

Vital Signs

PINGRY STUDENTS TAKING THE PULSE OF THE WORLD



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EDITORIAL

Trouble Everywhere—
Who Do You Call?

ELIZABETH ARROTT/VOA NEWS

The year 2014 has seen the development of three grave threats to the American-led world order. To ensure global stability, the United States must be willing to take decisive action.

BY HUNTER STIRES

It was only just last year that President Barack Obama could declare with confidence to the gathered representatives of the United Nations that “the world is more stable than it was five years ago.”

In the short space of time between that statement and the present, the global situation has undergone a series of radical changes that have thoroughly shattered that perception of relative calm. Across the world, sovereign nations and non-state actors alike have made moves to rock the system of international rule of law that has been the accepted norm since the end of the Second World War. Analysts who once joined Francis Fukuyama in his prediction of “the end of history” and the final triumph of liberal democracy at the end of the Cold War have now joined the ranks of those fearing the outbreak of another global conflict.

In Europe, Vladimir Putin, in his apparent quest to reestablish the Russian sphere of influence lost after the 1991 breakup of the

Soviet Union, has used the Ukrainian popular effort to help integrate with Europe as a pretext to seize the strategically significant Crimean peninsula. Now buttressing a so-called separatist movement with a false-flag army of Russian regular troops, Putin has unintentionally galvanized the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and has heightened fears of a NATO-Russian confrontation with his threats and provocations toward the Alliance’s Baltic member states. Russian forces have made overtures meant to show their willingness and preparedness to escalate further, particularly by testing several new strategic missiles of intermediate range and making incursions into North American airspace with nuclear-capable bombers. Western punitive sanctions have now forced a ceasefire in Eastern Ukraine and are beginning to significantly impact Russia’s economy. With the ruble falling to record lows and its energy sector under threat, Russia is strengthening ties with longtime frenemy China, which could lead to a geopolitical nightmare for the West should such a relationship become a formal political and military alliance.

In the Middle East, the Syrian Civil War has spawned a much larger regional conflict through the rise of the terrorist network known as “the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.” With roughly 200,000 people killed so far and as many as 5 million displaced, the strife in Syria is no longer about the continued survival of the Assad regime. It seems that because the West was unwilling to step in on behalf of the

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Editors-in-Chief/ Hunter Stires, Pradyuth Maganti
Associate Editors/ Gaurav Gupta, Peter Shim
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On the Cover: Citizens Protest American Immigration Policy

moderate Free Syrian Army after the first confirmed use of chemical weapons in the suburbs of Damascus last year, the United States and its allies are now forced to intervene to stop the rise of a greater adversary than Bashar al-Assad. In scant weeks, ISIL was able to brush aside the Iraqi Army--equipped and trained by the United States--and capture a large swath of Iraq's populated regions until they were stopped 50 miles north of Baghdad. With an established territorial base straddling the Iraqi-Syrian border and a sizable reserve of passport-carrying Western fighters, ISIL could well prove a greater threat to the American and European homelands than did Al Qaeda in the first decade of the 21st century. However, ISIL's shocking, well-publicized acts of barbarity, including the strict imposition of radically-interpreted Sharia Law on occupied areas and the prominent beheadings of Western hostages, have united an unlikely but so far effective coalition against them, bringing U.S. and Arab airpower into play in support of Iraqi and Kurdish forces on the ground. The conflict has even warmed relations between Iran and the United States, but it seems that the two countries will likely become short-term partners but remain long-term geopolitical adversaries in the region. Unfortunately, the stated American war aim, "to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL", is an open-ended one, without concrete, achievable metrics for success. Though the ongoing aerial campaign has met with success in destroying ISIL oil installations and military assets, experts have cautioned that subduing such an organized group will require years of effort, and eventually American ground troops to root out the extremist threat.

In the Western Pacific, the People's Republic of China has started to use its growing military power more assertively than ever before. As the People's Liberation Army Navy grows to become the world's second largest fleet after the United States Navy, China has begun to selectively flout accepted international maritime law to suit its own purposes. To support its dubious claims of 90% of the reputedly resource-rich South China Sea, China has begun building artificial islands and airbases inside other countries' Exclusive Economic Zones to establish Chinese sovereignty within the infamous "Nine Dash Line". Though China has recently made overtures designed to warm its currently icy relations with the United States, Chinese actions have strengthened the perception of new strategic rivalry between the two countries. Last December, a Chinese landing ship deliberately placed itself in the path of USS *Cowpens*, an American guided missile cruiser sailing in international waters, nearly causing a serious collision. Chinese merchant and fishing vessels are lately being used as a paramilitary force to enforce territorial claims in the South and East China Seas. More worrying, though, is the prospect that bolder elements of the People's Liberation Army are acting independently of the wishes of the central government. In August, a Chinese fighter jet made a recklessly close intercept of a U.S. Navy maritime patrol aircraft, and though China officially dismissed American concerns, analysts have warned that the up-and-coming generation of junior Chinese officers is likely to become much more aggressive as they watch their own capabilities expand. Further cause for alarm is the prospect that the Communist Party may create international diversions as a means of quelling unrest of the type that is currently rocking Hong Kong. Though China will not make the transition from regional to global power for some time, it is conceivable that the Pacific will become increasingly less stable as China looks to find external solutions to its internal problems.

For the first time since the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the American-led world order is faced with the threat of relative marginalization and potential collapse. Though no one of these three fronts of instability can individually destroy Western civilization, the combination of the three, if not responded to in a careful and balanced way, could possibly give the United States and her democratic friends the

geopolitical sickness that historian Paul Kennedy has labelled "imperial overstretch". The specter of this specific malaise, more than any other factor, should be what gives us pause when we hear retired Secretary of State Madeline Albright say that "the world is a mess."

Though the three major regional challenges that have dominated our attention for the past months will likely remain for years to come, the thoughtful American and allied reactions that are now taking shape seem to be producing effective solutions with a proper and measured allocation of resources thus far. By re-engaging with the global community, whether by formulating sanctions with Europe to force Russia to cease aggressive direct action in Ukraine, leading European and Arab coalitions to attack extremist groups in Iraq and Syria, or by building better relationships with nations on the Pacific Rim, the United States is showing itself to be a force for good and stability in the world. After several years of apparent retreat and dangerously isolationist political pressure forcing visible reticence to use military force, the United States is reasserting its commitment to upholding the global rule of law it has built over the past century.

In his new book, *World Order*, Henry Kissinger argues that "a world without a balance of power is an arbitrary world." We must have some means of preserving order to maintain security and avoid serious turmoil, and our current structure is one based on American international leadership. The events of 2014 have shown us that America in the position of standard-bearer is our system's greatest strength, but that it can be our greatest weakness if we let our vigilance and willingness to take that office flag or fail. The United States can choose to be the embodiment a vision most recently articulated by President Obama on 60 Minutes. When we are at our best, "America leads. We are the indispensable nation. We have capacity no one else has. Our military is the best in the history of the world. And when trouble comes up... they don't call Beijing, they don't call Moscow. They call us.... That's how we roll."

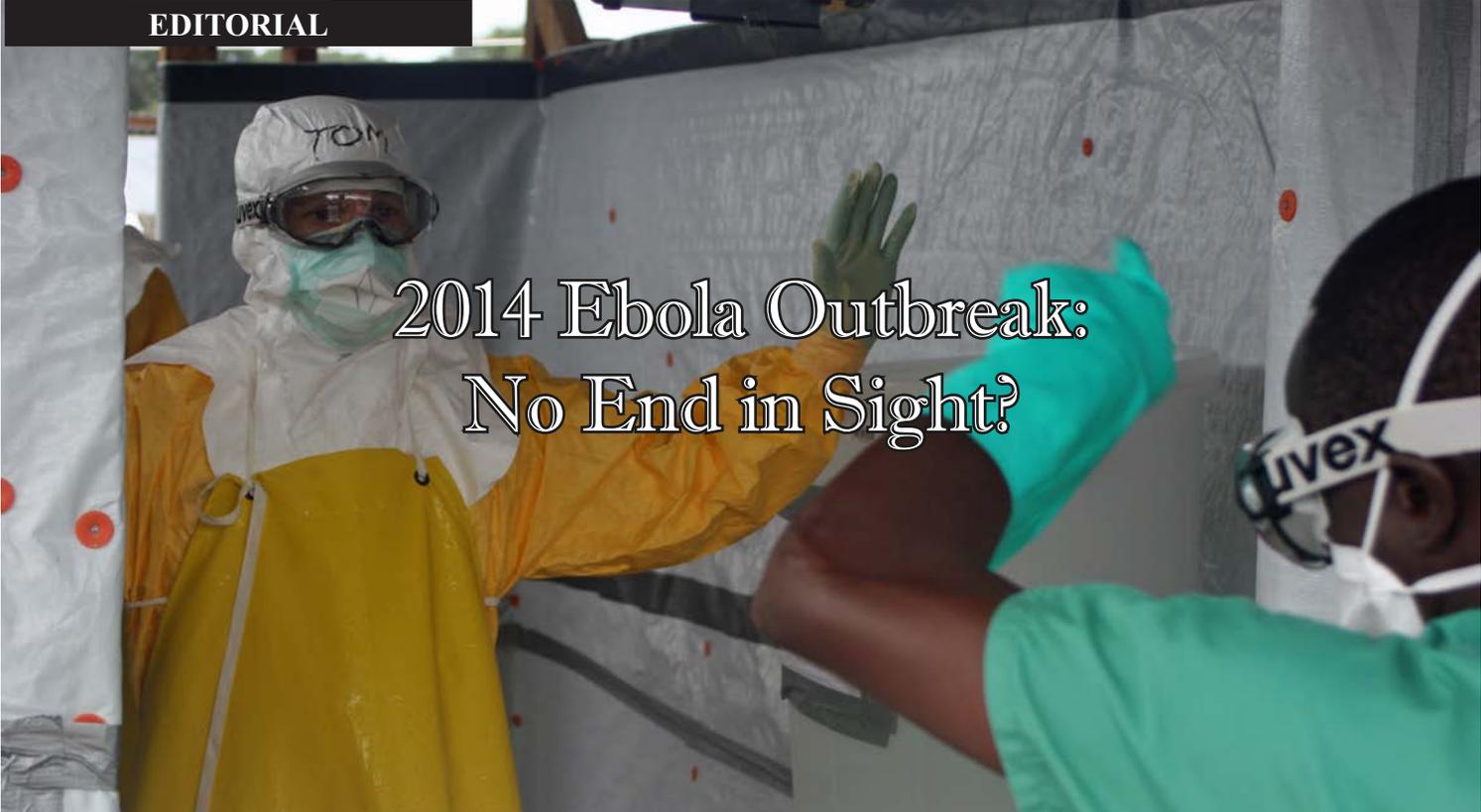
The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers by Paul Kennedy; <http://www.politico.com/blogs/politico-live/2014/07/albright-the-world-is-a-mess-192914.html>; <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-09-29/ruble-drops-to-record-heads-for-central-bank-intervention-level.html>; <http://www.thetakeaway.org/story/kissinger-urges-renewed-us-leadership-world-order/>; <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/president-obama-60-minutes/>; <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/15/world/asia/chinese-and-american-ships-nearly-collide-in-south-china-sea.html>; <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/23/world/asia/us-says-chinese-fighter-jet-confronted-american-navy-plane.html>; <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/23/world/middleeast/un-raises-estimate-of-dead-in-syrian-conflict-to-191000.html>; <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/141968/scott-harold/big-trouble-in-little-china>; <http://thediplomat.com/2014/09/can-america-save-the-world-order/>; <http://thediplomat.com/2014/09/in-iraq-beware-of-destruction-without-control/>; <http://thediplomat.com/2014/09/chinas-military-may-have-gone-rogue-after-all/>; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/24/remarks-president-obama-address-united-nations-general-assembly>

(Below) Ships of China's People's Liberation Army Navy participate in joint exercises with warships of potential ally Russia in a worrying sign of Sino-Russian cooperation against the United States and its allies around the world.



XINHUA

EDITORIAL



2014 Ebola Outbreak: No End in Sight?

CDC GLOBAL/DECONTAMINATING CDC DIRECTOR

The lethal outbreak of Ebola in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia poses a grave threat to West Africa and the larger world and highlights major drawbacks of globalization

BY PRADYUTH MAGANTI

The 2014 Ebola Epidemic is the largest known outbreak of Ebola in recorded history. According to the World Health Organization, 8,000 people in West Africa have Ebola, but because unreported cases distort figures of the epidemic, the actual number of affected people could be closer to 20,000, with the Case Fatality Rate currently holding at approximately 70 percent. The statistical inaccuracy is frustrating health officials around the world while a number of confirmed cases are still shrouded in ambiguity. More importantly, the actual virus is baffling medical professionals worldwide and a clear end to the outbreak may not be in sight.

In order to understand the implications of the virus, it is vital to understand how Ebola works and affects human cells. Ebola, short for Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever, is the result of four different viruses, the most important of which is called EBOV. Like other viruses, EBOV attaches to host cells and transmits glycoprotein, which can then replicate the virus in the cell. The virus then attacks all types of cells around the body with no preference to a particular area or group. Growth becomes exponential and the virus traverses all parts of the body through the bloodstream. Typically, mild symptoms of the virus, including chills, diarrhea, fever, nausea, and headache begin a week after infection, so it takes time to determine the existence of

the virus in a patient. Subsequent symptoms like eye swelling and bleeding from the mouth, eyes, ears, and nose take longer to develop. However, once the more serious symptoms appear, Ebola becomes difficult to stop. Unfortunately, the virus's effect on individual cells is still only partially understood, so discovering a sound vaccine is posing challenges. With two vaccines still in the works, Ebola is not a disease that can be cured immediately at the present.

The socioeconomic environment of the most seriously affected countries, including Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone, plays a critical role in the under reporting of Ebola cases. In order for the Ebola virus to be detected and diagnosed, a team of physicians needs to meet and properly examine a potential victim. Yet such assessments in close proximity to infected patients pose serious hazards to health officials in these impoverished nations. Since the communication infrastructure and transportation systems are corrupt and ineffective in these developing nations, searching for victims is a difficult task. And even once officials do locate a potential victim, Dr. David Fisman, an infectious disease specialist, says they must observe “recognized symptoms, seek care, be correctly diagnosed, get lab testing – if they’re going to be a confirmed case – have the clerical and bureaucratic apparatus actually transmit that information to the people doing surveillance.” It is highly improbable that each case will be a confirmed one, as each must pass through a long series of checks before being marked as confirmed. A lack of human and medical resources has crippled the health systems

(Above): A patient receives treatment for Ebola. The outbreak of Ebola has created a serious global health concern



CDC GLOBAL/GUINEA RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS

critical to the fight against Ebola. Although widespread regional poverty contributes to the understaffing of West African hospitals, Ebola itself is killing workers who come in close contact with the patients, creating a vicious cycle. Ebola is not an inherently contagious disease, but nurses and officials are at an elevated risk, as close daily contact with the infected is necessary for the treatment of patients. Medical resources are sparse in the nations that are combating major outbreaks as well, requiring an input of international aid. Millions of dollars worth of supplies have been shipped to West Africa in the hope of containing the fatal virus. For each case, health economists claim that at least \$2000 are needed daily for mild symptoms and more than \$5000 daily for serious and progressed cases. In the next year, American taxpayers could pay up to one billion dollars for fighting the disease in Africa and within the confines of the US. \$570 million will be needed over the next six months in Africa alone, as hospitals are already claiming to be strapped for funds after expending their resources on Ebola. The financial implications of the fight against the Ebola outbreak cannot be overstated.

With the epidemic turning into a global threat, people around the world must become more vigilant and better prepared to handle Ebola. Previously thought to have been

contained within West Africa, the disease has appeared in America and Spain. One reported fatality in the United States has caused pandemonium about the steps taken to ensure the patient's survival. After contracting the disease in Liberia and coming to the US, Thomas Eric Duncan was released from Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital after recording a 103-degree temperature. He was then readmitted to the hospital two days later where he was subsequently diagnosed with Ebola and later died. There is no telling if Duncan could have been saved had the hospital discovered the Ebola earlier. Nevertheless, to ensure the safety of more patients, hospitals have to become more aware and exercise greater caution during the current outbreak and will have to become better equipped to fight the disease.

As the number of Ebola cases escalates each week, containment of the disease has been of utmost priority. With new airport screening and flying restrictions being adopted, governments around the world are ever more cognizant of the spread of Ebola and how quickly it can cause transformations within a population. These measures are taken to ensure the vitality and safety of worried passengers from countries in West Africa, but Ebola must still be put into perspective.

With other rampant killers such as HIV/

AIDS, respiratory infections, and malaria decimating much larger portions of the African population, Ebola is still a comparatively small problem on an absolute basis. While Ebola has killed about 4,000 people worldwide in the last year, HIV/AIDS and respiratory infections have each killed over 1 million people within the last year in Africa alone. This is not to say that Ebola is insignificant. Fear over the future impact of the virus is a key driving force behind the attention Ebola is garnering in the media, as no successful vaccine has been conceived in the short time since the epidemic began last December. The outbreak has gained more focus than other more widespread diseases because of its relative mysteriousness, rather than its effect on the population. The overall sense of trepidation is warranted only to an extent. There may be a considerable amount of uncertainty surrounding Ebola and the end of the outbreak, but health experts still have time to stop the disease before it escalates into something as grave as HIV/AIDS.

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001339.htm>; <http://www.vox.com/2014/10/6/6889037/reporting-ebola-epidemic-virus-outbreak>; <http://triblive.com/home/photos/6933146-74/ebola-health-africa#axzz3G2BXGYAm>; <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/12/health/ebola-up-to-speed/index.html>; <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/31/world/africa/ebola-virus-outbreak-qa.html>

(Above): Red Cross volunteers enter a village in Guinea in order to monitor health conditions

Crisis at the Border: Our Immigration Quandary

An influx of child migrants at the United States' southern border has created conflict between those who advocate for humanitarian relief and others who argue against the permissiveness of our immigration policies

By JOSH METZGER

In today's domestic and international crises, the United States has struggled to find political accord; as a result, appropriate reforms and resolutions have failed to succeed. While international disputes between Democrats and Republicans supplement the political gridlock in Washington, an egregious, and somewhat unnoticed, issue is occurring at the United States' southern border. Since October, 63,000 unaccompanied children have attempted to cross the United States border, surpassing last year's numbers twofold. In addition, President Obama has called this crisis and current intensification on the border an "urgent humanitarian situation." Implemented regulations proscribe President Obama's actions on the issue; thus, some Americans call for amendments on laws that guarantee urgent humanitarian relief to those who seek asylum in the United States of America.

Central America's high murder rates, impoverishment, and drug trafficking predominantly spur youth emigration to the United

States. To escape the perilous surge of violence in recent years, children and teens seek security in the United States while hoping to foster a new life for themselves and their future families. Most are coming from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Especially in Honduras and El Salvador, "gang violence... is driving a substantial exodus to other countries throughout the region." As gangs in these countries try to recruit young teens to join, either rejection or an agreement could prove to be an effective death sentence. While accepting the gang "invitation" inevitably entails a life of violence, hazardous undertakings, and potentially death, declining an offer results in severe reprisals, often the murder of the teen and his family. With Honduras as the world leader for murder rates, 90.4 murders per 100,000 people, youth are certain to try to escape. Furthermore, poverty and destitution have created a poor quality of life for those living in of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Without the chance to succeed in their home countries, impoverished kids look to take the trip northward through Mexico

on the notorious train la Bestia, or the Beast. Children "must face the rape and abuse that many children experience during the journey, sell their possessions and their bodies, and give their life savings to unscrupulous smugglers." Children are still willing to take the infamous journey to the United States despite all that they could suffer. Finally, potential amnesty has encouraged child migrants. Obama's immigration reform, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA), "gave temporary protection from deportation and work eligibility to some young unauthorized immigrants." While some Republicans believe DACA has created an incentive to Central American youth, results may show otherwise. In a survey of 400 children, only one declared new immigration policies as his or her incentive for fleeing to the United States.

The border crisis's intensification is largely due to lack of funding and resources, non-expedited trials, and the absence of an appropriate and effective immigration reform. The current surge in child migrants has instigated a lack of resources and facilities. For the roughly 60,000 child immigrants being held at the processing centers, bedding was only "designed for about 6,000 to 8,000 kids a year." Also, while the House of Representatives did pass a \$694 million bill to subsidize resources, it is unlikely the bill will ever become law. The bill additionally falls far short of matching Obama's requested \$3.7 billion. In addition, due to lack of assets, border patrol agents are now acting as overseers in the processing centers, which were formerly military bases. Instead of protecting the border and catching potential illegal migrants, Customs and Border Protection must divert important assets from core duties because of the poor management of this crisis. Also, the lengthy trials and time-consuming investigations have led to chaos at the border. With the options of removal, voluntary departure, and acceptance, children must appear in front of an immigration judge who will ultimately determine their fates. However, it takes 550



PROTOPLASMAKID/WIKIMEDIA



STEFFLER/FLICKR

days before a decision is made. Therefore, the Obama administration wishes to incorporate the policy of “initial hearings.” Originally used with Mexican children seeking humanitarian aid, the policy implements immediate investigations to Central American youth that will ultimately determine if a child is even allowed to attend an immigration court. This will significantly decrease the number of hearings for each immigration judge. Finally, an appropriate and effective immigration policy has yet to be effectuated. With about 65% of children who seek asylum receiving it, controversy, concerning how far the United States should go to preserve and protect its borders, has proliferated. As a nation, we must strive to correct our immigration crises, but in a fashion that is “consistent with American values.”

According to a 2008 law enacted under the Bush Administration, those who seek asylum in the United States and those who fear for their lives are granted citizenship after examination. This law, the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, has deterred the resolution of the border situation. By creating allure to those in need of humanitarian relief, and by promising fair trials and immediate custody, this act could be to blame for the current border crisis. Thus, an appropriate amendment to the law could ultimately terminate our current crisis and mitigate the surge in child migrants. Controversially, President Obama, after the request of Speaker

of the House John Boehner, has looked to sidestep Congress and act unilaterally on the issue. President Obama declared, “I’m going to have to make some tough choices to meet the challenge, with or without Congress,” and later affirmed, “I’m going to have to act alone, because we don’t have enough resources.” If this were to happen, he would be using his power of Executive Order, neglecting the roles of both Congressional chambers. However, in the midst of a Senate recess, there may be no other option. President Obama is the only figure who has the influence to resolve this dilemma, and after requested to do so, he can now take the immigration worries into his own hands.

With more and more child migrants making the arduous trip northward, the border crisis continues to intensify; in search of humanitarian aid, youth look to the United States more than ever to escape to a better life. Due to high murder rates, impoverishment, and drug trafficking, many children try to flee their inhospitable beginnings in hope of potential amnesty from the United States and even other Central American countries. Also, because of the lack of effective immigration policies, reduced funding and resources, and non-facilitated trials, the border situation has grown, leaving tens of thousands of kids settled at the United States’ southern frontier. Because of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, President Obama

is confined to the strictures of immigration reform; however, an amendment of this law or Executive Order could be the only way to resolve the border crisis. Finally, should we provide humanitarian support to Central America by subduing the dangerous surge of violence that drives away youth? If not, there is no question children will continue to make the formidable journey northward to what they perceive is a beacon of hope.

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-boehner-gop-minors-spending-bill-daca-20140731-story.html>; <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/immigration-border-crisis/fate-most-kids-who-cross-border-staying-u-s-n153706>; <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2014/08/01/with-no-deal-in-congress-on-border-obama-says-hell-act-alone/>; <http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/2014/07/22/The-crisis-at-the-U-S-border-is-rooted-in-Central-American-poverty-and-violence-And-the-United-States-can-help-solve-the-problem-at-its-roots-at-relatively-little-cost/stories/201407220050>; <http://graphics.thomsonreuters.com/14/immigration/index.html>; <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2014/08/02/take-2-republicans-draft-new-version-border-bill-in-bid-to-break-impasse/>; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/02/22/many-immigrants-facing-deportation-must-wait-550-days-for-their-day-in-court/>; http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sen-richard-blumenthal/a-response-to-the-refugee_b_5678639.html; <http://www.msnbc.com/hardball-with-chris-matthews/watch/focus-grows-on-crisis-along-us-mexico-border-295306307831>; <http://news.yahoo.com/house-oks-bill-crisis-us-mexico-border-004546494--politics.html>; http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/15/us/questions-about-the-border-kids.html?_r=0; <http://www.vox.com/2014/6/16/5813406/explain-child-migrant-crisis-central-america-unaccompanied-children-immigrants-daca>

Ferguson and the Future of Racial Equality

The debate over racial profiling and police brutality has intensified due to the the murder of unarmed teenager Michael Brown by officer Darrell Williams; racism may still play a role in American society

BY NICOLE MO

On August 9th, 2014, an unarmed teenager named Michael Brown was shot to death by police officer Darrell Wilson. Nearly two months later, peaceful protests and dangerous riots still persist in Ferguson, Missouri, the ninth most segregated metro area in America. Brown's death has become an incredibly polarizing topic, hotly debated everywhere from news networks to Twitter feeds. Many have argued that Wilson acted not only unprofessionally, but by shooting an unarmed black teenager who was on the ground with his hands up, they claim that what Wilson did was nothing short of a hate crime. Others have pointed at Brown's supposed provocation of the officer as acceptable grounds for Wilson to fire his weapon. Violence from both ends has been reported, but amidst all the controversy, the crucial question remains as unanswered as ever—is racially-fueled police brutality an American problem?

The incident in Ferguson is not an isolated case of what some allege as race-based injustice from our police force. A tragic one, definitely, but hardly an anomaly in how the system has been working as of late. On July 17, 2014, Eric Garner was put into an illegal

chokehold by police officers in broad daylight and died of asphyxiation. On August 2, NYPD officers entered the wrong house on a domestic violence call and dragged out naked Denise Stewart from her bathroom and proceeded to pepper spray her 4 year old grandson. On August 6, John Crawford was shot and killed by Ohio police for holding a toy gun at a local Walmart. Meanwhile, there have been several documented instances of white citizens walking into Target stores with rifles strapped across their backs. Even with these examples, a tiny sample of incidents across America, many still deny the presence of systematic racism in America's police force. While some have rallied around Michael Brown's shooting to protest the treatment of African Americans by officers of the law, just as many have accused protesters of capitalizing on a justified shooting to loot and garner attention. Is there a right answer to perhaps one of the most divisive questions of our society?

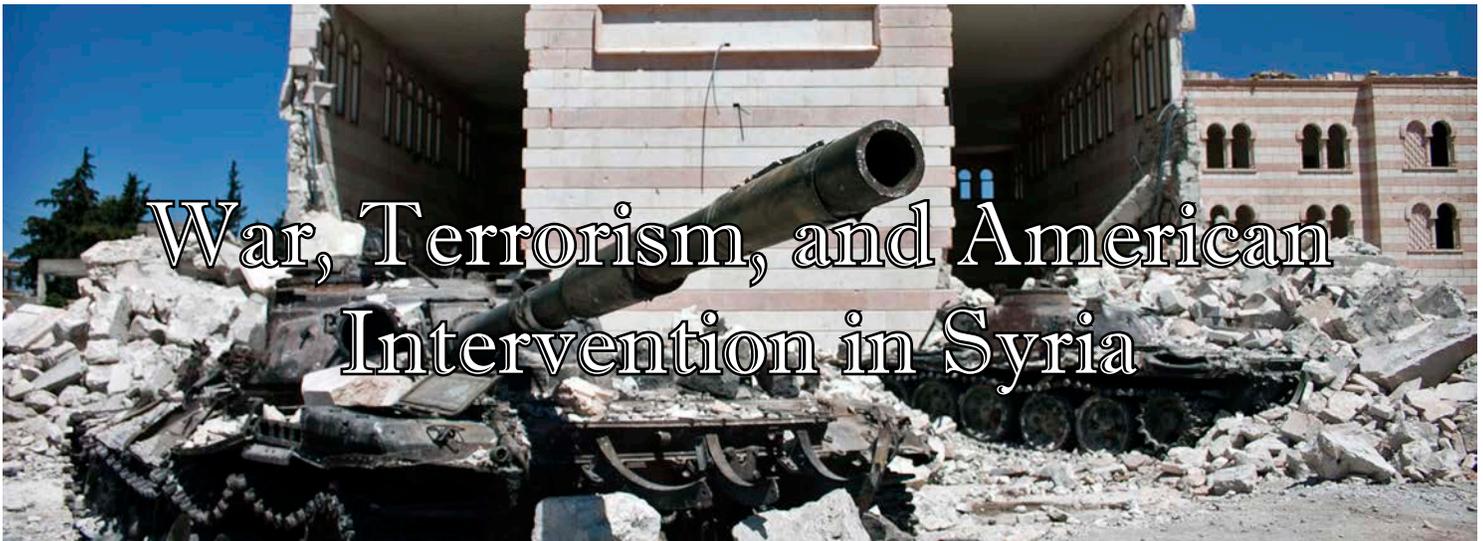
While Brown's case is still too contentious to take a stance on, shocking statistics of Ferguson's race problem paint a pretty clear picture. A town that is over 60% black employs just three black police officers on its 53-man squad. In 2013, 92% of searches and 86% of car stops involved blacks, when in actuality

only 1 in 5 blacks stopped actually possessed illegal contraband compared to 1 in 3 whites. Ferguson police have been widely criticized for their clumsy, and sometimes violent, handling of the mostly peaceful protests. In particular, the tear gassing of a black state senator, the unexplained arrest of two journalists, and the public apology expressed to Brown's parents almost two months after his death illustrate their mismanagement of the issues. Objectively, the numbers and facts seem to suggest that systematic racism is running rampant in this small Missouri town, and still, the fund set up for Wilson has received significantly more donations than the one for Brown. Fellow Ferguson police officers have rallied around Wilson with potentially offensive stickers and shouts of "We are Darrel Wilson" and the continuous and documented abuse of peaceful protestors. We Americans live in a day and age where we like to believe that racism is a fault of the past, completely effaced in modern society. With equal rights under the law and a legally unsegregated nation, how could racism still exist, let alone in our police system? The police are here to serve and protect us, and they deserve our utmost respect, putting their lives in danger everyday for the good of the people. However, not all officers are the Ferguson department, and there is no denying that many police officers truly deserve all the acclaim they rarely receive. But when officers possess so much power in our society, "many" simply is not good enough. We can continue to brush off Ferguson as an exception, the protestors as instigators, and systematic racism as a thing of the past. We can continue to argue that racial profiling is taken out of context, and is sometimes even a necessary tool to protect our society. Easy enough to say when our children aren't the ones singled out as those that society needs protection against.



LOAVESOFBREAD/WIKIMEDIA

<http://graphs.net/police-brutality-statistics.html>, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/no-indictment-in-ohio-wal-mart-shooting/>, <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/brooklyn/nypd-officers-drag-naked-brooklyn-woman-apartment-video-article-1.1889292>, <http://www.latimes.com/nation/nationnow/la-na-nn-garner-homicide-20140801-story.html>,



War, Terrorism, and American Intervention in Syria

TRIEBERT/FICKR

The sudden rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant continues to foment national turmoil and political discord

BY JONATHAN ALGOO

ISIL is up North, Al Qaeda's al-Nusra front is in the South, Assad is in the West, and the only Western-backed rebel group controls one city. This is the current state of affairs in Syria. The United States has started an intervention in the Syrian Civil War through airstrikes against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and one al-Qaeda offshoot, Khorasan, but has not done much else. The United States is also ramping up efforts to assist the Free Syrian Army (FSA), with training operations slated to last into 2015. In the meantime, the United States is supplying weapons to the Kurds, an ethnic organization in Northern Iraq with a reasonably powerful militia that is working in coordination with American air power to engage ISIL.

While significant, everything the Obama Administration has been doing does not take care of the real problem: establishing regional stability within Syria. In order to establish a kind of lasting peace and stability, the United States should not invade Syria and institute an American-style democratic government. History shows us that this is a bad idea--in Iraq, the United States instituted a quasi-democratic government that was strong during the American occupation but is now weak and rife with instability and corruption. Iraq's political malaise transfers to its military, which cannot secure the borders, giving terrorist groups like the Islamic State avenues to attack Iraqi territory. Another failed US intervention was the 1992 invasion of Somalia. In all, the United States has

occupied 14 countries in the Islamic world, and then left.

In order to institute regional stability, the end goal, the United States needs to do more. They need to aggressively attack and destroy various militant groups, and continue to help their current allies. What the United States is doing right now is not enough. Sure, the United States has helped the Kurds and the Free Syrian Army, but these are just two groups out of 1500 vying for control of Syria. The United States should start by protecting civilians from terrorist groups within Syria, as well as alienating terrorist groups in Syria and Assad's government from the rest of the world. This plan should come in two parts: sanctions first, then offensive military action later. While ideally the Obama Administration should have acted in 2011, when the two main belligerents were Assad and the "anti-Assad" rebels, it is not too late for the US to change its strategy.

ISIL poses a direct threat to the national security of the United States. The United States should take a direct approach to ISIL by first defending and training the Free Syrian Army and Kurdish Pesh-Merga fighters, while aggressively defaming and economically degrading ISIL. If the United States follows this plan and gradually wears down ISIL, they should follow by "putting boots on the ground". If the United States only sends military advisers to Iraq, as they have been doing, militants could easily move back into Syria virtually unscathed. Currently, many Islamic State fighters are retreating due to pressure from US airstrikes and an increased US military presence in Iraq.

With regards to the rest of Syria, the United States should not get deeply involved. This is not our war, but we still have a part to play in it. Unless there is a national security emergency, or a humanitarian emergency, there should be no situation in which the United States puts combat boots on the ground. However, the United States should still support efforts against terrorist groups. If the United States wants lasting peace, they should let the citizens, the people of Syria, win their own independence without drastic foreign intervention.

The United States should see its main role as providing humanitarian and logistical support to help the millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees currently within Syria and neighboring nations. They are the untold story of this war, and they need to be helped the most. To help, the United States needs to continue sending aid and encourage greater resettlement for the millions of Syrians either displaced from their homes in Syria or outside of it. In order to help these refugees and IDPs, the United States needs to work with Russia and China in the UN, the next step to achieving greater peace in Syria.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/editorial-the-islamic-state-exploits-obamas-weaknesses/2014/09/22/b5562bd8-4277-11e4-9a15-137aa0153527_story.html; <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/14/opinion/sunday/a-risky-bet-on-syrian-rebels.html>; http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/even-if-we-defeat-the-islamic-state-well-still-lose-the-bigger-war/2014/10/03/e8c0585e-4353-11e4-b47c-f5889e061e5f_story.html; <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/24/opinion/reluctantly-helping-assad.html>; http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/in-syria-the-united-states-is-bombing-friend-and-foe-alike/2014/10/02/28bac60a-499f-11e4-b72e-d60a9229cc10_story.html



CIA/WIKIMEDIA

Peter Shim's visit to Mongolia highlights larger themes of a nation's history and education

BY PETER SHIM

Two years ago, as I became fascinated by Mongolia and Genghis Khan during world history class, I contacted the Mongolia State University of Education (the institution that educated 97% of the teachers in Mongolia) and agreed to send English books to them. After I collected and sent 600 children's books from American libraries last year, they invited me to come to Mongolia and deliver the next batch in person. So, armed with 400 books about literature, I traveled to Mongolia this summer.

One observation I made was that although Genghis Khan is seen as a barbarian and a ruthless dictator to most cultures, the Mongolians revere him as we do George Washington. The largest national airport is called "Genghis Khan Airport." Moreover, the Mongolian government just recently gave a national medal to anthropologist Jack Weatherford, who wrote a markedly favorable historical interpretation of Genghis Khan's actions.

Another thing that I noticed was the seemingly pervasive clash of cultures in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. Around every corner, I was faced with at least four languages: Mongolia, Russian, Korean, and English. Mongolia's status as a developing nation was emphasized by the juxtaposition of dirt roads and some extremely modern buildings in the capital. In a common supermarket, I was able to find Mongolian goods as well as Frito-Lay and Nong-Shin, a Korean brand. There is also a dichotomy between modern and traditional housing; just several hundred feet from Soviet style apartment complexes, there stood many traditional Ger huts. Amazingly, 60% of the whole Mongolian popula-

tion lives in these traditional wood and sheepskin structures.

As a developing country, Mongolia has some very practical and innovative solutions for difficult problems. For instance, my tour guide, Temujin, informed me that the gigantic concrete tubes above the sidewalk transported steam made from the city's coal power plant into every single home in the city. This efficiency and ingenuity has allowed the country to modernize very quickly over the past decade, and its economic expansion reminds me of the growth Korea experienced during the 1950s.

The Mongolia State University of Education took me to several university-affiliated kindergartens for me to read several books to Mongolian children and distribute the books to the kindergarteners. I was shocked that the average kindergarten had only 6 books total. When I went to the MSUE campus to deliver the rest of the books, I saw that the number and type of books could have been mistaken for one person's private collection rather than that of the largest university of education in Mongolia. When I asked Temujin, he told me that the average salary in Mongolia was approximately 100 USD, even for a respectable job such as a professor. In fact, Temujin himself received his Ph.D in socialism in Moscow, but became a tour guide for better pay. As the average Mongolian has trouble paying for daily necessities, most citizens do not have the resources or time for books. Furthermore, as Mongolia is located between the superpowers of China and Russia, propaganda that has filtered through the years sometimes is anti-western, blocking the tendency to increase English education. Temujin also told me that Mongolians have always liked Russia more than China and is thus more subject to Russian influences; the Great Wall of China, after all, was built to



ALAN FIELDUS/FICKR

(Left) An encampment of yurt-style tents

directly intruding on the kitchen is thought to be incredibly rude, not to mention dangerous; it is easy for the tent to catch fire by bumping into the person cooking. As for the second tradition, grandfathers apparently told their grandchild this as to discourage them from playing near the center of the tent, as the two poles there actually hold up the tent. If children playing were to accidentally knock them down, it could be quite dangerous.

Too soon, it was time to return home. As the airplane lifted off, I realized that visiting Mongolia gave me more respect for the Mongolian culture and the struggles of Genghis Khan. As I glanced out the window at the bright airport as the captain gave a passenger announcement, I thought of my three nights sleeping in a traditional wood-and-wool Ger and of the palpable quiet, the sky ablaze with stars not visible from my New Jersey window.

keep the Mongolians out.

After handling the logistics of the book delivery, the University sent me on a tour of the countryside. I observed thousands of sheep and goats along the highway--while there are only 3 million Mongolian people, there are 2.5 million horses, 3 million cows, 17 million sheep, and 18 million goats. Indeed, the greatest export from Mongolia is its high-quality cashmere.

Another thing I thought was really incredible was the Mongolian sky. In Korea, the sky is always grey because of pollution. In New Jersey, the sky is a pale-blue. In Mongolia, I looked on the deepest blue sky and the whitest clouds that I have ever seen. The night is actually just as beautiful as the day. Without light pollution, the sky is filled with stars.

While in the Mongolian countryside, I rode on horseback for the first time. For 3 days, I rode horses around the countryside, returning each night to our campsite and Ger tent. I found the hills rather interesting. Every hill had a substantial number of trees, but some hills seemingly had trees missing, or "bald-spots." These bald-spots are sometimes one circle of grass amidst dozens of trees. Apparently, because Mongolia has blue skies and white clouds for 350 days a year, the sun shines so strong that all trees on any part of the hill without shade will certainly die, not to mention the lowland valleys.

At night, I slept in a traditional Ger tent and learned its traditions. First, anybody who enters the tent must always walk around it in a clockwise manner. Second, nobody is permitted to walk through the two poles that make up the center of the tent, or pass items through it. The first tradition relates to Mongolian-Buddhism; Buddhists apparently believe that walking clockwise increases collective knowledge while moving counterclockwise decreases it. Violation of the second tradition is said to result in a separation of one's parents and other general forms of disaster. However, these traditions have practical uses. Immediately to the right of the entrance to the tent is the kitchen, and

*(Above) Peter Shim in Mongolia*

PETER SHIM '15

"...I realized that visiting Mongolia gave me more respect for the Mongolian culture and the struggles of Genghis Khan."

Tesla: Reinventing the Future of Technology

With the arrival of its new model 3, Tesla is rapidly becoming the face of innovation in the automotive industry

BY RESHMI KOTLA

By now, most of us have heard of Tesla Motors, the multimillion-dollar electric car company that has taken the technology and business worlds by storm. In the business world, Tesla Motors shocked investors this year with its rapid growth. In fact, this year the stock price, currently trading around two hundred fifty dollars, nearly doubled since November of last year, when it was trading for about one hundred twenty dollars. In the technological world, many recognize it as the epitome of innovation, with Jake Fisher, the Consumer Reports' director of auto testing who oversaw this year's review of 260 vehicles, referring to Tesla's Model S as "a truly groundbreaking car" and "the very best car [he has] ever driven." But what makes Tesla so special compared to other green car companies, such as Fisker Automotive (plug-in hybrid sports cars) and Coda Automotive (inexpensive electric sedans)? Why is it considered one of the most prominent, developing companies of this year? What mainly differentiates Tesla and makes it such a successful company are its experienced CEO, Elon Musk, its unique engine, and its innovative ideas.

Elon Musk, the founder of Tesla Motors and estimated to be worth nearly 3.8 billion dollars, plays a crucial role in the success of Tesla. One of the most important things Musk brought to his company was experience. Unlike the founders of many other green car start-ups, who had relatively little or no experience with managing a company, Musk not only has degrees in business and physics, but also has already established two successful firms, PayPal and SpaceX. Furthermore, since Musk is a billionaire, Tesla has the capital that every growing company needs. In fact, in 2004, Musk helped establish Tesla with an initial investment of \$6.3 million and in 2007 and 2008 invested another \$20 million when the company was on the verge of collapse. Such a large personal investment, which nearly left Musk broke, substantially helped Tesla

establish itself into the success it is today.

Musk also realized the value of good partners. Since any company can not sustain itself by only selling electric sports cars, he generated income for Tesla Motors by selling battery packs to other automakers, such as Daimler AG and Toyota, which each invested 50 million dollars into Musk's company.

One of the most important technological features of Tesla Motors is its distinguished engine, or more specifically, its use of 18650 cells. While other automotive companies use much larger and pricier proprietary units, Tesla's electric vehicles employ thousands of small, cylindrical "18650" lithium-ion cells. These 18650 cells are then connected together

and in wholesale for less than half that price. Furthermore, since the liquid cooling system in the cells have temperature sensors, the standard safety circuitry usually included in each cell is not needed, making Tesla's cells cheaper to manufacture. However, ultimately, what distinguishes Tesla the most from other electric vehicles is its capability to travel 250 miles or more on a single charge, while other electric vehicles only range from 75 to 110 miles. Such relatively long travel distances allow Tesla to compete with other conventional petrol- or diesel-engine cars. Thus, such technological features of Tesla Motors make it one of the most rapidly developing automobile companies today.

While its technological features are very notable, Tesla Motors is defined by its innovation. Never before has any green car company invented a vehicle that can travel for that many miles without consuming gas. Different from other mainstream automotive companies, Tesla incorporates original ideas, such as touch-screen control panels, battery packs, and recharging stations for its customers along the road. Such ingenuity contributes greatly to its growing success.

Ultimately, Tesla's prosperity can be attributed to its strong leadership, economical and technological features,

and innovative new ideas. Thus, Tesla is not an ordinary company, but the epitome of our technological advancement and creativity in the 21st century. In fact, it represents our society's growing ability to make our wildest dreams into reality. With such potent creativity, who knows what our future will look like?



The New Tesla

TESLA MOTORS INC.

to form a flat battery pack, which can easily be removed and replaced, underneath the floor of each vehicle. The advantages of using these standard laptop cells are both technological and economical. Technologically speaking, these cells are small and can release heat quickly. By utilizing a liquid coolant in between them, Tesla can prevent the damage and overheating of cells, which will make them easier to charge, more reliable, and last longer. In addition, the use of more energy-dense materials reduces the weight and increases the range of the electric vehicles. Economically speaking, Tesla's use of these cells is also very cost effective. In fact, 18650 lithium ion cells can be sold in the retail market for as low as four dollars each

<http://finance.yahoo.com/echarts?s=TESLA+Interactive#symbol=TESLA;range=1y>; <http://www.forbes.com/sites/joannmuller/2013/05/11/the-real-reason-tesla-is-still-alive-and-other-green-car-companies-arent/>; <http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21576218-tesla-has-high-hopes-its-high-spec-electric-cars-general-electric-motors>; <http://www.economist.com/blogs/babbage/2014/09/difference-engine-1>; <http://www.economist.com/news/business/21597893-tesla-gains-new-admirers-it-heads-towards-mass-market-fully-charged>; <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2014-02-25/tesla-model-s-is-ranked-best-overall-car-by-consumer-reports>



MENENDJ/WIKIMEDIA

The power vacuum in Syria has led to the rise of the terror network known as ISIL, elevating fears of attacks against Europe and the United States at home

BY JULIA AXTELL

ISIL, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, is a Sunni jihadist group notorious for their acts of terror, including the broadcasted beheading of American journalist James Foley. ISIL declared itself a caliphate, an Islamic state run by a religious political entity, and claims authority over all Muslims across the world. The group's overarching goal is to bring all Muslim-inhabited regions of the world under its political control. Meanwhile, United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia have designated ISIL a "foreign terror organization" and are doing what they can to put an end to the group's plans for terror. ISIL is commonly associated with al-Qaeda, although al-Qaeda cut all ties with the terror group in February 2014 after an eight month power struggle due to ISIL's violation of

human rights and "notorious intractability." As of June 2014, ISIL has acquired at least 4,000 fighters in its Iraqi branch, claiming responsibility for attacks on government and military targets, as well as the deaths of thousands of civilians. By August 2014, ISIL has 50,000 fighters in Syria and 30,000 in Iraq. With new attacks everyday, ISIL is becoming more dangerous than ever.

Perhaps one of the most inhumane acts of terror to date is the video of James Foley being beheaded by an ISIL member. ISIL posted the video on YouTube to not only threaten the life of another American hostage, but also to demand President Barack Obama end the military operations in Iraq. While Foley's public execution was shocking, it is not the first of its kind, as ISIL uses these videotaped beheadings to establish an Islamic caliphate stretching from Syria to Iraq. Foley went missing on November 22, 2012 in northwest

Syria after he was reportedly forced into a van by gunmen and was never to be heard from again. At the time of his disappearance he was working for the online news outlet GlobalPost. After the shocking news of her son's death, Diane Foley posted on the "Free James Foley" Facebook page that she and her husband have "never been prouder of [their] son Jim. He gave his life trying to expose the world to the suffering of the Syrian people."

In the video of the beheading of James Foley, the executioner threatened the life of another American journalist who we now know was Steven Sotloff. The executioner threatened Sotloff's life by giving Obama the choice: stop the airstrikes in Iraq or their "knife will continue to strike the necks of" Americans. Unfortunately, less than a month later another video was published showing the beheading of Sotloff, who had been kidnapped by the group at the Turkish-

(Above): ISIL militants have taken control of large swaths of Iraq and Syria, forcing American and allied intervention in the Syrian Civil War



SSGT DANIEL ST. PIERRE/U.S. ARMY/WIKIMEDIA

(Above): American and Iraqi soldiers returning from an attack on an earlier iteration of the ISIL network during the Iraq War. Though American airpower can degrade ISIL, military leaders have said it will take combat troops on the ground to destroy them entirely.

Syrian border in August 2013. The Committee to Protect Journalists reports that there are nearly twenty journalists missing in Syria; most of them are being held captive by ISIL. Former CIA director R. James Woolsey, Jr. believes that the Syrians were surprised by the American airstrikes and are now “doing the best they can to retaliate.”

To combat ISIL forces, President Barack Obama has ordered airstrikes, with coalition support from five Arab nations. The strikes were directed at the northern Syrian city of Ayn al-Arab where Kurdish forces have been fighting ISIL. The objective of the airstrikes is to “degrade and ultimately destroy” ISIL, according to President Obama, who warns that these strikes will not end soon. Officials are adamant that US forces will not be deployed to Syria or Iraq, although military advisers have been sent to Iraq to fortify local security forces.

Lawmakers are continuing to question President Obama’s airstrike approach to defeat ISIL, the militant group that is more powerful than he originally thought he admitted Sunday. In an interview for CBS’ “60 Minutes,” President Obama confessed that they had “underestimated what had been taking place in Syria” during its civil war, which enabled Syria to become a “ground zero for jihadists around the world.” President Obama fears that the terrorists are remnants of al Qaeda in Iraq, which, after being weakened by US forces, “went back underground.” He

believes that the terror group was able to reconstruct themselves because of the chaos of the Syrian Civil War, which left large areas of the country ungoverned.

The White House is claiming that these military operations will not be like wars in the past. Tony Blinken, a deputy national security advisor, says that they are “not sending in hundreds of thousands of American troops,” nor are they “spending trillions of American dollars.” Instead, they are “empowering local actors with some of the huge assets” like airpower, intelligence, training, equipping, advising, and assisting. Obama claims he does not need Congress’ permission for the airstrike campaign due to the 2001 authorization to go after al Qaeda; however, he says he would “welcome” its support for the mission.

The question on many people’s minds is how ISIL differs from al Qaeda. Experts on international terrorism argue that ISIL is a more violent terror group than al Qaeda. However, professor at University of Massachusetts Lowell and director of the Center for Terrorism & Security Studies, John G. Horgan, believes that “we seem to have short memories when it comes to al Qaeda” and he would “caution against thinking of al Qaeda as a somehow ‘softer’ face of violent Islamism.” Horgan says that “ISIL embraces and immortalizes physical savagery in a way that is rarely seen in terrorist groups,” as evident by their use of social media in

the murder of James Foley. Horgan claims that ISIL “reveled in the disgust” America expressed in the murder of Foley. ISIL’ brutal violence against religious minorities and civilians in Northern Iraq and Syria, which includes beheadings and reportedly cutting children in half, is what has prompted many to consider ISIL more violent than al Qaeda. Not to be forgotten is the fact that ISIL was formed out of al Qaeda. One of the key differences between the two terror groups is their different use of tactics, strategy, and leadership. ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi “embraces beheadings and crucifixions, and he focuses on local regimes and rivals, ignoring [al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri’s] credo of hitting the ‘far enemy’ – the United States.” Michael Ryan, adjunct scholar at the Middle East Institute and expert on al-Qaeda, believes that ISIL is more violent because of the way they use “weaponized information” to publicize “their brutality in a lurid way as a means of terrorizing potential victims.”

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/08/19/world/meast/ISIS-james-foley/>; http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/al-qaeda-disavows-any-ties-with-radical-islamist-ISIS-group-in-syria-iraq/2014/02/03/2c9afc3a-8cef-11e3-98ab-fe5228217bd1_story.html ; <http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/02/world/meast/ISIS-american-journalist-sotloff/index.html>; http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/28/politics/obama-ISIS-congress/index.html?hpt=hp_t1; <http://www.christianpost.com/news/is-ISIL-more-violent-than-al-qaeda-125172/>

Ray Rice and the Future of the NFL

Ray Rice's flagrant violations of federal law has sullied the reputation of the NFL and threatens the future of American football

BY BRYCE WEISHOLTZ AND SAM KECECI

The National Football League has never been viewed as a paradigm of exemplary off-the-field behavior from its players, but recently, many have begun to question the incredible amount of violence and criminal behavior stemming from NFL players. Within the past few years, numerous football players have been arrested for assault, domestic violence, and even murder, in the case of former New England Patriot Aaron Hernandez.

On August 22, 2013, Hernandez was indicted for the murder of Odin Lloyd, and on May 15, 2014, Hernandez was indicted for the 2012 double homicide of Daniel de Abreu and Safiro Furtado. But Hernandez's name is among many players who seem to have no regard for the penalties they must face for their violence. What has the NFL come to? Currently the "prison epidemic" is running rampant through the National Football League, a league which claims in its mission statement to be "ethical in all of our dealings with fans, clubs, business partners, and each other." Because of the violent nature of football and the violent culture that has been ingrained in the NFL for years, it seems that violence off the field will continue to plague the football world unless radical changes are introduced. It seems many players lack the ability to keep the violence of

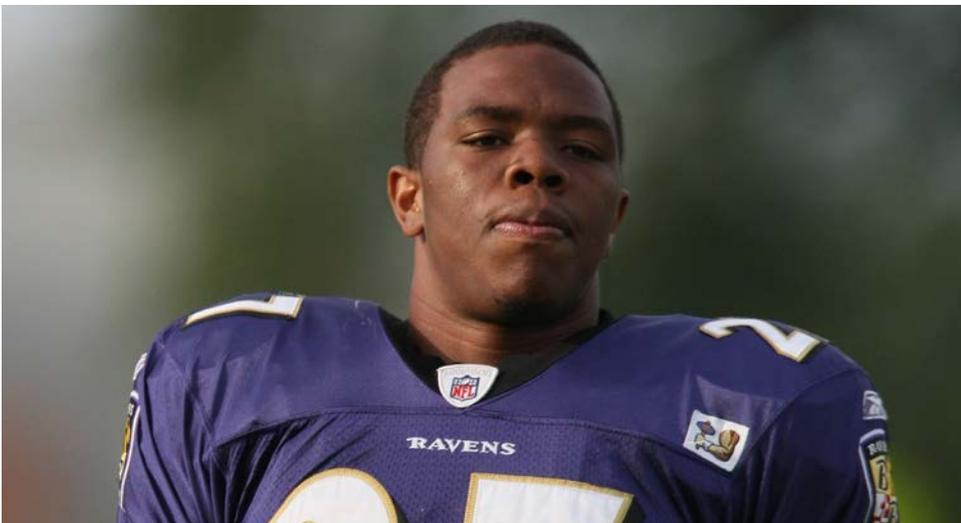
football on the playing field.

More recently, and arguably more controversially, the Baltimore Ravens' running back Ray Rice was arrested for domestic violence after knocking his then-fiancée and now wife unconscious. After reviewing the case, commissioner Roger Goodell issued Rice a meager two game suspension. He was also fined \$58,000, less than one percent of his yearly salary. To put that in context, Kansas City wide receiver Dwayne Bowe was also suspended two games for his alleged use of marijuana. The fact that domestic violence and recreational drug use were ruled to be equally bad has left many questioning Goodell's comprehension of the severity of Rice's actions.

While Goodell's punishment let Rice off easy, the Baltimore Ravens dealt a far harsher punishment to the All-Pro running back—they terminated his contract. Feeling no remorse, Ravens owner, Steve Bisciotti, stepped in and did what the NFL neglected to do. This is not an isolated incident, though. Just this year alone, three marquis NFL all-pros (including Rice) have been accused of physical assault. A few weeks ago, Minnesota Vikings' running back, Adrian Peterson, was convicted on two accounts of beating his sons. As a result, Peterson has been deactivated from the Vikings' roster

indefinitely. One other rather appalling case is Carolina Panthers' all-pro defensive end, Greg Hardy. Hardy was accused of assaulting his wife in May. The NFL refused to discipline him, and Hardy was only suspended by the Panthers just before playing their third game. Hardy is eligible to return after his hearing in mid-November. These cases do not solely apply to the players deemed "superstars." Just recently, the Arizona Cardinals backup running back, Jonathan Dwyer, was penalized for hitting his wife. Afterwards, the team suspended him indefinitely. These cases were not the first, and certainly not the last as the NFL abuse epidemic spreads.

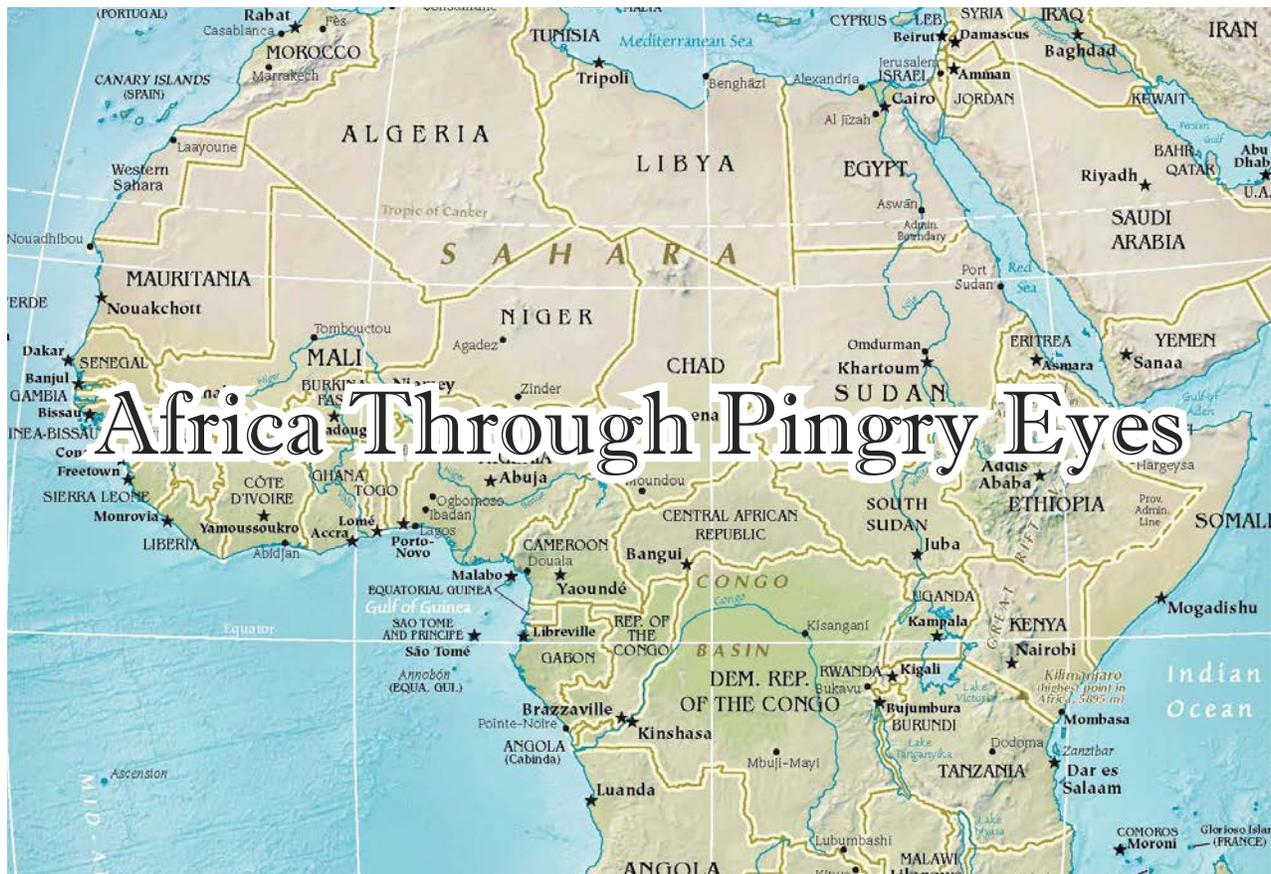
One commonality between every dispute is the NFL's, specifically Commissioner Roger Goodell's lack of strong disciplinary action. In each instance, the initial, and in the case of Ray Rice, proper disciplinary action is given by the team. As soon as Adrian Peterson turned himself into the Texas police, the Vikings immediately suspended him indefinitely. Although incredibly tardy, the Panthers took action in the Greg Hardy scandal; a scandal in which the NFL has yet to comment on. Dwyer has been in the news for some time now, and the only team that has looked at the case is the Cardinals. Clearly, the NFL and Goodell have virtually no ability to control its players. On top of that, it appears as though they have no intention of resolving these issues in the near future. In the meantime, more and more players are being indicted on various charges. This even extends to the college level, where Florida State quarterback, and top NFL prospect, Jameis Winston, has been convicted on several accounts, including petty theft and, most recently, disorderly conduct. Unless the ship is righted, athletes at all levels of football will continue to taint the name of the game.



KEITH ALLISON/FLICKR

(Above): Ray Rice playing with his former team, the Baltimore Ravens

<http://www.nfl.com/careers/values> & <http://www.nfl.com/careers/about>;
<http://www.wcvb.com/news/local/boston-south/aaron-hernandez-indicted-in-death-of-semipro-football-player/21576582>; <http://www.sbnation.com/nfl/2014/7/24/5933913/ray-rice-suspension-roger-goodell-statement>
http://espn.go.com/nfl/story/_/id/11646031/ray-rice-offers-interviews-nfl-nflpa-investigations; <http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/08/us/ray-rice-new-video/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VbwTMJroTbI>



WIKIMEDIA

Hannah Curtis's trip to Zambia, Botswana, and South Africa illustrates larger trends throughout the region and the world

BY HANNAH CURTIS

The last words I heard before boarding the 16-hour flight to Cape Town were, "Why are you going to Africa? You will catch Ebola. It is not safe." In fact, each time I mentioned my future travels to Zambia, Botswana, and South Africa, I was warned of Ebola. By the look of concern on people's faces, it was almost as if I carried disease already! While boarding the plane, I pondered my possible exposure to the epidemic, but I also knew that I would not be in close proximity with the disease, so instead I began to prepare myself for the exciting culture of the African nation. During my travels, two "eye opening" experiences continue to stick with me to this day. To me, they summarize why African culture is so unique and special. These two moments are my exposure to the Kalahari Bushmen in Botswana and the exploration of the local Livingstone market in Zambia.

First, in the Kalahari Desert, large indigenous tribes called the Kalahari Bushmen,

or the San People, were stationed in the wild bush and vicariously sustained themselves off of prehistoric hunting-gathering traditions. Dating back to the Neolithic era, the San tradition of hunting-gathering implemented sustainability through nature. For example, during a drought in the Kalahari Desert, the scarce amount of water would force the San to dig up certain known roots that capture water, slice them, and squeeze the mush until water began to seep out. Other traditions include hunting with a bow and arrow, smoking home grown tobacco through a zebra bone, following wild predators to herds for hunting, and using plants for medicine. Everything they owned comes from nature and because of this, it was evident that they are fiercely independent.

This hunter-gatherer aspect of the Kalahari Bushmen made me realize that there is a massive division between traditional cultures in Africa, like that of the San, and modern America. The juxtaposition between the two shows that there has been a paradigm shift in the growing material-

ism in Western countries, especially in America. The Kalahari Bushmen and the average modern society of America are polar opposites. On the western end of the spectrum, the ownership of luxury goods is considered a necessity, whilst in rural Africa; only the core tools for survival are used. This is the online definition of materialism, "The excessive desire to acquire and consume material goods. It is often bound up with a value system which regards social status as being determined by affluence as well as the perception that happiness can be increased through buying, spending and accumulating material wealth." The claim that happiness is brought on by buying goods and spending money is disproved by the Kalahari Bushmen, who, as the chief of the tribe told me, believes that the key to their happiness is fewer material goods. He said that because they have so little, they are so happy. In fact, the sole necessities like wood, clothing made out of cow hide, and weapons for hunting, is what brings the tribe closer together. This close-knit sense

attributes to their outgoing and “prankster” dispositions. Instead of relying on goods like cars, cellphones, and social media, the Bushmen indulge in simpler ways of life that do not involve these modern-day technologies.

It was refreshing to get a new perspective on how happiness is achieved. Instead of the common western belief that money and luxury brings pleasure, it was interesting to see how experience and community is the Bushmen’s foundation for happiness. American materialism is constantly growing, while the San people continue to live happily with no luxury goods to their name. Through these observations of the Kalahari society, I have realized that song and dance can bring more happiness than buying a pricey new handbag. Through personal experience such as walking through the bush, playing games, making dinner, and learning their language, I felt a new sensation of joy.

Other than the Kalahari Bushmen, I also interacted with the local village people of Livingstone, the town that houses the mighty Victoria Falls. While there, I not only visited rural villages, but I also visited the local market of Livingstone. Hundreds and hundreds of stands crowded the mile-long street and attracted what seemed to be millions of locals and travelers. The street was split up into sections that included bedding, food, shoes, pants, shirts, toys, juices, and personal products. As I walked through the clothing sections, I noticed something

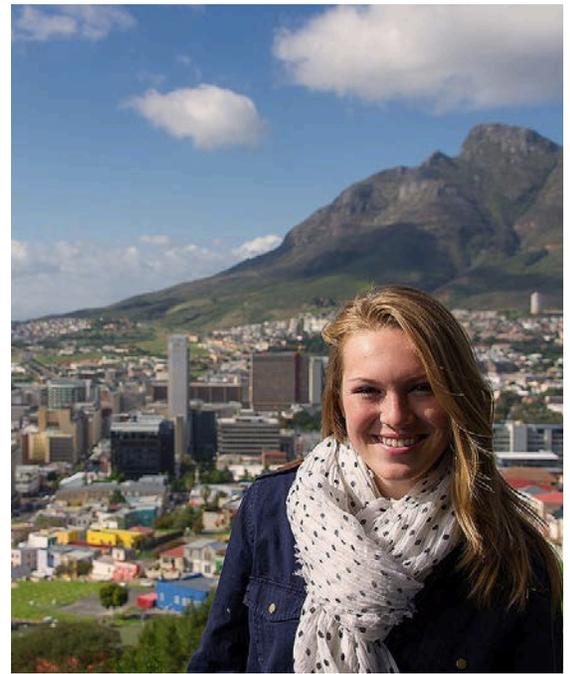
(Below) Kalahari bushmen of South Africa work to start a fire



IAN SEWELL/WIKIMEDIA

quite intriguing. A purple shirt with the words “Century 21 Real Estate” written in large purple letters was hanging in a small stand. I stopped and observed the stand for a minute, noticing other shirts that advertised popular American businesses and colleges. I found it funny how a common underestimated piece of clothing like that of the Century 21 shirt, could end up all the way in Livingstone, Zambia. It was interesting to see how the Africans marveled upon shirts like these. If I had the chance to, I would like to have asked the stand-owner where he got all his clothes. I was eager to discover more so I continued to journey through the market only to find more items, such as bedding from Macy’s, Avril Lavigne concert t-shirts, and Sketcher sneakers. Finally, I asked my tour guide where everything was coming from and he answered, “From Western charities of course.” I suddenly felt a feeling of pride as I have donated boxes full of clothes multiple times before and now I finally know where they were going. I realized that my outgrown or out-of-style clothing is someone else’s luxury.

Aside from my days with the Bushmen and the walk through the market, I enjoyed the myriad of other typical tourist attractions that South Africa, Zambia, and Botswana have to offer. While in South Africa,



Hannah Curtis during her summer trip to Africa

I visited the grand city of Cape Town where I toured outlying districts and enjoyed the mouth-watering seafood. After touring the beautiful country, I flew to Zambia where I spent two nights exploring Victoria Falls and enjoying one-on-one time with the villagers. Next, I flew to Botswana and immersed myself in African culture. Activities including ATV rides through deserts, game drives to conquer the “Big 5”, and elephant rides through the wild sum up my experience in this mesmerizing country. Everywhere I went offered a different view on African culture and not only did my experiences make me appreciate the difference, but also helped me promise myself that I would return in the next couple of years.

Whether it was gaining a refreshing new view on the Kalahari Bushmen’s way of life, or observing the day-to-day routine of the Livingstone citizens, Africa had much to offer to a culture enthusiast like me. My experiences can teach us to live simpler lives and know that whatever happens in the future is out of our control, but as for the present—let us enjoy the ride and live happily because like the Bushmen, all a person needs in life is a supportive community and an enthusiastic spirit to live a thrilling life.

http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/chatter-box/2008/09/stress_and_class.html; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_materialism; <http://www.survivalinternational.org/tribes/bushmen>



Enterovirus D68: An Emerging Public Health Threat

The spread of the deadly Enterovirus D68 across the United States continues to instill fear in the American public

WIKIMEDIA

BY EMMA PALMER

Eli Waller was tucked into bed the night of Wednesday, September 24 as if nothing was out of the ordinary. No one would have guessed that the four-year-old child would never wake up the next morning. That night, Waller became the first confirmed fatality of a rare but--until now--seemingly harmless virus known as Enterovirus D68. Enterovirus D68 was discovered in the 1960s, originally exposing itself as a mild respiratory illness or common cold. Eli's death as a result of the virus was completely unprecedented. As more severe symptoms and fatalities are now appearing, apparently related to Enterovirus D68, we must now recognize the virus as a serious threat.

Over the past month, enterovirus D68 cases have risen to 538 in over 40 states across the US. Although is the right time for the enterovirus to be appearing, the number of cases is much greater than past years. The rapid rate at which the virus is spreading throughout the United States is spurring a legitimate concern. Like a cold, the virus is spread from person to person through interactions such as sneezing and coughing. However, Abby Phillips of the Washington Post explains, "Because there isn't much known about this virus,

it is possible that Enterovirus 68 is more contagious than it was believed to be". It is this unpredictability and lack of information surrounding Enterovirus D68 that increases its threat. Additionally Rafal Tokarz, a scientist at Columbia University's Center for Infection and Immunity who has studied the spread of Enterovirus 68 elaborates, "Since it was discovered in the 1960s, the virus has evolved, making it likely that how it is spread has also changed". Tokarz even suggests that this particular strain of enterovirus has been mutated as he states, "We speculate that this virus in the past 10 to 15 years has sort of evolved into different sub types allowing it to become more prevalent worldwide. Maybe it has mutated into something that is more easily transmissible, I don't know if that is the case but it's certainly possible." Whether a mutation of the virus is apparent, the newfound complications of the virus support the idea of a change in viral structure.

The name enterovirus is normally attributed to the common summer cold; however, this particular strain of D68 is behaving abnormally with unexpected severe symptoms. The virus is mainly targeting children between the ages of 6 months to 16 years with a significant link to children with asthma or other respiratory problems. Symptoms of the virus often begin as signs

of a cold, but can escalate to respiratory complications that result in hospitalization. Anahad O'Connor of the New York Times explains," parents should be on the lookout for children with difficulty breathing, chest pain, wheezing or blue lips. Those are signs that the child requires immediate medical care". The alarm created by the disease is mainly attributed to the fact that symptoms of the virus transform from mild to serious rapidly resulting in the rushed hospitalization of many children.

While many of these symptoms such as respiratory complications are treatable, recent uncharacteristic developments of virus have left doctors searching for solutions. A potential link between Enterovirus D68 and an unidentified neurological illness has been revealed in Colorado, Boston, and Michigan. As Greg Bothelo reports, "Doctors in Colorado spotted it first – a group of 10 children hospitalized with limb weakness, cranial nerve dysfunction and abnormalities in their spinal gray matter." Out of the 10 children in Colorado, four have tested positive for enterovirus D68. Dr. Larry Wolk, the chief medical officer and executive director for Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment explains, "It is a spectrum of arm or leg weakness that can be as mild weakness or as severe



JAMES GATHANY/CDC

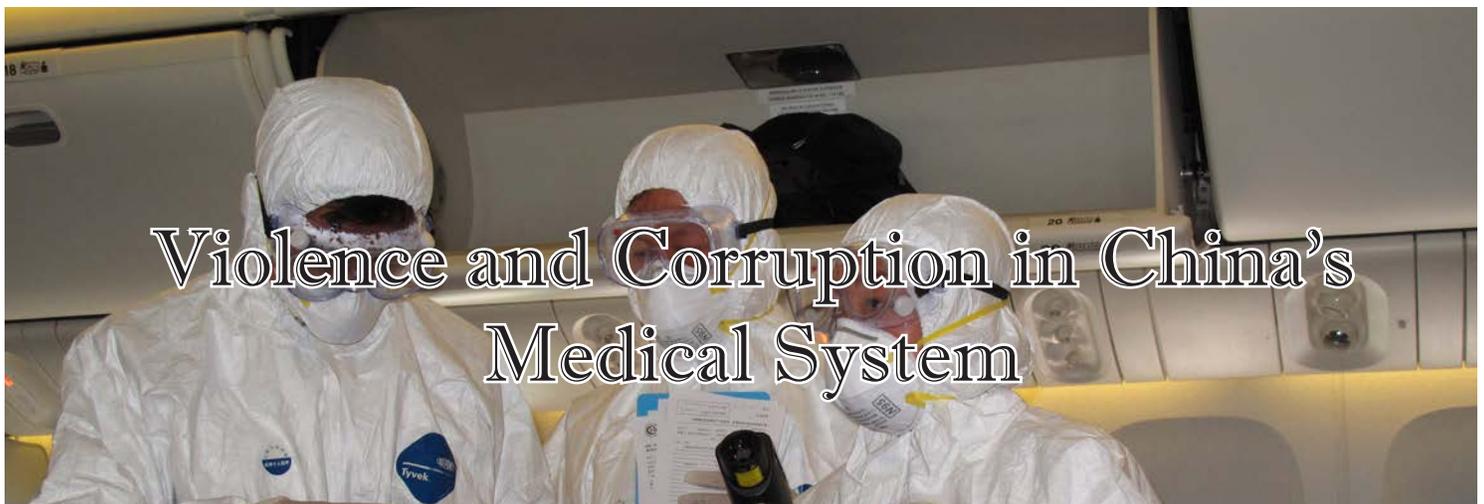
as paralysis. What ties them all together though are findings of spots or lesions in the grey matter of the spinal cord on MRI scans.” Even though enterovirus is behaving similarly to Polio, the Colorado patients tested negative for both Polio and West Nile Virus, which would cause similar infections in the spinal chord. Unfortunately, the

connection between Enterovirus D68 and these neurological complications is not limited to Colorado. Four cases of similar muscle problems were reported to be affecting four people in Boston and one in Michigan. All these patients began experiencing respiratory problems that led to varying degrees of muscle complications.

This new possible side of the disease is leaving doctors more determined to find out why Enterovirus D68 is having such a serious impact on the United States.

As more severe symptoms and fatalities appear related to Enterovirus D68, it is important to recognize the illness as a grave potential danger. As this polio-like virus spreads throughout the United States, doctors are urgently searching for connections and a cure. The unexpected death of Eli Waller has had a drastic effect on the specter of this mysterious disease and its sporadic symptoms. Until doctors can be certain of the causes and effects of enterovirus D68, it will remain a legitimate threat to the nation.

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/08/health/enterovirus-ev-d68-explainer/index.html>; <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2014/09/29/enterovirus-68-probed-in-paralysis-cases-in-colorado-kids/>; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2014/09/08/what-is-enterovirus-68-the-mysterious-illness-that-is-sickening-hundreds-of-children/>; http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/10/02/enterovirus-68-what-you-need-to-know/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0; <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/cdc-investigates-limb-paralysis-children-enterovirus-68-outbreak/story?id=25804998>; <http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/04/health/new-jersey-enterovirus-68-death/>



SIMOURD/FLICKR

The rising trend of attacks against medical professionals in China threatens the health of both the Chinese people and their economy

By SIYU CAO

Violence against medical personnel in China has occurred multiple times over the last few years. It rose about 23% each year between 2002 and 2012 according to a survey by the China Hospital Management Association. Patients who felt they had received unsatisfactory treatment have

attacked their doctors and even killed them. A well-known incident that occurred in Harbin, China in 2012 involved a seventeen-year-old boy, Li Mengnan, from Inner Mongolia who had an inflammation of the spine. In March of 2012, Li Mengnan visited the First Affiliated Hospital of Harbin Medical University for the sixth time in two years. Li had a long-term type of arthritis in the spine called

ankylosing spondylitis, and his illness was worsening. When he arrived with paperwork from a clinic, the doctors at the hospital told him that they couldn't treat his spinal problem due to his history of tuberculosis. Seeing that his only choice was to return to Mongolia, Li Mengnan walked back to the hotel where he and his grandfather were staying in. While his grandfather lay down

“China’s health care system has become corrupt—doctors recommend unnecessary and expensive tests to their patients and drug companies give cash to health workers who, in exchange, use their products in the hospitals.”

to take a nap, Li Mengnan went to a nearby store to buy a knife. He then returned to the hospital with the knife, took the elevator up to the rheumatology department, saw a doctor sitting at a computer, and stabbed the knife into the doctor’s neck. Other hospital workers quickly rushed over and Li attacked them too. He also attempted to kill himself, but failed and fled from the scene. The doctor whom Li had attacked was pronounced dead and Li was later sentenced to life in prison. During the trial, Li’s lawyers stated that Li was the actual victim and “the hospital’s negligence, over prescription, and terrible quality of service are the main reasons this

tragedy occurred.”

Many people felt sympathy for Li Mengnan and also viewed him as the victim of yet another unfortunate incident caused by a Chinese hospital. The father of the doctor who was killed by Li also blamed the health-care system for his son’s death. A popular newspaper in China asked readers to rate their reaction to the murder by choosing the smiley face, sad face, or angry face; about 65% of them answered with a smiley face.

Some Chinese civilians who are dissatisfied with a hospital’s treatment will actually stage protests. Some of them even hire professional protesters and pay them each day they protest. China’s medical system first started to fall apart when Deng Xiaoping came into power. He boosted the economy by improving manufacturing and real estate but, this unfortunately ruined the medical care system. The government was no longer responsible for providing health care for the public and public hospitals were forced to deal with their financing by themselves. Doctors started to take bribes because they received a low income; they also performed useless tests for patients since the government paid them for each service, regardless of its effective necessity for the patient. In the old system, doctors from educated cities travelled to rural areas to treat the local people. Under Xiaoping’s system, poor, sick people had to travel to the big cities to find the best treatment; consequently, these urban hospitals became burdened with the large amount of people. Chinese doctors overworked themselves then, and they still do today. The record number of patients seen in a day is three hundred and fourteen. A doctor working at the Shanghai Children’s Hospital worked for ten hours straight and spent two

minutes helping each patient. This reveals how disorganized China’s health and medical system is—doctors only care about money and on average, only spend ten minutes with each patient.

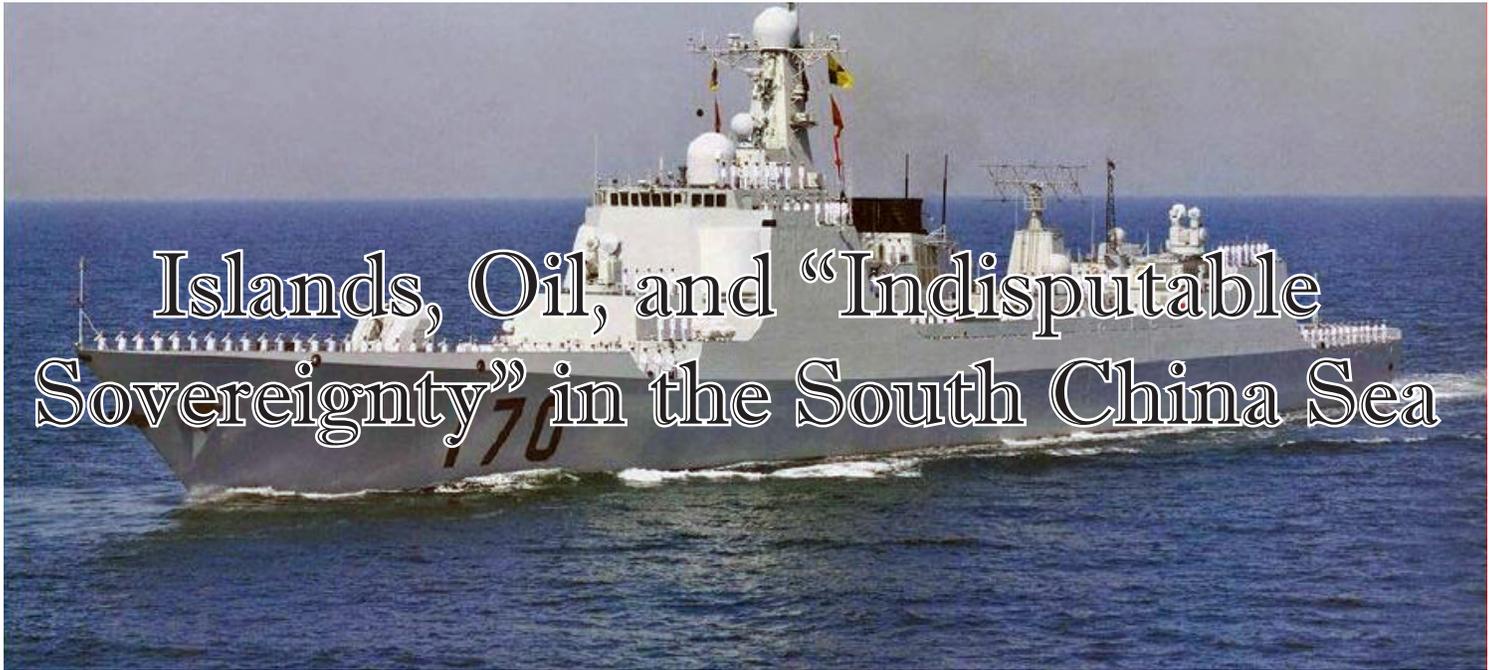
China’s healthcare system has become corrupt—doctors recommend unnecessary and expensive tests to their patients and drug companies give cash to health workers who, in exchange, use their products in the hospitals. Just this summer, GlaxoSmithKline, a well-known UK pharmaceutical giant, was accused of overcharging for its drugs and also for bribery. The company’s staffs in China were detained and have been accused of spending 3 billion yuan (448 million dollars) on bribing government officials, medical staff, and foundations to prescribe their drugs at high prices.

Although China’s economy and exports are doing well, its medical system is failing. People are spending more and more money on medical care and this will eventually ruin China’s economy. China’s healthcare reform plan was launched in 2009 and the government had planned to invest 124 billion dollars. About four years later, the government has actually spent more than 370 billion dollars and according to a survey, about 81% of the respondents have problems with accessing health coverage. 95% said that medical treatments were expensive and 87% of them said that the costs were higher than they were before the reform. Since hospitals are authorized to place a 15% mark-up on the price of medicines, doctors prescribe many expensive drugs. Patients whose treatments are more expensive are often turned away by hospitals because the more expensive the treatment, the more money is drawn from the staff’s wages. China’s government needs to quickly find a solution because the it is evident that its reform plan is not working out very well.



GOULAO/FlickR

http://www.forbes.com/fdc/welcome_mjx.shtml; <http://english.people.com.cn/90778/8344542.html>; http://www.china.org.cn/china/2012-03/28/content_25001535.htm; <http://english.people.com.cn/102775/207834/index.html>; <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/08/25/under-the-knife>



UNITES STATES NAVAL INSTITUTE NEWS BLOG/WIKIMEDIA

Islands, Oil, and “Indisputable Sovereignty” in the South China Sea

Territorial disputes in the waters off Southeast Asia are destabilizing the region as China pursues natural resources and international validation of its military power

BY CHARLIE ZHU

In the past 12 months, relations between China and several other Southeastern Asian countries have deteriorated at an alarming pace. With nations such as Vietnam, the Philippines, and Malaysia harboring major disputes with China over territory in the South China Sea, recent military skirmishes and debate over construction rights have caused major diplomatic tension between the Southeast Asian nations. The potential of lucrative offshore oil deposits and fisheries in the area have fueled tensions on both sides, with China recently asserting its dominance in the Spratly Islands and the Paracel Islands. Although these waters have been contested for decades, the current economic conditions in China may play a role in the aggressive diplomatic strategies currently used.

The latest chapter in the ongoing saga of the South China Sea unfolded in May 2014, where a confrontation sparked a skirmish between Vietnamese military vessels and Chinese ships building an oil rig in contested waters. Vietnamese authorities in a news conference claimed “Chinese ships, with air support, sought to intimidate Vietnamese vessels,” also accusing the Chinese of “intentionally [ramming] two Vietnamese Sea Guard vessels.” Chinese officials say that the reverse is also true, that Vietnamese ships rammed Chinese ships as well. The incident occurred 120 nautical miles off the coast of Vietnam, near the Paracel Islands, within the “nine-dash-line” that China lays claim to in the South China Sea. In 1974, the confrontation escalated between the two nations so much that it resulted in a naval battle that cost the lives of nearly 70 Vietnamese navy sailors. The seabed underneath the disputed territories is widely thought to be rich in natural gas and petroleum reserves, underlining the Chinese economic motive for the marked aggression.

From a diplomatic perspective, Beijing continues to strengthen its hold on the area. The origins of the nine-dash-line can be traced

to World War II, where the Japanese surrender led to claims on the Spratly and Paracel islands by the Republic of China. Current international law, however, has no clause for the rights of disputed areas, and countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines have faulted China’s claims as illegal and groundless in UN regulation. Nevertheless, Chinese officials still make a fervent diplomatic claim to the waters. Policymakers in Beijing raised more eyebrows in the summer of 2014 by stationing patrol ships and a military garrison on Yongxing Island in the South China Sea. In the view of neighboring South Asian countries, China’s expansion into these areas come as a clear warning signal: at the expense of others, China will aim to “exercise sovereignty over all land features inside the South China Sea,” according to a Chinese politician quoted by the New York Times.

Although territorial disputes in the South China Sea are not a unique occurrence, the current economic situation in China has perhaps urged Chinese action further along. For years, China’s booming population and economy have built up an extreme reliance on coal: according to US Global Investors, 71% of China’s energy consumption is made up of coal, compared to a mere 20% of the U.S. This large coal consumption has heavily polluted China, and domestic shale fracking ventures are expensive and non-cost effective. The long-term solution, then, is petroleum and oil, exactly what the resource-rich South China Sea provides. A unique need for a new source of resources may well play a role in China’s aggressive decisions to claim the oil-rich seabed.

Events in the Spratly islands near the Philippines nearly mirror Chinese tensions with Vietnam. In April 2014, Philippine officials protested that China was building artificial islands in the Spratly Islands, another area of hot contention. Ships have been hauling sand and construction supplies to the islands for the past several months. The Philippines claim the atoll for themselves, though Chinese construction may be a hindrance to these claims. By building and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26...

Chinese Education through Pingry Eyes

ENOCH LAI/WIKIMEDIA

Sanford Ren's firsthand experience of the Chinese education system prompts juxtaposition with Pingry's pedagogy

BY SANFORD REN

In a musty classroom, row after row of students sit in a uniformed fashion, backs hunched, faces squinted, writing whatever assignment out of thousands that was to be done for that day. The teacher commands the class in an eerie fashion, silencing those daring to make a tiny sound with a menacing stare. She sits under a row of words that hang before the class every day that says “Study hard, and you’ll become successful”, a representative example of China’s student propaganda. The bells rings--there is no talking, students file like zombies out of the classroom, only talking quietly in the dusty hallways. Teachers patrol the corridors like hawks, scolding those who don’t “walk” or sending those with “unstylish” hair to detention. The rules are so obscure that if they were ever applied to Pingry students, it’s conceivable that 99% of us would get detentions just for having “unstylish” hair. The first time I got a hair detention, I laughed in the teacher’s face, and the consequences were pretty imaginable.

Living under a communist government, life was at once controlled and free. China blocked Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, and many other websites, even Google sometimes. The main reason for this is because these websites refused to block material that showcased China in a bad light (unlike Bing). Since I came from America, I knew these things weren’t the most reliable

sources, but some of my classmates were rather hopeless. They believed whatever was fed to them by the state-run media. Once in school I created a club that tried to teach people how to think freely without the influence of the government and to not be afraid to criticize it. It went on for a few weeks, but once, our department head did a little in depth research about us, and we all got... detention! Our teacher lectured us on how we should be thankful for how much the government had did for us, which had some good points but was still sketchy.

One of the biggest differences between China and the United States is the style of teaching. For example, in history classes here, we usually analyze important people and how and what influenced them to carry out specific actions in the larger context of the big picture. But in China, the only thing that comes up on a test is “dates”. Who did what when is the only thing you’ll find on a Chinese history test. The general education board is heavily criticized on how it makes tests so bland. In math, most of the questions only involve taking a certain theory and inserting it into one question. To compensate for the fairly easy questions, the board ends up using “creative” ways to insert multiple theories into one question, paying the way for some insanely hard questions. This type of math is so complicated that math professors have trouble doing the 6th grade version of it. Another bureaucratic stupidity are the three major exams required

to graduate from lower, middle, and high school. The whole country takes the same test at the same date, same time. These tests are then scored to determine the academic level of each student, who would be sent into schools based on their own academic level. On paper, it looks pretty solid, but when examined more closely, failure means that a student’s education is basically over. Overall performance is never taken into account – fail one test, hope for better luck next life. Imagine taking nothing but Math, English, Physics, and Chemistry for 8 hours a day, then running for an additional hour to “improve” physical health in the months before the tests. At the end of June, suicidal rates jump massively around China, and news stations start reporting on people collapsing from stress all around. Strangely, some government officials still wonder why. This short-sightedness is common in officials, who never look to themselves as problems.

China’s education system still has a long way to go before it reaches its full potential. There are signs that the nation’s leadership realizes the need for reform, which is essential in order to produce a new generation of citizens able to cope with the “information economy” and rapid technological change. So far the new ideas have not reached the school I attended, but given the dramatic changes that have occurred in other aspects of Chinese society, there is definitely hope.



China: Impressions of a Foreigner

BJOERN KRIEWALD/WIKIMEDIA

Stephanie McMorran's visit to China on the Pingry summer language trip inspired her to write about the rich Chinese history, China's relationship with the United States, and how Chinese culture affects her own life

BY STEPHANIE MCMORRAN

I have often debated my position on China as it has always been a big part of my family. Although I am not Chinese, every time my grandfather visited us, he would share his love and fascination for the Far East with me. Giving me little jade necklaces with zodiac symbols on them, teaching me how to use chopsticks, and buying me books to help write Chinese characters cultivated a deep appreciation of China within me. As I have already been taking Chinese for the past three years, I was able to join 12 other people to travel to China! We visited the two largest cities: Beijing and Shanghai, stayed with a host family for a week, and had the opportunity to observe classes at our sister school in Quzhou.

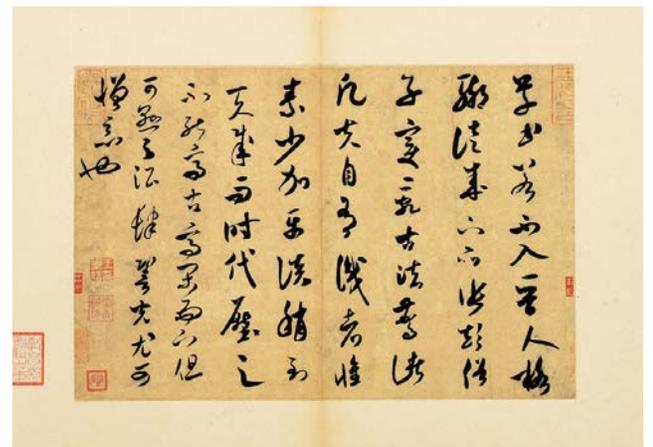
Ever since the communist party was first introduced to China in the late 40s, there have been stories of the horrors and injustices of the government. Recently there has been a lot of controversy surrounding the protests in Hong Kong. From what I observed, however,

the Chinese are definitely not an oppressed people. Communism—or whatever Communism is in China nowadays—looked like it was working pretty well.

The idea of autocracy is derived from Confucianism. The state, in Confucian times, “was regarded as an extension of the family...the emperor and his officials were referred to as parents of the people. Subject owed the same loyalty to their rulers that they owed to senior members of their family.” Likewise, the emperors and officials had to be wise, virtuous and humane men. Although this depends upon whom you ask, there is no doubt that the Chinese people show utmost respect for their rulers and those who are above them in society.

Contrary to what some people might think, the Chinese revere Americans. In Chinese,

“America” literally translates to “beautiful country.” The Chinese adore America to the point where brands like “Forever 21” and “Old Navy” are given huge store signs in major Chinese cities as if they were high fashion stores. For the week the thirteen of us were in the small town, we were treated like local celebrities and asked numerous questions



WIKIMEDIA

“I have to say that we may not be as different as we would like to think we are. Sure, there are the obvious differences of geography, ideology, and civilization, but beside that we are both facing similar dilemmas.”

about our school system and how our country operates—or doesn’t operate—on a daily basis. The Chinese do not see themselves as competitors with the United States. They see the US, the global symbol of Westernization, as an opportunity to be accepted by the international community. Whether you like it or not, our two nations have become symbiotic; in other words, one could not possibly exist without the other. Almost all of the major American countries are either “sending American jobs overseas, or choosing to employ cheap overseas labor.” Not only does the Chinese government adore the United States, but it also pays a good portion of our national debt. China is the holder of \$1.268 trillion dollars as of June 2014, . China wants to pay our debt because the Chinese government wants “to keep the value of the dollar high to make its own currency, the Yuan, relatively cheaper by comparison.” As a result American and other Western companies will keep their factories in China because of the cheap and readily accessible goods.

In my opinion, I have to say that we must focus on how we are similar, while also respecting our differences. Sure there are the obvious differences of geography, ideology and civilization, but beside that we are both facing the same dilemmas. The Chinese complain about government, school and whatever else. Their politics, besides the ideology of course, is also similar in that the government does not always do the most moral thing but rather the thing that has its best interests at heart.

Now I’m not saying China is a perfect country, and I definitely do not agree with their actions during the Tibetan crisis or in Tiananmen Square, but a perfect country does not exist. We must be open to countries that are “different” than the US because as our world becomes more globalized, these interactions will get harder to solve if people are ignorant of other cultures. Instead we must learn to work with different views because it’s those differences in opinion that make the world an interesting place.



WAXBERG/PINGRY OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

(Above): The Pingry language and culture trip to China during June of 2014



Republican Congressional Lawsuit: What It Means For the Republican Party

SPEAKER JOHN BOEHNER/FLICKR

The Republicans' lawsuit against Barack Obama makes many question the role of the Constitution, how our country is becoming more polarized, and how the Republican party will suffer consequences from this decision, either beneficial or detrimental

BY MIRIAM TRICHAS

As House Republicans rally for a \$350k lawsuit against President Obama for contravening the Constitution, now is a fitting time to wonder whether the effort is really worth the money or the hassle. In July 2014 the GOP-led house initiated a high-profile lawsuit charging President Obama with failing to enforce the law, an act that would violate the Constitution. To be sure, Republicans have criticized Obama's actions in the past regarding issues from welfare to immigration. Republicans believe that Obama exceeded his executive authority in making unilateral changes to the Affordable Care Act, which this suit focuses solely on. On Wednesday, July 30, the House approved the lawsuit against Obama. The agreement between the law firm and the House will run until a decision is made by the courts on January 3, 2015. The lawsuit against Obama will waste time and taxpayers' money, while raising money for the Democratic Party, and deteriorating the reputation of the Republican House which is using the lawsuit as a proxy for impeachment.

The House or Senate has never before sued the president of the United States. Immigration and healthcare have become entwined in

an intensifying breach of trust between the Republican House and President Obama. The White House asked the Department of Homeland Security to postpone its suggestions for executive action on immigration, because President Obama conceived that "there's a window for the House to get immigration reform done this summer." Obama proceeded to release a statement declaring the amount of unaccompanied children at the border to be an urgent humanitarian situation. One week later, John Boehner announced his intention to sue Obama over his use of executive actions. This declaration captured the attention of the country Sarah Palin insisted that "it's time to impeach" Obama over his immigration policy. Meanwhile, on July 30, the House approved the lawsuit against Obama, focusing instead on the Affordable Care Act and the decision to wait for one to two years before enforcing the stipulation that employers provide health insurance starting in 2014.

Many have wondered why the House didn't choose to sue the president over immigration policy instead. First, John Boehner has spent the past 18 months calling for inclusive immigration reform in the hope of impressing Latinos. It would be inconsistent for him to suddenly turn around and sue Obama for giving children a break on deportation. Next,

Boehner may have been wagering that the border crisis issue would quiet down before fall, which it did, and that ObamaCare would remain a crucial point in the midterm elections. A lawsuit based on the employer directive would carry more remarkable power than one based on immigration. Moreover, Boehner was playing his strongest hand, which was very important at the time because although the House ended up approving the suit, the stakes of losing were potentially high at the time.

Boehner's lawsuit has, in some respects, backfired, causing Democrats to step up and support Obama. Boehner's plan to pursue a lawsuit against Obama over executive orders appears to have created a windfall for Democrats, who enjoyed their biggest single day of fundraising ever after his announcement. Also, the House Republicans' choice to hire lawyers for \$500 an hour has supplied their opponents with ammunition, as Congressional Correspondent Dana Bash has attacked the move as "a political stunt that wastes America's time and taxpayer dollars". Many politicians are arguing that while taxpayers' money is going towards lawsuits such as this, the minimum wage has been raised to roughly \$10 an hour in many states, which wouldn't be the case if people had more money. Furthermore, the suit



SPEAKER JOHN BOEHNER/FLICKR

has degraded relations between Obama and the Republican Party unnecessarily, impeding effective government action.

The deteriorating reputation of the Republican House has been attributed to the Republicans' using the lawsuit as a proxy for the impeachment of President Obama. Although John Boehner says that the goal

of his lawsuit is not to ultimately impeach Obama, former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin disagrees, saying that "there's only one remedy for a president who commits high crimes and misdemeanors and it's impeachment; it's the I-word". In fact, there are a sizable number of Republicans that voted to impeach the president because, in their minds, suing him

wasn't going far enough. Because of this, the Republican House's reputation has worsened amongst the American people.

The controversy surrounding the Republican Congressional Lawsuit has worsened the reputation of the Republican House whose ultimate goal is to impeach Obama. It has backfired by raising money for the Democratic party, and has already wasted taxpayers' time and money. Many people are confused whether it will even go to court. After authorizing the lawsuit, the House had to set up a legal team, which has to determine when and where to submit the lawsuit. The courts will make a decision on the lawsuit on January 3, 2015. Until then, we must ponder, is it worth the time and energy needed to pursue this lawsuit when the money could be better used towards other debts?

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/house-approves-lawsuit-obama/><http://www.politico.com/story/2014/07/john-boehner-barack-obama-lawsuit-108968.html><http://www.politico.com/story/2014/08/house-lawsuit-cost-110320.html><http://koin.com/2014/07/30/gop-led-house-approves-lawsuit-against-obama/><http://www.nationaljournal.com/congress/house-hires-lawyer-for-obama-lawsuit-20140825>http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/view_from_chicago/2014/07/boehner_s_lawsuit_against_obama_is_a_loser_because_of_american_ideas_about.htmlhttp://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/house-clears-way-for-lawsuit-against-obama/2014/07/30/7436aca6-1809-11e4-9349-84d4a85be981_story.html<http://www.msnbc.com/politics-nation/watch/gops-lawsuit-against-obama-backfires-290084931962>

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inhabiting these islands and construction projects, China could strengthen its claim enough to win international recognition and gain the right to fishing areas and oil reserves within a 200 nautical mile radius of the islands, according to international law.

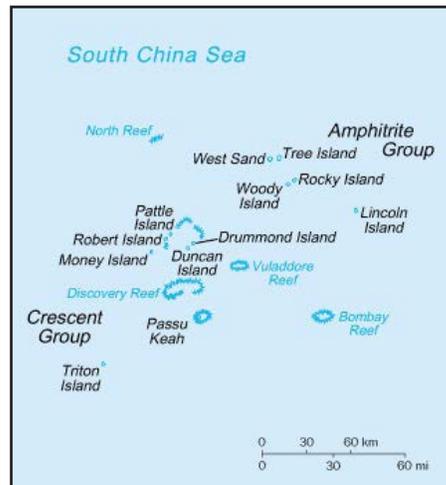
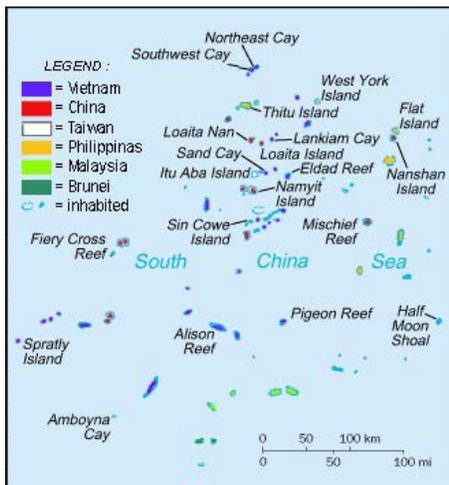
Again, China's need for resources prompts its diplomats to remain steadfast in their claim to the islands. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying states that "China has indisputable sovereignty" over the area. This unwillingness to compromise has driven many to protest, as China seems to be obstinate on what seems to be unreasonable claims. For many countries including the United States, it is imperative that China maintains peaceful diplomatic relations with its neighbors. Over the past decade, China's economic growth has been unrivaled, and China and other Far East countries like Japan have become major players in global trade. Therefore, it would be in the global interest to avoid diplomatic disagreements escalating into military conflict. Any unrest over resources in the South China Sea could have implications in Chinese manufacturing, for example, which plays a large role in the U.S. economy.

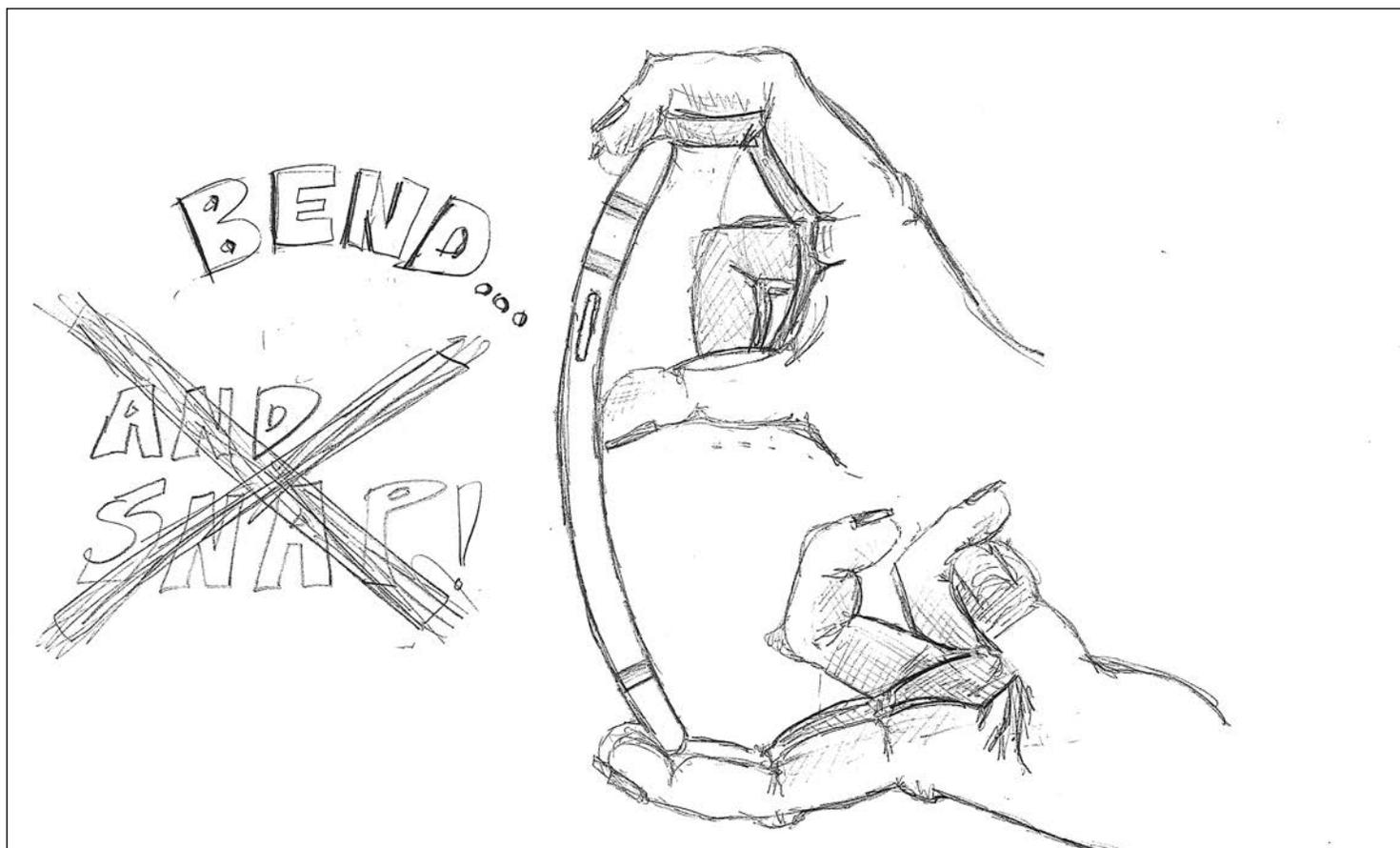
China, then, must collectively take steps with Vietnam and the Philippines to ensure a diplomatic agreement.

http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Opinion+Tensions+rising+East+Asia/9848060/story.html?__federated=1; <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/25/world/asia/claims-south-china-sea.html?module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3As%2C%7B%22%22%3A%22RI%3A15%22%7D>; <http://www.usfunds.com/investor-library/frank-talk/coal-use-in-china-shineslight-on-growth/#.VDCV5b5N3zI>; <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/12/business/international/china-takes-on-big-risks-in-its-push-for-shale-gas>; <http://www.philstar.com/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/11/1367888/china-bares-first-book-9-dash-line>; <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/17/world/asia/spratly-archipelago-china-trying-to-bolster-its-claims-plants-islands-in-disputed-waters.html>; <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/12/world/asia/beijing-reasserts-its-claims-in-south-china-sea>; <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2012/08/20120803134096.html?distid=ucs%axzz23AvFOC11>; <http://www.dw.de/hanoi-chinese-ships-attack-vietnamese-boats-in-china-sea/a-17618246>

(Below Left): A map of territorial claims in the Spratly Islands. (Below Right): The Paracel Islands, seized by China from Vietnam in 1974





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RUTHIE ADVOKAT '15

convinced. Popular tech website Wired cites that the Watch “brings too much to a screen that’s too little”. This consumer indecision is evident in the company’s volatile stock numbers. Over the thirty-day period between the start of the first quarter of the 2015 fiscal year, the company’s stock price curve has changed inflection 17 times. On the other hand, some tech analysts believe that with more iterations and updates, the Watch—if it catches on, and history indicates that it won’t—could eat away at iPhone sales. The crossover the iPhone and the Apple Watch is too big to ignore. As Chunka Mui of Forbes indicates, “it is too early to dismiss the Apple Watch’s potential to transcend the iPhone”.

Apple is doing its best to remain relevant and stay on the technology forefront, and for now, the company appears to be safe. With more than 1 in 4 adults in America owning an iPhone, it’s a stretch to think Apple will be disappearing anytime soon. But if the company hopes to maintain its previous financial success, it needs to look to expand its markets into Europe, South America, and Asia. If Apple can overturn the Samsung monopoly in Asia, the company will surely be here to stay for years to come. However, if Apple occupies itself with its myriad patent

feuds with rival companies, it might be time to take the advice of Barron’s magazine and invest in Samsung Electronics.

<http://techcrunch.com/2014/10/12/the-iphone-6-plus-wins-the-longer-race/>; <https://www.google.com/webhp?tab=ww&authuser=0&ei=szM8VJv-HPCQsQTxqYCIBg&ved=0CAcQ1S4#authuser=0&q=apple+stock+numbers&spell=1>; <https://www.apple.com/watch/overview/>; [\[apple-watches-achilles-heel-is-the-iphone/\]\(http://apple-watches-achilles-heel-is-the-iphone/\); <http://fortune.com/2014/01/16/npd-better-than-1-in-4-adult-americans-now-own-an-iphone/>; \[http://online.barrons.com/articles/samsung-why-the-stock-could-jump-50-1413005581?tesla=y&mod=BOL_hp_highlight_\]\(http://online.barrons.com/articles/samsung-why-the-stock-could-jump-50-1413005581?tesla=y&mod=BOL_hp_highlight_\); <http://www.trust-edreviews.com/opinions/iphone-6-vs-galaxy-s5>](http://www.forbes.com/sites/chunkamui/2014/10/13/the-</p>
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(Above) Apple CEO Tim Cook

IHNATKO/FICKR



Apple's Newest Products: iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus

DAMBRANS/FLICKR

The newest product from Apple leaves many wondering why the iPhone keeps becoming bigger and bigger; how does this product seem in the market and what does it mean for the future of technology?

BY GAURAV GUPTA

In an environment like Pingry, where some teachers and most students own smartphones, the release of the iPhone 6 and iPhone 6+ is a big deal. For Apple fans, it marks a drastic leap forward from the technology in the iPhone 5s, whereas for Android fans, the 6 and 6+ are merely marketing hype. It seems that with every model year, smartphones are becoming bigger and bigger. At 5.5 inches, the iPhone 6+ screen overshadows that of the smaller iPhone 6 (at 4.7 inches) and dwarfs the iPhone 5s's mere 4-inch display. Yet the increased screen size better not be the 6 and 6+'s claim to fame, because the close competitor Samsung Galaxy S5's screen size is nothing to sneeze at, either (5.1 inches). And while there are other notable features that Apple is bringing to the table with its duo of new phones, the jury is still out on whether or not the tech conglomerate still represents the future of technology, as it once did.

Apple has taken its time to ensure that the launch of the 6 and 6+ simultaneously give buyers the chance to explore their Apple options. From an appearance standpoint, the iPhone 6 and 6+ differ fairly significantly.

The iPhone 6+ screen larger and the phone is thicker than its smaller counterpart, and the functionality of this larger screen rivals that of a tablet. Additionally, the iPhone 6+ camera has been improved drastically over the 5s and even the 6, allowing users to take even-more accurate photos. However, from a performance standpoint, the two phones are virtually indiscernible. Both phones come standard with the new iOS 8 operating system, and both have the new A8 64-bit processor. And both phones have similar storage capacities. The only real performance difference is battery life, where the increased size of the 6+ allows for a bigger and more efficient battery. Anecdotally speaking, the battery life of the iPhone has always been a problem, so this was a must-fix in order to keep up with competitors Samsung and Nokia.

Apple added "Apple Pay" to the 6 and 6+, a wallet-like feature that allows you to use the phone as a credit card at participating retailers (the full list can be found at www.apple.com). While Apple fans were expecting the feature to be available in the 5S, the arrival of a well-thought-out near field communication (NFC) technology—the technology that

enables the Apple Pay feature—has satisfied buyers.

Apple is doing all that it can to be innovative. Where other companies, like Google, are expanding their technology to eyewear and fitness bands, Apple has only just announced its first watch. Marketed as being both traditional and cutting-edge simultaneously, Apple is expanding its horizons to include a smaller, wearable version of the iPhone. Marketed as Apple's "most personal device yet", the Apple Watch brings email, messaging, and even calling to your wrist. They've even implemented NFC technology into the Watch. Apple has integrated an activity monitor to help users keep track of their daily movements. Apple is also emphasizing the customization feature of the Watch. With hundreds of different watch straps to choose from, Apple is hoping that the freedom of style and expression will help increase sales.

However, not everyone is lauding the wearable technology. The Watch is "the first major new product developed under Tim Cook and Jony Ive outside of Steve Jobs' shadow". While Apple is pitching the Watch as a must-have companion to the iPhone, the majority of consumers have yet to be

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