

Enterprise Report

Restoring Liberty, Opportunity, and Enterprise in America



AEI Today, Five Days a Week

By Robert Doar

My favorite time of day is the 30 minutes before 6:00 a.m. when I drink coffee with my wife, Sara, and discuss what we are reading on our laptops. This easy time is punctuated when *AEI Today* pops into our inboxes.

AEI Today is not predictable. Our scholars share certain values for sure, but they cover so much territory and offer such different approaches that you never can be quite sure what you are going to get on any morning: a pathbreaking research paper, yes; a hard-hitting op-ed in a prominent newspaper, yes; a thoughtful blog on an underappreciated issue, yes as well.

Take the February 17 edition: Among the 38 items featured that day were peer-reviewed papers, AEI reports, blog posts, podcasts, a video, and op-eds in a wide variety of outlets, including the *Wall Street Journal* and *Los Angeles Times*. Each piece was grounded in facts and empirical data and presented new information and ideas you don't get anywhere else. Some responded to the news of the day, and others took a long-term view of world events and trends. This variety and depth is presented without tribal cant or partisan cheerleading, an increasingly rare commodity in a polarized media environment—except at AEI.



Robert Doar
AEI President and
Morgridge Scholar

Just a few highlights from that day:

- A major report titled *China, Unquarantined* from **Dan Blumenthal** and **Nicholas Eberstadt**, underscoring the catastrophic consequences of setting the Chinese Communist Party loose in the liberal international order;
- A National Bureau of Economic Research paper from **Michael Strain** examining how different groups of workers were affected during the recovery from the Great Recession (which reveals that real wages for the median black and Hispanic worker grew 8 percentage points more from 2016 to 2019 than they did from 2007 to 2015; maybe the Trump administration was better for these groups than the Obama administration);
- A long-form essay by **Yuval Levin** in *National Review* using the occasion of Presidents Day to consider the sorry state of Congress;
- A Q&A with **James Pethokoukis** and Korok Ray (Mays Business School at Texas A&M University) on how universities can promote innovation;
- A web event with **Angela Rachidi** on the future of family antipoverty policy after the pandemic; and
- An episode of *Banter*, the AEI podcast I host (with Director of Media Relations Phoebe Keller), in which we interviewed **Sally Satel** on the opioid crisis and addiction during the pandemic.

We provide all this in a way that is as clean and easy to read and navigate as possible. If you are not signed up, you should be. To do so, visit www.aei.org/newsletters/.

This *Enterprise Report* provides another snapshot of AEI scholars' work. In our Q&AEI, scholars **Kevin Kosar** and **Philip Wallach** discuss their work on how Congress can fulfill its legislative role and restore its place as the first branch of American government. And we feature *A Search for Common Ground*, a new book in which **Frederick Hess** partners with the University of Southern California's Pedro Noguera to explore how those on opposite sides of the ideological aisle can find common ground without abandoning their core convictions.

We have continued to recruit new scholars to our ranks. In just the past few months, we have brought on **John Fortier** to cover election reform, **Tony Mills** to examine the role of scientific research in policy, **Eric Sayers** to explore China's military modernization, **Thomas Chatterton Williams** to write about the growing undercurrent of illiberalism in the media and on college campuses, and **Wang Xiyue** to study the geopolitical ambitions of today's most authoritarian powers.

Our communications and outreach teams deploy a variety of strategies to inject our scholars' ideas into the national conversation. This includes a new Policy Outlook Series, aimed at congressional leaders on the most important issues they are likely to confront in the coming months. Our scholars are engaging the next generation of leaders, participating in major virtual events including our Leadership Network Millennial Cohort Summit; the Academic Programs Winter Policy Summit, held in partnership with the University of Chicago's Institute of Politics; and the Student Conference on the Future of Hispanic Politics, cohosted with the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute.

Running through all this work, of course, is our steadfast commitment to free enterprise, individual liberty, and opportunity for all and the independence and rigor with which our scholars carry out their work. This mission and our hallmark academic freedom are the keys to AEI's credibility with all audiences—Republicans *and* Democrats, conservatives *and* liberals.

Thank you for being a part of the AEI community and *for* making our work possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Doar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

AEI Scholars

Shaping the Policy Agenda for 2021 and Beyond

Across policy areas, AEI scholars are fighting for good ideas, beating back bad ones, and informing policy responses to the most pressing challenges facing our country. Leveraging long-standing relationships with policymakers on both sides of the aisle, they are influencing the health care and economic debates surrounding COVID-19, engaging with new members of Congress and the administration, and positioning themselves as go-to resources on numerous urgent issues.

- **Michael R. Strain** and AEI President Emeritus **Arthur C. Brooks** participated in two private briefings hosted by the Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics for more than a dozen incoming House Democrats and Republicans on the post-coronavirus economic recovery. AEI scholars have participated in these briefings for more than a decade, and the briefings serve as a valuable tool to connect AEI scholars' work with incoming policymakers on both sides of the political aisle.
- AEI Economic Policy scholars have been in close contact with the Biden administration's economic policy team and have shaped how the new administration is approaching school reopening, aid to state and local governments, and the Paycheck Protection Program, among other issues. At the same time, as Congress considers the Biden administration's \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief and stimulus plan, conservatives in the Senate are relying on research from AEI Economic and Domestic Policy scholars to push back against progressive policies such as a \$15 national minimum wage and the permanent expansion of pandemic unemployment benefits.
- AEI scholars have long-standing relationships with incoming high-level officials in domestic policy, at the Pentagon, and in the State Department, and their counsel has been sought on issues including China's presence in Southeast Asia, Iran, workforce development, K-12 education reform, economic mobility, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Policy Outlook Series to Inform 117th Congress

AEI's Government Relations team is hosting the AEI Policy Outlook Series, a virtual briefing series running from February 2 to April 5. The series is aimed at equipping members of Congress and their staff with AEI scholars' perspectives on the nine most important issues of the 117th Congress: economic recovery, education reform, the China challenge, technology policy, health care and vaccine delivery, the Middle East and Iran, poverty policy, tax reform, and congressional capacity. Through weekly briefings, this series will position AEI scholars as the top resource on Congress' already-full agenda for members from both parties.

AEI Hosts

America's Future: An AEI Ideas Gathering



In December, more than 400 members of the AEI community gathered for a two-day virtual policy summit titled "America's Future: An AEI Ideas Gathering." This innovative event allowed participants to watch the seminars, comment live, ask questions, access background reading materials, and network with one another. Across 11 sessions, AEI scholars and distinguished guests shared their views on the most significant policy issues facing our country and offered ideas that can help the US move forward in public health, economic mobility, education, community life, national defense, constitutionalism, and more. Highlights include:

- **Robert Doar** interviewed then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) on how Senate Republicans will work with the Biden administration;
- Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX), longtime leader on the House Armed Services Committee, discussed what is ahead for defense policy with **Mackenzie Eaglen** and **Kori Schake**;
- **Naomi Schaefer Riley** moderated a conversation between **Charles Murray** and **Nicholas Eberstadt** on the revitalization of our country and communities; and
- Tyler Cowen (George Mason University) and Nicholas Christakis (Yale University) held a wide-ranging discussion on Christakis' book *Apollo's Arrow: The Profound and Enduring Impact of Coronavirus on the Way We Live* (Little, Brown Spark, 2020).

AEI Alumni

Where Are They Now

AEI has long focused on looking ahead to develop the next generation of leaders. We have served as an incubator for talent and a launchpad for hundreds of young people, many of whom went on to successful and influential careers in government, policy, media, business, and academia. These young people are introduced to AEI through a range of programming, from our highly competitive internship and research assistant programs to student development and professional engagement opportunities. Each program provides distinct and substantive opportunities for young people to engage with our scholars' work, build a network of like-minded peers and mentors, and develop skills that will serve them throughout their careers.

Former AEI research assistants, for example, currently serve in senior positions on Capitol Hill, including as a **director on the Senate Armed Services Committee**, a **senior staffer** for Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR), and the **chief speechwriter and strategic communications director** for Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY). AEI alumni also serve in high-responsibility positions across state governments, federal agencies, and the judiciary, with one **former research assistant clerking for Justice Amy Coney Barrett**. **Former research assistants and staff members have gone on to attend graduate and law school at every Ivy League university; Duke University; Georgetown University; the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Michigan; and many others.**

Through the AEI Alumni Network, we are leveraging our relationships with the hundreds of AEI alumni working in policy-related fields to connect them with our scholars' work and the best free enterprise thinking available in the policy community at a time when our country needs principled leadership more than ever. This spring, the Alumni Network will hold several networking, educational, and professional development events, including a civil discourse workshop and a reading group led by an AEI scholar. Additionally, the AEI Alumni Mentorship Program will pair senior and junior alumni to advance AEI scholars' work through relationships with well-positioned alumni.

Many former research assistants, interns, and Academic Programs participants are also members of AEI's Leadership Network (AEI's network of more than 1,000 state and local leaders) and Enterprise Club (AEI's network of

hundreds of young leaders in business, spread across 14 chapters in the United States and United Kingdom) and help spearhead AEI programming in their communities.



"During my two years at AEI, I was reminded daily that ideas matter. That fact has continued to inform my work, as have the ideas that AEI cultivates and the research its scholars produce."

—Andrew Pappas

Andrew Pappas worked early in his career in AEI's media relations department, where he was responsible for fielding calls from members of the media and pitching AEI scholars' work. Since November 2019, he has served as the general counsel of the Arizona House of Representatives, where he provides legal and policy advice to the Speaker of the House and all members of the Republican majority caucus. He joined AEI's Leadership Network in 2015.



"All my experiences with AEI were invaluable to my growth as a professional, whether it was honing my skills in research and analysis or having opportunities to meet and interact with senior-level US and foreign government officials as a junior member of the team. I am grateful to AEI for the experiences that helped me grow in my career."

—Omeed Jafari

Omeed Jafari was introduced to AEI as an intern for AEI's Foreign and Defense Policy team. He later returned to research and write on US-Iran relations, and he went on to serve as analyst for the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He is the founder and managing partner of a consultancy firm and a member of AEI's Enterprise Club.

AEI Alumni Event

In March, the AEI Alumni Program will hold the first-ever AEI Civil Discourse Workshop, providing 15–20 young professional AEI alumni the opportunity to learn and practice conversation with serious purpose. Taking place over two days, the event will allow participants to debate a hot-button policy topic and engage in training in rhetoric and public speaking. To learn more, contact Jane Knight at jane.knight@aei.org.

Academic Programs

AEI Academic Programs Holds Major Policy Summits

In February, AEI Academic Programs held two major virtual policy summits that attracted hundreds of students and further positioned AEI as a key partner for academic institutions and other organizations seeking to increase ideological diversity on their campuses.

“This conference gave me much-needed perspective on the intense partisanship faced by the US, and was a great reminder of the importance of informed, respectful disagreement.”

— Winter Policy Summit participant

In partnership with the University of Chicago’s Institute of Politics,

AEI Academic Programs hosted the 2021 Winter Policy Summit on February 2–4. More than 150 students participated in the conference, which featured:

- A conversation between **Kori Schake** and the University of Chicago’s John Mearsheimer (moderated by AEI’s **Hal Brands**) about the state of international relations during the Biden presidency;
- A discussion between **Yuval Levin** and Melody Barnes of the University of Virginia on how to rebuild a common civic culture, moderated by James Bennet of the *Economist* and;
- Opportunities for students to engage directly with experts in their choice of breakout sessions, which included a conversation between Kara Swisher of the *New York Times* and **James Pethokoukis** about Big Tech and American democracy, Tim Alberta of *Politico* and **Ramesh Ponnuru** on the future of the left and the right, and AEI’s **Bruce Meyer** and **Angela Rachidi** on COVID-19’s impact on low-income Americans.



On February 20, Academic Programs **cohosted the 2021 Student Conference on the Future of Hispanic Politics with the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute**. Featuring AEI scholars **Ryan Streeter** and **Timothy P. Carney**, the conference included panel discussions with a wide variety of thinkers and experts on topics including public policy and the American dream and the future of the Hispanic vote in America. More than 60 students attended the conference, and more than 80 percent of participants had never engaged with AEI before.

Visit www.aei.org/academic-programs/ to learn more about AEI’s programming for students or recommend a student for any of our opportunities.

AEI Hosts

Leadership Network Millennial Cohort



On February 2–4, AEI welcomed 80 young leaders from across the country for its second Leadership Network Millennial Cohort. **Robert Doar, Frederick Hess, Yuval Levin, Ian Rowe, Paul Ryan,** and **Ryan Streeter** led sessions with the group of young leaders from 23 different states and Washington, DC.

In a post-program survey, participants rated the program a nine out of 10.

97% agreed with the statement

“After attending the Summit, I am more likely to get involved with and stay in touch with AEI in the future.”

90% agreed with the statement

“I would like to help AEI spread its mission principles of freedom, opportunity, and free enterprise in my community.”

80% reported an increase in knowledge about leadership.

“The Summit came at such a tumultuous time in our country. I’ve been feeling burned out with political discourse and it’s difficult to engage in such a negative space. The Summit reopened that door for me. It was exceedingly refreshing to discuss big ideas with people who were respectful, thoughtful, and hopeful.”

—AEI Leadership Network Millennial Cohort member

Q&A

Kevin Kosar & Philip Wallach



Kevin Kosar and **Philip Wallach** joined AEI's Social, Cultural, and Constitutional Studies research division as resident scholars in September 2020, both coming from the R Street Institute. Kosar and Wallach are conducting research on Congress and how we might restore its proper place as the first branch of American government.

In addition to Kosar's work on Congress, he is one of the foremost experts on the United States Postal Service and is spearheading a new project at AEI dedicated to election reform. He worked for more than a decade for the Congressional Research Service, and he cofounded and still codirects the Legislative Branch Capacity Working Group, which is dedicated to assessing Congress' capacity to perform its constitutional duties and collaborating on ideas to strengthen the legislative branch.

Wallach's work at AEI centers on America's separation of powers, with a focus on the relationship between Congress and the administrative state. He has been published widely in academic and popular presses and served as a fellow with the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress in 2019. Wallach began his policy career as an AEI research assistant under Michael Greve.

You have both produced a lot of work exploring Congress' declining capacity. What are some of the most promising opportunities you see for reversing that trend?

Kosar: I am glad to see that Congress has reauthorized the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. One reason Congress slid into anachronism is that it was nobody's job to keep it up-to-date. I also hope Congress will return to fixing the budget process, which is broken.

Wallach: I'm hopeful that there will be a silver lining in the awful attack of January 6—namely, that members of Congress will finally understand the need to invest in their own institution and defend its place in the constitutional system.

With the passing of coronavirus legislation in the spring of 2020, Congress demonstrated it can take decisive action when needed. What else—besides a crisis—will it take for Congress to fulfill its legislative role?

Wallach: The action in the spring was accompanied by shockingly little deliberation. A deal was cut and then ratified in Congress, but we need our legislature to do more than that. Members need to focus squarely on their responsibilities as legislators, rather than preening like reality TV stars. That means digging into the details of the law and fashioning compromises with colleagues instead of calling them names. To realize that vision, we'll need a big shift in how members think about their relationship to their parties.

Some Americans have called for reforming, or even abolishing, the Electoral College, among other election reform proposals. If the US were to introduce one major reform to our election system in the coming years, what do you think it should be?

Kosar: States have most of the constitutional authority to conduct elections, and I am glad to see that some of them are experimenting with new means to empower Americans to choose their elected officials. Both Maine and Alaska are trying open primaries, ranked choice voting, and top four voting. But if I had to choose a single federal reform, it would be amending the Electoral Count Act of 1887 to make it clear that it is not the job of either the vice president or the Congress to decide whether states' lawfully selected electors should be accepted or rejected.

Phil, what is your favorite memory as an AEI research assistant?

Listening to Walter Berns read out the Declaration of Independence near the Fourth of July has to rank up there. But best of all was getting to sit in on some roundtable discussions featuring absolute giants. I didn't even know how good I had it at the time.

Kevin, in addition to your public policy work, you have written books on whiskey and moonshine. How did you develop this interest and expertise?

I bartended at the faculty club at Ohio State when I was finishing my undergraduate degree. My boss told me I needed to learn how different beverages taste, so I began tasting things I would have never considered trying, like single-malt scotches. While in graduate school in New York City, I continued sampling beverages and began writing up my reviews for a newspaper and started posting them online. That led to me writing articles and then the books on whiskey and moonshine. It is a fun hobby.

Find all of Kosar's and Wallach's research at [aei.org/profile/kevin-r-kosar/](https://www.aei.org/profile/kevin-r-kosar/) and [aei.org/profile/philip-wallach/](https://www.aei.org/profile/philip-wallach/).

New Book

Frederick Hess Finds Common Ground in Education Reform

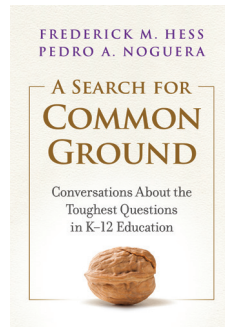
AEI Director of Education Policy Studies

Frederick Hess recently released

A Search for Common Ground: Conversations About the Toughest Questions in K-12 Education (Teachers College Press, 2021).

Hess and his coauthor, Pedro Noguera (University of Southern California), often fall on opposing ideological sides of education policy debates, and in the book, they candidly talk through their differences on some of the toughest issues in K-12 education today.

Written as a series of back-and-forth exchanges on points of heated disagreement in education, Hess and Noguera provide a model for how to sort through complicated issues and find common ground in today's atmosphere of distrust. Across 13 chapters, Hess and Noguera address contentious topics including school choice, the achievement gap, civics education, social and emotional learning, and diversity and equity, clarifying



points of agreement and disagreement and pointing to opportunities for principled cooperation.

Hess and Noguera promoted the volume widely, including speaking at the AEI Millennial Cohort Summit held in February, several gatherings of education policy leaders and practitioners, and a web event cosponsored by AEI and the University of Southern California later this spring. They have also launched a podcast to continue the conversations started in

the book, which can be found here

www.aei.org/podcast/introducing-the-common-ground-podcast/.

“If you despair that our public schools are beyond repair, read this book. If you despair that people of widely divergent views can no longer debate them without rancor, read this book. (If neither of these thoughts are bothering you, do a little homework and then read it!)”

—Gov. Mitch Daniels,
president, Purdue University

“Opening ourselves up to other perspectives does not mean we’re abandoning our own convictions, only that we believe in hearing people out before deciding we’ve nothing to learn from them. And, really, it’s hard to imagine educators operating in accord with any other principle.”

—Frederick Hess and Pedro Noguera

New Scholars Join AEI Ranks

Across research areas, AEI has recently welcomed new resident and visiting scholars and fellows, who are bolstering the Institute's work on some of the most significant policy issues facing our country and world. They join the 13 new scholars in 2020 and are helping position AEI to continue having a major impact on the policy debates in 2021 and beyond.



John Fortier

returns to AEI as a resident scholar to pursue his work on the continuity of government, focusing especially on Congress and

elections, voting, the US presidency, and the Electoral College. Along with Yuval Levin and Kevin Kosar, Fortier will undertake a multiyear research project dedicated to providing thought leadership and practical reform ideas needed to guide thinking and drive change in election administration.

Tony Mills, a senior fellow at Pepperdine University's School of Public Policy and a scholar associate at the Society of Catholic

Scientists, joins AEI as a resident scholar in domestic policy. His work explores two facets of the relationship between science and government: government's role in science and the nature and impact of scientific expertise in our democratic institutions.



Eric Sayers

joined AEI in December as a visiting fellow. Drawing on his past experiences as a consultant for US Pacific Command, a professional

staff member of the Senate Armed Services Committee for Asia-Pacific Affairs, and a policy adviser to Rep. J. Randy Forbes (R-VA), Sayers will focus on security

challenges in the Pacific, particularly the implications of China's rapid military modernization.



Thomas Chatterton Williams

joined AEI as a nonresident fellow in December. He is a contributing writer at the *New York*

Times, a columnist at *Harper's*, and most recently, the author of *Self-Portrait in Black and White: Unlearning Race* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2019). At AEI, Williams will pursue his next book project—an exploration of the sources of illiberalism on the left and right.

continued on page 8

AEI Podcast

AEI Podcast Highlights Stories of Agency and Empowerment

Resident Fellow **Ian Rowe** launched a new podcast series in December highlighting the stories of black men who have achieved success by leaning on the core principles of family, faith, free enterprise, and entrepreneurship. Rowe and his cohost, Nique Fajors (Premium Retail Services and AEI Leadership Network member), originally launched the series as Harvard Business School classmates in the 1990s to tell stories of black male success that they felt were overlooked in the media. They have relaunched it today as both a YouTube video series and podcast to help inspire young people who may feel success is out of reach. Their guests thus far have included Glenn Loury (Brown University),



Ralph Clark (ShotSpotter CEO), and Gervase Warner (Massy Companies). You can find all episodes of the podcast here: www.invisible.men/.

Visit www.aei.org/aeis-best-podcasts/ to find a list of AEI's best podcasts of 2020.

AEI Book

A Time to Build Recognized as Book of the Year

The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) recognized **Yuval Levin's** most recent book, *A Time to Build: From Family and Community to Congress and the Campus, How Recommitting to Our Institutions Can Revive the American Dream* (Basic Books, 2020), as the Conservative Book of the Year.

The Paolucci Book Award, named in memory of distinguished public intellectuals Henry and Anne Paolucci, recognizes thoughtful books that advance the public's understanding of conservative principles and contribute to the rich debate about important conservative ideas while avoiding factional or partisan argumentation.



Previous winners have included noted historians and political scientists such as Wilfred McClay, Pauline Maier, and Andrew Roberts. Levin will give a lecture on *A Time to Build* at ISI's award dinner on June 25, which will also be broadcast on C-SPAN's *Book TV*.

American Enterprise Institute

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Make Free Enterprise Your Legacy

For more than 80 years, AEI scholars have been tackling our nation's greatest challenges by producing work that bolsters free enterprise and innovation, strengthens our communities, defends our nation's founding values, and revitalizes America's leadership in the world. One of the best ways you can ensure that AEI can carry out this mission far into the future is by including AEI in your life and estate plans. Planned gifts provide AEI with long-term financial stability, guaranteeing the Institute has the means to continue our important work for years to come.

Major ways of making a planned gift include will or trust provisions, charitable remainder trusts, and charitable lead trusts. For more information, please visit www.aei.org/donate-about/planned-giving/ or contact Nicole Ruman Skinner (nskinner@aei.org; 202.862.7180).

New Scholars, continued from page 7



Wang Xiyue, a PhD candidate at Princeton, joins AEI as a Jeane Kirkpatrick Fellow. Wang brings a uniquely personal experience to his

study of the history and regional affairs of the Middle East (with an emphasis on Iran), China, Russia, and Eurasia: He was imprisoned for more than three years in Tehran under false charges of espionage, until he was released as part of a prisoner exchange. His work will focus on addressing and dissecting the geopolitical ambitions, strategies, and consequences of competition and cooperation of Iran, Russia, and China.