

# RACHEL ESPLIN ODELL

Massachusetts Institute of Technology ▪ Department of Political Science ▪ rodell@mit.edu

## EDUCATION

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology** 2014 –

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Political Science

Fields: International Relations and Comparative Politics

Dissertation: *The Contest for the “Free Sea”: Variation and Evolution in States’ Interpretations of the International Law of the Sea* (working title)

Committee: M. Taylor Fravel (Chair), Richard J. Samuels, Kenneth A. Oye

**Harvard University** 2006 – 2009

A.B. *summa cum laude*, East Asian Studies; Government (secondary field)

Honors Thesis: *Social Means to a Rational End: Emulation & China in the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism* (Thesis Adviser: Alastair Iain Johnston)

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Fellow, East Asia Program, Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft 2019 –  
(on leave until August 2020)

Asia Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Nonresident Research Analyst 2014 – 2019

Research Analyst 2011 – 2014

Junior Fellow 2010 – 2011

Co-authored several publications and prepared and participated in briefings to officials in the White House, State Department, Pentagon, and U.S. intelligence community, as well as broader foreign policy communities in Washington, Beijing, Tokyo, and Seoul. These publications and briefings were tied to work in coordinating projects, including, *inter alia*:

- (1) The U.S.-China Security Perceptions Project, a bilateral project to measure U.S. and Chinese views of security issues among elites & public through polling & workshops;
- (2) The U.S.-China Crisis Management Project, a joint effort between the Carnegie Endowment and the China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies;
- (3) *China’s Military and the U.S.-Japan Alliance in 2030*, the first unclassified strategic net assessment of the implications of China’s growing military power for the U.S.-Japan alliance; and
- (4) *Conflict and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region: A Strategic Net Assessment*, a report for the U.S. Pacific Command on trends in the Asia-Pacific region out to 2040.

Thesis Supervisor, Committee on Degrees in Social Studies, Harvard College	2018 – 2019
<i>Thesis Advisee:</i> Jennifer Li; <i>Thesis Title:</i> <i>China's Newsmakers: Comparing Chinese Media Coverage on North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Program Between 2000 and 2012</i>	
Acting Allston Burr Assistant Dean of Harvard College for Mather House	Jan – June 2017
Acted as the primary academic and residential dean for approximately 430 sophomores, juniors, and seniors in one of the 12 principal undergraduate communities at Harvard College. This role encompassed a broad range of functions, including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing academic and personal advice and mentorship</li> <li>• Responding to and managing student crises</li> <li>• Performing disciplinary functions</li> <li>• Fulfilling administrative and ceremonial duties</li> <li>• Voting membership on the Administrative Board of Harvard College</li> <li>• Voting membership in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University</li> </ul>	
Tutor, Mather House, Harvard College	2014 – 2020
Resident Tutor (2014-2017); Nonresident Tutor (2017 – 2020)	
Fellowships Adviser, Mather House, Harvard College	2014 – 2019
Head Fellowships Adviser (Jan – June 2016)	
Teaching Assistant, Professor Richard Nielsen, <i>Introduction to International Relations</i> , MIT undergraduate lecture course	Fall 2016
Research Assistant, Professor M. Taylor Fravel, MIT Dept. of Political Science	2015 – 2016
Conducted research in China and the U.S. on Chinese signaling in diplomatic crises; international maritime disputes and joint development of marine resources	
Concentration Adviser, Department of Government, Harvard College	2014 – 2016
Research Assistant, Professor Robert Sutter, Georgetown University	2010
Research Assistant, Professor Nahomi Ichino, Harvard University, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs	2007 – 2009
Audio Transcriptionist, Federal News Service	2010 – 2011
Chinese Translator, Wallace Academic Editing	2010
Intern, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, China Affairs	Summer 2008
Page, U.S. House of Representatives	Summer 2005

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

Predocctoral Fellowship, International Security Program, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School of Government	2019 – 2020
Predocctoral Fellowship, Institute for Security and Conflict Studies, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University (declined)	2019
MIT Center for International Studies Summer Study Fellowship for dissertation fieldwork in China	2019
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2016 – 2019
MIT-India Program Research Grant for dissertation fieldwork in India	2019
Smith Richardson Foundation World Politics and Statecraft Fellowship for dissertation fieldwork in India and China	2018
Alexander George Award for Best Graduate Student Paper from the Foreign Policy Analysis Section of the International Studies Association	2018
MIT Center for International Studies Summer Study Fellowship for dissertation fieldwork in Chile and Peru	2018
Visiting Research Fellow, Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University	Nov 2017
MIT-Japan Research Grant for dissertation fieldwork in Tokyo & the United States	2017
MIT Political Science Dept. Graduate Student Research Fund Grants (4 years)	2017 – 2020
MIT Political Science Dept. Graduate Student Travel Fund Grants (5 years)	2016 – 2020
Nominee, Star Family Prize for Excellence in Advising, Harvard College	2016
“25 Under 25 in U.S.-China Relations,” <i>China Hands</i> journal, Yale University	2013
Phi Beta Kappa	2009
Harvard College mid-year commencement speaker	2009
Fung Foundation Scholarship for undergraduate thesis research in Beijing & Shanghai	2009
Center for American Political Studies (CAPS) Undergraduate Research Seed Grant for archival research at George H. W. Bush Presidential Library at Texas A&M University	2009
John Harvard Scholar, awarded to top 5% of class	2007, 2008, 2009

Detur Book Prize, awarded to approximately top 5% of freshman class	2007
Fung Foundation Scholarship for summer Chinese language study in Beijing, China	2007
Harvard Beijing Academy graduation speaker (speech delivered in Chinese)	2007
Dean's List (4.0), David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies, Brigham Young University	2006

## PUBLICATIONS

“Chapter 16. Chinese Regime Insecurity, Domestic Authoritarianism, and Foreign Policy,” in *AI, China, Russia, and the Global Order: Technological, Political, Global, and Creative Perspectives*, Nicholas Wright, ed., Strategic Multilayer Assessment Periodic Publication, December 2018 ([link](#))

*Conflict and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region: A Strategic Net Assessment*, with Michael D. Swaine, et al. (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2015) ([link](#))

*U.S.-China Security Perceptions Survey: Findings and Implications*, with Michael D. Swaine, Luo Yuan, and Liu Xiangdong (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2013) ([link](#))

*China's Military and the U.S.-Japan Alliance in 2030: A Strategic Net Assessment*, with Michael D. Swaine, Mike M. Mochizuki, et al. (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2013) ([link](#))

“How to Contain Japan-China Tensions,” w/ Michael Swaine, *The Diplomat*, June 24, 2013 ([link](#))

“Getting Past Mutual Suspicion,” with Michael Swaine, *The National Interest*, June 6, 2013 ([link](#))

“Exchange Rate Regimes and Protectionism,” with Uri Dadush and Shimelse Ali, in *Currency Wars*, Vera Eidelman & Uri Dadush, eds. (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2011) ([link](#))

“Is Protectionism Dying?” with Uri Dadush and Shimelse Ali, *VoxEU*, June 7, 2011 ([link](#))

*Is Protectionism Dying?* with Uri Dadush & Shimelse Ali, Carnegie Paper 121 (May 2011) ([link](#))

艾琳 (前中文名), “‘医疗改革以后...’: 北京远郊农民的医疗,” 《美国大学生看中国: 2008 报告哈佛北京书院社会调查论文选》, 冯胜利主编 (北京: 高等教育出版社, 2008 年 7 月)

English citation: Rachel Esplin (Ai Lin), “‘After Health Care Reform...’: Rural Healthcare in Beijing’s Outer Suburbs,” in *China Issues 2008: Best Essays from Social Study in Harvard-Beijing Academy*, Feng Shengli, ed. (Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2008)

“Not a Rigid Framework,” book review of *War & Peace In Our Times: Mormon Perspectives*, eds. Mason et al., *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, vol. 46, no. 4 (winter 2014)

Four opinion pieces on U.S. politics published in the *Idaho Statesman* (Boise, Idaho) in May 2018 and the *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City, Utah) in 2011

## **WORKING PAPERS**

How Strategic Norm-Shaping Undergirds America's Command of the Commons (August 31, 2019), MIT Political Science Dept. Research Paper No. 2019-23, available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3451412>

Second Image Squared: The Interactive Effects of Elite Politics in U.S.-China Relations, 2009-2016, with Kacie Miura

A Theory of Contestation Space in International Regimes (March 27, 2019), MIT Political Science Department Research Paper No. 2019-04, available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3369619>

Freedom of Navigation in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea: A Case Study of Japan's Maritime Jurisdictional Claims (April 5, 2018), MIT Political Science Dept. Research Paper No. 2018-4, available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3160017> (full paper available on request)

Assessing the Effect of China's Expanded Presence in the South China Sea on the U.S.-China Military Balance

Maritime Hegemony and the Fiction of the Free Sea: Explaining States' Claims to Maritime Jurisdiction (June 30, 2016), MIT Political Science Department Research Paper No. 2016-21, available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2802204>

Civilian Control, Civilian Nationalism: Differences in Chinese Military and Diplomatic Press Statements, with Tyler Jost

PRC Behavior in Interstate Security Crises: What Deters China and How China Sends Signals, with Alastair Iain Johnston and M. Taylor Fravel

## **PRESENTATIONS**

"The Contest for the 'Free Sea': Variation & Evolution in the Global Maritime Order," Dec 2019  
Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs,  
International Security Brown Bag Seminar

"How Strategic Norm-Shaping Undergirds America's Command of the Commons," Aug 2019  
American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Conference

"Whose Free Sea? International Variation in Approaches to Maritime Jurisdiction," July 2019  
National Institute for South China Sea Studies, Hainan, China

"A Theory of Contestation Space in International Regimes," Mar 2019  
International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Conference

"Second Image Squared: The Interactive Effects of Bureaucratic Politics in U.S.-China Relations, 2009-2016," Mar 2019  
ISA Annual Conference, with Kacie Miura (presented by co-author)

“Chinese Regime Insecurity, Domestic Authoritarianism, and Foreign Policy,” Strategic Multilayer Assessment panel on AI, China, Russia, and the Global Order Feb 2019

“Present at the Creation, Protagonist in the Apocalypse? How Norm Contestation Shapes Power Transitions,” American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Conference Aug 2018

“Freedom of Navigation in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea: A Case Study of Japan’s Maritime Jurisdictional Claims,” ISA Annual Conference, Junior Scholar Symposium Apr 2018

“U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations as Strategic Norm-Shaping,” ISA International Security Studies Section (ISSS) – APSA International Security and Arms Control (ISAC) Section Joint Annual Conference Oct 2017

“An Ends-Oriented U.S. Asia Strategy for a Post-Primacy Era,” Asia Strategy Workshop convened by the Office of Net Assessment, U.S. Department of Defense Sept 2017

“Rethinking Revisionism: Hegemony, Self-Interest, and Contestation in the International Maritime Regime,” First Colloquium, MIT Department of Political Science May 2017

“Explaining Change in the International Maritime Regime: From *Mare Clausum* to *Mare Liberum* and Back Again?” MIT Security Studies Working Group Apr 2017

“The Fiction of the Free Sea: Explaining Change in the International Maritime Order,” MIT International Relations Work-in-Progress (IR-WIP) Working Group Mar 2017

“Maritime Hegemony and the Fiction of the Free Sea: Explaining States’ Claims to Maritime Jurisdiction,” ISA Annual Conference, Junior Scholar Symposium Feb 2017

“Assessing the Effect of China’s Expanded Presence in the South China Sea on the U.S.-China Military Balance,” ISSS-ISAC Joint Annual Conference Nov 2016

“Assessing the Effect of China’s Expanded Presence in the South China Sea on the U.S.-China Military Balance,” MIT Security Studies Working Group Nov 2016

“Assessing the Effect of China’s Expanded Presence in the Spratly Islands on Competition and Conflict in the South China Sea,” MIT IR-WIP Working Group Sept 2016

“Maritime Hegemony and the Fiction of the Free Sea: Explaining States’ Claims to Maritime Jurisdiction,” Carnegie International Policy Scholars Summer Workshop June 2016

“Civilian Control, Civilian Nationalism: Differences in Chinese Military and Diplomatic Press Statements,” ISA Annual Conference, with Tyler Jost Mar 2016

“Testing the Civil-Military Divide in China: Text Analysis of Public Foreign Policy Statements by Chinese Elites,” MIT Strategic Use of Force Working Group, with Tyler Jost Mar 2016

“Japan and Freedom of Navigation,” MIT-Waseda University Transpacific Workshop Dec 2015

“International Maritime Law and Freedom of Navigation: Theory Development and Theory Testing,” MIT Strategic Use of Force Working Group Nov 2015

“International Maritime Law and the Disposition of Maritime Jurisdictional Disputes,” Harvard-MIT-BU Chinese Politics Research Workshop Oct 2014

“U.S.-China Security Perceptions Survey,” Carnegie Endowment for International (Int’l) Peace Dec 2013

Northeast Asia Young Scholars Roundtable, Carnegie Endowment for Int’l Peace Nov 2013

“China’s Military and the U.S.-Japan Alliance,” Carnegie Endowment for Int’l Peace May 2013

“China’s Free Trade Agreements,” Asst. U.S. Trade Representative for China Affairs Aug 2008

### **PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEER SERVICE**

Secretary, Board of Directors, Mormon Women for Ethical Government Feb 2019 –

Treasurer, Mormon Women for Ethical Government Feb 2019 – Jan 2020

Senior Director, Mormon Women for Ethical Government June 2018 – June 2019

Co-Lead, Standards of Democracy Committee, Mormon Women for Ethical Government 2018

Co-Chair, Security Studies Working Group, MIT Security Studies Program 2016 – 2017

At-Large Member, Graduate Student Council, MIT Political Science Department 2016 – 2017

Co-Chair, International Relations Work-in-Progress (IR-WIP) Working Group, MIT Security Studies Program Fall 2016

Co-Founder, Graduate Student Council, MIT Political Science Department 2015 – 2016

International Policy Adviser, Millennial Action Project 2013 – 2014

Foreign Policy Team Volunteer, Jon Huntsman for President 2011 – 2012

Chair, DC Young Professionals for Jon Huntsman for President 2011 – 2012

East Asian Studies Student-Faculty Undergraduate Advisory Committee, Harvard University 2008

Foreign Policy Committee Chair, JFK Jr. Forum, Harvard Institute of Politics 2006 – 2008

Student Liaison to Institute of Politics Fellow James Baker, National Security Law Study Group, Harvard Institute of Politics 2007

## **OTHER STUDY**

**Harvard Beijing Academy at Beijing Language and Culture University** Summer 2007  
Intensive Chinese language program

**Brigham Young University** Summer 2006  
Coursework in international politics and world geography

## **SKILLS**

### **Languages**

- Mandarin Chinese (advanced proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking; four years of intensive Chinese coursework in college)
- Spanish (advanced proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking)
- Japanese (completed Japanese Beginner I at Global Language Network, Washington, DC)
- French (completed Conversational French I at The Graduate School, Washington, DC)

### **Software**

- R (regression analysis, web scraping, quantitative text analysis, graphics)
- LaTeX
- Geographic Information Systems (basic familiarity with ArcGIS, Google Earth Pro)

## **MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS**

American Political Science Association  
International Studies Association  
MIT Security Studies Program  
Carnegie International Policy Scholars Consortium and Network

*Updated February 2020*