

The following are sample Junior Fellow essays provided by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. These are older essays, but they will provide you with a sense of the quality expected by the Senior Fellows.

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Why I would like to become a Junior Fellow.

Research is my passion. Research has the ability to affect change by providing insight where such insight might go unnoticed and, in this sense, it is an end in itself. I was first attracted to the Fellowship program because, while I have immeasurable respect for research irrespective of applicability, I find it most exciting when it leads to action and is applied to problems we face today.

Research changes not only policies, but also perspectives. Realizing this has been largely a process of self-enrichment: while I have participated in my share of debates and discussions, the perspectives that have changed have primarily been my own. As a Junior Fellow, I would go beyond this self-enrichment. It is because of the Endowment's ability to act as an influential force in both generating insight and the practical application of such insight—its ability to offer both process and product—that I find the Junior Fellowship program so attractive. I see it offering me invaluable experience in research, application, and the execution of policy, three elements that I know will one day be essential to my anticipated career in policy and analysis.

I am especially interested in the opportunity to contribute to the Democracy Building or Non-Proliferation projects. In these issues I see the synthesis between my interest in political theory with respect to identity, governance, and security and my desire to apply these theories to the real world and its most pressing challenges.

I have spent the past few years familiarizing myself with the methods and theories of great thinkers of the past and present, and observing the world around me with an attentive eye. This has prepared me for what is the necessary next step in pursuing a career in policy and analysis: being a part of the process itself. I want to contribute to the literature, perspectives, and policies that shape and reshape the political world. I am ready to be a participant, rather than a bystander. I can think of no better way to approach future scholarship and vocation in the study of politics and policy than as a firsthand participant in the efforts of the Endowment's scholars.

China's rapid growth has generated a great amount of anxiety in the United States. Some fear that conflict with China is inevitable. But others believe that such an outcome is not pre-ordained. Do you believe that China's rise poses a long-term threat to the United States?

The rise of China is likely to be one of the most crucial developments affecting the global order in the 21st century. China, by virtue of its size, population and increasingly its economy, is shaping global events and interactions between various actors. This poses a key challenge, or maybe even an invaluable opportunity for the United States to bring to fruition its long-term efforts to integrate China into the international community, even as it continues to watch developments in China and their implications closely to identify any signs of potential confrontation or a major clash of interests.

Anti-China lobbies have always existed in the US since the Communists came to power in 1949. Recent developments that have given these lobbies ample ammunition to overplay the "China Threat" card include its rapid economic development, the much hyped-about controversy over exchange rate and trade balance issues, China's increasing defense budget and growing military presence, its engagement with the established international norms, and its diplomatic globetrotting in search of raw materials and energy sources. Given these developments, it comes as no surprise that China is increasingly being viewed as a threat to US interests by many. However, these developments should not be taken to mean that conflict with China is inevitable. While some international relations theorists like John Mearsheimer believe that conflict is inevitable with a new rising power seeking its rightful place in the international system, there are various other factors in place that cause other China watchers to believe otherwise. To examine whether China's rise poses a *long-term threat* to the United States, we must examine some key aspects of this issue in more detail.

First, let us consider the issue of China's rise. Undoubtedly, China is rising. Economically, China has seen sustained annual GDP growth rates of 9-10% over the past couple of decades with the result that the size of its economy has quadrupled since Deng Xiaoping started reforms in 1978. With the hullabaloo about China's exchange rate regime and the resulting trade imbalance along with the global shift in manufacturing activity to China, many now consider China to be threatening the sustainability of the competitiveness of the US economy in the world, drawing parallels with Japan during the 1980s. However, China's per capita income still remains at very low levels. Having started from a very low base, China is nowhere close to the standards of living in place in developed countries like the United States. Despite this, it is clear that China is developing rapidly and as a Goldman Sachs report predicted, China's economy in GDP terms could overtake the US by 2050. In a dire

situation, China could see an economic backlash from the US and vice versa, with increased protectionism potentially leading to a conflict that would eventually spill into the political and military spheres as well.

Politically, China has developed better relations with many countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, the European Union, and even in the US' own backyard, Latin America. Given that China's relations with these countries have improved out of economic imperatives (buying raw materials from these countries and serving as a market for them as well), it is important to note that China is leveraging its economic prowess to gain political favors as well such as greater recognition of the One China policy. In addition, as the dissatisfaction and disillusionment with the United States among its traditional allies rises due to its unilateral foreign policy, China is moving in to provide an alternative to these countries without harping on sensitive issues like political reform, democracy, human rights etc.

On the military front, China's military has undertaken various steps to modernize its capabilities and China's defense budget has been growing by double-digit figures for quite a few years now. It doesn't help pro-China lobbies that Chinese leaders have often adopted a very tough stance against Taiwan, passing an Anti-Secession law last year that irked many Taiwanese and Americans. While many argue that China's military capabilities will never match those of the US, an economically robust economy with greater resources to devote to military purposes could see the PLA emerge as a credible threat to the US military capabilities. Another key consideration is China's increasing demand of energy due to rapid economic development. Demand from China is considered to be one of the key factors behind the high oil prices that we are witnessing today. In addition, Chinese companies are seeking to buy oil fields in countries in Africa, Central Asia, and Russia etc. to satisfy its needs, paying scant regard to the political records of regimes like Sudan and Iran many of which are considered to be "rogue" states by the United States.

Next, we need to examine what a *long-term threat* to the United States would entail. A long-term threat implies that the threat would probably be realized in about 15-30 years. Any country, firm, or individual could be considered a threat to the United States if it challenges and threatens its national interests and prevents the achievement of US strategic objectives in the fields of economic, political and energy security as well as undermines the position of the United States as the sole superpower in the world today.

So, given what we know about China's rise, and assuming that this rise continues uninterrupted by major socio-economic or political upheaval (which many continue to argue is inevitable in China), does China

pose a long-term threat to the United States? Potentially, yes. Is conflict between the US and China inevitable? No. Analyzing this issue in terms of economic, political, military or strategic threat, we can conclude that on the economic front, China is likely to threaten the position of the US as the hub of economic activity in the world. In addition, as China continues to attract multinationals due to its low-cost labor, the US could continue to see further jobs being lost. If the issues of exchange rate and huge trade deficits in the US vis-à-vis China gain even more momentum and portray, rightly or wrongly, China as being the root cause of the economic malaise afflicting the US economy, we could see economically unwise measures being adopted by either or both countries.

Politically, as China develops its economic strength further, its interactions with the world might become even more assertive. While currently China avoids challenging key political objectives of the US, such as the war in Iraq, it could potentially begin throwing its political weight around, and leverage its better relations with many countries if the relations of the US with these countries continue to deteriorate. Militarily, it is highly unlikely that China will pose a credible threat to the strength of the US military. However, with the concerted efforts to develop a blue-water navy for the first time, China could potentially pose a credible threat to the US military position in the Taiwan Straits, an area where a US-China military conflict might actually materialize. China also intends to use its blue-water navy to protect the Straits of Malacca through which most of its oil imports flow. China and the US could potentially come into conflict as China's energy needs explode to the extent that it starts encroaching upon territories and oil fields that the US has traditionally secured its oil from, like Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.

Clearly, the potential for China posing a threat to the vital interests of the United States in the long term definitely exists. However, the strong economic ties that bind the US and Chinese economies raises the stakes of such a conflict actually escalating into war. The situation in the years ahead is likely to be different from the Cold War era. Neither the US nor China wants to see the destruction, or anything close to it, of the other country. It would mean economic suicide for both countries. The key lies in channeling the efforts of both countries in a way that prevents them from getting embroiled in a zero-sum competition over status, resources and influence. It is clear that successful management of relations between these two countries will be crucial to maintain stability in the world in the coming decades. Restraint, diplomacy, constructive dialogue and understanding of each others' positions will prove critical in managing what probably is, and will most likely continue to be, the most crucial bilateral relationship in the world.

F. China Studies (Asia Program). Some observers of China's foreign and defense policies argue that Beijing recently made a strategic decision to utilize its growing political, economic, and military power and influence in Asia and beyond to challenge many aspects of the existing U.S.-led international system, including accepted interpretations of freedom of navigation, the peaceful resolution of maritime territorial issues, and growing international norms against genocide and human rights abuses carried out by repressive regimes. Do you agree? If so, why was such a decision made, what evidence exists to support such a contention, and how should the West respond? If you disagree, then how do you explain Beijing's apparently increased level of assertiveness in many areas witnessed in recent years?

F. China Studies (Asia Program)

“Hide our light and nurture our strength,” Deng Xiaoping, then China’s paramount leader and the grandfather of its economic liberalization, urged his Party comrades in 1991 on the eve of his retirement. Deng’s pithy piece of advice, probably first coined (in typical Chinese Communist Party style) in a furtive backroom meeting of the “Eight Elders,” has defined Chinese foreign policy in the years since. Well over a decade after Deng’s death, however, some observers of China’s foreign policy now argue that Beijing has made a strategic decision to forsake his advice and utilize its growing power to challenge aspects of the U.S.-led international system. In fact, the Chinese still recognize that the primary focus of their foreign policy - to cultivate conditions favorable to domestic economic growth - is better served by China’s peaceful rise within a unipolar international system dominated by the United States rather than through a challenge to the prevailing balance of power. Nevertheless, as China’s economy has continued to develop, and particularly in the years since China’s accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, Beijing’s quest for new markets and energy resources has generated increasingly assertive behavior and brought it into conflict with established elements of the current world order. This conflict, however, is not the primary purpose of Beijing’s foreign policy, but rather a byproduct of it.

Chinese foreign policy has had an economic focus since the advent of China’s economic reforms and opening up in the late 1970s. In the post-Mao era, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), with Deng Xiaoping at the helm, increasingly focused on economic growth as a means of maintaining the legitimacy of the Party. To this end, Beijing moved away from a foreign policy derived from Maoist ideology in favor of one designed to cultivate conditions favorable to economic growth. Over the past three decades, Beijing’s foreign policy has maintained its economic focus largely because it is perceived by China’s leadership as being inextricably linked with the primary objective of maintaining domestic stability and continued rule of the CCP. Economic growth is also seen as an important conduit for achieving modernization of the military and codification of China’s international power after a “century of humiliation.” Both are important goals for China’s leadership. Ultimately, unless their actions will incur diplomatic or strategic costs that outweigh the economic (and other attendant) benefits, Beijing generally does not forsake important economic partnerships to adhere to international norms.

China's involvement in Sudan is perhaps the most notorious example of how economic interests pursued by Beijing have brought it into conflict with international norms. Many observers have labeled the civil war between the Arab-dominated central government in Khartoum and the non-Arab tribes of the Darfur region as genocide. As a result, numerous countries have sanctioned the government in Khartoum, enforced an arms embargo, sent peacekeeping forces, and honored the International Criminal Court's indictment of Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir for crimes against humanity. Against this backdrop of international condemnation, China invested \$10 billion in Sudanese oil fields - making the country China's largest source of oil in Africa. China's willingness to use its international influence to protect its interests in Sudan, including opposing proposals to sanction the Sudanese government, resulted in it pursuing policies contrary to human rights norms. Nevertheless, China did not select such a forbidding political environment simply to antagonize the West or challenge aspects of the international system. They invested in Sudan because they were able to; as latecomers integrating in the global economy, the Chinese were successful in securing investments because other countries were reluctant to do so.

The importance of economic issues is also evident in China's territorial claims in the South China Sea. All the other claimants of territories in the region justify their claims on the basis of provisions of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). China, however, insists on the historical legitimacy of its 9-Dash line - a controversial demarcation line first proposed by the Nationalist government in 1947 - that is based on survey expeditions, fishing activities, and naval patrols that date back to the fifteenth century. According to the 9-Dash line, China owns the entire South China Sea with the exception of small areas off the coasts of other littoral states. It is China's economic interests, notably its energy security needs, which have put it at odds with the territorial boundaries that UNCLOS has enforced in the region since 1994. The South China Sea is home to proven oil reserves of seven billion barrels and an estimated 900 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Access to this oil would greatly enhance China's energy security. China is also dependent on the region's sea lanes for conduct of its trade and import of oil. The United States has the capability to interrupt these sea lines of communication (SLOC), and China worries that it might choose to do so in a crisis. These worries have prompted the Chinese to

regulate U.S. and other foreign military activities inside its 200-nautical-mile maritime Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), putting China in a minority group among the world's nations that claim that the UNCLOS gives coastal states the right to regulate military (and not just economic) activities within their EEZ. This stance has cast doubt on China's support of norms surrounding the freedom of navigation. Such misgivings ignore the fact that the Chinese also have a large stake in the observance of freedom of navigation norms; trade affects 60 to 70 percent of China's economy and without it China would have a hard time sustaining its economy, let alone CCP rule.

Although Beijing's economic interests are the primary determinant of its increasingly assertive behavior over the last few years, it is true that the years between 2008 and 2010 marked a period of particularly imperious behavior. Here, other factors were also at play. For example, as UN-established deadlines for defining claims in the South China Sea approached in 2009, the Chinese adopted a more belligerent posture in the interest of solidifying their claims. There is also evidence that this marked assertiveness was the consequence of debate in Beijing over the future course of Chinese foreign policy. Over the last few months of 2010, supporters of a more forceful foreign policy dominated the public narrative. As the negative consequences of this assertive foreign policy became apparent, however, advocates of a more restrained policy pushed back. The denouement of this struggle was the publication of an article on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website in which Dai Bingguo, one of the highest ranking officials in the Chinese foreign policy establishment, offered a resounding defense of the more accommodating policy. The article signaled Beijing's return to a more accommodationist approach.

As the Arab Spring toppled governments in the Middle East, Chinese diplomats nervously approached their foreign counterparts to ask if they thought China would be next. Their actions reveal the sense of vulnerability that pervades the Party's psyche. Party leaders know that creating conflict in the pursuit of economic interests undermines the stability on which China's economic growth - and the survival of the Party - depend. As a result, although its search for new markets occasionally impels China to flout accepted aspects of the U.S.-led international system, it is ultimately not in China's interests to push this defiance too far and challenge the system itself.

Most democracy promotion tools available to United States policymakers were developed to assist transitions in central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, and East Asia. Are they likely to be helpful in the Arab world? If so, why? If not, what sort of modifications or substitutions are needed?

Good policies are not Procrustean beds. U.S. policymakers must accommodate reality in constructing strategies and approaches, and they must acknowledge that context dictates effective tactics. Yet U.S. policymakers have not exercised this responsibility in their approaches to the Arab world, and they have allowed a disposition towards democratic consolidation to adversely affect both their policies and, more importantly, their expectations for success. There exists a key contextual contrast that U.S. policymakers have not yet widely accepted: whereas in many parts of Latin America, East Asia, Africa and Central and Eastern Europe, the U.S. promoted democracy by aiding consolidation in a transition or post-transition context, there is no such extant democratic framework in the predominantly authoritarian Arab world. Put simply, U.S. policymakers would be ill advised to treat the Arab world as they have treated other regions where the effects of democratic transition were present already. First, policymakers must acknowledge the reality of this context and, second, they must pursue a robust policy of engagement to help create institutions essential to democracy that are now largely absent in the Arab world.

Authoritarianism in the Arab world has proven remarkably resilient to challenges and shocks over the past two centuries. Where democracy has shown signs of development elsewhere, it has shown few signs of viability and life in the Middle East and North Africa. Israel and Lebanon are exceptions in the region rather than the rule. In the former-Soviet states, and in much of Latin America, Africa, and East Asia, U.S. policymakers were faced with the challenge of democratic *consolidation* during or after a significant transition. These transitions created a context of potentially viable democracy. Democracy, one might say, was “in the air” as the prevailing conceptual framework for future governmental development. We saw this to be the case after the collapse of the Soviet Union, after post-colonial independence in some African states, through various military coups and student uprisings in South Korea, and through the collapse of military regimes in parts of

Latin America. The democratic context was often already a feature of the political topography when U.S. policymakers addressed how best to promote democracy, and successes in places such as Poland and South Korea led these policymakers to take such a topography for granted.

This has created a disposition among U.S. policymakers towards consolidation, and failures in Iraq since 2003 have made this clearer than ever before. True, the U.S. did initiate the transition, but U.S. policy quickly shifted towards premature democratic consolidation despite the lack of a complete transition. This was evident, for example, when the Iraqi army was disbanded, compromising Iraq's ability to maintain security, and elections were pressed into the foreground of political discourse before the state possessed essential institutions with respect to such issues as domestic security and energy infrastructure. Though it is not the first example that has done so, Iraq has shown us that even forcefully toppling an authoritarian regime does not ensure that a democratic framework will take root. Policymakers have failed to recognize the impotence of promoting democratic learning in an authoritarian or semi-authoritarian context *when compared to* comparable efforts in a nascent democratic context. In other words, this disposition towards consolidation has skewed expectations of success by causing policymakers to believe that consolidation efforts will work where such efforts are actually inappropriate.

Two modifications must be applied to policies in the Arab world; the first applies to analytic expectations, the second to policy approaches. First, the authoritarianism of the Arab world has proven resilient to both exogenous and endogenous shocks or trends that might lead to the emergence of a democratic framework. The entrenchment of elite-driven politics and a refusal to embrace free market policies are important contributing factors to this resilience. Democratic transitions, it follows, are not guaranteed and, even if they were, they are difficult to predict, meaning we must treat the "pre-transitional" (to use an inherently biased term) character of the Arab world as a fixture rather than as an anomaly that will soon erode.

Second, the fact that the U.S. has extensive experience in democratic consolidation does not mean that we should apply this experience unconditionally to the Arab world. Democracy promotion entails building essential institutions, such as dependable police forces, judicial systems, and educational organizations, many of which are absent in Arab states. U.S. policymakers will not encourage the creation and expansion of such institutions through hostile rhetoric and condemnations of Arab governments, but through engagement with the elites who hold power in these states. This entails continued humanitarian efforts as well as gradually creating incentive structures, i.e. through careful diplomatic and economic pressure and engagement, which encourage elites to make concessions benefiting the growth of these essential institutions. The U.S. should not adopt a policy of appeasement, but it must recognize the implications of promoting literacy, metaphorically speaking, where elites decide which books are on the shelves.

Furthermore, the U.S. should recognize that creating these incentive structures is something that it cannot do on its own. Policymakers should make their democracy promotion plans more robust by incorporating a strategy to improve U.S. relations with Europe. Unilateral incentive structures offered by the U.S. will be ignored if Arab elites can afford to do so by turning elsewhere for support and resources. Better U.S.-Europe cooperation could limit the scope of these alternatives.

The modifications I recommend largely concern prevailing attitudes that are misleading. The reality on the ground is that the Arab world is not at a stage where the lessons of democratic consolidation are relevant and applicable. When this is acknowledged and accepted, U.S. policymakers can begin the difficult process of constructing approaches to the Arab world with more reasonable, though not certain, expectations of success.

A. Democracy Program. Public condemnations of human rights abuses, economic sanctions, and other forms of punishment and distancing are not effective ways to support democracy in autocratic countries. The United States should instead seek to promote evolutionary democratic change in dictatorships by supporting societal engagement, educational exchanges, diplomatic engagement, etc. Do you agree or disagree and why?

Carnegie Endowment Junior Fellow Application

Essay-A: Democracy Program

The idea that U.S. democracy promotion requires one of two broad approaches represents a false choice. Outright public condemnation of regime abuses and more gradual engagement with civil society are not mutually exclusive policies, and the desire to treat them as such has the serious potential to hamper U.S. efforts to support democratization and political development in countries around the globe. Instead, the most effective means of promoting democracy abroad is through a multifaceted approach that seeks to disincentivize anti-democratic behavior on the part of regimes while building up capacity amongst societies and the opposition to engage in real democracy. Ultimately such a strategy recognizes the need to foment democracy from the top down as well as from the bottom up.

While evidence suggests that public condemnations of human rights abuses, economic sanctions, and other forms of punishment are not effective ways to support democratic reform *on their own*, they should not be abandoned as a component of U.S. policy toward autocratic regimes. Such actions serve three main purposes. First, they weaken the regimes themselves, forcing them to rethink their approach to governance. Second, such policies signal to pro-democracy forces within an autocratic society that the United States stands with them and supports their aspirations. Such a signal has the potential to embolden opposition forces to continue to push for political reform. Finally, such actions affirm U.S. support for democracy worldwide and allow the U.S. government to remain consistent in its moral opposition to despotism. This final, values-based argument has been detailed in the State Department's Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) and the President's National Security Strategy, which both establish the American values of political freedom and democratic governance as driving forces behind foreign policy decisions.

Despite their positive potential, policymakers and observers often view such policies negatively because they appear to fail in so many cases. Upon closer examination, however, the failure of such policies to produce democratic reform generally reflects the lack of a serious, comprehensive strategy or particularly challenging circumstances, rather than an overall indictment of their effectiveness. While high-profile cases of failure, like North Korea and Saddam Hussein's Iraq, lead to the belief that such strategies are ineffective, in reality, sanctions have consistently achieved a modest success rate in moving autocratic regimes toward reform, and public condemnations of human rights abuses rarely have a profoundly negative impact on democratization. Nevertheless, these policies alone are not enough.

Societal engagement must also remain an important component of U.S. support for democracy internationally, but, like political and economic pressure, the evolutionary change it promotes generally does not serve to transform non-democratic societies on its own. Civil society is a crucial building block of any democracy, and a population that is engaged through institutions within civil society will be much better equipped to succeed in the context of democratic reforms. Therefore, programs like educational exchanges and support for NGOs that promote all sorts of civic engagement, from female empowerment to local elections, can be transformative to the extent that they give a society a kind of democratic practice.

However, without a concerted push for political openness and democratic reform from the top, "evolutionary change" generally fails to produce real results. Democratic practice is useful in states that are making strides toward democracy. But if a regime feels no real pressure to reform itself, the result will be either a country in which civil society is relegated to the margins or an increasingly agitated population willing to resort to more destabilizing routes toward democratic transition. Neither produces the kind of positive, sustainable change that is in

the interest of the country in question or the United States.

In addition to political pressure and societal engagement, a crucial third prong in U.S. efforts to promote democracy in autocratic countries is active engagement with the opposition. Without capable opposition leaders, states that pursue democratization have a higher risk of reverting back to authoritarianism. If no credible alternative exists to the ruling party or group, competitive democracy will ultimately prove unsustainable. That is why capacity-building amongst opposition parties is critical. Organizations like the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI), which receive funding from the federal government, are important partners in efforts to build capacity amongst opposition leaders and parties. In many countries, these organizations maintain established relationships with political leaders both inside and outside of the government and they have developed a great deal of respect amongst the population. Their strategy is focused on ensuring that true competitiveness exists in the electoral realm in countries at various stages of democratization.

Ultimately, government reforms have a much greater chance of success when they are being implemented in a society that is capable of serious democratic engagement. Likewise, a people yearning to be free under the yoke of a regime unwilling to make democratic concessions generally fails to produce tangible results and can often lead to the type of political unrest witnessed across the Arab world in early 2011. That is why U.S. democracy promotion cannot be an either-or choice. It must engage simultaneously on three levels: 1) to push regimes to be more open and democratic through both punishment and incentives, 2) to promote the development of an active civil society with institutions capable of democratic engagement, and 3) to work with the opposition to establish a legitimate and capable governing alternative.