

Early Warning
April 2020

FEATURED STORIES

2020 Doolittle Dinner



On March 5th, 2020, [SSP hosted this year's General James Doolittle Award Dinner](#) at the Royal Sonesta Hotel. Celebrating the legacy of US Air Force General James “Jimmy” Doolittle, the Dinner features a guest speaker for a discussion of US military policy and international security issues. This year’s guest was [Admiral James A. Winnefeld Jr.](#), who served as the 9th Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, among many other roles in the US military, as well as nonprofit and private sectors. Following dinner in the Sonesta’s Riverfront Room and an introduction by SSP Director and Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science, Taylor Fravel, Admiral Winnefeld delivered remarks on a range of issues related to US military doctrine, grand strategy, and defense policy. A vibrant Q&A session followed, in which members of the MIT community had the opportunity to ask the Admiral questions touching on several themes, including the challenges faced by the US Navy and Air Force in the 21st century, as well as the material and institutional costs associated with meeting such challenges.

2020 Independent Activities Period at SSP



The Independent Activities Period (IAP) is a short term at MIT in January when members of the MIT community have the chance between Fall and Spring Semesters to pursue small independent projects. Students and educators have greater freedom to pursue their own educational interests and are encouraged to innovate in their approaches to learning and teaching. SSP hosted several events for IAP 2020, including a series of talks organized by the SSP Military Fellows. These included “[The Maritime Fight: Redefining the Navy and Marine Corps Fighting Partnership](#)”, delivered on January 28th by US Navy Commander Evan Wright and US Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Riggs, as well as “[The Age of the F-35 and Autonomy on the Modern Battlefield](#)”, presented by US Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Tucker Hamilton on January 29th. Both presentations were enlightening in the detailed, expert’s view they gave attendees, and in a shift from typical SSP seminars during the semester, allowed the audience to learn about US military policy directly from its practitioners.

The SSP Wednesday Seminars are now online



In response to the ongoing circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of MIT's physical campus, [SSP has now moved its regular Wednesday Seminar online](#). Hosting the Seminar as a Zoom meeting accessible to the public will allow SSP to continue with its tradition of engaging the community with relevant, weekly discussions of international security issues with renowned experts. The first online seminar speakers were Dr. Annette Idler on April 1st, and Prof. Charles Glaser on the 15th. SSP has also hosted roundtables with SSP Faculty, including a discussion on April 22nd of the effects of the pandemic on international affairs. Since moving online, the audience of the seminars has grown to nearly 150 attendees.

For more updates about SSP's Alumni and their recent activities, please see our [Alumni Profile page on the SSP website](#). Our featured alumna/alumnus for this issue is [Marika Landau-Wells](#), Assistant Professor in the Travers Department of Political Science at UC Berkeley.

WHERE WE SPOKE

Caitlin Talmadge, alum '11

Speaking engagements included presentation at Yale's MacMillan International Relations Workshop, on paper, "The Emerging Nuclear Era", as well as two appearances on CNN to discuss the US' killing of Qasem Soleimani and a quote in The Economist on a study of US-China nuclear competition

Emma Campbell-Mohn, graduate student

"Blood and Treasure: The Ethics of Using Economic Coercion instead of Military Conflict," panel for "New Just War or just new wars? Assessing the strategic, legal and ethical consequences of the changing character of war" at Université Paris 2 Panthéon Assas, January 27, 2020.

Alan J. Kuperman, alum '02

"[Texas Lawmakers, Foreign Policy Expert React to Iranian General's Death](#)," Spectrum TV, January 3, 2020

"Navy LEU Fuel R&D," Congressional Staff Briefing on Keeping Nuclear Bomb Material from Terrorists and Rogue States, U.S. Senate, February 6, 2020.

Brendan Green, alum '11

Presented on his new book, *The Revolution that Failed: Nuclear Competition, Arms Control, and the Cold War* at the University of Virginia's Miller Center and at SSP's own Wednesday Seminar, both in early March 2020.

Dave Pendall, Army Fellow '12-'13

January 20th-22nd, 2020 - [London- Defence Geospatial Intelligence \(DGI\) Conference](#), Panel Chair and Panel Moderator

Kevin Benson, Army Fellow '01-'02

In January 2020, conducted a two-day seminar on critical thinking for a select group of US Army, Air Force and Marine Corps officers at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

In February 2020, presented a one-day seminar on Army division, corps and field army operations, based on his experiences as an Army planner, for the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate of the US Army Combined Arms Center, also at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Taylor Fravel, faculty and Security Studies Program Director

“Active Defense: China’s Military Strategy Since 1949,” Stanford University, January 2020

Gregory Koblentz, alum ’04

“The Use of Chemical Weapons in Syria: Lessons for U.S. Policy,” Middlebury Institute for International Studies, Monterey, CA, February 4, 2020.

Joshua Rovner, alum ’08

"The Iran Crisis and American Energy Security," Cato Institute, March 4, 2020.

Kelly M. Greenhill, alum ’04

“Truthiness and Tribalism as Political Weapons: Fear, Cognitive Hacking and the Strategic Use and Abuse of Extra-factual Information,” Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University (February 13, 2020); and

“Perceiving Wolves in Sheeps’ Clothing? Unintended Consequences of Coercive Humanitarian Interventions,” Department of Political Science IR Workshop, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA (February 14, 2020).

Paul van Hooft, Stanton Fellow, ’18-’19, current Research Affiliate

January 31, 2020, presentation on US grand strategy at the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies

February 4th, 2020, presentation on transatlantic relations in the age of Trump at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

February 7th, 2020, presentation on European strategic autonomy at the Free University Brussels

February 10th-11th, 2020, took part in a workshop on 21st-century issues in nuclear deterrence

WHAT WE WROTE

Caitlin Talmadge, alum ’11

January 2020, "[The U.S.-Iran crisis has calmed down—but things won't ever go back to how they were before](#)," The Monkey Cage blog at *The Washington Post*, with Christopher Clary, January 12.

January 2020, "[Was it risky for the U.S. to take public responsibility for killing Soleimani?](#)" The Monkey Cage blog at *The Washington Post*, January 3.

Sara Plana, graduate student

"[Proxy War: The 'Least Bad Option' or the 'Second-to-Last Resort'?](#)", as part of "Book Review Roundtable: Understanding Proxy Warfare," *Texas National Security Review*, Mar 17, 2020.

Gregory Koblentz, alum '04

Stefano Costanzi, Gregory D. Koblentz, and Richard T. Cupitt, "[Leveraging Cheminformatics to Bolster the Control of Chemical Warfare Agents and their Precursors](#)," *Strategic Trade Review*, Vol. 6, No. 9 (Winter/Spring 2020), pp. 69-91.

"[Chemical-Weapon Use in Syria: Atrocities, Attribution, and Accountability](#)," *The Nonproliferation Review*, Vol. 26, No. 5/6 (2019), pp. 575-598.

Gregory D. Koblentz and Madeline Roty, "[Myanmar should finally come clean about its chemical weapons past—with US help](#)," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March 10, 2020.

"[A Biotech Firm Made a Smallpox-Like Virus on Purpose. Nobody Seems to Care](#)," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, February 21, 2020.

Emma Campbell-Mohn, graduate student

"[Educational Institutions Should Engage More—Not Less—With China](#)," Letter to the Editor, *The Atlantic*, February 25, 2020.

Erik Lin-Greenberg, alum '09 and SSP faculty starting Fall Semester '20

"[Allies and Artificial Intelligence: Obstacles to Operations and Decision-making](#)," *Texas National Security Review*, Vol 3, No 2.

Alan J. Kuperman, alum '02

"[Challenges of Plutonium Fuel Fabrication: Explaining the Decline of Spent Fuel Recycling](#)," *International Journal of Nuclear Governance, Economy and Ecology* 4, 4 (2019): 302-316.

Brendan Green, alum '11

The Revolution that Failed: Nuclear Competition, Arms Control, and the Cold War. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, February 2020

Taylor Fravel, faculty and Security Studies Program Director

"[China's "World-Class" Military Ambitions: Origins and Implications](#)," *The Washington Quarterly* Vol. 42, No. 4 (Spring 2020)

“Stability in a Secondary Strategic Direction: China and the Border Dispute with India After 1962,” in Kanti Bajpai, Selina Ho and Manjari Chatterjee Miller, eds., *Routledge Handbook of China-India Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2020)

David Weinberg, alum '12

With Shaya Lerner, "[Battling COVID, Iran Regime Makes Jews its Bogeyman](#)," IranWire, April 3, 2020.

With Marcus Sheff, "[Saudi textbooks revised, but still incite hate](#)," Long War Journal, March 30, 2020.

"[ADL Study Finds Ongoing Use of Anti-Semitic Materials at State-Run Book Fairs across Arab World](#)," ADL Blog, February 25, 2020.

Rachel Tecott, graduate student

"[How coronavirus will affect the US military](#)". The Monkey Cage blog at *The Washington Post*, with Erik Sand, March 19th, 2020.

Erik Sand, graduate student

"[How coronavirus will affect the US military](#)". The Monkey Cage blog at *The Washington Post*, with Rachel Tecott, March 19th, 2020.

Joshua Rovner, alum '08

"[The Primacy Problem: Explaining America's Afghan Purgatory](#)," *War on the Rocks*, January 9, 2020.

"[‘Real’ Deterrence? Identifying the Trump Administration’s Iran Strategy](#)," *Lawfare*, January 26, 2020.

"[The Blessings of Secrecy](#)," *War on the Rocks*, February 11, 2020.

"[Does Trump Care about the Director of National Intelligence?](#)" *Lawfare*, February 23, 2020.

"How Do We Succeed in Cyberspace, and How Do We Measure Progress?" White Paper for Congressional Cyberspace Solarium Commission, March 2020.

"[Did the Cyberspace Solarium Commission Live Up to its Name?](#)" *War on the Rocks*, March 19, 2020.

"[The Intelligence Contest in Cyberspace](#)," *Lawfare*, March 26, 2020.

Kelly M. Greenhill, alum '04

"Of Wars and Rumors of Wars: Extra-factual Information and (In)Advertent Escalation," in Harold Trikonas, Herbert Lin and Ben Loerke, eds., *Three Tweets to Midnight: Effects of the Global Information Ecosystem on the Risk of Nuclear Conflict* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2020)

“Three Things to Know About Conspiracy Theories,” *Tufts Magazine* (spring 2020)

Marika Landau-Wells, alum '18

"[Political Preferences and Threat Perception: Opportunities for Neuroimaging and Developmental Research](#)," *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences* 2020 (34): 58-63
(with Rebecca Saxe)

David Allen, current Grand Strategy, Security, and Statecraft Fellow

A new book, *Every Citizen a Statesman*, is under contract with Harvard University Press.

Paul van Hooft, Stanton Fellow, '18-'19, current Research Affiliate

van Hooft, Paul. "[Land rush: American grand strategy, NATO enlargement, and European fragmentation](#)." (2020)., as part of a special issue for *International Politics* on NATO enlargement (edited by Josh Shiffrin and Jim Goldgeier).

Francis Gavin, current Research Affiliate

Nuclear Weapons and American Grand Strategy, Brookings Institution Press, January 21, 2020

NOTES FROM ALL OVER

Caitlin Talmadge, alum '11

Appointed an associate editor at *International Security*, as well as a Research Affiliate at SSP

Miranda Priebe, alum '15

Miranda Priebe is the director of the RAND Corporation's new Center for Analysis of U.S. Grand Strategy. Barry Posen was the inaugural speaker for the Center's seminar series.

Dave Pendall, Army Fellow 2012-13

Dave Pendall took on new roles as the Executive Secretary of the Defense Science Board Summer Study 2020, "[New Dimension of Conflict](#)" and a Government Advisor on the US Army Science Board's Systems of Systems Analysis Project

Taylor Fravel, faculty and Security Studies Program Director

Participated in trans-Atlantic symposium on US and European relations with China in Berlin in February 2020

Paul Heer, '15-'16 Robert E. Wilhelm Fellow, CIS

Joined the Center for the National Interest as a [Distinguished Fellow on China/East Asian affairs](#)

Rachel Tecott, graduate student

Received the [Institute for Security and Conflict Studies \(ISCS\) Predoctoral Fellowship](#) at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs for the 2020-2021 academic year

Erik Sand, graduate student

Received the America in the World Pre-Doctoral Fellowship at the Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs at Johns Hopkins SAIS for 2020/2021 academic year.

Leonard Samborowski, Army Fellow '98-'99

Took on a new role as the head of the MBA program at Nichols College in Dudley, MA.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elina Hamilton, former SSP Wednesday Seminar coordinator

Appointed Assistant Professor of Musicology at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa. She will begin her role there in August, 2020

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Eyal Hanfling, graduate student

Received a Critical Language Scholarship in March 2020 from the U.S. State Department for Urdu language study in India this summer (though unfortunately, the program was canceled)

Erik J. Labs, alum '94

For his work on naval issues for Congress, Dr. Labs recently received The Navy Superior Public Service Award, which is the second highest award that the United States Department of the Navy can present to a private civilian not employed by the Department.

David Allen, current Grand Strategy, Security, and Statecraft Fellow

Received the Bancroft Dissertation Award at Columbia, which is given to the best dissertation in U.S. history, diplomacy, or international relations