

Opinion

ONE-ON-ONE

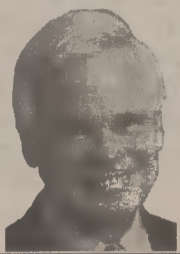
Historians
and natives...

While President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping were getting to know each other last weekend, a native North Carolinian was warning that the United States and China are on the brink of war.

Graham Allison grew up in Charlotte,

"A great power can escape the trap with subtle statecraft."

- D.G. MARTIN



where he was a football star for Myers Park High School

and later played at Davidson College before transferring to Harvard. There he spent most of his academic life, most recently as director of Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

Based on a careful study of historical situations in which a rising power like China confronts a ruling or dominant power like the U.S., Allison says much more often than not, war between the two powers is the result.

War can happen, he says, even when both the ruling and the rising powers are committed to avoid armed conflict.

Allison calls this conundrum "The Thucydides's Trap," based upon the Greek historian's analysis of the causes of the Peloponnesian wars between Sparta, the ruling or dominant power in the Greek peninsula, and Athens, a rising power challenging Sparta's dominance. Neither power wanted war, but both were determined not to let the other interfere with its legitimate aspirations of greatness.

"It was the rise of Athens," Thucydides wrote, "and the fear that this inspired in Sparta, that made war inevitable."

Allison and his colleagues have studied 16 situations over the past 500 years in which a rising power threatened to displace the ruling power. War was the result in 12 of these times.

In recent articles, including the April 16 issue of Time, and other recent issues of the Huffington Post, The Atlantic, and in his forthcoming book, "Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?" Allison argues that the U.S. and China are on a collision course. That is because (1) China is quickly overtaking us as the world's dominant economic power, and (2) China's firm aspirations will put it in direct confrontation with the U.S.

For instance, China expects, over time, to reassert its historic dominance over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and territories claimed by Japan, The Philippines, and other allies to which we have specific treaty responsibilities for defense.

Allison notes that the current emerging crisis on the Korean peninsula could lead to a spark of armed conflict between the U.S. and China.

Trump strategist Steve Bannon says "We are going to war in the South China Sea in five to 10 years, there is no doubt about it."

Allison disagrees, but he warns, "Based on the current trajectory, war between the United States and China in the decades ahead is not just possible, but much more likely than recognized at the moment. Indeed, judging by the historical record, war is more likely than not. Moreover, current underestimations and misapprehensions of the hazards inherent in the U.S.-China relationship contribute greatly to those hazards. A risk associated with Thucydides's Trap is that business as usual-not just an unexpected, extraordinary event-can trigger large-scale conflict. When a rising power is threatening to displace a ruling power, standard crises that would otherwise be contained, like the assassination of an archduke in 1914, can initiate a cascade of reactions that, in turn, produce outcomes none of the parties would otherwise have chosen."

As he writes in Time, "Thucydides's trap does put the odds against us."

But, he adds, a great power can escape the trap with subtle statecraft.

Subtle statecraft. That is something all of us should be praying for every day.

D.G. Martin hosts "North Carolina Bookwatch."

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832



SMALL TOWN GIRL

Time to unplug...

Over the course of the last few weeks I have noticed how children today, including mine, are addicted to technology and electronic devices.

From phones, to tablets, computers and gaming systems, children of all ages are staring at screens while healthier fun and adventure wait around them.

First, let me say I do not have a problem with technology. Children need to understand how to use electronic devices, because this technology is everywhere in today's world.

Children should have time to use these devices and understand how to use them safely, but they should also know how to play and be creative without gluing their eyes to a screen.

Almost everywhere there are children with their faces cemented to screens.

Almost everywhere I go I see children attached to their electronic devices.

I know there are many apps that are excellent education tools for children, and these devices may come in handy when there is a long wait in a pediatrician's waiting room.

But the way I see it, if a child has to have a tablet in his hand through eating dinner, or through

"To be honest, I didn't realize how consumed they were."

LESLIE BEACHBOARD



any family time, there may be a problem.

I have to admit I am a guilty parent who has let electronic devices take control of my children. To be honest, I didn't realize how consumed they were.

All four of my children seem not to function unless they have an electronic device in their hand or their eyes on the television.

Not only is this a problem, but it also caused arguments between the four over who was going to watch a video or play a game next.

On a daily basis, my phone charger would disappear because someone knew it would charge his or her device. They would borrow it at their leisure, and I am left with a maddening mission to find it.

As a parent you begin to see there is a problem when your children are not focused on what

is going on around them because they are afraid they may miss something on a screen.

I remember back in the day when I was their age, we had limited gaming unless it was Super Mario Brothers on a Nintendo. The internet was dial-up and was so slow that online gaming was almost impossible.

Enough was enough, so I began the process of "unplugging my children."

I did not take all of their electronic privileges away, but I am limiting their screen time.

They need to enjoy this warm spring weather and stretch their legs from where they have been in the house over the winter.

Since I have four children, this gives them an opportunity not only to play together but also work on their teamwork skills.

There are so many activities for children, to do indoors and out, and most of them don't involve staring at a television or device.

Leslie Beachboard is a Staff Writer for the Bertie Ledger-Advance, who is trying to unplug her children from virtual reality and get them outside to play. She can be reached via email at lbeachboard@ncweeklies.com.

AROUND HERE

Special thank yous and kudos...

The spring sports season is well underway, and I believe it is time for me publicly to recognize some people who our readers all should know if they follow sports in our newspaper.

They are the coaches, athletic directors and scorekeepers of the Bertie County high schools.

The coaches (and athletic directors) spend hours and hours preparing their teams for competition. They fix their fields so they are safe and playable. They deal with unhappy parents, and a vast majority of them also have to teach multiple classes per day.

And, perhaps the hardest job of all, they all have to deal with a pretty obnoxious sports editor in myself.

I can be a real pain to deal with. Sometimes, I even get tired of me, so imagine how these coaches, athletic directors and scorekeepers feel when they get incessant phone calls, texts and emails asking for results, schedule changes and other relevant information.

In the old days, there was no internet, no email. The only ways for the newspapers to receive sports information was by fax, or coaches had to call on a landline telephone.

You remember landlines, right? The phones you couldn't use to text or play games with.

Anyway, back to the present.

"I know I ask for a lot, but I can't do this job alone."

- JIM GREEN



Now there is the internet, and multiple programs such as Game Changer, Max Preps and NC Mile-split allow coaches to enter information from their games or track/cross country meets.

I don't know for sure, but I am guessing the time it takes coaches to upload information to those sites is comparable to the time they'd be on the phone with me if we were back in those old days.

What readers see in the newspaper each week is a direct result of the cooperation I receive from these people - folks who, after a difficult loss, likely would rather not submit information to me, but do so anyway.

My goal every week is to have as much sports news in the newspaper as my editor will allow me to have. Some weeks I have more news than space, but I rarely want it to be the other way around - not enough news to fill the space I do have.

This is why coaches, athletic directors and scorekeepers are so important to the newspaper.

With all of the technological advances, there are so many more ways to get me sports news than just using a landline telephone.

If you use these methods, you don't have to deal with me directly - which I am sure, many of you appreciate.

I am often given so much credit for what appears in the newspaper.

All I do is organize the coverage based on the information I've received, and I try to augment it with as many photos as I can.

The real credit should go to these coaches, athletic directors and scorekeepers.

If you see something in the newspaper, you should thank them for caring enough about their athletic programs and teams to report their sports news to us - even when they are exhausted, or when they'd rather not.

I know I ask for a lot, but I can't do this job alone. These people make no excuses; they do what I ask - which is why I try to do so much in return.

I just wanted to humbly thank these people for the job they are doing, and will hopefully continue to do.

Jim Green is Sports Editor for the Bertie Ledger-Advance. He can be reached at jgreen@ncweeklies.com.

Bertie
Ledger-Advance

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832

THE BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1928 THROUGH THE HERITAGE OF THE WINDSOR LEDGER AND THE AULANDER ADVANCE. THE NEWSPAPER TRACES ITS HISTORY TO 1832 WHEN IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED AS THE WINDSOR HERALD AND BERTIE COUNTY REGISTER

Kyle Stephens
Group Publisher
kstephens@ncweeklies.com

Angela Harne
Group Editor
aharne@ncweeklies.com

Thadd White
Editor
twhite@ncweeklies.com

Deborah Griffin
Staff Writer
dgriffin@ncweeklies.com

Leslie Beachboard
Staff Writer
lbeachboard@ncweeklies.com

Jim Green
Sports Editor
jgreen@ncweeklies.com

Michelle Leicester
Creative Services
mleicester@ncweeklies.com

Jessica Mobley
Advertising Manager
jmobley@ncweeklies.com

Lanny Hiday
Copy Editor
bertienews@ncweeklies.com

THE BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE (ISSN 051-700) IS PUBLISHED EACH WEDNESDAY FOR \$26.69 (PLUS TAX) PER YEAR (IN BERTIE, HERTFORD, MARTIN, NORTHAMPTON, CHOWAN AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES) BY GOOKE COMMUNICATIONS NORTH CAROLINA, LLC, 109 S. KING ST., WINDSOR, NC 27983. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT WINDSOR, NC AND ENTERED AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.

POSTMASTER:
ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE, P.O. Box 69, WINDSOR, NC 27983.

CONTACT US:
BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE
P.O. Box 69,
WINDSOR, NC 27983.
PHONE: (252) 794-3185
FAX: (252) 794-2835