

The Merits—and the Limits—of Democracy Promotion in the Middle East

by [Robert Satloff \(/experts/robert-satloff\)](/experts/robert-satloff)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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At a time when a macabre fondness for the 'stability' provided by the likes of Saddam, Qaddafi, and Assad has seeped into sectors of America's public discourse, Elliott Abrams has correctly diagnosed the main problem with U.S. regional policy.

American foreign policy has witnessed quite a few knock-down, no-holds-barred battles over the past 50 years. Thanks to his Democrat-turned-Republican political pedigree, Elliott Abrams has been involved in almost all of these fierce debates since the early 1970s. To follow his personal intellectual history and political maturation is thus to trace an important piece of the past half-century of intellectual and political thinking in America. And that opportunity is again on offer in his new book, *Realism and Democracy: American Foreign Policy after the Arab Spring*. The opening third of the book is a riveting 40-year history of an idea: the idea that human rights and, later, democracy promotion should be not just the nice-sounding but throwaway advice we spoon-feed to dictators on the American dole or to the leaders of insignificant countries in irrelevant places, but at the center of American foreign policy and at or near the top of the agenda in U.S. relations with other great powers...

[Read the full article on the Mosaic website. \(https://mosaicmagazine.com/observation/2017/12/the-merits-and-the-limits-of-democracy-promotion-in-the-middle-east/\)](https://mosaicmagazine.com/observation/2017/12/the-merits-and-the-limits-of-democracy-promotion-in-the-middle-east/) ❖

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