences were significant. Schools that did not meet these goals "failed." They were put on probation and faced extra supervision—all adding up to more pressure on teachers and students. By 2008, annual state spending on standardized tests had increased by nearly 160 percent, according to the Pew Center on the States.

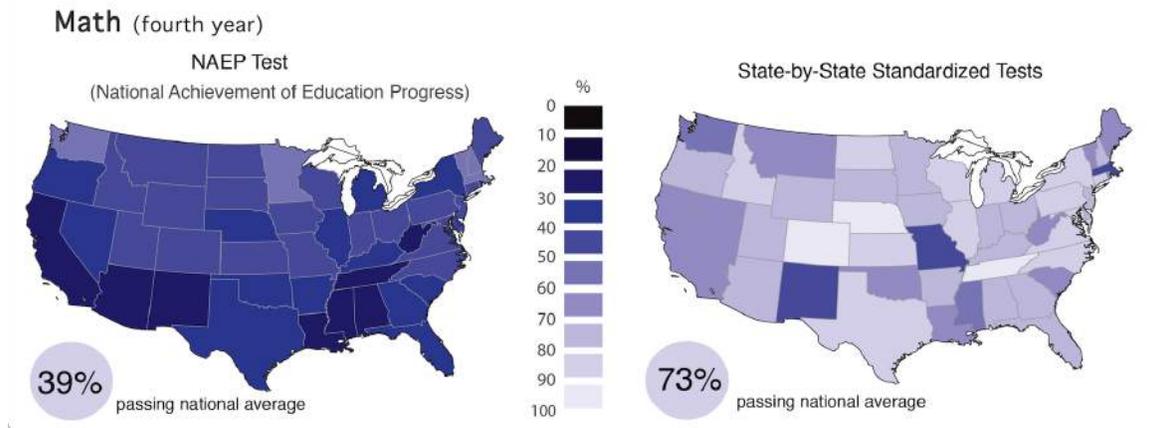
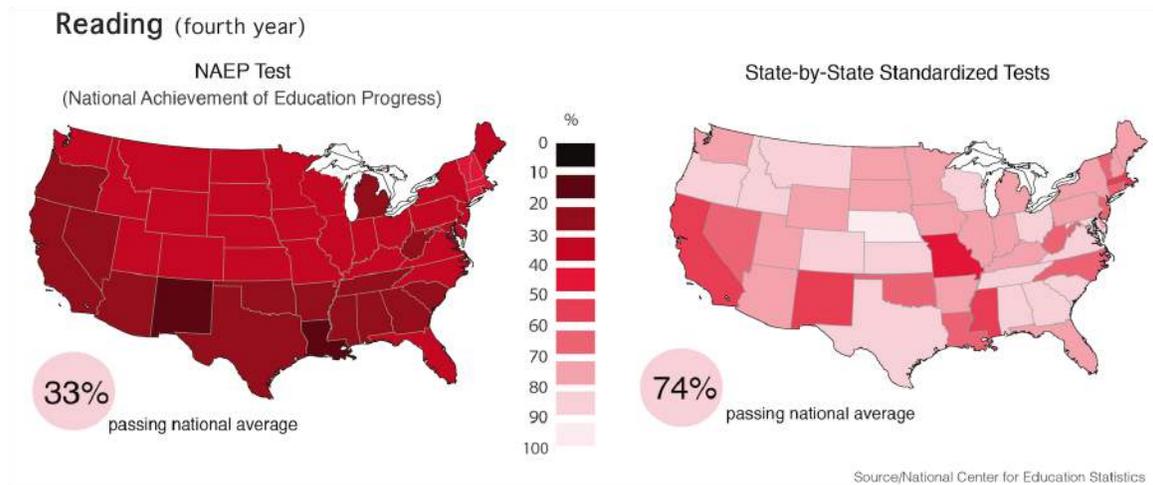
States, teachers, and students seemed relieved when NCLB was left behind during the Obama Administration. President Obama's 2009 Race to the Top initiative allowed states to compete for around \$5 billion in additional education funding in an effort to offset the effects of NCLB. According to education historian Diane Ravitch, high stakes undoubtedly led to teachers "teaching to the test." This in turn led to a narrower curriculum; "What was not tested—the arts, history, civics, literature, geography, science, physical education—didn't count."

Some states began to lower their passing score benchmarks so that more students would pass each year, thereby showing academic "progress." Other states and school systems—including Atlanta, El Paso, Texas, and Washington, D.C.—were caught in the midst of widespread cheating scandals.

As states and teachers faced more pressure to improve, the standards meted out under NCLB regulations became lower. Given that passing measures oftentimes decreased each year, it became more likely that students would pass—and that schools would appear to have "succeeded," since more students had passed the exams designed to assess their newfound knowledge.

The Gap in Student Proficiency

Before Common Core, the NAEP test was the only standardized test that tracked student progress nationally. Since No Child Left Behind allowed states to design their own tests, many states lowered the bar for proficiency. The gaps between the NAEP and state-created tests shows that students pass on low state standards and fail on national standards.



This Looks Like a Job for Superman

The 2010 movie “Waiting for Superman” was hailed as the ultimate presentation of educational solutions and a bleak statement on the current state of the U.S. education system. The movie likened bad scores to bad teachers, purporting that poverty led to bad teachers and poor students. Solutions presented included firing bad teachers, closing failing schools, and measuring more definitively.

The Common Core standards presented by policymakers, corporations, and a rather limited number of educators in 2009 were initially seen as a last-ditch effort to revive failing school systems in a less competitive fashion. Compared to their international peers, American students were faring abysmally. However, the testing industry had a larger presence in the initiative than the educators did; when Common Core was finally unveiled for the public, it emphasized more tests, not less.

Since the U.S. Department of Education cannot legally control curriculum in schools, the Gates Foundation volunteered to fill the void, giving money

first to educational funding, policy and curriculum groups such as the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief School Officers, Achieve, and to Student Achievement Partners. Once the curriculum was established, the Gates Foundation handed over more money to think tanks and policy centers in order to verify that the standards set were effective. Even major teacher’s unions were accepting money from the Gates Foundation to work on the standards.

Yet, all this work didn’t improve results. When the Common Core standards were enacted, students across the board began failing, not passing. When the state of New York administered Common Core exams during the spring of 2013, less than 30 percent of students passed.

Before Common Core standards were enacted, the National Assessment of Educational Progress was the only test that tracked student progress nationally during the days of NCLB. Since every state was allowed to design its own tests and standards under NCLB, the NAEP is the most consistent metric of student data currently available.

At present, the disparity between the NAEP and state-issued tests is astonishing. Students pass state-created standardized tests in numbers far greater than those passing the NAEP (see table above). If Common Core is to continue unhindered, it is possible the disparity will continue. As can already be seen, more students are failing national tests than statewide ones. Given the current emphasis on testing, a more pervasive test culture is likely to do more harm than good. If standardized testing advocates want to point at numbers—the numbers are already there.

Georgia on My Mind

Georgian policymakers have taken the emphasis on standardized testing further than other states. Testing is mandatory for nearly every course a student takes now, even art and music. School districts have to create their own Student Learning Objectives (very similar to standards, but a bit more specific) and subsequently test students on progress made along those metrics.

According to Clarke County School Superintendent Philip Lanoue, as reported in the Athens Banner-Herald, the emphasis has led to a loss of instructional time and money. Moreover, the standardized tests in place are about to be overhauled once more, as the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests used during NCLB years are replaced with Georgia Milestones, a set of tests designed to measure progress more in line with Common Core Standards.

Stop, Drop, and Roll

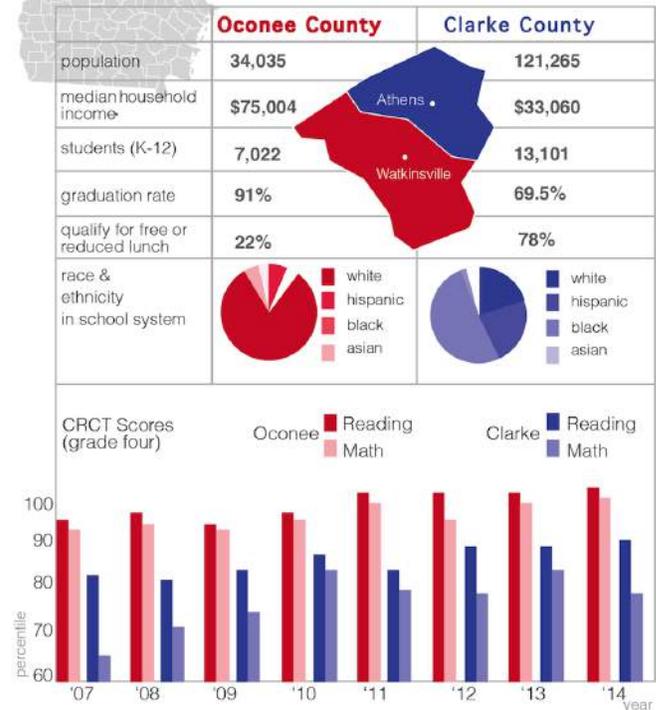
The potential solutions to the problems of the American educational system are myriad: charter schools, more testing, less unions, more technology, less technology, better school facilities, a different system of teacher tenure, remedying poverty-based educational inequity. These solutions are linked by one major factor: their contradictory nature.

That these solutions don't line up with each other makes implementation of any solution, even for the sake of experimentation, a daunting task. Aside from the cost factor associated with educational reform, it's apparent that education is a contentious subject. The children in schools right now are the mayors, engineers, teachers and Congressional leaders of tomorrow. Failing them is tantamount to failing ourselves. Unfortunately, most solutions aren't supported by enough data to provide a definitive answer.

“ If anything, we have learned that education is not a “one size fits all” equation. Rather, it is a combination of factors...that will ensure the success of students as they enter an increasingly competitive and globalized world.

A Closer Look:

The difference in test scores between two neighboring Georgia counties underscores the difference that even demographic factors—in this case race and class can potentially have on standardized testing scores. Although students in Oconee County and Athens-Clarke County were taking the same tests, their scores were very different.



The Common Core standards haven't even been in place for five years. The data they provide is inconsistent across states, and given that NCLB statistics are not the most reliable, it is possible that we do not have an accurate picture of what American students are actually learning. As standardized tests change with each new round of policy, and as passing benchmarks change in accordance with school and state fears of “failure,” the data becomes more unreliable.

If anything, we have learned that education is not a “one size fits all” equation. Rather, it is a combination of factors—home environment, school environment, alert and engaging teachers, an effective system of student assessment, and more—that will ensure the success of students as they enter an increasingly competitive and globalized world. Putting out this fire is a daunting task.

How did the Confederate States of America almost stall a modern-day plan to deepen the Savannah Harbor?

Now that President Obama has signed the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014, the long-awaited Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP) has finally begun construction. SHEP is the byproduct of 17 years of negotiations by Congressmen, Senators, and Governors of both parties. Proposed as a response to the expansion of the Panama Canal, SHEP was spearheaded by former Congressman Jack Kingston of Georgia's 1st District, Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, former Georgia Senator Saxby Chambliss, and Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, among others.

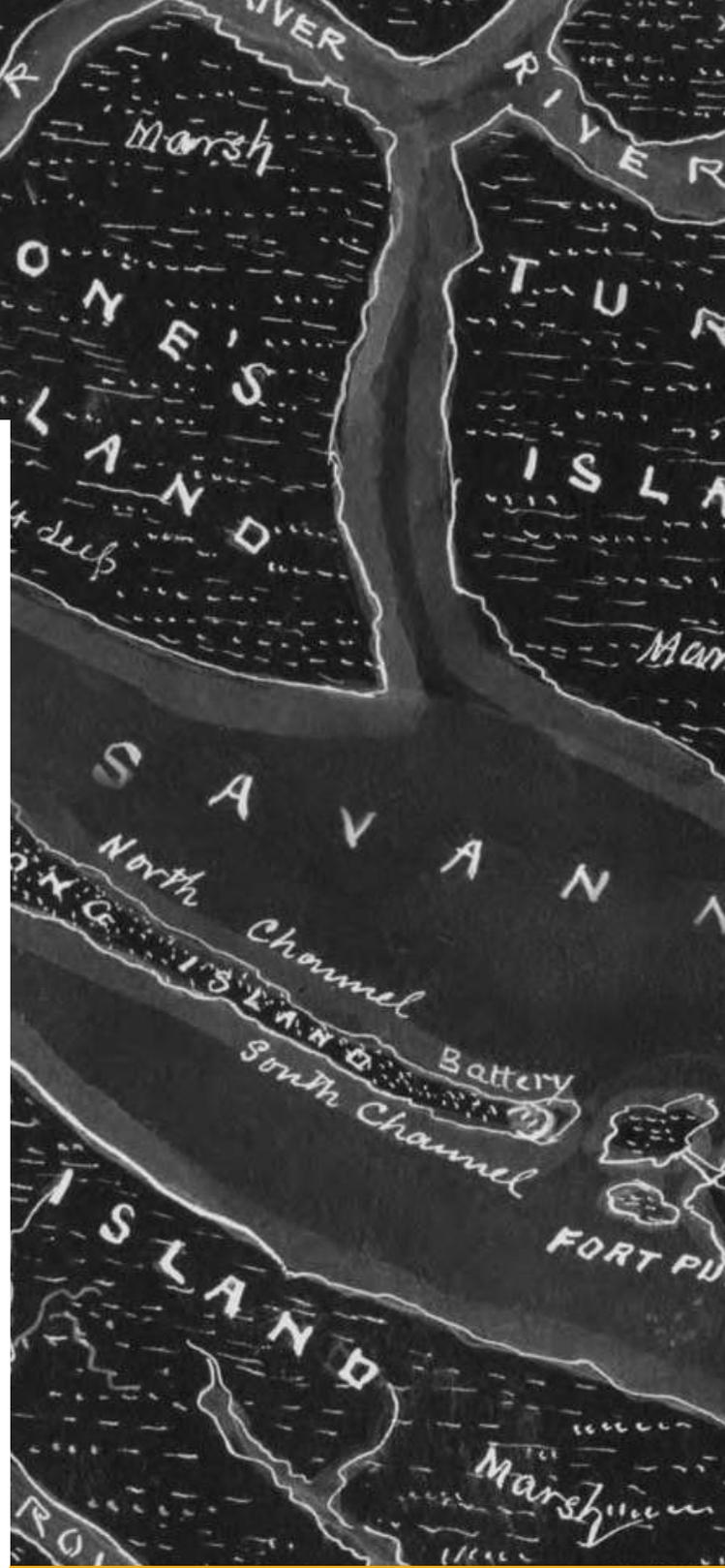
The goal of the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project is to dredge the bottom of the harbor in order to accommodate larger container ships. These dredging efforts would increase the depth of the Savannah harbor from its current level of 42 feet to 47 feet, allowing larger ships access to the harbor. The project will also involve extending the channel's entrance by seven miles and enlarging the Kings Island Turning Basin. Savannah is one of several different Atlantic ports responding to the Panama Canal Expansion Project with expansions of its own.

The expansion of the Panama Canal will allow for larger cargo ships to make their way from Asia, through the Canal, and up to the East Coast of the United States and to Europe. In response, many ports are vying to benefit from the increased business of these larger container ships. Ports all across the Atlantic – from Southampton and Liverpool in the UK to Miami, New York, and Charleston in the U.S. – hope to have their ports ready in time. The city of Savannah and many prominent Georgia politicians want to get in on the action.

Unfortunately, a project of this magnitude will not be cheap. The June 2014 price tag for SHEP came in at \$706 million. Despite this price, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates that SHEP will bring \$174 million in annual net benefits to the United States, a large part of which will go directly to Georgia's government and businesses. It will allow for a 78 percent increase in the number of cargo containers brought into the harbor. As Mayor Reed put it, "This is the most consequential infrastructure project since Hartsfield-Jackson." Beyond the actual dredging, the funding will go to preparing the harbor for expansion, including removing any sunken objects that may impede the progress of the project.

Now SHEP will finally see its time in the spotlight and, more importantly, in President Barack Obama's budget. In his Fiscal Year 2016 budget, President Obama requested \$29.7 million for the Savannah Harbor project. Of that request, \$21.05 million will be for the actual construction and expansion project itself, with the remaining \$8.66 million devoted to the disposal of the resulting waste in Georgia and South Carolina.

On top of President Obama's budget request, the Army Corps has pledged an additional \$21 million to the project from the Corps' budget. While these commitments are impressive and have been well received by the Georgia Congressional delegation and Gov. Deal, it is a far cry from the project's \$706 million price tag, another \$400 million of which is supposed to come in the form of federal funding. But it is a step in the right direction.



After all of the rhetoric, this story sounds like it has reached a happy ending. It is one of the greatest showings of bipartisanship in recent memory, especially among a delegation that Senator Chambliss described as being difficult to get to agree on "whether the sun rises in the morning." SHEP has received support from all levels of government, including President Obama, who included it as part of his 2012 "We Can't Wait" initiative. In October 2014, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Georgia Ports Authority signed a project partnership agreement to begin dredging, and the project officially began at the end of January 2015.

MONEY AND POLITICS AND CONFEDERATES OH MY!

Deepening the Savannah Harbor

Bert Thompson
Assistant Senior Editor

But, as is often the case with major construction projects, history has gotten in the way. Before the Army Corps can begin deepening the inner harbor, they must recover and salvage the CSS Georgia, a Confederate ironclad warship lying on the bottom of the Savannah Harbor. The Georgia was scuttled in the harbor in December 1864 in order to stop it from falling into the hands of General William T. Sherman and his rapidly approaching army. The CSS Georgia was forgotten by history as it lay dormant in the Savannah harbor, and it was only rediscovered during a 1968 harbor dredge. Although the Georgia never actually fired a shot in battle before it was sunk, she represents the evolution of naval technology and design during the 19th century.

The Civil War was arguably the first truly industrialized war, and the development of ironclads represented the importance of industrial capacities in warfare. The Georgia was part of a new era of naval warfare and a far cry from previous ships that relied on speed and elusiveness. The Georgia was just one of the ironclads designed and built during the Civil War. Its more famous cousins, the USS Monitor and CSS Virginia, were the two ships that met in the famous ironclad showdown at Battle of Hampton Roads.

Ironclads were built with a wooden hull, which was then plated with railroad iron or steel armor plates. These plates sometimes made the ships slow and unwieldy, as was the case of the Georgia, which was covered by 500 tons of railroad iron. The Georgia was so heavy that its steam engines were unable to propel it through the swift channel of the Savannah River. Because it could not serve as a seaworthy vessel, the Georgia settled into its role as a floating, shooting barge.

“It has very clearly become a symbol for why things went

wrong for the Confederate naval effort,” said Ken Johnston, the executive director of the National Civil War Naval Museum. The Georgia is a microcosm of how things went wrong not just for the Confederate navy, but for the Confederacy as a whole. The Confederacy, which lacked the substantial industrial capability of the Union, plated 500 tons of railroad iron onto one ship that ended up being useless.

2015 marks the 150th anniversary of arguably the most trying moment in American history. The Civil War divided the young nation along sectional lines, and it left an estimated 620,000 Americans dead. September 2, 1862 – the Battle of Antietam – remains the bloodiest day in American history, as 3,654 Americans were killed in the course of the day. The Civil War, distant as it may seem to us 150 years later, is still a major part of American life today. Here in the South, it is not uncommon to see a car with a Confederate battle flag bumper sticker, and some states – including Georgia – have faced controversy regarding their current state flag’s similarity to the Confederacy’s own.

The Georgia is another example of how we live in a region and state constantly affected by our collective history, both good and bad. The Civil War, while in the past, surrounds us every day. The roadside markers of historical events may just be a blur as we drive past them, but they represent important moments in our state and country’s checkered past. It is fitting that the Georgia should see the light of day again on the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War, reminding us all that history does not remain solely in the pages of textbooks.

The Savannah Harbor Expansion Project will bring great economic opportunities to Georgia and the South at large, but it has already brought us one more great, sunken, and iron-plated link to our past.

HERE'S JOHNNY

The Last of Georgia's Old Guard

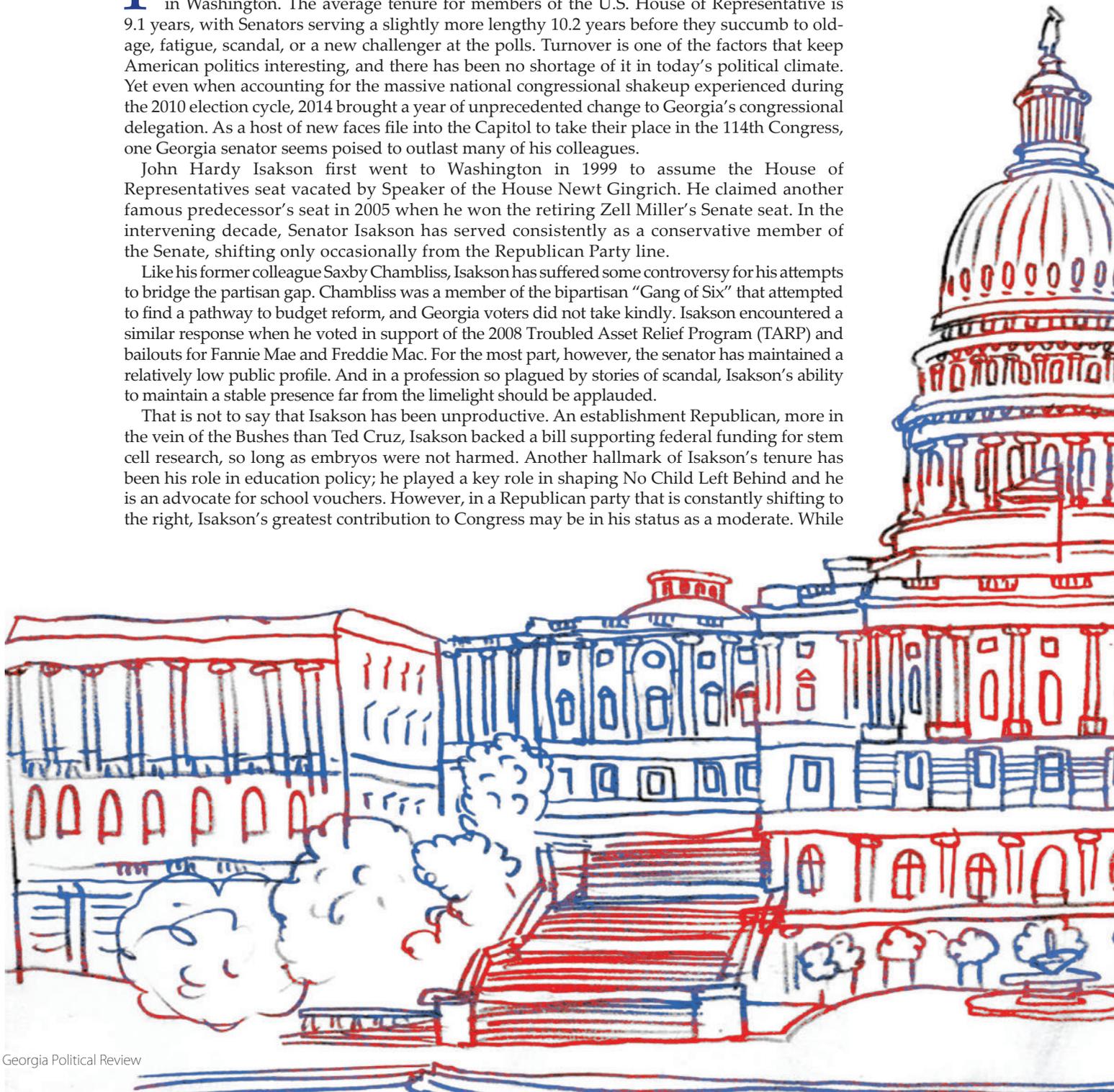
Max Wallace
Marketing Director

For all the popular banter about “career politicians” serving as barriers to American progress, very few men and women are able to establish themselves as permanent fixtures in Washington. The average tenure for members of the U.S. House of Representative is 9.1 years, with Senators serving a slightly more lengthy 10.2 years before they succumb to old-age, fatigue, scandal, or a new challenger at the polls. Turnover is one of the factors that keep American politics interesting, and there has been no shortage of it in today's political climate. Yet even when accounting for the massive national congressional shakeup experienced during the 2010 election cycle, 2014 brought a year of unprecedented change to Georgia's congressional delegation. As a host of new faces file into the Capitol to take their place in the 114th Congress, one Georgia senator seems poised to outlast many of his colleagues.

John Hardy Isakson first went to Washington in 1999 to assume the House of Representatives seat vacated by Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. He claimed another famous predecessor's seat in 2005 when he won the retiring Zell Miller's Senate seat. In the intervening decade, Senator Isakson has served consistently as a conservative member of the Senate, shifting only occasionally from the Republican Party line.

Like his former colleague Saxby Chambliss, Isakson has suffered some controversy for his attempts to bridge the partisan gap. Chambliss was a member of the bipartisan “Gang of Six” that attempted to find a pathway to budget reform, and Georgia voters did not take kindly. Isakson encountered a similar response when he voted in support of the 2008 Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) and bailouts for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. For the most part, however, the senator has maintained a relatively low public profile. And in a profession so plagued by stories of scandal, Isakson's ability to maintain a stable presence far from the limelight should be applauded.

That is not to say that Isakson has been unproductive. An establishment Republican, more in the vein of the Bushes than Ted Cruz, Isakson backed a bill supporting federal funding for stem cell research, so long as embryos were not harmed. Another hallmark of Isakson's tenure has been his role in education policy; he played a key role in shaping No Child Left Behind and he is an advocate for school vouchers. However, in a Republican party that is constantly shifting to the right, Isakson's greatest contribution to Congress may be in his status as a moderate. While



he is unlikely to back a measure written by Harry Reid, Georgia's senior senator can be expected to reliably pursue practical solutions rather than standing on principle.

Although Sen. Isakson may be less of a household name than John McCain or Elizabeth Warren, staying out of the public eye has allowed him to become the most senior Republican member of Georgia's delegation to the capital. Saxby Chambliss and Jack Kingston, the former 11-term Congressman from Georgia's 1st District, were the last two Georgia Republicans to assume office before the arrival of Isakson in 1999. With this past year bringing the retirement of Senator Chambliss and Congressman Kingston's first electoral loss in over twenty years, Isakson now stands as the senior statesman for Georgia's conservative interests in the capital. Only Sanford Bishop and John Lewis have served longer than Isakson, but they are strongly in the minority, two Democrats clinging to the bastions of blue in an otherwise red state.

Furthermore, the 70-year-old Senator has shown no signs of slowing down. While Chambliss declined to seek reelection due to an increasingly partisan political climate, Isakson announced his intention to seek reelection shortly after the polls closed in November. This struck some as surprising, as the Senator's age and concerns over his health had led many to believe that there would be yet another open Senate seat in 2016. Now that he intends to seek a third term, it is unlikely that Isakson will face any meaningful opposition. Democrats will likely be reluctant to field a strong candidate or pour significant financial resources into a contest against a Republican incumbent, particularly given the lackluster performance of Michelle Nunn and Jason Carter this past cycle.

The only factor that may shift this sentiment is the presidential ballot in 2016. If Hillary Clinton or another

prominent Democrat wins the Democratic nomination, Georgia's senate seat may be seen as in play, perhaps drawing a challenge from Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed or a revitalized Carter. Republicans will be unlikely to field a serious primary challenger, particularly because those Congressmen who declined to seek Senator Chambliss's seat in 2014 – Tom Price of the 6th District, foremost among them – now enjoy relative seniority over most of their colleagues. Risking such a tenured career in the House to take on a relatively popular and very well-funded incumbent in the Senate would be an unlikely career move.

There is an even more intriguing, if unlikely, scenario worth noting. If Senator Isakson were to win and subsequently retire or be unable to complete his term due to health concerns, Georgia Governor Nathan Deal would have to make a special appointment, allowing a new Republican to take the seat without having to immediately face election. Such a prospect is no doubt appealing to any Georgia Congressmen who wishes to ascend to the Senate, but fears facing an incumbent head-to-head at the polls.

Setting aside such longshots, and assuming that Isakson wins his seat, how will he spend his next term? It is unlikely that he will transform into a conservative firebrand, and although he holds seniority among the Georgia delegation, there are still 16 Republican senators who arrived in Washington before him. Because of these senior members, a top leadership position is unlikely. With the Republicans taking control of the Senate, Isakson was recently afforded control of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and Ethics Committee, which seem to complement his interests. At the moment, it seems that Senator Isakson will continue to serve as he always has, a measured and steady voice of reason among the chaos at the Capital.

“ Isakson now stands as the senior statesman for Georgia's conservative interests in the capital.



Cait Felt & Rob Oldham
Senior Editor & Assistant Senior Editor

AN IMMIGRANT EDUCATION

“The nine students left the building wearing monarch butterfly wings, to symbolize the beauty of natural migration, and handcuffs.”

“Minorities aren’t supposed to get an education...they’re supposed to be working for free of for very little pay.” This is what Dr. Emiko Soltis told her class of 15 stony-faced students on a recent Sunday afternoon. Soltis is the Executive Director of Freedom University (Freedom U), a nonprofit educational organization based in Atlanta. All of the students she was speaking to were there by both choice and necessity. These students are all Hispanic, most illegally entered the United States as children, and all are effectively banned by the Georgia Board of Regents from receiving more than a secondary school education.

Georgia Board of Regents Policy 4.1.6 bans undocumented students from being admitted into the top five universities in Georgia, and Policy 4.3.4 bans them from receiving in-state tuition to those schools they can attend. In response to these policies, Freedom U, a “modern-day freedom school,” was established in 2011. It was inspired by the makeshift Civil Rights-era schools that provided an education to racial minorities barred from segregated institutions like the University of Georgia (UGA).

So who are the students attending Freedom U? The think-tank Educators for Fair Consideration estimates that about 65,000 undocumented students graduate from American high schools every spring. Only about 1,800-3,000 undocumented students, however, enroll in higher education programs every year. This translates to roughly 3 percent of undocumented high school graduates attending college. Compared to the estimated 66.3 percent of American citizens entering college, this percentage is staggering. However, there are other factors at play here besides bans like Georgia’s. Undocumented aliens tend to have lower incomes than citizens, making college a less feasible option for them regardless of admittance. Additionally, many fear deportation

and try to avoid detection by not applying to publicly-funded schools. That being said, state bans still have a major impact on an undocumented student’s decision on whether to apply to college. In order to overcome these hurdles, students in Georgia can attain some level of college education by attending Freedom U.

Freedom U provides free classes to undocumented students on topics such as immigration history, SAT prep, and debate. Educators come from across the state to voluntarily teach on Sundays. But education is only part of its mission. Freedom U is also involved in the fight to overturn the Board of Regents’ policies. Students are actively involved in protests and demonstrations of civil disobedience across the state, including at UGA. Nine such students, some documented and others not, were arrested in Moore College on Jan. 9, 2015—the 54th anniversary of UGA’s desegregation—while conducting a protest. Under the direction of Freedom U, students found a classroom in Moore College to listen to lectures on the Civil Rights Movement. Doors were marked with signs reading “Desegregation in Progress.” When the building closed, however, some students refused to leave the room in protest of what they consider to be “modern-day segregation.” The police escorted the students off the premises after receiving a tip from an unknown source. The nine students left the building wearing monarch butterfly wings, to symbolize the beauty of natural migration, and handcuffs.

Freedom U backs up its protests with several arguments against the ban. One is that, contrary to popular belief, undocumented immigrants do pay taxes. A 2010 study by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that undocumented immigrants in Georgia pay over \$300 million in state and local taxes each year. Moreover, Freedom U says that Georgia’s policy is unusual and

economically unsound. Georgia is one of only three states that bans students from top universities and denies them in-state tuition. Other states have done away with such bans, because as Roberto Gonzales, a Professor of Sociology at the University of Washington has said, "Given the opportunity to receive additional education and move into better-paying jobs, undocumented students would pay more in taxes and have more money to spend and invest in the U.S. economy."

Freedom U students and volunteers have confidence that the ban will be rescinded in the future. They believe that the empathy their protests evoke, along with economic reality, will eventually win over the naysayers. Kevin Ruiz, one of the students arrested at Moore College, said that it was a great illustration by his undocumented peers that "they're willing to give up everything for their education." Ruiz also said that he and the other Moore College protesters are not worried about the punishments they face. They are accused of "disrupting normal university proceedings," but Ruiz said that the "normal operations are segregation, immoral ... and should be disrupted."

If these higher education policies that Ruiz describes as "immoral" are to change anytime soon, reforms will likely have to face the Georgia General Assembly first. Although the ban technically comes from the Board of Regents, the Board did not put it in place completely by choice. If the Board had not implemented the ban, the General Assembly would have likely passed a law that banned undocumented students from all of Georgia's colleges, not just the top five. Ruiz says that although most undocumented students recognize this, the Board of Regents is still "actively preventing qualified students from attending college," and therefore cannot claim to be "the good guys."

But many Georgians do see the Board of Regents as "the good guys." The dominant sentiment among the general populace is that these students are not American citizens, and therefore should not be allowed to take the place of citizens in top schools. But this attitude might actually be hurting the top schools. If a qualified applicant is rejected due to their citizenship status in favor of a less qualified one, then the school is becoming less competitive due to a non-academic factor.

More controversial is the ban on in-state tuition. In South Carolina, which is a state with a similar immigrant population to Georgia's, a study by immigration attorney Michael Olivas estimates that each undocumented student paying in-state tuition at a public university costs each taxpayer approximately two cents per year. Students who earn a degree in the United States are more likely to stay in the country after receiving their degree. With a college degree, it is easier for these students to gain U.S. citizenship and receive higher paying jobs. The resulting higher income levels translate into a higher tax bracket. Olivas's study estimates that the average undocumented student who takes advantage of this program would pay back within just seven years of graduation more in taxes than what the taxpayers had given them.

Georgia's legislative process makes it difficult to grant reprieve to undocumented students who want to be treated like their classmates, and who didn't appear so different from them until they began filling out their college applications. Even though the Georgia General Assembly's threat to pass



legislation banning undocumented students from attending all of the state's secondary schools is ultimately responsible for the current ban, some of its members are beginning to fight against it. SB 44, introduced by Democratic State Senator Nan Orrock in January, would effectively overturn the Board of Regents' policy, as it calls for noncitizens to be considered the same as citizens when determining college admittance qualifications and tuition rates. Before the bill was considered by the Higher Education Committee on Feb. 10, Freedom U students spoke with Republican Senator Michael Williams, a member of the Higher Education Committee, who had said earlier that he did not support SB 44. The students said that after speaking with Williams, he seemed much more supportive of their position, particularly after realizing that the vast majority of undocumented immigrants do indeed pay taxes and that they are more likely to keep living in Georgia and better its economy if they can attend the top in-state schools.

Despite Williams' apparent change of heart, the committee meeting on Feb. 10 did not go well. The meeting only lasted 45 minutes before the chairman cancelled it, and although the crowd in the room seemed supportive of the undocumented students, SB 44 was not put to a vote, as it was unable to garner the necessary support from the committee members. If SB 44 ever makes it out of committee, it will still face several legislative obstacles including the Rules Committee and a floor vote before making it to the Governor's desk.

While Georgia is clearly not a receptive place for college-bound undocumented students, it is possible for these students to attend out-of-state colleges. Some schools, like UCLA, even encourage undocumented students to attend in order to gain the most competitive student body and to increase diversity. But many students in this situation are low-income and have trouble paying out-of-state tuition, regardless of their acceptance.

If the Freedom U students had their way, Georgia would follow the rest of the nation and repeal the Board of Regents' policy. And they might get their way before too long. Georgia and its top colleges are beginning to listen to their concerns. With measures like SB 44 coming through the General Assembly, Freedom U is now optimistic that the ban will soon be overturned. They believe that protests like the one at Moore College show the state that education is so important to them, they are willing to go to prison for it.

It is well known that Georgia has a less-than-stellar record when it comes to civil rights. But our history does not determine our destiny. Change is in the air. For the students at Freedom U who want nothing more than to attend college in the same state that they grew up in and to continue to live and work here, that change cannot come soon enough.



READ MY LIPS

No Promise Is Permanent

Shaun Kleber
Staff Writer

President Barack Obama is trying to limit his own power. Democrats want to limit it more, and Republicans want him to have unlimited control and authority. Tell your friends and family you love them. The end is near.

After unwavering, Reagan-esque “read my lips” promises over the past several months not to use ground troops in the fight against ISIL, Obama caved to mounting pressure from military officers and congressmen to seek authorization to step up military involvement in the conflict. On Feb. 11, Obama submitted an Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), which would give him the authority to wage a military campaign against ISIL and “associated persons or forces.”

This is the first AUMF submitted to Congress since the 2001 and 2002 requests submitted for the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively. Those two requests were submitted by Former President George W. Bush’s administration and were notably broad in terms of the limits placed on the President and the military. In fact, the 2001 AUMF specifically was so broad that it has since been used to authorize attacks in the Philippines, Georgia, Yemen, Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, and now Iraq and Syria. Obama has used that law as the legal

basis for the more than 1,900 airstrikes the United States has conducted in Iraq and Syria over the past six months.

Even though Obama has stressed repeatedly that he does not legally need congressional approval, Obama submitted this AUMF in response to calls for legislative involvement and limits on presidential authority in this military action. True to that goal, this AUMF contains several more restricting limitations than its predecessors. First, Obama made it clear that while there may be a need for Special Operations forces and other limited missions, this authorization would not allow for any “enduring offensive ground combat operations.” Second, the request clearly identifies ISIL as the target and enemy; it mentions the extremist group by name 17 times—17 more times than the 2001 AUMF mentioned al-Qaeda. Finally, the authorization would expire in three years—one of the clearest and most restrictive limitations in the request.

Some elements, however, have been left broad and ambiguous. The White House has admitted that this was done purposefully in order to leave the President some flexibility to adjust the military’s strategy as needed. For example, the request does not have any geographic limitation—it does not limit the battlefield to Syria and Iraq—and seeks permission to attack people and forces

“associated” with ISIL. In other words, other than the limitations for time and scope of force, this AUMF would give the White House virtually unrestricted power to engage in attacks around the world as long as they can draw a connection—however tenuous—to ISIL.

Obama has stated that his goal in this case is to “show the world that we are united in our resolve to counter [ISIL].” He said that he is “optimistic that [the AUMF] can win strong bipartisan support and that we can show our troops and the world that Americans are united in this mission.”

The White House emphasized that this request came out of intense consultation with both parties, but that has not stopped both Democrat and Republican congressmen from raising objections to the request. Predictably, Democrats think the President should have less war-making authority, while Republicans think he should have more.

“ ...leaving the 2001 AUMF on the books is like handcuffing the President but leaving the key in his pocket.

Much of the Democrats’ objections stemmed from the ambiguity of the phrase “enduring offensive ground operations.” Democratic Representative John Yarmuth questioned whether that was an established term. “It sounds pretty open-ended to me,” he said. And the sentiment is not just limited to a few Democrats. “A lot of people think it’s still a little bit too broad,” Democratic Representative Jerrold Nadler said.

Republicans, on the other hand, have raised the opposite objection, asserting that the proposal is too constricting on the President’s war-making authority. Many conservative congressmen are willing to defer almost all decision-making power to Obama as the commander in chief rather than approve an AUMF that they view to be needlessly handicapping to the military.

House Speaker John Boehner said he was concerned the bill did not “give our military commanders the flexibility and authorities they need to succeed and protect our people.”

“If we are going to defeat this enemy, we need a comprehensive military strategy and a robust authorization, not one that limits our options,” Boehner said.

Republican Senator John McCain wants an AUMF with absolutely no limits—no limits on the use of ground troops, length of time the authorization remains in force, or the geographic area to which the law applies.

“If we want to constrain the President’s actions, we have the power of the purse,” McCain said.

While he is technically correct, today’s Congress handles the budget about as well as Atlanta handles snowstorms, and their ability to limit the President’s military authority with the budget after-the-fact is dubious at best.

Another concern with a limitless authorization is a situation exactly like the one that stemmed from the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs, where a targeted authorization for one war and one enemy has been used, abused, and expanded far beyond the original intent. It is as if congressional Republicans have forgotten that the situation we are in now with ISIL stemmed partially from the unrestricted war that the US has been waging in the Middle East for the past decade.

Our military involvement in the Middle East and beyond since 9/11 has been a textbook example of why limitations on military authority are critical. It has resulted in increased anti-American sentiments abroad, strengthened the abilities of extremist groups to recruit members, and caused the United States extreme losses of both lives and money.

As such, it is important to find a balance between constriction to the point of inflexibility and limitless authority. Despite Obama’s repeated statements that he does not want to engage in a large-scale war with ISIL, he has already adjusted his position once from his absolute “no ground troops” stance of the past few months. Even if Obama has no desire to push the boundaries of any military authorization, his successor may not be so restrained, and if the abuse of the previous AUMF is any indication, future authorizations need to be far more careful, calculated, and clear.

The proposed AUMF does a good job of striking that balance, but leaving the 2001 AUMF on the books is like handcuffing the President but leaving the key in his pocket. Obama has expressed a commitment to work to “refine and ultimately repeal” that statute, but Congress failing to do so at this point would make this authorization nothing more than a symbolic vote. He has used that law to authorize attacks up to this point and has stated that it gives him the legal authority to continue to wage war without congressional approval, and it will continue to serve as a blank check to the military unless Congress takes meaningful action to restrict the President while also taking away his get-out-of-jail-free card.

It is time for laws and limitations to take precedent over politics and promises, because as we’ve seen time and time again, no promise is permanent.

THE SONS OF JIM CROW

+ THE NEXT CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Austin McCandlish
Staff Writer

“Everything that we see is a shadow cast by that which we do not see.” Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote these words in his essay “The Measure of a Man” nearly 60 years ago, urging a society largely unaware of its own prejudices to aspire to a greater depth of understanding. From the perspective of one living in the year 2015, the institutionalized racism of Dr. King’s time appears rather plain to see. A segregated society with literacy tests and signs reading, “whites only” seems glaringly prejudiced and unjust. But not so long ago many people truly believed that a race could be separate but equal and that segregation itself represented a just society. The evils that now seem so obvious were once unseen, and it took enlightened and brave individuals such as Dr. King to expose America’s shortcomings so that it could progress. But in the year 2015, a great deal still remains unseen. America’s legacy of institutionalized racism, classism, and subjugation is carried on by its justice system. Policing overly focused on drug use and a judicial system stacked against those with few resources creates an institution that targets poor minorities, and a vast array of restrictions serves to deny employment to and otherwise disenfranchise former inmates.

According to The Sentencing Project, an advocacy group for prison reform, a white male in America has a one in seventeen chance of going to prison throughout his lifetime. A black man has a one in three chance. Over 60 percent of people in prison are ethnic minorities, and more than two thirds of those are

imprisoned for nonviolent drug offenses. Half of America’s two million or so prisoners are there for nonviolent drug offenses, leading the United States to have the largest prison population in the world. The American Civil Liberties Union reports that black individuals are 3.7 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than their white counterparts, despite similar rates of usage. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration found that despite whites having higher usage rates of marijuana, hallucinogens, pain relievers, cocaine, and methamphetamine than blacks, the latter are imprisoned for drug use four times as often as whites. The “War on Drugs” has largely skipped over white suburbia, where individuals use and deal drugs in the relative privacy of their own homes; instead, the vast majority of arrests come from poor neighborhoods with large minority populations.

The War on Drugs, and many other features of the criminal justice system, began in the 1980s, when crime was on the rise and the media was abuzz about a dangerous new street drug dubbed “crack cocaine.” At the time, many people in the United States were fearful of the impact that drug use and associated activity would have on their communities. But people’s fear of drugs has often had just as much to do with people’s fear of other people. Starting in the 1930s, politicians elected to use the term “marijuana” when referring to what at the time was known as cannabis largely because it associated the drug with Mexican immigrants and capitalized upon the country’s xenophobia.

Similarly, in the 1980s politicians played upon people's fears of gang-related violence in inner cities to impose many of the harsh drug penalties currently in place. Today, federal sentencing for crack cocaine, predominantly found in low-income black neighborhoods, is far harsher than it is for powder cocaine, which is primarily used by affluent whites. This is despite the fact that both drugs have been found time and again to be equally as dangerous. The objective of all of this may have indeed been to discourage drug use and protect communities, but the justification and implementation of such actions has too often been rooted in prejudice and fear mongering.

Most individuals arrested for drug offenses face what are called federal mandatory minimum sentence laws. Essentially, these laws mandate that an individual convicted of a certain crime must serve a minimum amount of time in prison, limiting a judge's ability to consider context or a defendant's unique situation. For example, the federal minimum sentence for selling a small amount of LSD is five years. By contrast, there is no federal minimum sentence for vehicular manslaughter. When a person of low-income is faced with a mandatory minimum sentence and no means of hiring a good attorney, they are often faced with no choice but to plead guilty. This further ensures that those serving the most time are poor minorities.

America's justice system not only targets poor minorities for nonviolent drug offenses, but it guarantees that these individuals are permanently degraded to the status of second-class citizens. The Sentencing Project estimates that a total of 5.85 million Americans are denied the right to vote due to voting restrictions placed on former felons. 11 states do not allow a convicted felon the right to vote until after he or she has gone through imprisonment, parole, and a probationary period. In Florida, for example a convicted felon must wait five years after completing incarceration, parole, and probation before he or she can vote. In Iowa a former inmate can only regain the right to vote if he or she successfully petitions the state government. Perhaps this is why in Florida nearly a quarter of voting-age black males are disenfranchised, and why nationally one in thirteen African-Americans is unable to vote.

But voting is not the only thing that former inmates are denied; they are also have limited access to jobs, education, and housing. The federal government can and does deny public housing assignments to people ever convicted of drug felonies. Federal financial aid for education is denied to students convicted of a felony as well. The vast majority of employers ask applicants if they have ever been convicted of a felony, one of the reasons why the Center for Economic and Policy Research found that ex-offenders had an unemployment rate 12 percent higher than the national rate.

While people often see the denial of certain rights and opportunities to ex-offenders as due punishment, preventing former inmates from getting basic opportunities contributes to America's recidivism rate of more than 50 percent. It further serves to unduly subjugate poor minorities who have been shown in numerous studies to be equally likely to violate the law as their more affluent, white counterparts. Mandating that a poor black man spend five years in prison for marijuana

possession seems an absurdity. Further ensuring that he lives a life without a fair chance of getting a job, aid for education, access to public housing, or even the fundamental right to vote is a repulsive injustice.

For decades minorities and the poor have been unjustly targeted for incarceration and unjustly denied reentrance to society once they have served their time. For decades America has been silent, but no longer. In recent years, political leaders from both parties have begun to acknowledge the failure of the War on Drugs. Republican Senator Rand Paul has brought forth a bill designed to reform mandatory minimum sentencing. Meanwhile, a movement known as "ban the box" has begun to prohibit employers from asking applicants about their criminal history, and politicians from President Barack Obama to former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum have spoken of national bills to restore voting rights to ex-offenders. Further, the high-profile killings of Michael Brown and Eric Garner have reinvigorated a national conversation about policing, race, and the War on Drugs.

America is on the cusp of change. It is time that America and its citizens regain the spirit of King and his companions, not to create a new civil rights movement, but to more fully realize the dreams of the original. This will likely not happen with grand marches or exuberant pieces of legislation. After all, the imprisoned cannot protest, and the convicted too often cannot vote. But through targeted, piecemeal legislation and more honest conversation about race, the United States can craft a more just society.

Most fundamentally, Congress should scale back the War on Drugs by reforming or abolishing mandatory minimum sentencing laws and reclassifying drug possession as a misdemeanor. The general consensus among both Democrats and Republicans is that the initiative was a failure, and that a more affordable and fairer approach is needed. Repealing mandatory minimums will mean that judges can tailor their sentences to specific situations and reclassifying drug use will provide poor minorities relief from laws that rip nonviolent citizens away from their communities. Further, Congress must pass a bill prohibiting states from disenfranchising former inmates, as the states who practice this tend to also imprison the poorest minorities. Finally, employers should be barred from asking job applicants about their criminal history and restrictions on public housing and educational aid should be eased so that those who have been arrested are able to re-enter society.

Of course, no one specific action is going to solve the inequities of the United States justice system, and former inmates will no doubt continue face discrimination and unjust treatment. Moreover, the discriminatory impacts of a system designed to target criminals is a more challenging issue to grapple with than the blatantly racist and classist laws of past. But the current system of justice in the United States is so abhorrently weighted against minorities and the poor that to ignore those impacts would be the greatest injustice. America must continue to aspire for greater. Jim Crow may be dead, but his descendants remain in the guise of mandatory minimums, felony disenfranchisement, criminal history questionnaires, and a war on drugs. The shadow cast by that which we choose to not see has become too large to ignore.

“America’s justice system not only targets poor minorities for nonviolent drug offenses, but it also guarantees that these individuals are permanently degraded to the status of second-class citizens.”



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**YOU'VE HEARD
IT BEFORE**
THE VOTER'S DILEMMA

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Jack Keller
Staff Writer

“Go Vote,” is the imperative your U.S. Government teacher constantly reiterated. Unfortunately, eligible citizens are voting at remarkably low rates. According to the Bipartisan Policy Center, in 2012 only 57.5 percent of eligible citizens voted, down from 62.3 percent in 2008. According to the U.S. Census Bureau of Voting and Registration, an estimated 133 million voters of 215 million eligible, turned out to vote, meaning 82 million did not participate in the presidential election.

The 2012 turnout percentage decreased in nearly every state and the District of Columbia. In fact, America placed 120th on a global report of voter turnout rates, compiled by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. Priding itself on its democratic principles, this nation can barely maintain two-thirds of the eligible population's votes. To put this in perspective, Australia boasts the world's highest turnout rate at 94.5 percent. Due to a mandatory voting system, a small fine (\$18) provides enough incentive to motivate Australians to participate in elections at substantially greater rates than countries with voluntary voting.

Perhaps more frustrating, the 2012 campaigns spent over \$6 billion on pamphlets, postage, staff salaries, travel expenses, and advertising. With all the time, money, media, study, and effort put into campaigning, why is there so much apathy associated with American politics that it silences the voices of a free nation?

Just 36.4 percent of eligible voters participated in 2014. According to the United States Elections Project, this is the lowest voting turnout since 1942. Despite \$3.6 billion spent on the 2014 midterm election, two out of three Americans were uninspired by their local political options. Consequently, the men and women directly overseeing local legislation do not necessarily reflect the ideology of their constituents.

A majority of Americans feel distant from the defining wealth of American politics. Old political labels conceal the gooey nature of our political system. At face value, it is Republicans versus Democrats, but the ideological differences between liberals and conservatives concede to a consistent approach to unfettered corporate funding.

An individual's vote is drowned in the flood of dark money permeating our political system. Dark money refers to campaign funds spent on behalf of a candidate by outside sources that are not disclosed to voters. These groups spent upwards of \$161 million during in 2010 and \$216 million during 2014.

In electing Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell (R-KY), independent groups contributed \$23 million in unlimited campaign spending. Not to mention the Kentucky Opportunity Coalition's an estimated \$7.6 million attack ad campaign against the Democratic challenger, Alison Lundergard

Dark Money was not the only spending pollutant in 2014. Designed for candidates to bypass federal limits, 94 "Super PACs" allowed big givers to support their choice candidate through disclosed donations. Of \$52.6 million these groups spent, 57 percent benefited Democrats. Combined with Dark Money, all independent expenditures totaled \$525.6 million. 57 percent benefitted the GOP and undoubtedly contributed to the conservative majority in both the House and the Senate.

The Journal of Politics published research that polarization and gridlock may even increase the wealth of the few and exacerbate economic inequality. Adding to this research, Non-Profit Vote reported that voter participation strongly correlated with factors like education, income, and age.

According to the Pew Research Center, nonvoters are less educated and less affluent than likely voters. Almost 54 percent of nonvoters have less than a high school diploma. This represents around 44.1 million people. Low education levels go hand-in-hand with low incomes as 46 percent of nonvoters have family incomes under \$30,000. Basically, this marginalized population lacks representation due to their lack of participation in both presidential and midterm elections. Congruently, their situation is stagnant, leaving this branch of the population with a sense of ennui.

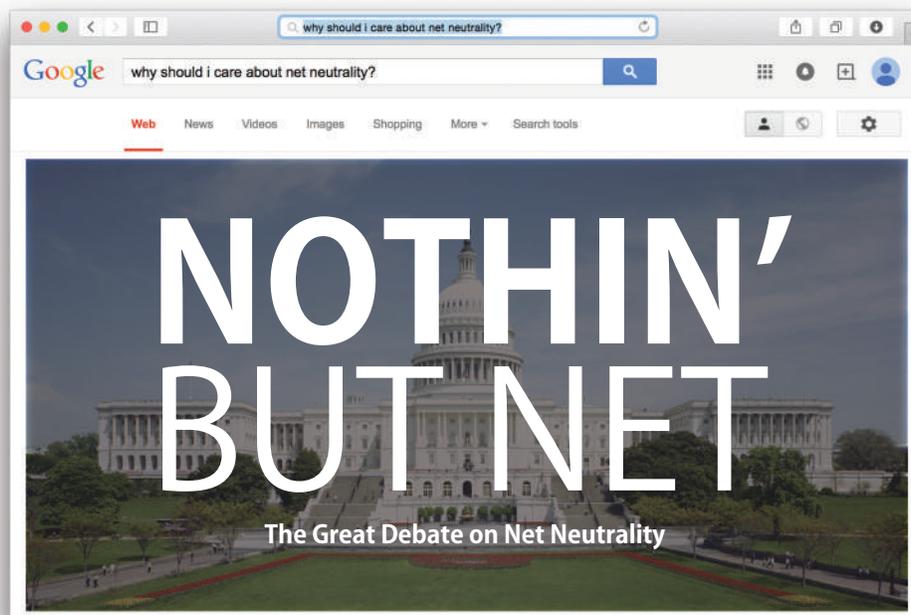
The young person's vote is hardly reflected in American politics either. In 2012, 18- to 24-year-olds represented 41.2 percent of the vote, compared to 71.9 percent for those over 65. Lacking

“ Just 36.4 percent of eligible voters participated in 2014. According to the United States Elections Project, this is the lowest voting turnout since 1942.

fiscal capital or influential networking, the young American vote seems worthless in the "grand scheme of things."

The Founding Fathers chose "E Pluribus Unum," Latin for "out of many, one," as the moniker for a united nation comprised of a collection of states. However, now more than ever, frustrating gridlock defines the American political system. The growing disparity within campaign finance confirms for American voters that their vote falls in the crack of a broken system. To many, not voting represents a disassociation with mediocrity, in effect perpetuating the status quo. The system is better translated "Ex multis unum, quia pauci" or "from many, for few".

In his essay "The Weasel, Twelve Monkeys And The Shrub", David Foster Wallace wrote, "In reality, there is no such thing as not voting: you either vote by voting, or you vote by staying home and tacitly [double] the value of some Diehard's vote." Although one vote may seem miniscule among the myriad of voices, it is securing your independence as an American. So, to reiterate what you learned in high school, "Go Vote!" It's your voice.



Jacquelyn Harms
Staff Writer

On February 28 of this year, the Federal Communications Commission made a historic decision. In a 3-2 vote, the FCC decided to protect a free and open Internet. They decided to protect net neutrality.

Net neutrality is the concept that all Internet traffic should be treated equally. Every website's data is given the same priority and is delivered quickly to consumers all around the globe. Without net neutrality, a "fast lane" is opened, in which some content is prioritized in delivery to consumers. Some companies would be given priority over others, especially the ones who stream a lot of content and ones who have a lot of traffic, like Facebook and Amazon.

Net neutrality is essential in maintaining the equality of the Internet landscape. In fact, neutrality has been the norm on the Internet since its conception. Because of this, the Internet has been an astonishingly level playing field in the past two decades for creators and consumers alike.

And the benefits to creators are at the heart of the argument for neutrality. People like Mark Zuckerberg would be quick to champion net neutrality for the sake of innovation. The Internet works in a way that allows every company a fair chance to succeed in gaining recognition and increasing profits. Regulating the internet would mean that Internet Service Providers (ISPs) such as Comcast and Verizon could make companies that have a lot of consumers and content (like Spotify and Amazon) pay extra fines for more traffic and usage. Newer companies that stream a lot of content could not afford these extra fines would be forced to deliver extremely slow content to their consumers.

This is less than ideal, as consumers want websites to work quickly. Zuckerberg didn't have to empty his wallet to ensure his customers were actually getting his product. It was simply available for anyone to access – no extra fines included. This is how groundbreaking online services such as Skype and Google were able to succeed.

Before the historic decision was made, the FCC chair Tom Wheeler announced his plans to support net neutrality in an online statement released on Wired. This report surprised many, as Wheeler had been a top lobbyist for many cable companies in Washington, and this connection had elicited concerns that Wheeler would use this position to make policy favoring the

cable companies. This recent statement reflects the opposite, as he declared he would like to make the Internet a public utility. In other words, the Internet would be treated the exact same way as water and gas. The FCC would be able to regulate broadband services, ensuring fair access for every company. It used to be that Internet service providers were defined as telecommunication services. Now, thanks to the recent decision, they are defined as information services. Recognizing internet access as an information service allows the FCC to regulate quality of access. This requires ISPs to provide equal access and become subject to the scrutiny of the FCC.

Protecting net neutrality is extremely important to both businesses and consumers. Companies like Amazon, Netflix, and Twitter have all signed a letter stating their support for a free and open Internet. All of these companies understand that they could not have attained the level of success they enjoy today if they were forced to pay large fines when they first started up. This would also force companies like Netflix and Amazon to pay the price-- literally. Huge companies like these take up a large part of the Internet-- whether it's dealing with traffic or streaming. These companies would have to pay much more.

However, some companies opposed reclassifying broadband as a public utility. The main argument is that higher charges would allow the ISPs to further investment in rural broadband and other projects. However, the CFO of Verizon, Francis Shammo, spoke at a conference which several investors attended to say: "I mean to be real clear...this does not influence the way we invest. I mean we're going to continue to invest in our networks and our platforms... nothing will influence that." Even Tom Wheeler affirmed that this policy wouldn't harm investment opportunities, as wireless carriers "have been able to raise and invest hundreds of billions of dollars and build a mobile network that is the envy of the world."

The Internet has been free and open since its conception. This has allowed it to change the way that ideas materialize into full-fledged businesses. Reed Hastings had nothing holding him back from creating Netflix. The story is the same for Amazon founder Jeff Bezos. Ideas like Amazon and Netflix have changed society. Why stifle innovation when the Internet so perfectly facilitates it? The world is at the door, and that door should not be shut.

Obama's Tax Plan

PROBLEMS WITH THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSALS

Bruce Li
Editor-in-Chief

On August 26 of last year, Burger King acquired Canadian coffee and doughnuts chain Tim Hortons for about \$11.4 billion and relocated its headquarters north of the U.S. border. A month earlier, Chicago-based drug maker AbbVie bought the Irish company Shire Pharmaceuticals, moving to the United Kingdom in a \$55 billion deal. A month before that, Minneapolis-based medical tech company Medtronic announced a \$42.9 billion deal to acquire Irish medical supplies provider Covidien and reincorporate in Ireland.

These high-profile mergers have many common goals—expanding global reach, pursuing product innovation, cutting costs, spurring growth. But most notably, all three deals stand to save these formerly American companies billions of dollars in corporate taxes over the next few years.

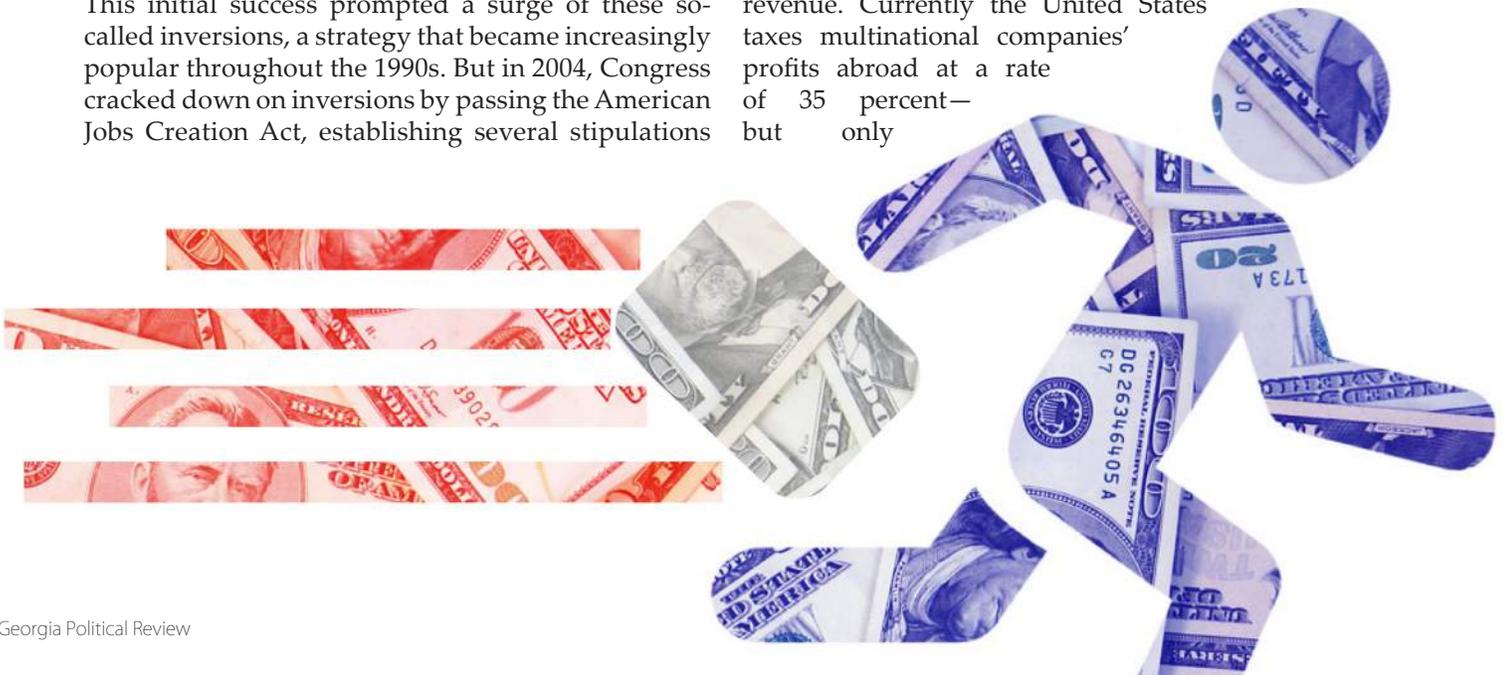
The reincorporation of a company in a foreign country with more favorable tax policies is not a new idea. In 1980, lawyer John Carroll pioneered this strategy and engineered the first ever “tax inversion.” Carroll helped Louisiana-based construction company McDermott flip its company structure, transforming a subsidiary in Panama into the parent company and thereby saving McDermott from shouldering the steep U.S. corporate tax rate. This initial success prompted a surge of these so-called inversions, a strategy that became increasingly popular throughout the 1990s. But in 2004, Congress cracked down on inversions by passing the American Jobs Creation Act, establishing several stipulations

to stymie the technique. Regulations now required the newly acquired foreign company to represent at least 20 percent of the new combined firm, or have at least 10 percent of the business operations (this was later bumped up to 25 percent in 2012). These provisions were meant to prevent companies from acquiring tiny or insignificant foreign businesses simply to reap the tax benefits.

Alas, this was not the end of tax inversions. Beginning in 2009, there was a new wave of tax inversions as companies found increasingly ingenious ways to skirt the law. Many of these deals made national headlines; something as American as a cheeseburger chain was now moving to Canada and saving \$1.2 billion over the next three years in the process. This prompted President Obama and his administration to call the recent moves “unpatriotic” and “wrong.”

But tax inversions are just one symptom of the ailing American corporate tax system. After making changes in 2014 to render inversions even more difficult to pull off, Obama laid out several measures in his budget proposal this February to tackle other key areas—offshore profits and U.S. corporate tax rates—to improve the current tax system.

These proposed changes seem to remedy some problems and potentially generate more tax revenue. Currently the United States taxes multinational companies’ profits abroad at a rate of 35 percent—but only



when the profits are repatriated, or brought back to the United States. Thus, American companies like GE and Apple have contributed to an enormous pool of offshore profits—over \$2 trillion—which are completely untaxable before being repatriated. Under the current system, these companies have an incentive to keep the funds abroad to avoid the tax, leading to increased savings and investments in foreign countries.

Part of the President’s proposed changes include a one-time 14 percent tax on this pool, a huge revenue generator that would be used to pay for much-needed improvements in U.S. infrastructure. Another proposal is a lowering of the tax paid on the repatriated profits made abroad, down from 35 percent to a global minimum of 19 percent. Under this proposal, U.S. companies stashing profits in tax havens like Bermuda and the Cayman Islands, both with a zero percent tax rate, would have to pony up 19 percent of their profits in taxes upon repatriation; other U.S. companies operating in countries like the Netherlands, with a 25 percent tax rate, wouldn’t have to pay any additional taxes.

Finally, Obama proposed lowering the corporate tax rates in the United States from 35 percent to a more modest 28 percent. These proposals, coupled with the stricter regulations on tax inversion (the foreign company acquired would need to represent 50 percent of the combined entity to receive the tax benefits of relocating), are Obama’s way of aligning incentives and increasing tax revenue.

These proposals seem logical and potentially successful. However, Obama’s plan is far from a perfect solution. The problem is that many of Obama’s proposals lead to new incentives that may inadvertently hurt his plan to increase tax revenue. For instance, several critics have pointed out that the tax inversion proposals may actually spur companies to hurry and try to invert before the new regulations are adopted. Furthermore, while the tighter regulations may turn companies away from inversion, they may now incentivize firms to engage in substantial mergers. For example, with an inversion less attractive and less feasible, the American banana producer Chiquita has approved a sale to two huge Brazilian bidders. The company has relocated its headquarters to Brazil, taking all its untaxed profits with it. Obama’s plan may

make inversions more difficult, but it also incentivizes American companies to go further than simply changing their tax domicile, an unpleasant side effect that would decrease tax revenue as well. There is no question that the 14 percent one-time transitional tax would generate revenue. Apple reportedly has over \$137 billion indefinitely invested abroad, meaning a tax bill of \$2.5 billion under Obama’s plan. But there is a huge ethical argument against the tax, which essentially retroactively punishes companies that stayed well within the boundaries of the law. As for the 19 percent global minimum tax, critics point out that while this rate is lower than the top rate paid on repatriated funds, it is still not enough to encourage repatriation when companies can avoid a tax altogether by storing funds offshore indefinitely.

Of course, there will also be push-back from Congress. While there will be support for the lowering of corporate tax rates, Obama will be hard-pressed to find supporters in the Republican Congress for his other new taxes. Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp offered similar proposals last year with less harsh rates (8.75 compared to 14 on the transitional tax and 15 compared to 19 on the global minimum), yet still received little support from fellow Republicans. With this opposition in mind, the Obama administration may be using these rates as initial negotiation markers rather than realistic proposals.

Ultimately, the holes in Obama’s proposal serve to illustrate this important point: the United States needs broader and more meaningful tax reform, not quick-fix targeted solutions. The most supported aspect of Obama’s plan—the lowering of the 35 percent corporate tax rate—is largely seen as inconsequential. The majority of corporations do not pay the full bill thanks to various loopholes and exceptions. In fact, corporate America has seen its tax bill drop since 2007, even as profits rise. So in order to bring about real change in the system, the corporate tax rate must be lowered, but only if the decrease is coupled with closing loopholes that let bigger corporations with more resources off the hook. Corporations are less concerned about patriotism than their bottom line, and the tax system will require a more extensive retooling than the shaky solutions Obama is proposing to make a difference.



Obama’s plan may make inversions more difficult, but it also incentivizes American companies to go further than simply changing their tax domicile, an unpleasant side effect that would decrease tax revenue as well.



THE WALL MUST HOLD

Bobby Wetherington
Staff Writer

Almost half of all Americans are born twice. Or so says a 2005 survey in which 48 percent of Americans believe that they have had a “born again” experience after which they have committed their lives to Jesus of Nazareth. This poll accompanies several others which demonstrate the rise of Christian evangelism in America.

Today, over half of the U.S. population has actively tried to convert someone to Christianity. The current evangelical phenomenon is usually credited with the increase in the number of born-again Christians (up from 35 percent in 1976). What is even more surprising is that 71 percent of evangelical Christians believe the Constitution formally establishes the United States as a Christian nation. This belief endures despite the fact that God is never mentioned in the Constitution.

Furthermore, 32 percent of all Americans would support a constitutional amendment making Christianity the national religion. 34 percent of Americans want their state to adopt Christianity as the official religion, and 37 percent of Americans believe the United States has gone too far in dividing religion and politics. The previous statistics could indicate that the 200 year old tradition of the separation of church and state may be under threat.

The Personal Views of the Founding Fathers

Without a doubt, the majority of the men known as American Founding Fathers were orthodox Christians. They recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the literal son of God, believed in the Holy Trinity, and took Communion. However, as many Americans know, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson,

John Adams, James Madison, and George Washington held controversial personal views about Christianity.

The spiritual views of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and James Madison were highly influenced by the Enlightenment concept of Deism. Deists believe in a creator God who, after creation, removed himself from the equation. They do not believe that Jesus is the son of God or other revelations, and they oppose formal religious institutions. Deism itself is as much a religion as the Big Bang Theory, because it does not console or enjoin adherents. Jefferson famously created his own Bible by cutting out all the parts he did not like. For his part, Madison believed that religion was a product of simple minds.

George Washington and John Adams held controversial religious views as well. Washington became the source of scandal in his church when he refused to take communion or kneel to pray. After being rebuked by his pastor, Washington left his church for good. Adams, in his characteristic fiery style, called for a world without religion and referred to Christianity as “the most bloody religion that ever existed.” It is likely that convictions like Madison’s were the reason the Founding Fathers encouraged the separation of religion and government.

The Federalist Papers and Separation of Church & State

The greatest fear the Founders had concerning democracy was that the majority would establish a tyranny over the minority. James Madison, along with the other Founders sought to create as many competing factions within the United States as possible so that it would be nearly impossible for one to overwhelm all the others.

Today, many Americans mistakenly believe the separation of powers only pertains to the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Originally, the Founders intended for the same principle to also apply to civil society. An America in which religion is supreme is just as tyrannical as one in which the government is absolute. In a theocracy, the Christian majority would be able to force their values and laws on non-Christians. Inversely, if the government was all-powerful then it could try and replace religion with totalitarian rule.

James Madison believed that the division of religion and politics was better for both. He specifically mentions in Federalist 10 that the division of society into political and religious factions could prevent one from dominating the other. As odd as it may appear, the Founders endorsed religious tension, so that one may not reign uncontested.

The fact that 37 percent of Americans believe the wall of separation is too severe is not such a bad thing. It is the mad genius of the Founding Fathers. Before 1787 few would have thought that encouraging national division was a good idea, however, it in part has created what is arguably the most powerful state the world has ever seen. The United States is able to be a “melting pot” precisely because no institution can enforce homogeneity. Disaster will only strike if the competition of interests ends. Those evangelicals who wish to formally combine religion and politics need to recognize that the product they desire is not a democracy or a republic. For two hundred years the wall of separation has kept tyranny at bay, and for the good of the republic, it must hold.

STEPPE IT UP, MONGOLIA

Boom and Bust in Asia's El Dorado

Megan White
Staff Writer

For a brief window of time in the 13th century, Mongolia put the current definition of global superpower to shame. At its peak, the Mongol Empire occupied nearly one quarter of the world's land, stretching from modern-day South Korea to Poland. Even today, the former Khanate maintains its distinction as the largest contiguous state in history.

But almost as quickly as it emerged, the Mongol Empire shrank back into the steppe. Within a century of Genghis Khan's proclamation of the "Great Mongolian State," the Empire cracked into four distinct pieces, all of which would eventually give way to new regional kingdoms and empires.

After centuries of Chinese rule, a stint as a Soviet satellite republic, and two decades of shaky democracy, Mongolia is on its way back. While it is improbable that Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, the current president of Mongolia, will mount a horse and conquer the better part of the Eurasian continent, his country claims one of the world's fastest growing economies, with 18 percent growth in 2011 and 12 percent growth in 2012 and 2013, as opposed to about 2 percent in the United States and 8 percent in China. In 20 years, the population of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia's once sleepy capital, has more than doubled, and the city now boasts French bistros, glitzy malls, and a crane-dotted skyline.

Much of the country's rapid growth can be attributed to its mineral resources. The land is, quite literally, a gold mine – as well as a copper, coal, silver, uranium, and molybdenum mine. It also does not hurt that Mongolia, one of the world's fastest-growing mineral producers, shares a 4,700-kilometer border with China, the world's fastest-growing mineral consumer. The bedrock of Mongolia's mining boom is the "OT" – Oyu Tolgoi, or "Turquoise Hill" – mine. Located in a desolate spot in the Gobi Desert, the copper-and-gold mine is expected to account for one-third of Mongolia's GDP by 2020. Since construction began in 2010, \$6 billion has been invested in the project, a staggering sum for Mongolia's \$11.5 billion economy. While the Mongolian government owns 34 percent of the venture, the other two-thirds is owned by Ivanhoe Mines of Canada. International mining giant Rio Tinto, which owns 49 percent of Ivanhoe Mines, is charged with managing OT. When complete, the mine is expected to produce 450,000 tons of copper per year, making it one of the five biggest mines in the world. In a 2012 article, *The Economist* speculated that Mongolia could become the next Qatar or Brunei: a country with a small, yet fabulously wealthy population.

But commodity-driven growth comes with its drawbacks, and

Mongolia's rise has not exactly been a walk on the steppe. Initially, economists feared that Mongolia would fall victim to "Dutch disease," a condition whereby resource wealth floods the country, drives up the exchange rate and/or inflation, and renders other industries uncompetitive. Currently, however, Mongolia seems to be suffering from an opposite affliction. Runaway government spending and a slump in Chinese demand have left Mongolia facing a balance-of-payments crisis, a sharp drop in its exchange rate, and a credit crunch. Squabbling between Rio Tinto and the Mongolian government over management of Turquoise Hill's fees and taxes have halted the mine's development and frightened other foreign investors. Though the government and Rio Tinto have shown signs of reconciliation, the conflict demonstrates the danger of Mongolia placing all its eggs in one mine.

Mongolia's rapid growth has brought political and social costs as well. Though the number of Mongolians living below the poverty line fell by ten percent in 2011, about 30 percent of the population is still living in poverty. For this group, many of whom live in felt tents on the fringes of the capital, the mineral boom has meant rising prices, urbanization, and stark inequality. Mongolian politicians have attempted to alleviate the problem by spreading the wealth. Already every Mongolian is entitled to 21,000 togrogs (\$16) on the 15th of every month. So far these handouts have helped, but at the price of increasing the public debt. The largest political parties have promised to end handout policies, but they remain a temptation in Mongolia's raucous democracy.

As the mineral boom reshapes Mongolia's political and social landscape, it is also reshaping the physical landscape. In 2013, Ulaanbaatar claimed the second-worst air pollution levels in the world. As Mongolia plans to ramp up its coal production with the opening of another mine, Tavan Tolgoi, the problem is only likely to grow worse. A budding environmentalist movement has spoken against the digging up of nomadic lands and the poisoning of rivers, but for now they are drowned out by the whirring of the drills.

While Mongolia is by no means poised to redraw the map, its rapid pace of export-driven growth is likely to put the fallen Empire back on it. But with a host of political, social, and environmental concerns to address, Mongolia is not out of the hole yet. Continued international investment and a resurgence of demand in China and the United States will buoy the mining industry, but without a plan for addressing widespread poverty, pollution, and economic shocks, Mongolia's growing pains will continue. In the land of historic booms and busts, Mongolians know the drill.

Bailey Palmer
Staff Writer

With nuclear negotiations between Iran and the United States at a possible turning point, quite a lot of attention has been focused on Iran in the past months. The regime, widely seen as radical, volatile, and irrationally militant, is trusted by few and liked by even fewer. The international community has been trying to remove the regime for nearly 40 years, seemingly to no avail. With Western media covering only the political antics and nuclear developments of the Islamic regime, it wouldn't be unreasonable to believe that Iranian society was as conservative as its government. The average image of Iran in the eyes of the outside community is that of veiled women, backward beliefs, and strict autocratic oppression with little pushback. The Pew Research Center found that 83 percent of Americans do not believe the Iranian government respects the personal freedoms of its citizens. That number was even higher in European countries.

Yet, what if there was a sexual revolution going on behind closed doors?



IRAN'S SEXUAL REVOLUTION?!



A new generation, politically informed and unsympathetic to the state, has made sexual rebellion part of their ethos.

While the public life of the Iranian people is severely regulated to conform to the regime's radical Islamic standards, Iran has a vibrant history of cosmopolitanism and spirituality, not necessarily religious fervor. Before the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iran was a fairly open and progressive place relative to the rest of the region. Some within Iran hoped that the overthrow of the Shah would bring more political freedoms, even though Iranians at the time were not particularly dissatisfied with the liberties afforded to them in their personal lives. Yet when Ayatollah Khomeini came to power, they lost both. The radical vision of a utopian Islamic society strangled Iran.

Even so, one cannot remodel a culture—especially one as ancient as that of Persia—within a few decades. As a popular saying in Iran goes, “Before the revolution, one went out to drink and stayed in to pray. Now, people go out to pray and stay in to drink.” In a groundbreaking ethnographic study, Pardis Mahdavi revealed that most Iranian young people are partying, drinking, and having sex in much of the same ways they do around the world. Mahdavi, an Iranian-American, is a professor of anthropology at Pomona College. She is widely published, with research interests in health, gender, and sexuality in the Middle East. Her results, founded on in-depth qualitative interviews with 80 young Iranians and extensive field research, depicted a deeply dichotomous social structure. Outwardly, Iranian young people conform to the regime's moral law because they must. Yet, privately, sex within both long-term relationships and one-night stands is common. The University of Tehran found that within the city, on average, women have intercourse for the first time at the age of 16, and men at the age of 15. By comparison, in the United States the Kinsey Institute puts those numbers at 17.3 and 16.9, for women and men respectively. Tehranis are also getting married increasingly later in life: 26 for women and 29 for men. This essentially leaves 10 years of premarital sex and courtship—both of which are illegal.

Mahdavi uncovered some even more striking trends. Among those she interviewed, group sex was not uncommon, perhaps even commonplace. One man from her study added, “Have I ever had group sex? Well, yes, with a few women at a time, but who hasn't done that? But I've watched really elaborate orgies too.” Ironically, because the regime has made any kind of public courtship impossible, romantic encounters must occur in private. When dating only occurs in bedrooms, relationships move far faster than they would otherwise. This also explains acceptability of more provocative acts like orgies. With everything happening behind closed doors, norms shift. The car, too, has taken on a kind of safe-haven status, similar to its role in the American cultural shift in the '50s. Cars afford a private space while also allowing for a quick escape from the morality police, or komiteh, should the need arise. Taken out of context, the stories of these sexual escapades are not particularly notable. Yet in Iran, the risks are much higher. Simply being in the company of a member of the opposite sex is punishable with 84 lashes. Extramarital sex is punishable by death.

Mahdavi found that the threat of arrest for sexual deviancy was far from abstract; it was a daily reality.

She writes, “Most of my informants had been caught and detained at least once, many several times, and several of my informants had faced the whip at one time or another during their arrests. Experiences with

the komiteh were a favourite topic amongst these young adults and they often traded ‘war stories’. It seemed that this was both the price of rebellion and social revolution and the marker of success.”

Under a regime where even a lock of hair left visible is subject to legal prosecution, seemingly apolitical choices, like when to lose your virginity, take on new meaning. The Islamic Republic was born out of a radical utopian vision of the ideal Islamic state. As such, every facet of one's life is under political jurisdiction. This means that even minor rebellions—like teenagers having sex—undermine the very foundations of the state's legitimacy. Mahdavi writes, “Many urban young adults throughout the social landscape increasingly reject Islamist social restrictions as they feel that religion has been forced upon them without choice, and see their social behavior (including style of dress, sociality and interactions) as political statements.” This has only been exacerbated by the increasing connectedness young Iranians have with the outside world, especially through social media.

One may ask why this kind of sexual revolution is not being seen in other radically conservative states, such as Saudi Arabia. First and foremost, there are fundamental cultural differences between them. The strict, radical vision of Islam, while not universally accepted in Saudi, is at least organic to their culture. The ideology developed out of the deserts of Arabia in the centuries following the introduction of Islam. The Iranian Islamic Revolution effectively imported that Arab-centric view of Islam to an inherently different society. This parallels the original Islamic conquest of Iran. It took over 10 years for Muslim fighters to topple the Sassanid Empire, and the resistance was fierce.

Despite the important cultural considerations, there are also several more subtle causes for this sexual revolution. Iran's age structure is heavily skewed towards the young. 70 percent of Iran's populace is under the age of 30. These young people, who lived through the butchery of the Iran-Iraq war and its aftermath, are also highly educated. The regime's push for free and widespread education, in combination with a baby boom, has created a state in which the majority of its citizens are young and educated. Within Tehran, 84 percent of young people are currently enrolled in university or are university graduates, and 65 percent of these graduates are women. Even across the entire country, about 80 percent of both men and women attend secondary school, with 55 percent of those graduating going on to attend a university. Youth unemployment is high, too. In Iran, over 2.5 million young people are unemployed, and over half of them are university graduates. Unmarried and idle, many young Iranians simply have more time to party and have sex. Coupled with this newly available lifestyle, their education gives them the intellectual background to critique the regime and frame their sexual choices as part of an underground dissent.

Even the most autocratic government must hold some degree of legitimacy, and Iran's changing sexual mores are a direct threat to this. Women are wearing mini-skirts under the chador. Young people hook up and drink in the face of extreme risk. A new generation, politically informed and unsympathetic to the state, has made sexual rebellion part of their ethos. While the regime has stood the test of time thus far, Ayatollah Khamenei is 75, and the rest of his regime is just as old. Maybe we'll just have to wait for time to show whose side it's on.

They say Paris is for lovers... maybe Tehran is too.

GENERALIZATIONS IN A DYNAMIC CONFLICT

Ridding Ourselves of the Israeli Stereotype

Deryn Sousa
Staff Writer

Israelis are anti-Palestinian. Israelis want an apartheid state. Israelis are violent people. They are racist. They are ethnically homogenous. They are bullies, aggressive Zionists, and only concerned with maintaining the “Jewish homeland.”

Israel is the chosen nation. Israel is a beacon of hope in a turbulent Middle East. Israel is only defending itself. They simply want to keep their Jewish homeland. They have been wronged and unjustly scrutinized by the international community.

If you have had a conversation about the Arab-Israeli conflict, it is almost guaranteed you have heard some variation of these statements. Generalizations of both demonization and glorification not only harm the potential for peace—they remove the conversation entirely.

As is the U.S. invasion of Iraq, states often take actions that seem logical for national security although the public may not approve them in the long run. “Operation Protective Edge” is a perfect example of these implications. As a result of the summer events in Gaza, violence against Jews has been demonstrated in France, Spain, and Denmark. This Anti-Semitic violence is not only dangerous to Jews but also a threat to the values of pluralism held so dearly by the Western World.

Israel is a nation founded as a microcosm of the Jewish world. However, general statements such as those mentioned previously paint Israel as a single, unitary actor devoid of differing opinions or ideologies.

In an interview with Israeli-American Dr. Lihi Ben Shitrit, she asserts that, “Coverage is often based on domestic issues, and when it is focused on international issues it is focused on U.S. national interests in these issues rather than really going into the domestic dynamic of other nations.”

It is important, however, to understand that the citizens of Israel, much like the citizens of the United States, are capable of loving their country while disagreeing with their government.

Nationalism and patriotism are too often confused. In a Washington Post “Letter to the Editor,” Ronald Tiersky distinguished nationalism from patriotism. He wrote that, “patriotism is fundamental to liberty because pride in one’s nation-state is related to the courage of national self-determination. Nationalism is the poisonous idea that one’s country is superior to somebody else’s.”

Amongst the many dangers of nationalism lie egocentrism, prejudice, and a superiority complex. This leads to the unflinching praise of country leading citizens to

ignore the reality of their state’s actions. This blind support may have been present in the case of Nazi Germany or Imperial Japan, but it is not the case for modern Israelis.

As a liberal democracy, Israeli citizens also face government policies contradictory to their own beliefs and convictions. The legislative system is based on proportional voting in which a coalition needs 61 seats (of 120) in order to form their government. Oppositions are represented, but not with power. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s current right-wing coalition has dominated Israeli politics and leadership since 1977. Ideologically, the Likud is conservative. Current polling trends, however, point to the slim possibility of a new government led by a center-left coalition in the March 17 elections.

The Israeli public tends to lean to the left on economic issues, but Israeli politics are defined by the hawk-to-dove axis of national security. On this issue, Conservatives have been more popular in recent years as they have been tougher on Arab-Israeli relations. Israelis see national security as a number one priority, but not all Israelis agree with the policies used by the current government. In the realm of international affairs, nothing is black and white.

Both Israel and the United States have a plethora of problems. However, perhaps one of Israel’s greatest character traits is that, similar to the United States, it is a nation full of varying ideological factions that are free to express their dissenting views. Patriots on both sides of the political spectrum are sources of new ideas, future policies, and the numerous benefits of diversity. Debating policy within liberal democracies such as Israel and the United States is crucial in reaching peaceful negotiations. Polarization and generalizations are not.

It is time to forget the Israeli generalizations in order to understand that Israelis as a whole cannot be classified under one sweeping statement. Dr. Ben Shitrit did have hope for the future on this topic, however, stating, “I have found that the UGA students I have taught are quite knowledgeable and are very interested in other cultures, in understanding other viewpoints and nuances existing in other places.”

Being a Jew, Israeli, or pro-Israel does not equal anti-Palestinian sentiments. On the other hand, being Pro-Palestine does not equal anti-Semitism. It is time to consider that the domestic dynamics and nuances are important on both sides of every conflict. In doing so the possibility of productive conversations of peace increases. The conversation for compromise is again placed on the table.

FIGHTING

Female Genital Mutilation

Shornima KC
Staff Writer

Zainab was infibulated at the age of 8. She recounted the experience to the WHO: “My two sisters, myself and our mother went to visit our family back home. I assumed we were going for a holiday. A bit later they told us that we were going to be infibulated. The day before our operation was due to take place, another girl was infibulated and she died because of the operation. We were so scared and didn’t want to suffer the same fate. But our parents told us it was an obligation, so we went. We fought back; we really thought we were going to die because of the pain. You have one woman holding your mouth so you won’t scream, two holding your chest and the other two holding your legs. After we were infibulated, we had rope tied across our legs so it was like we had to learn to walk again. We had to try to go to the toilet, if you couldn’t pass water in the next 10 days something was wrong. We were lucky, I suppose, we gradually recovered and didn’t die like the other girl. But the memory and the pain never really goes.”

Three million girls will be subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM) this year. Within the umbrella of FGM is clitoridectomy, a partial or total removal of the clitoris; excision, removal of the clitoris, the labia minora, and in some cases the labia majora; infibulation, forming a seal by cutting the inner or outer labia and transposing it to cover the vaginal opening; and other mutilation like piercing, incising, scraping, and cauterizing the genital. Clitoridectomy and excision are the most common procedures. There are no medical benefits to FGM. In fact, most victims will have lifelong mental and physical health problems including severe abdominal pain, infections, pain during sex, and difficulties during childbirth.

Today, the practice is generally associated with Islam, although FGM predates Islam. In fact, in predominantly Christian countries like Eritrea and Ethiopia, over 90 percent of the women are circumcised. As recently as 1950s, clitoridectomy was practiced in the West to cure women of various “disorders” like hysteria, masturbation, and lesbianism. Currently, in the United States, the Center for Disease Control estimates that 150,000-200,000 girls are at a risk of being forced to get circumcised. According to Dr. Nawal Nour, founder of the African-American Women’s Health Practice at Boston’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital, “The numbers need to be updated – but this needs funding and no one is interested.”

Lukman Hakim, the secretary of Assalaam Foundation in Indonesia that performs mass female circumcisions, says, “It is necessary to control women’s sexual urges. They must be chaste to preserve their beauty.” Such ideals of women’s sexuality perpetuate the practice. Social pressures are the strongest motivator of FGM. By removing “unclean” and “male” parts of the genitalia through FGM, women are supposed to become beautiful, modest, and pure. FGM is also associated with premarital virginity and marital fidelity because it rids the woman of sexual pleasure.

Stopping this practice is an uphill battle. It is important to change perceptions of female sexuality that have persisted for thousands of years in some cultures, a herculean task. On top of that, today, more than 18 percent of FGMs are performed by healthcare providers, indicating a growing trend of medicalization. Medical practitioners performing FGM implies non-existent medical benefits of FGM and ushers an archaic tradition into modern society.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2012 to eliminate FGM, asserting that it is a human rights violation. In Africa, 15 states have laws criminalizing FGM. In the rest of the world, 10 countries have laws that specifically criminalize FGM. Other countries prosecute practitioners under pre-existing child safety laws. However, FGM cases are rarely brought to court because the practice is sanctioned by family members and accepted as tradition. In the United States, thus far, there has been only one successful prosecution of an offender.

Often the victims are disempowered women, with little means of having their voice heard. Governments can pass legislation to support these women. Offering specialist services, remedial treatments, and psychological support to validate that broader society is on their side is a good start to bring this practice to an end. Additionally, the laws can provide witnesses who decide to report this human rights violation with complete anonymity, which will encourage more people to report this crime. Research shows that the most effective way to eliminate FGM is for the communities practicing it to make a decision to abandon it. The mothers who take their daughters to get cut think that they are doing the right thing. It is important not to isolate them, but to work with them to open a factual discourse.





CHARLIE HEBDO AND NIGERIA

How Boko Haram Continually Evades Terror Talk

Robert Galerstein
Assistant Senior Editor

“Terrorism” is a tricky phenomenon. The CIA defines it as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.” Basically, terrorists have a political purpose and attack innocent people. The amorphous term leaves little room for a discussion of how specific incidences can become problematized in different ways by governments and the media. This nuance is critical to understanding the broader implications of terrorist activity and avoiding misrepresentations of different insurgent groups.

The Charlie Hebdo attack received significant international news attention. On January 7, 2015, two gunmen opened fire in the satirical magazine’s headquarters killing 12 employees. The attack was heavily discussed in the media and was described by French President François Hollande as a “terrorist attack of the most extreme barbarity.” Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula claimed responsibility for the attacks within a week of the incident.

“Je Suis Charlie” quickly spread through Twitter and the rest of the Internet, signifying a support of the magazine and their right to free speech. The attack was seen as a symbolic threat to the Western notions of self-expression, representing a violent, religious attempt to restrict their humor and ideas. The international community expressed solidarity for the victims of the attack, as rallies and other showings of support – including hefty financial donations from governments and private groups – helped quickly get the magazine back up and running. Charlie Hebdo demonstrated their resilience a week after the attack by re-running a controversial cover from a 2011 issue.

Other terrorism doesn’t appear to have the same connotations. For some reason, the developing world constantly

fails to achieve the degree of symbolism garnered by attacks in Europe and the United States. The Islamist terrorist Boko Haram has been wreaking havoc on the northeast part of Nigeria and neighboring countries. The terrorist group supposedly has connections to Al Qaeda and ISIL and is attempting to implement Shariah law in the territories it occupies.

Just in the first half of 2014, Boko Haram killed more than 2,000 people. In April 2014, the group kidnapped 276 schoolgirls, stirring up some media attention with the #BringBackOurGirls campaign which is still working to rescue the abducted children. By the end of last year, over 1.5 million people had fled the conflict zone.

Potentially as a result of their lack of media salience, Nigeria’s situation has seen limited improvement. Since the beginning of the year, Boko Haram has attacked a bus, taken over a small village, torched a town of hundreds, committed multiple suicide bombings, and kidnapped 40 children. On January 3rd through January 7th, the week preceding the Charlie Hebdo attacks, Boko Haram captured their 17th town in the “Baga Massacre” where death estimates range from 150 to 2,000 people. President Goodluck Johnathan’s government has called for further military aid from the United States and the United Nations, however concerns about corruption within the government have stymied assistance efforts. In an interview with the Wall Street Journal, Johnathan asked “Are they not fighting ISIL? Why can’t they come to Nigeria?”

The group responsible for the Charlie Hebdo attacks has received more attention from the United States. Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), a militant Islamist organization based in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, is the most deadly and active branch of Al Qaeda. While they do not have the same

degree of sovereign control over territory like Boko Haram, they apparently present a more direct threat to the United States' national interests. The group was propelled by recruiter and activist Anwar al-Awlaki, who began publishing Al Qaeda's Inspire magazine and is believed to have connections to the Fort Hood Shooter, Christmas Day "Underwear Bomber," Times Square Bomber, and cargo planes bomb plot. The group has killed hundreds in Yemen, but has had only sporadic success internationally with attacks in the United States and France.

AQAP is heavily problematized by the United States security apparatus because of their attempts at violence against the United States and its allies. Accordingly, the United States uses drone strikes in its targeted killing strategy against the militant group. A drone strike successfully killed key leaders al-Awlaki and Samir Khan. The United States does not release official reports about its covert military programs, but the Bureau of Investigative Journalism maintains data on U.S. covert operations internationally. They estimate the United States has conducted 90 to 109 strikes killing over 400 people, with at least 65 civilian casualties. Since the beginning of 2014, the United States has conducted at least 20 covert operations in Yemen, killing at least 100 militants.

While the U.S. drone program began in Pakistan to fight Al Qaeda and certain sects of the Taliban, the program has now expanded into Yemen and nearby Somalia. Al-Shabaab exercises Shariah law in a third of the war-torn state, but is worrisome to counter-terror officials because of the vast Somali populations inside the United States that have already become candidates for recruitment. The United States has already begun a targeted killing campaign against ISIL but has yet to extend its operations into Nigeria.

As President Obama goes to Congress to ask for an Authorization for the Use of Military Force against the Islamic State, this will be the second AUMF granting the president authority to conduct extended military operations against specific non-state actors. The first AUMF gave President Bush broad authority to fight Al Qaeda, and was used to wage pre-emptive wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. That same authority is still used to justify drone campaigns in Pakistan and Yemen, and President Obama wants that authority expanded to encompass ISIL as well.

Regardless of the efficacy of U.S. counter-terror activities (which is certainly in question), it is clear that the security apparatus feels more threatened and thus more obligated to act and respond to Al Qaeda and ISIL than to Boko Haram. Although the national security of the United States is a constant priority, other factors are also in play. ISIL and Al Qaeda both have direct effects on Saudi Arabia, a critical U.S. economic and military ally in the Middle East.

Perhaps even more important is their effect on the West and the psychological threat they project on to core American and European values. Although all three are listed as Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the CIA, AQAP is the only group to commit successful terrorist attacks against the United States. What distinguishes Boko Haram and ISIL is unclear; it could range from geography and

strategic importance to the perceived strength of the group.

It is no coincidence that media coverage has fallen directly in line with the interests of the United States and its developed allies. African victims of systemic terrorism are not as well received in the larger media outlets, whether it is because of the lack of perceived threat to Western security or the feeling of extreme distance and disconnect from the less developed continent. Simon Allison wrote that "there are massacres and there are massacres...it may be the 21st century but African lives are still deemed less newsworthy – and, by implication, less valuable – than Western lives."

One thing is certain—the United States does not have a neat solution to problems and in fact is directly implicated in the rise of these insurgencies. The United States' intervention in Iraq played a clear role in the development of ISIL, creating a weak and artificial government that failed to gain the support of its people. Although that story is widely known and may be contributing to the United States' sense of responsibility in helping the region, the United States' relationship with Boko Haram is far less obvious.

The United States is especially out of sorts on Nigeria because of their initial role in Boko Haram's development. WikiLeaks released classified CIA documents in 2009

and in subsequent years that revealed the United States was attempting to contain the increasing influence of a rising Nigeria and eliminate them as a rival in the region. The United States is reported to have taken advantage of political instability in Nigeria and provided aid to rebel groups in an attempt to destabilize the government. They certainly achieved that result, but also got stuck with Boko Haram. The money funneled from the embassy helped start the development of one of the worst insurgent groups in

the world, a development the United States intelligence community predicted before the group had even begun terrorist activity.

This is not to argue the United States is the single or even largest contributing factor. The government of Goodluck Johnathan has struggled to meet the demands of its people and corruption is rampant within the military. To avoid conspiracy, it can simply be observed that the United States has made mistakes and now chosen to forget the situation entirely. The media has followed suit and Boko Haram has attracted little attention relative to AQAP and ISIL. This coverage deficit reflects biases of eurocentrism, development, and even military strategy.

In Niger, a state bordering Boko Haram territory and feeling the burden of the insurgent group, 10 people were killed and dozens injured directly following the publication of the Charlie Hebdo post-attack issue. These people are no less valuable than the editor and contributors at the French magazine, but continue to be less "newsworthy." The "Je Suis Charlie" campaign was quick to pick up internationally but Nigeria is still waiting for "I am Baga too." The United States doesn't view Boko Haram as a direct threat and does not have any idea what to do about them, but that does not make them any less terrifying.



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