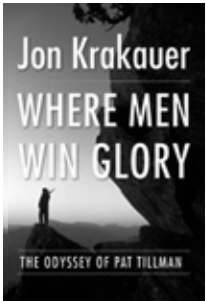


MR Book Reviews



Featured Review

WHERE MEN WIN GLORY: The Odyssey of Pat Tillman, Jon Krakauer, Doubleday, 2009, New York, 383 pages, \$27.95.

The Pat Tillman story has been told before—perhaps no better than in the pages of *Sports Illustrated*. Anyone who saw the Tillman cover photo depicting him with his long hair flowing in the red uniform of the Arizona Cardinals, with a subtitle “An Athlete Dies a Soldier,” would likely never forget the image. Tillman’s story was one of sacrifice, both monetarily when he joined the Army, and then mortally when he lost his life in combat alongside his fellow rangers in Afghanistan.

Jon Krakauer, famous for books and articles on mountaineering and experiences of wilderness solitude, focuses on three main areas in this book: a detailed narrative of the platoon’s actions leading to Pat Tillman’s death, an exploration of how the Army tried to hide the circumstances of that engagement, and a biography of Tillman’s formative years (how he became the kind of man who would walk away from millions of dollars in order to soldier).

In the introduction, Krakauer suggests that Pat Tillman was a human Rorschach test. Those on the right saw him as an “exemplar of Republican values,” while those on the left viewed him as a sort of caveman who joined the Army for no better reason than to kill Arabs. Krakauer rightly claims that there was much more to Tillman than simple caricatures, but such a claim hardly constitutes a stunning insight. People are innately complex, and any attempt to sum up the whole of a person in a sound bite is pointless.

The author frequently explores Tillman’s fascination with overcoming personal challenges. Though he

was undersized for a professional football player, Tillman was still a large man, seemingly too large to compete in either a marathon or a triathlon, yet he completed both. Krakauer’s point is that Tillman always sought a challenge, particularly those of an individual, physical nature. There are several instances in the book where Tillman assumes great personal risk in diving and climbing. In fact, these happen so frequently that one could conclude that Tillman’s fascination with adrenaline-inducing experiences as well as overcoming personal challenges might have contributed as much to his decision to join the Rangers as his stated sense of duty.

Whether Krakauer is right or wrong in his contentions is debatable, but his claims are often not particularly convincing for two reasons. First, he demonstrates bias by dedicating an entire chapter on the contested 2000 presidential election, claiming it was stolen. He attacks Bush and his administration often enough to make one wonder if the author is motivated more by passion than fairness. Second, throughout the book Krakauer employs a questionable method of attribution. Rather than precise notes linked to a bibliography, he offers general comments on his sources for each chapter. For example, he usually notes that his main sources were interviews with a particular person and leaves it at that. Such a form of referencing sources is imprecise and does not allow readers to check his facts.

Krakauer does superb work in telling the story of Tillman’s death. His descriptions of the platoon’s actions are precise and detailed, at times disturbingly so. For example, he vividly describes the extent of Tillman’s injuries as well as the awkward recovery of the body from the high ground back to the platoon area. Some of the descriptions are nauseating, but they are neither gra-

tuitous nor voyeuristic. Rather, the author provides the precision necessary to truly capture the extent of the tragedy, the horror of the moment.

Krakauer is less effective in making a case that the cover-up was orchestrated for political purposes at the highest levels of government. He cites messages written by then-Major General McChrystal, commander of Joint Special Operations Command, to his superiors that warn of the likelihood that Tillman was killed by friendly fire, yet the author’s suggestion that the cover-up was skillfully orchestrated is not convincingly proven. Much of the situation was ugly and without doubt poorly handled, but the claim that it was carefully designed is debatable. One must remember that Tillman was killed on 22 April 2004 and his ashes scattered in the Pacific Ocean on 28 April.

Further, Kevin Tillman, Pat’s brother, was a member of the same platoon, and nobody in the unit wanted to tell Kevin that his brother had been killed by friendly fire. Six days pass quickly, and it seems possible that nobody wanted to make public the nature of a hero’s death on the eve of the memorial ceremony. Krakauer may be right about an intentional cover-up, but he doesn’t provide the needed evidence to prove the claim that the motivation was insidious rather than compassionate.

The author discusses many other painful topics: the Tillman family’s self-serving actions after Pat, at the age of seventeen, beat another young man savagely and continued the attack long after the victim was unconscious; the indiscipline demonstrated by the apparently panicked members of the Ranger platoon as they engaged targets without properly identifying them; rumors that Tillman was assassinated by members of his unit, which Krakauer denies; the loss or intentional destruction of key evi-

dence (Tillman's bloody uniform and personal journal); the investigating officer's public claim that the Tillman family, being atheists, would forever be unable to find comfort; the Soldier who actually shot Tillman writing an inept letter questioning his subsequent dismissal from the Ranger Regiment.

In the end, the focus on what made Tillman tick is the book's strength. What made him leave the NFL for the Army? Why was Tillman so taken with the transcendentalism of George Bernard Shaw, finding significance in the belief that "nothing is at last as sacred as the integrity of your own mind"? A thoughtful man, Tillman questioned authority while working in professions that demand compliance, excelled in a team game despite an innate tendency to be a loner, and seemed indifferent to both fame and wealth in a world where both are coveted. While not always successful, Krakauer explores many fascinating contradictions in a book that is certainly worth reading. That said, one must keep in mind his rather apparent mistrust of both the government and the military chain of command.

**LTC James Varner, USA, Retired,
Platte City, Missouri**

THE DUEL: Pakistan on the Flight Path of American Power, Tariq Ali, Scribner, New York, 2008, 336 pages, \$16.00.

Tariq Ali's latest work is simultaneously enlightening, befuddling, and erratic. A long-serving London-based journalist as well as editor of the *New Left Review*, Ali is a keen and highly opinionated observer of Pakistani politics and international affairs. He describes Pakistan as a dysfunctional state rather than a failed one and cautions that his former homeland may be closer than ever to careening out of control. Although his work is hardly a model of discursive reasoning, Ali largely focuses on three broad concerns: America's toxic interference in Pakistan's affairs, Pakistan's internal political disarray, and the Soviet and American wars in Afghanistan. At

its best, his commentary is highly discerning and brings to light various aspects of Pakistan's many challenges.

The book's title (perhaps containing a veiled allusion to U.S. air strikes) implies that Pakistan's haphazard relationship with the United States has compounded Pakistan's difficulties. Ali tells how American foreign policy, by virtue of the sheer magnitude of U.S. wealth and power, has distorted not only Pakistan's policies but also Pakistan's very history. During and even after the Cold War, U.S. leaders tended to base their decisions on Pakistan on short-term strategic concerns. By choosing to base U.S. relations with Pakistan on cooperation with that country's generals, the United States made the military an increasingly dominant force in Pakistani society. By deliberately overlooking Pakistan's development of nuclear weapons in exchange for cooperation in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the U.S. opened the door to current apprehensions about the control and proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Ali explains that from its birth in 1947, Pakistan has suffered from ineffectual leadership. Civilian politicians have been notoriously corrupt and inept, and military despots have performed no better. Ali asserts that Leavenworth-educated General Zia-ul-Haq, to whom the United States turned for aid in defeating the Soviets in Afghanistan, authorized the Inter-Services Intelligence to turn Islamic extremists loose to wield increasing influence in the Pakistani army, as well as in that country's social and political life.

Despite his disdain for the Taliban, Ali has little use for the American-led war in Afghanistan. He considers President Hamid Karzai a "quisling" and an impediment to progress. Moreover, he sees no end to the current war except through negotiated arrangements with all of that country's neighbors, including Iran.

Ali has a dim and decidedly leftist appreciation of American society and politics that shades his analysis of some events, but even so, there is much to gain from reading Ali's

book. Ali knows many of Pakistan's political leaders personally and has an amazing network of contacts. He laces his text with colorful and telling anecdotes and personal sketches of key figures. These features to some extent compensate for the author's occasionally disjointed narrative. In sum, while the conscientious student of South Asian affairs should not rely on this book alone, it is nevertheless a valuable supplement to the works of Ahmed Rashid and others.

**Robert Baumann, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE NUCLEAR EXPRESS: A Political History of the Bomb and Its Proliferation, Thomas C. Reed and Danny B. Stillman, Zenith Press/MBI Publishing, Minneapolis, MN, 2009, 392 pages, \$30.00.

Nuclear proliferation lies at the heart of many current international issues, including the invasion of Iraq and the confrontations with Iran and North Korea. Despite strenuous efforts by the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency, additional governments (and potentially nonstate actors) continue to obtain both fissionable material and technical knowledge.

Nuclear weapons designers Thomas Reed and Danny Stillman have attempted to trace the path of proliferation from the 1930s to the present. In the process, they not only describe the governmental decisions behind the spread of nuclear weapons but also explain many of the technical issues related to weapons design and safety. In addition, Stillman recounts the unusual access he gained to both the Soviet and Chinese nuclear programs during the 1990s.

The authors stress the often-overlooked realities of proliferation, such as the role of early computers in calculations for the original hydrogen bombs or the flow of knowledge that occurred when physics graduate students returned to their home countries after studying abroad. They also describe how miscalculations caused fatal accidents in U.S. and Soviet nuclear tests during the 1950s.

In addition, *The Nuclear Express* describes governmental actions that have produced one new nuclear power every five years since 1945. With regard to the long-standing debate about Soviet espionage, the authors allege that an unnamed employee of the American hydrogen project gave the Soviets the key design concept of radiation implosion. They also describe how, despite all its denials, China continues a voracious program to obtain technical information from the United States.

The two authors describe in some detail the manner in which France provided critical help to the Israeli nuclear program until Charles de Gaulle halted this cooperation, and they allege that Lyndon Johnson and other American officials knowingly accepted Tel Aviv's deceptions concerning its weapons program. Israel later gave technical assistance to the South African search for an A-bomb in return for uranium ore and testing facilities. Reed and Stillman assert that China has been the key actor in helping Pakistan, North Korea, and perhaps other states develop their own nuclear weapons. Of course, no history of nuclear weapons would be complete without discussing the role of Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan.

Some readers may question the book's conspiracy theory approach and the speculative nature of the authors' account of recent nuclear transactions. However, overall, this is a refreshing and informative review of proliferation issues and well worth reading by anyone concerned with them.

**COL Jonathan M. House,
USAR, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE SECRET SENTRY: The Untold History of the National Security Agency, Matthew A. Aid, Bloomsbury Press, New York, 2009, 408 pages, \$30.00.

Some 30 years ago, an expert on World War II wrote that historians would have to rewrite their stories of that conflict because of then-newly released information about Ultra,

the allied breaking of German radio traffic codes. Based on Matthew Aid's excellent history of signals intelligence and the National Security Agency (NSA), one might have similar thoughts about the history of national security policy after World War II.

Take for example the defense of the Pusan Perimeter during the Korean War. Historians have long noted the uncanny ability of the Eighth Army's commander, Lieutenant General Walton "Johnnie" Walker, to anticipate the focus of enemy attack. "Uncanny" means "mysterious" and Aid uses newly declassified documents and direct contacts with retired Eighth Army general staff members to demystify the event. He documents U.S. intelligence penetration of North Korean army radio traffic.

Unfortunately, U.S. intelligence did not decisively penetrate the plans and operations of the Soviet Union's next client. North Vietnam practiced security and radio traffic discipline far more thoroughly. True, signals intelligence provided tactical information about the size and location of enemy units. However, neither the NSA nor anyone else gave much warning about the Tet Offensive in 1968.

Aid makes clear that the NSA has a mixed record, something one could say about every national security agency. Confederate major general George Pickett famously said that the Yankees had a lot to do with the defeat of the Confederacy, and Aid points out that enemy message traffic differs substantially in its penetrability. Soberly, he concludes that the latest technology (the plethora of cell phones and fiber-optic cables) is likely to exceed NSA capability for the foreseeable future. This is not comforting to a country that can attribute some of its greatest military victories—such as Normandy and Pusan—to signals intercepts. However, data acquisition will not save us from great policy failures, such as The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and the invasion of Iraq. Aid quotes a senior analyst talking about "many policy makers . . . persuaded of

[their] own ability to analyze things correctly . . . This is a congenital disease among high-level policy makers."

Some 2,500 years ago, Sun Tzu wrote that all war planning and military operations should begin with knowledge of ourselves and of the enemy. Aid's book on the National Security Agency and signals intelligence should be on the reading list of every serious student of national security.

**Michael D. Pearlman, Ph.D.,
Lawrence, Kansas**

UGLY WAR, PRETTY PACKAGE: How CNN and Fox News Made the Invasion of Iraq High Concept, Deborah L. Jaramillo, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2009, 254 pages, \$22.95.

What if someone took the plot of the 1997 motion picture *Wag the Dog* so seriously she decided to write an academic study of the news media based on the movie's intended tongue-in-cheek premise—and publish the results in a book? That's apparently what Deborah L. Jaramillo does in *Ugly War, Pretty Package: How CNN and Fox News Made the Invasion of Iraq High Concept*.

The book posits that media moguls treat news as if it were "a narrative," embellishing reality with production techniques that emulate film industry slickness while serving agendas that may not always include reporting news as unvarnished truth.

Simply put, according to Jaramillo, TV news stories, produced as "packages," do not deal with news as much as they promote narratives or story lines aimed at drawing audiences who will boost the networks' commercial bottom lines.

However, instead of *Wag the Dog*'s bogus, trumped-up war in Albania, *Ugly War, Pretty Package* focuses on the actual 2003 invasion of Iraq, which ironically some critics and international observers with 20/20 hindsight now agree really *was* a trumped-up war based on false intelligence about Iraq's nuclear capabilities.

Jaramillo points to what she refers

to as “The Spectacle of Televised War” to support her thesis that “CNN and Fox News plainly used coverage of the 2003 war to advance their commercial aims by adhering closely to the war’s marketable concept. Armed with this concept and a simple story spread by the Bush administration and the Department of Defense, the two networks marketed the war narrative for commercial ends.”

The author admits she draws on her own background in the motion picture—not news—industry in gathering her research, which she thoroughly documents. However, when a nonjournalist views a journalistic issue through her own show-biz prism, it is inevitable that some of the resulting light thrown on that issue reflects the realities she knows from her own world.

Readers venturing into the world of *Ugly War, Pretty Package* would be well advised to keep this in mind as they navigate their way to where the truth surrounding media coverage of a real war really lies. And fair warning—it may not always be in the eye of the beholder.

Carol A. Saynisch,
former CBS News journalist,
Steilacoom, Washington

EMPTY CASING: A Soldier’s Memoir of Sarajevo Under Siege, Fred Doucette, Douglas and McIntyre Ltd., Vancouver, 2008, 228 pages, \$18.95.

Empty Casing: A Soldier’s Memoir of Sarajevo Under Siege is not just another Balkan War book. Fred Doucette, an experienced infantryman who served 32 years in the Canadian Armed Forces, has written a poignant, often disconcerting book about the effects of war on the human mind. Doucette uses his own experience while a member of a United Nations Military Observer Team in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 to examine the effects of traumatic operational stress and makes a great contribution toward understanding post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from a soldier’s perspective. The book focuses on two main themes: that civilians as well as combatants can suffer traumatic stress

injuries, and that PTSD is treatable.

Doucette describes the hostile environment of Bosnia in 1995 and recounts events that occurred during his deployment, including running from Mount Igman to Sarajevo to link up with his UN mission observer team, performing his missions and daily activities, and interacting with the Mehmebegovic family and other Bosnians who remained in Sarajevo.

Doucette easily moves from strategic, operational, and tactical perspectives to the tactical level, where he is most effective vividly describing the horrific sights, smells, and frustrations he experienced. Doucette provides insight into the emotions and dilemmas he struggled with every day. He describes how his brain automatically “switched” into survival mode following a near-fatal mortar attack and how he had to be hyper-vigilant to complete the mission. These descriptions provide the context for the internal battles he experiences later.

The last and perhaps most important part of the book examines how Doucette’s experiences in Bosnia adversely affected his mental state, his social and family life for over five years, his diagnosis, and his subsequent treatment. Doucette reflects that when he appeared to have reintegrated back into society, he was actually battling “demons” on three levels—the individual level, where he measured his self-worth, self-reliance, and his ability to solve his own problems; the professional military level, where he measured himself against the norms of being a tough, strong, disciplined infantryman who was not allowed to show weakness; and the human level, where understanding, compassion, and the value of life (not destruction and cruelty) were the norms. These conflicts fueled his anger and depression and the terror he associated with flashbacks he called “war porn.” Properly diagnosed with PTSD in 2001, Doucette found relief after he began treatment and eventually become a peer counselor for Canada’s National Defense Operational Stress Injury Social Support program.

Empty Casing’s maps and photos enable the reader to visualize the

horrific environment and conditions of the conflict. The book is relevant because military and civilian personnel from many nations, returning to or escaping from the stressful and horrific environments of conflict, may be suffering from operational stress injuries. Whether you agree with the author’s reasoning and perspectives or not, the book is of enduring value. It offers hope and encouragement for other soldiers suffering from PTSD and their loved ones.

LTC Edward D. Jennings,
USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

ON HALLOWED GROUND: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery, Robert M. Poole, Walker & Company, New York, 2009, 339 pages, \$28.00.

On Hallowed Ground is an engaging historical narrative that covers Arlington National Cemetery from the American Civil War to the War on Terrorism. Robert Poole begins the story with Robert E. Lee’s family evacuating their Arlington estate and Union forces seizing it. As casualties escalated, the dead soon overwhelmed Washington’s mortuary resources. Out of necessity and retribution, Montgomery Meigs, head of the Quartermaster Corps, systematically turned Lee’s estate into a cemetery. Lee never regained his property, and the site evolved over the post-Civil War years from a Union shrine into a symbol of national reconciliation.

As the national culture changed, so did Arlington. Ostentatious Victorian funerary art gave way to simple marble headstones. Architects and city planners, seeking to restore the estate and city to its intended simplicity, interred the city’s planner, Pierre L’Enfant, on a hill overlooking the National Mall. Casualties from Cuba and the USS *Maine* bore witness to the country’s growing international role. Astounding technological changes transformed the military but increased the 20th century’s death toll.

Advanced identification methods ensured that casualties would not

remain forgotten. In World War I, those improvements allowed for the identification of all but a small percentage of the casualties. In honor of their sacrifices, one of those unknowns was transported amid great pomp to his final resting place in Arlington. Although his monument remained incomplete for a decade, the Unknown Soldier became the national symbol of American sacrifice. In the following decades, Arlington saw the tragic Bonus March, the construction of the Pentagon nearby, and the burials of casualties from World War II and Korea.

In 1963, the nation laid President John F. Kennedy to rest within the shadow of Arlington's Greek Revival mansion just as the ancient Athenian democracy buried its leaders in a place of honor. Because of this public attention, the site became a place of pilgrimage, and burial requests increased dramatically. However, the site suffered politicization when the Reagan administration pushed to include a Vietnam unknown. The poorly executed process resulted in the enshrinement of remains that were later disinterred and identified. Today, Arlington continues to honor past sacrifices while paying tribute to the casualties of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Written in a vigorous style and accessible to a broad audience, *On Hallowed Ground* makes a valuable contribution to the preservation of our national heritage. Poole gives voice to Arlington's silent monuments so their stories will not be forgotten. He tells the stories in vivid detail, seamlessly weaving together the national narrative with vignettes about those who lived, worked, or were laid to rest at Arlington. He also includes the history of Arlington's traditions and controversies and a helpful notes section for further study. This book is highly recommended as a narrative history and as a sobering reminder of our obligation to honor those who paid freedom's price.

1LT Jonathan E. Newell, USAR, Amherst, New Hampshire

THE RETURN OF HISTORY AND THE END OF DREAMS, Robert Kagan, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2008, 116 pages, \$19.95.

In his latest work, Robert Kagan offers a riveting picture of the unanticipated eruption of conflicting forces during the post-Cold War era. The book's title, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*, alludes to Francis Fukuyama's more optimistic work on the post-Cold War era, *End of History and the Last Man*. The book is certain to captivate, intrigue, and inform serious scholars and students of contemporary international relations. Kagan is a serious and gifted writer who has the uncanny ability to illuminate complex issues and give the reader an experience of simplicity without understating or diminishing the significance of his points and ideas. Unfortunately, *Return of History* is not a seminal work because its conclusion is disappointingly unoriginal.

Kagan uses the first half of his book to present a compelling view of the post-Cold War world, asserting, "The core assumptions of the post-Cold War years collapsed almost as soon as they were formulated." Kagan argues the "struggle for status has returned" among states. He writes that during the Cold War the "bipolar order suppressed the normal tendency for other great powers to emerge," which delayed the emergence of the China, India, and Japan we see today. Kagan contends that, as during the 19th century, a new international system of liberalism versus autocracy has reemerged. The tension between radical Islamist and modern secular cultures is the other "great conflict in the international system today." Kagan's wise and deliberate consideration of the "struggle between modernization and Islamic radicalism" is another striking aspect of his book. He persuasively argues that resurgent nationalism and the struggle for status are the two powerful forces at play in the contemporary international system, which yields *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*.

After positing this theory, Kagan examines the contemporary autocratic states of Russia, China, and Iran and their existing political systems. Kagan highlights the ever-mounting political incompatibilities, both domestic and foreign, between these states and the West. He emphasizes that "the new era, rather than becoming a time of universal values, will be one of growing tensions." One particularly compelling point Kagan makes is that "the world's democracies do not regard their own efforts to support democracy and Enlightenment principles abroad as an aspect of geopolitical competition, because they don't see 'competing truths,' only 'universal values,'" a point of view that works to the detriment of the West in geopolitical competitions.

Unfortunately, as Kagan's work draws to a close, it takes a sharp turn into the realm of the unremarkable. He sets forth an idea that essentially translates to "Yes, things are bad, but imagine how much worse they might be." He asks, "Might not even a flawed democratic superpower have an important role to play?" In the end, he offers a "Concert of Democracies" as a possible solution to instability, and simply reminds us that the U.S. defeated fascism in the 1940s and communism in the 1990s. He then offers the not exactly breath taking prediction that "the future of the international order will be shaped by those that have the power and the collective will to shape it."

LTC William J. Maxcy, USA, Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

IF MAHAN RAN THE GREAT PACIFIC WAR: An Analysis of World War II Naval Strategy, John A. Adams, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2008, 472 pages, \$34.95.

John Adams' *If Mahan Ran the Great Pacific War* is fiction that provides an insightful analysis of World War II strategy and operational art in the Pacific from the perspective of Alfred Thayer Mahan's theories of sea power, which all officers in the

opposing navies of U.S. and Japan had studied as required reading in their Naval War Colleges. Mahan's principles served as the basis for both the U.S. Navy's War Plan Orange and Japan's strategic decision making.

Adams examines how well actual strategic and operational decisions would fare had Mahan assigned them a grade. Some admirals, notably Ernest King, U.S. chief of naval operations, come to the top of the class; others, such as the highly intelligent Yamamoto, receive failing grades for their inability to follow through on strategic concepts. Despite this "cute" literary conceit, the book is a serious work of scholarship supported by extensive notes and bibliography. I have two minor quibbles. The editor should have caught many typos and could have eliminated some redundant passages, shortening the book by 50 pages.

Read this book with a detailed atlas of the Pacific Ocean (and a glass of your favorite grog). Adams discusses many important themes: the causes and consequences of the famous "two-pronged American Pacific strategy," the roles of reconnaissance, technology, and air power versus surface gunnery, the significance of island bases, submarine warfare, and the fundamental importance of logistics. Mahanian principles such as maintaining "a fleet in being," decisive battles versus raids, and the role of blockade are all discussed in depth as are the importance of having intelligent and courageous leaders and a well-trained crew. The author makes liberal use of alternative scenarios and "war gaming." Adams recognizes the benefit of hindsight and emphasizes that admirals had to deal with the "crushing" weight of making life or death decisions under enormous time pressures and with incomplete information.

If Mahan Ran the Great Pacific War is a must read for students of World War II in the Pacific and all those interested in naval and military strategy. Army officers, in particular, will gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by their naval brethren. Students of strategy will

ask themselves whether a particular battle, or even an entire operation, served to advance national military strategy or simply occurred as a function of inertia, unimaginative thinking, or a commander's egotism.

**LTC Prisco R. Hernández, Ph.D.,
USAR,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

HELL'S ISLANDS: The Untold Story of Guadalcanal, Stanley Coleman Jersey, Texas A&M Press, College Station, 2008, 536 pages, \$35.00.

Stanley Coleman Jersey's *Hell's Islands: The Untold Story of Guadalcanal* is a detailed history of the island-hopping campaign in the South Pacific during World War II that examines the strategic importance of the Solomon Islands while providing a detailed narrative of the struggle for Guadalcanal and neighboring islands. The book begins with events such as the Australian administration and defense plans for the islands that preceded the six-month struggle for Guadalcanal. Jersey details Japanese operations designed to seize the resource-rich area and create a defensive bastion with which to interdict allied shipping through the South Pacific and isolate Australia. The author focuses on the brutal conflict for Guadalcanal. Some historians have termed the conflict a more decisive turning point than the naval battle at Midway some two months earlier.

Jersey's research spans more than 40 years, beginning with his experience as a World War II veteran in the South Pacific. He tells the story from viewpoints of Americans, Japanese, Australian, and even native Guadalcanal inhabitants. Literally thousands of official archival documents such as battle orders, campaign reports, official correspondence, and officer's logs support his conclusions. Jersey presents the common Soldier's view through information gleaned from private diaries and interviews of more than 200 veterans of the campaign. His research presents a more in-depth view than most previous accounts.

Hell's Islands' myriad details add depth and clarity to the study, but

the book has one considerable drawback. As with other earlier works, Jersey gives far too much attention to the initial phase of the American campaign. The U.S. Marines had wrested control of Henderson Field from the Japanese and then held it against determined counterattacks by the Japanese at "Bloody Ridge" and "Lunga Point." While the Marines' heroic struggle certainly bears great merit in the overall story of the campaign, Jersey unfortunately dedicates only one chapter to the offensive operations conducted by the U.S. Army's XIV Corps. Almost in passing, the book presents the offensive battles to take Mount Austen and the Gifu strongpoint and clear the island, leaving the reader to wonder if the Army contributed much at all to the campaign's outcome.

Despite this flaw, *Hell's Islands* provides a credible addition to the literature on the Guadalcanal campaign. The book's detail about the prewar settlement and defenses provides key background information that adds to the readers' comprehension of the strategic context. Furthermore, the author's attention to detail adds to our understanding of how to conduct Joint military operations successfully against a tough and determined foe in a most inhospitable environment. *Hell's Islands* is a useful work not only for the casual reader but also the serious student of military history.

**Dan C. Fullerton, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE BOX FROM BRAUNAU: In Search of My Father's War, Jan Elvin, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2008, 237 pages, \$24.95.

The Box from Braunau: In Search of My Father's War chronicles a daughter's quest to learn about her father's experiences during World War II. In her efforts to understand the events and times that shaped her father's life, she reveals a tremendous amount of information about him, his experiences, and valuable military history. The mystery surrounding a small aluminum box her father kept from the war drove Elvin

to conduct her research. The box was handmade with an engraving of a man and woman surrounded by flowers and inscribed "1944 Braunau."

Elvin discovers that her father, First Lieutenant William Elvin, served as a platoon leader in E-Co, 2d Battalion, 318th Infantry Regiment in the 80th Infantry Division. She chronicles her father's experiences in heavy, sustained combat in France. She covers these experiences in detail and relates them to the broader context of the ongoing campaign.

Elvin describes her father's second life-altering event: the liberation of the Ebensee Concentration Camp in Austria. She provides descriptions of this horrific camp from numerous perspectives and discovers that it was at this camp that a grateful former prisoner gave her father the engraved handmade box he had kept for so many years. The man who had gone to great lengths and risk to make and hide the box had it inscribed with the name of the nearby town of Braunau, which ironically was also the birthplace of Adolph Hitler.

The Box from Braunau is well written. The reader will find it excellent not just for its contribution to World War II history but also because it provides insight into how a man's daughter could piece together the events that shaped her father's life and gave her an understanding of how her own life was shaped by them as well. I recommend the book, as it provides an understanding of the impact that these kinds of experiences can have on not only on those who have experienced combat but also on their family members.

**LTC Thomas G. Meara,
USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

DEFENDERS OF FORTRESS EUROPE: The Untold Story of the German Officers During the Allied Invasion, Samuel W. Mitcham, Jr., Potomac Books, Dulles, VA, 2009, 218 pages, \$27.50.

Experience tells me there is more than meets the eye when it comes to defining the success or failure

of revered military leaders such as Alexander the Great, Bonaparte, Lee, Grant, Montgomery, Patton, McArthur, and Rommel. Influences beyond one's control, frequently in the form of actions taken (or not taken) by superiors and subordinate leaders, often provide the critical act that seals their place in history. Samuel Mitcham provides a superbly researched account of the second- and third-level leaders of the German Army in 1944.

Defenders of Fortress Europe follows German army leaders as they prepare for the Allied landings on 6 June 1944. The reader takes a riveting journey through the tough fighting in hedgerow country, the Allied breakout and eventual taking of Paris, the German retreat, and the surrender in the west. The book discusses the more famous officers such as Rommel, Guderian, and Model, but they are not the centerpieces of the book. They provide context and a familiar point of reference to introduce lesser-known subordinate officers. The author traces each officer's early family life, his experiences in World War I, and how he spent the interwar years and progressed through the ranks of Hitler's war machine. The officers suffer tactical defeats, lose operational momentum, and slowly lose hope as their government crumbles.

I recommend *Defenders of Fortress Europe* to military professionals and to those interested in understanding the German army's inner-workings during the final days of World War II.
**COL David L. Blain, USA, Retired,
Leavenworth, Kansas**

D-DAY: The Battle for Normandy, Antony Beevor, Viking Press, New York, 2009, 526 pages, \$32.95.

In *D-DAY: The Battle for Normandy*, Antony Beevor presents a picture of this all-important battle from three levels—tactical, operational, and strategic. The book's scope of time is far more encompassing than just "the longest day." However, I believe Stephen Ambrose's *D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climatic Battle of World War II* better addresses the Soldier and unit aspects of the fight for Normandy.

Readers will appreciate Beevor's discussion of Allied strategic and political challenges and will be intrigued by the political and national motivations that drove the Allies to get onto the Continent. Officers must be aware of a nation's global vision and foreign policy before going in.

Was the race to Paris not only for liberation, but also to ensure that a civil war did not erupt between the de Gaullists and the communists? Did the French conveniently choose to ignore Britain's bankruptcy supporting the exiled French government and the second front, or the United States providing everything (uniforms, equipment, armor, and food) for French soldiers conducting their liberation? In cold, calculating terms, did the Allies view this as just one more task to accomplish, another hurdle to jump before realizing national interests and future visions?

The Germans thought of the future as they fought a losing war: Do we fight to the end or make a peace agreement with the Allies and continue the war with Russia? Who was responsible for slow reactions or the inability to place German forces at critical junctures? Did the Allied unconditional surrender demand influence Germany to launch desperate, ill-conceived, and poorly executed operations to stem the overwhelming offensive? After the Hitler assassination attempt, were surviving German generals inhibited because subordinate fanatics might turn them in at the slightest hint of defeatism or disgruntlement?

Beevor's nonjudgmental analysis of decisions and indecisions at divisional, corps, and army level allows for lessons learned and conclusions without prejudice. On the downside, the book's maps were less than adequate in detail and scope and poorly placed for the reader's reference.

**LTC David A. Moeller,
USA, Retired,
Roswell, New Mexico**

WORLD WAR ONE: A Short History, Norman Stone, Basic Books, New York, 240 pages, 2009, \$25.00.

Over the last several years, a number of books have been written about World War I, many of which have increased our understanding of the war and put to bed some of the more egregious myths that have emerged over the years. Against that backdrop, Norman Stone's *World War One: A Short History* is a step backwards.

Stone's approach is conventional. He begins with an explanation of the outbreak of the war, follows with a chapter on each year of the war, then finishes with a brief summary of the aftermath. He talks about the differences between the fronts, which helps in understanding why the fighting, in the main theaters, was so different in character. He captures the German High Command's denial of the true state of affairs toward the end of 1918.

The reader might get the impression the Allies were a bunch of duffers who stumbled around in a fog until enlightened by the Germans. For example, when discussing the German attack at Caporetto in 1917 and the March offensive of 1918, Stone states that these were "displays of panache of which the plodders on the Allied side were utterly incapable." The claim ignores the Allied offensives of 1918, which might not have been spectacular, but which did result in the collapse of the German Army: something rather more than mere panache.

In addition, there are a number of minor, but annoying, factual errors. For example, there is a clear implication that the Germans of 1918 had adopted the "new weaponry" of light machine guns and rifle grenades, but that the Allies had not. In fact, the rifle grenade was first widely used by the French, and both they and the British had light machine guns. Stone notes the Allies introduced tanks and developed an early form of blitzkrieg, although this does not stop him from claiming that Germany was leading the technology race.

Lest this review become no more than a laundry list of complaints, let me simply say that all of this is disappointing, especially given the excellent work that Stone has done in the past. If one is willing to accept

obvious bias, then Stone's book is a good overview of the war and worth reading. However, a better choice would be Keith Robbins' *The First World War* or Stokesbury's *A Short History of World War I*.

**Nicholas Murray,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

LINCOLN AND THE DECISION FOR WAR: The Northern Response to Secession, Russell A. McClintock, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2008, 400 pages, \$35.00.

Russell McClintock's *Lincoln and the Decision for War: The Northern Response to Secession* is a compelling book that casts new light on the problems facing President Lincoln and his administration in a time of political and social turbulence. The book focuses on issues and personalities that drove Northern and Southern leaders into their fatal split. McClintock carefully weaves together the challenges facing the newly victorious Republicans and the Democratic party, both riven by factional interests. McClintock tells the story not in terms of special interests but chronologically, allowing the reader to see how the road to war unfolded, despite the efforts of many to "preserve" the Union after Lincoln's election.

Lincoln and the Decision for War chronicles Northern tensions and the national mindset as the U.S. gropes for a political solution short of war. Most histories of this period focus on what the South chose to do and what actions it undertook to build a new nation state. McClintock integrates several divergent political crises into his book. The reader may be surprised to learn that many Northerners were ready to allow the South to secede, perhaps because Lincoln lacked constitutional authority to negate this action.

Others simply wanted the South and its peculiar institution to be gone, and here was an easy way to excise a cancer from the Union. Then there were the issues surrounding the Southern Unionists who wanted to preserve the nation at any politi-

cal cost. Add the Democratic Party into this mix and one begins to understand the complete volatility of the situation. It seems that both Lincoln and Douglas were not at the top of their game during this period, although I am inclined to give Lincoln more leeway because he was in the process of organizing a new administration.

The reader will be surprised how the public and the media dealt with Abraham Lincoln's election and the South's response. New alliances came and went as public opinion began to influence the choices of political actors. Lincoln found it hard to come to a decision quickly about how to handle the national crisis.

McClintock contributes greatly to Civil War scholarship and perhaps even helps Army officers understand the current political climate. The use of letters and diary entries from Americans from all walks of life shows that McClintock has truly mastered his subject. I highly recommend this book.

**LTC Robert G. Smith, USA,
Germantown, Maryland**

WADE HAMPTON: Confederate Warrior to Southern Redeemer, Rod Andrew, Jr., University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2008, 640 pages, \$40.00.

Rod Andrew's biography of Wade Hampton, III, fills a large gap in both Civil War and Reconstruction history. In *Wade Hampton: Confederate Warrior to Southern Redeemer*, Andrew explains how post-war period leaders such as Hampton were able to keep a hold on their Soldiers and fellow citizens. Andrew balances Hampton's story with themes of chivalry, honor, paternalism, and Hampton's difficult fight for vindication of the war-shattered South.

Andrew introduces Hampton's large clan and shows how that diverse group shaped Hampton's personality during his formative years and his actions later as a man and a leader. The book's footnotes detail the complexity of South Carolina's wartime politics and describe how the tension between

Virginia and the Deep South states affected Hampton's efforts to obtain replacements of Soldiers, horses, and equipment for his regiments. Hampton struggled throughout the war to obtain needed support and recognition for his Deep South cavalry units. Andrew also shows how Confederate leaders Robert E. Lee, J.E.B. Stuart, and Jefferson Davis dealt with the competent and charismatic Hampton.

Hampton felt personal responsibility toward all South Carolinians (black and white), which led him to espouse a resurgent Democratic party that re-enfranchised former Confederates including (in a somewhat limited fashion) black voters. Hampton sought ways to redeem the South and vindicate its historic wartime struggle. It is in the role of "vindicator" that Hampton is less understood, and Andrew corrects this fault. He depicts Hampton as a forceful political leader with the finesse not to resort to counter-violence. Andrew completes the picture of Hampton's life as a "patriarch," conservative post-war political leader, and "champion of South Carolina."

The book is an authoritative biography of an interesting man that will well serve serious students of Southern history, the Civil War, the Reconstruction era, and Wade Hampton.

**COL Darrell L. Combs, USMC, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

WAR ON THE RUN: The Epic Story of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America's First Frontier, John F. Ross, Bantam Books, New York, 2009, 576 pages, \$30.00.

We know Robert Rogers, the master of early American frontier warfare, as the founding father of the U.S. Army Rangers. "Rogers's Rules of Ranging"—the 28 maxims Rogers required his rangers to memorize—encapsulate the tactical methods of his unique, highly effective form of warfare. The rules still serve as a guide for today's Army Rangers.

In *War on the Run: The Epic Story of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America's First Frontier*, John F. Ross

argues that Roger's Rules represent something much more significant in America's history of warfare. Ross's epic biography establishes Rogers' unique ranging techniques as the nucleus of the hybrid form of warfare that evolved as a key to American victory during the Revolutionary War.

Ross draws from Rogers' journals and contemporary sources to produce a well-researched and documented history. His experience as an outdoorsman adds to the narrative and enables him to augment his archival research with observations gained from walking and kayaking much of the same terrain Rogers covered. Ross's personal exploration and detailed geographic and meteorological research conveys the severe climatic conditions and harsh terrain that confronted the rangers who were outfitted with only snowshoes, rudimentary boats, and the most basic of survival equipment.

Ross describes Rogers' near-convicition for counterfeiting, his constant troubles with debt, his eventual allegiance to the Tories, and his espionage skills (which led to the capture and execution of Nathan Hale). The author details ranger operations during the conflict between the British and the French and their Indian allies. He also describes the tension between advocates of traditional and irregular forms of warfare and the support required from key British leaders to enable the creation and growth of ranger units. His discussions about organization and training for irregular war are as relevant today as they were then.

Ross has restored Rogers to his proper place in history, describing not only his efforts in developing ranging tactics and organizations, but placing these achievements in the larger context of military history. *War on the Run* is a fascinating and enjoyable book.

**LTC Mark Calhoun, USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE WAR MAN: The True Story of a Citizen-Soldier Who Fought from Quebec to Yorktown, Robert A. Mayers, Westholme, Yardley, PA, 2009, 352 pages, \$26.00.

In *The War Man: The True Story of a Citizen-Soldier Who Fought from Quebec To Yorktown*, Robert A. Mayers takes an ambitious approach to uncovering the service record of a New York Continental Soldier in the Revolutionary War. While personal narratives of Soldiers from the Revolutionary War are not unheard of, they are uncommon, and Mayers surprisingly chooses an uncommon subject in John Allison.

Born in Haverstraw, New York, in 1754, Allison was the son of Joseph Allison, an affluent landowner and Seven Years War veteran and an early supporter of resistance to Crown policies. In 1775, Allison enlisted in Captain Robert Johnston's Company of the 3d New York Regiment Continental Line and served through the end of the war. Literate, affluent, and from a prominent family, Allison was anything but typical.

Allison failed to leave a written record of his service except for his pension application, filed with the Orange County magistrate in 1818. Mayers, a descendent of Allison, turned to 19th-century county histories, genealogies, and living historians to flesh out Allison's narrative.

Mayers details the demographics of Allison's company, tracing Allison's service through the collective record of Johnston's company. With this type of history, speculation is inevitable, and Mayers resorts to it from time to time.

At times, Mayers confuses the different types of service. His use of the term "minuteman" to describe all members of the militia becomes problematic, as does the intrusion of modern military terms describing the battles in which Allison engaged. Analysis is also sometimes lacking: Mayers does not go into much detail about how demographics, training, and equipment might have affected combat effectiveness. However, this is more than understandable, as *War Man* is a narrative of one man's service during the Revolutionary War.

The sections narrating Allison's service at St. Johns, the Battles of Forts Clinton and Montgomery, and the 1779 Wyoming campaign are illuminating. The book's maps and appendices are most useful,

and readers contemplating a tour of military sites along the Hudson may appreciate Allison's recapitulation of some of the operations in which he was engaged. Historians, enthusiasts of local history, and

students of military history interested in the Continental Army's northern operations will value *War Man*.

Joseph A. Seymour, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.

MR Letters to the Editor

Colonel Mike Redmond (UK), *chief, Stability Operations Division, Strategy, Policy, and Plans Directorate of Headquarters, Department of the Army (G-3/5/7)*—I found the article "Forward in Africa" (January-February 2010, *Military Review*) by MG Garrett, COL Mariano, and MAJ Sanderson of U.S. Army Africa to be both a comprehensive and insightful piece on the very real challenges that USAFRICOM and the U.S. Army in Africa face in implementing an ambitious yet necessary engagement strategy in this most important region. The issues faced by this nascent command to sustain a persistent and sustained engagement are reflected in other combatant commands and offer useful lessons for all. When Army commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan abate, the demand for trained and ready forces to build partner capacity will remain significant. Even when forces are allocated to conduct such operations, the requirement for complementary levels of effort across the entire security sector of a partner nation in order to permit the evolution of sustainable security institutions remains.

A recent Security Sector Reform White Paper, jointly published by the State Department, Department of Defense (DOD), and U.S. Agency for International Development, highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to this endeavor. This serves to make all practitioners more receptive to the roles that diplomacy, development, and defense play in building our partners' security institutions. Recent speeches by the secretary of defense, ongoing revi-

sions of a number of Joint publications, and the production of Army Field Manual (FM) 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance*, acknowledge that interagency cooperation, conflict prevention, and imbuing partner nations with the capacity to secure themselves, govern their people, and evidence willingness to operate as partners across the spectrum of conflict represent the new paradigm of our engagement.

Three small but important issues are worth addressing:

- In September 2009, DOD Instruction 3000.05 replaced the DOD Directive issued four years previously. The new instruction defined stability operations and indicated that these are a core military mission. It also outlines the direction not only for the services with regard to developing capabilities, but also for the combatant commands to incorporate the related tasks and considerations into the respective theater campaign plans. To assist in this work, the Army has appointed the commanding general, Combined Arms Center, as its proponent for stability operations and security force assistance (SFA).

- The principal focus of Army campaign plan (ACP) major objective 8.6, "Adapting the Army for Building Partner Capacity," lies in identifying and executing adaptation of the Army institutions that assist the operating force in the conduct of operations to build partner capacity. Although this has a direct bearing upon the construct, training, and delivery of such effort, which lies predominantly

with the operating forces, ACP 8.6 seeks to address how the generating forces are best structured to support this effort. Subsequent work will explore in greater depth the requirements of the various Army service component commands (ASCCs) and the manner in which operating and generating forces (individuals, organizations, equipment, capabilities, and programs) are identified, prepared, and made available to meet this mission set. The ongoing efforts of U.S. Army Africa and all ASCCs will prove critical to informing this project, and they form essential partners in development and execution.

- The Army approach to delivering SFA by the operating force uses a combination of special operations forces (SOF) and general purpose forces (GPF) assigned through the global force management process via the Army force generation (ARFORGEN) cycle. In the case of GPF, the modular brigade is the principal means for the tactical delivery of security force assistance. It demonstrates the versatility, agility, and flexibility of the GPF and makes full use of the robust inherent command and control structures therein. The modular brigade can be adapted to specific missions, augmented with specialist expertise by elements from the generating forces, and trained within the ARFORGEN cycle to deliver the required effect in accord with SFA demands. Brigades allotted the mission to provide SFA, either as a formation or through the provision of subor-

dinate elements, remain capable of reconstituting to conduct full spectrum operations as required. The Army strategy is to adapt existing brigades to conduct SFA missions and return these to their standard design in the “Reset” phase of ARFORGEN, not to build permanent SFA formations. The terms

“advise and assist brigade” (AAB) and “modular brigade for security force assistance” (MBSFA) have been used in operational theaters to differentiate between formations that have been augmented and adapted to conduct SFA and security operations from those that have not. The level of augmenta-

tion and adaptation for any formation to conduct SFA will be driven by the mission. To support this effort the Army has established a permanent SFA training formation (162d Infantry Training Brigade at Fort Polk, Louisiana) to prepare individuals and units assigned this mission.

MR We Recommend



WHEN JANEY COMES MARCHING HOME: *Portraits of Women Combat Veterans*, Laura Browder, Photographs by Sascha Pflaeging, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2010, 144 pages, \$35.00.

While women are officially barred from combat in the American armed services, in the current war, where there are no front lines, the ban on combat is virtually meaningless. More than in any previous conflict in our history, American women are engaging with the enemy, suffering injuries, and even sacrificing their lives in the line of duty.

From the Publisher

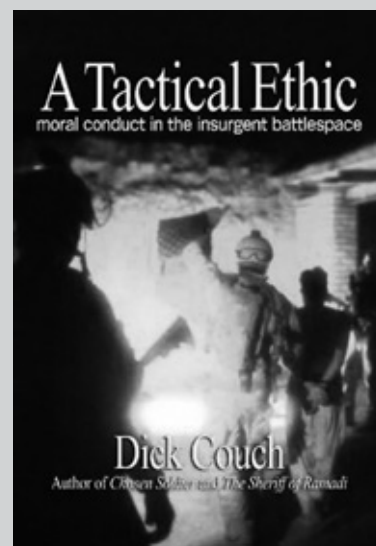


THEY DARED RETURN: *Jewish Spies Behind the Lines in Nazi Germany*, Patrick K. O'Donnell, DaCapo Press, Cambridge, MA, 2010, 240 pages, \$26.00.

It was 1942 and Adolph Hitler had the world clenched in his fist. As the war dragged on, a few Jewish refugees in the U.S. Army made the dangerous decision to make the fight against Hitler personal and joined the newly formed Office of the Strategic Services.

They Dared Return is the true story of these brave Jews who became spies for the Allies.

From the Publisher



A TACTICAL ETHIC: *Moral Conduct in the Insurgent Battlespace*, Dick Couch, U.S. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2010, 140 pages, \$22.95.

Bestselling author and combat veteran Dick Couch examines the importance of battlefield ethics in effectively combating terrorists without losing the battle for the hearts of the local population. A former Navy SEAL, Couch warns that the mistakes made in Vietnam forty years ago are being repeated in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that the stakes are even higher now. His book takes a critical look at the battlefield conduct of U.S. ground-combat units fighting insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan.

From the Publisher