

One Trump Is Worse Than the Other

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Editorials

[Remember, One Trump Is Worse Than The Other](#)

If we shout, “Holy Mackerel!” every time Trump says or does something objectionable, the public will soon ignore all such outcries. Above all, we need to differentiate between Trump the ultra-conservative and Trump the Democracy-Wrecker. To suggest that there is a world of difference between, on the one hand, gutting regulations, cutting taxes for the rich and undermining Obamacare, and on the other hand, voter suppression, chilling free speech, misinforming the public, avoiding press scrutiny, and accepting bribes from foreign governments — is not splitting hairs.

Published in *The Huffington Post*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

[Why Trump Should Support a Kurdish State](#)

In 2013 the PKK agreed to a truce with the Turkish government, but in July 2015, after Turkey bombed Kurdish targets in Iraq and Syria, the PKK withdrew and announced a new drive against the government. The new U.S. administration would do well to urge the Turks to grant its Kurds autonomy in return for a commitment by the PKK to cease all terrorist acts.

Published in *The National Interest*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

[Commentary: Trump Travel Ban On Syrians Should Exempt Kids Under 10](#)

Here's a test as to whether the Trump administration's travel ban on refugees from seven predominantly Muslim countries is truly driven by security concerns or reflects a prejudice. As I see it, the Trump ban on travel and immigration to the U.S., which is permanent for Syrians, should exempt children 10 years of age or younger. Nearly half of Syrian refugees already resettled in the U.S. are children under 14.

Published on *NPR*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

[Tillerson, Trump and the South China Sea](#)

The reactions to statements by Secretary of State Nominee Rex Tillerson and the White House, that the U.S. would prevent China from accessing its own artificial islands in the South China Sea, show the difficulties foreign leaders and commentators have had in adjusting to the Trump administration. The reactions include an op-ed in the state-run China Daily saying: "Such remarks are not worth taking seriously because they are a mish-mash of naivety, shortsightedness, worn-out prejudices, and unrealistic political fantasies. Should he act on them in the real world, it would be disastrous." The more hawkish Global Times warned "Tillerson had better bone up on nuclear power strategies if he wants to force a big nuclear power to withdraw from its own territories"

Published in *The Diplomat*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

[Just Say No to Middle East Bailouts](#)

Advocates of a Marshall Plan for the Middle East and other parts of the world, such as former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and former British prime minister Tony Blair, often point to the great success the United States had with nation building in Germany and Japan after World War II as evidence of what can be achieved. (Actually, Japan was not covered by the Marshall Plan, but it received similar assistance.)

Even a cursory examination of the sociological conditions in those two countries reveals that none of the conditions that allowed the Marshall Plan to succeed back then exists in

the majority of the countries that Kerry called upon the Trump administration to build up.

Published in *The National Interest*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

Out with Regime Change

Conflating "the responsibility to protect" with regime change is, in effect, one reason the tragic civil war in Syria is continuing.

Published in *The Economist*; [click here](#) for the full text.

Why Regulating AI is a Mistake (with Oren Etzioni)

In the next four years we will see an explosion of AI technology that further delivers on the promise of driverless cars, intelligent robots, and other societal and job-impacting advancements. The conversation needed is how to, or more precisely, how not to regulate AI.

Published in *Forbes*; [click here](#) to read the full article.

Adding Census Categories Won't Unite a Divided America

One of the parting acts of the Obama White House is to leave for the generations to come is a new American race: Middle Eastern and North African Americans, or MENAs for short. By a stroke of pen, or more precisely a change in census categories, the White House is about to declare that some ten million Americans, who until now were considered white, are a distinct nonwhite category, akin to African Americans, Latinos and Asian Americans. It is an odd move, given that one of the few subjects on which both President-elect Trump and Secretary Hillary Clinton agreed is that we need less divisiveness and more cohesion.

Published in *The National Interest*; [click here](#) to read the full article.



Saying goodbye in the Oval Office, with family

Academic Articles

The China Options

This article analyzes the various assumptions of the underlying policies that have been suggested as possible responses by the U.S. and its allies to the rise of China. These are examined here on the basis of insights provided by international theory, as well as empirical evidence. The article first examines the thesis that the best approach for dealing with China's rise is to integrate it into the existing liberal, rule-based, international order (Section I). The article next studies strategies that are based on U.S. application of power to balance or contain China or, alternatively, to afford it increased regional control (Section II). The article then turns to examine the preconditions for conflict resolution: are the differences between the core interests of the U.S. and China considerable and substantive—or rather limited? (Section III). The article then discusses the role of tension reduction and of salience-based bargaining in coping with interest differentials between the two powers and their allies (Section IV). The article closes by highlighting the distinctions that arise in assessing various American approaches to the rise of China if one focuses on attaining a stable, peaceful world or on also gaining a just world order.

Check SSRN on Monday for the full text of this article.

[Social Justice in the Post-Affluent Society](#)

The article spells out the reasons and provides evidence in support of the hypothesis that if the culture of a society shifts from one that extols affluence to one that extols communitarian pursuits—major gains for social justice will become much more probable. An obvious reason to expect that this hypothesis will hold true is that the more members of

a particular social grouping view each other as members of the same community—the more they are likely to be willing to support reallocations of wealth that reduce inequality in that society. However, there are much deeper and stronger links between a communitarian culture and social justice.

Published in *Theory in Action*; [click here](#) for the full text.

Book Review

[Academic Activism: No Good Deed Goes Unpunished](#)

A review of *The Public Professor* by M.V. Lee Badgett, NYU Press, 2016

Professor Badgett begins in Chapter 1 with a call to academics to reach beyond their normal circles and to engage in public debates. She recognizes that this is a challenge for professors throughout their career cycle: recent PhDs who are eager to change the world, but who are facing the pressure to publish or perish; and, senior colleagues who have tremendous knowledge and insight, but who do not know how to connect to policy debates. She offers several suggestions, ranging from teaming up with community organizations, to designing a research project, to writing a letter to heads of agencies to show how one's recent research might be of interest to their work.

Published in *Solutions*; [click here](#) for the full review.

"Bonds of Community, Points of Individualism: Conversation with Amitai Etzioni"

[Click here](#) to read *The Sociologist's* December 2016 interview with Amitai Etzioni.

I Read

In [The New Yorker](#), George Packer discusses Obama's farewell speech, noting that Obama "quoted from Washington's address, but not his most obviously relevant passage, on the danger of partisan demagoguery: 'It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, fomenting occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions.'" Packer added that "[i]f the President had quoted these words, he would have come close to naming the greatest threat to American democracy: his successor."

Kai Shultz writes in [The New York Times](#) of Bhutan's Gross National Happiness indicator and its use to detect problems in society. For related work, see [Happiness is the Wrong Metric](#), available on SSRN.

Announcement

Amitai Etzioni was recently appointed as a member of the Embedding Values into Autonomous Intelligent Systems Committee, part of the [IEEE's Global Initiative for Ethical Considerations in Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems](#).

New Videos!

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