
AT THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN PEACE AND WAR: The London Naval Conference of 1930

John H. Maurer and Christopher M. Bell, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2014, 288 pages

The liberal order that arose following the devastation of World War I, exemplified by the League of Nations, was primarily concerned with preventing another global conflagration. However, ensuring that the Great War remained “the war to end all wars” would prove far more complicated than the victorious allies had anticipated. The power vacuum created by the collapse of Europe’s old empires undermined the wartime political-military cooperation of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and the Empire of Japan. Allied military elites, politically strengthened during the war, pressured their governments to contest the power of former allies, threatening postwar rearmament.

The threat of an international naval arms race rivaling the antebellum Anglo-German antagonism, which many contemporaries considered a prime causation of the Great War, alarmed allied civilian governments. This menace of naval rearmament, combined with the desire of allied treasuries to reduce inflated postwar defense budgets, led to a liberal regime of naval arms control treaties, which sought to implement a system of counter proliferation across the major powers. *At the Crossroads between Peace and War* examines the London Naval Conference of 1930, the last significant interbellum naval conference, amidst the turmoil of this collapsing liberal world order. The work, the first since 1962, explores the growing political-military collaboration between the United States and Britain, and the end of Italian and Japanese cooperation with the West. It “fills an important gap in our understanding of ... why achievement was fleeting.”

London sought corresponding limits on auxiliary ships, which would complement the Washington

Conference’s restrictions on battleships in 1922. The 5:5:3:1.75:1.75 ratio set in Washington for the Britain (5), the United States (5), Japan (3), France (1.75), and Italy (1.75) respectively, formed the basis for efforts to primarily limit cruisers but also submarines and carriers. However, evolving geopolitical considerations—including an American drive for naval parity with Britain, Japan’s view of the United States as its principle threat, and Franco-Italian competition over Mediterranean hegemony—ultimately undermined its successful implementation.

Given their influence on major-power naval strategy, it is surprising that the “minor” naval powers are not expanded upon in this otherwise thorough work. Aside from Paul Halpern’s examination of French and Italian strategic concerns, the work seems to suggest that the United States, Britain, and Japan gave absolutely no consideration to “minor” naval powers. Why the conference excluded the Soviet Union and Germany, which had begun major shipbuilding programs in the 1920s that later led to the breakdown of the arms limitation regime, warrants further examination.

Ultimately considered a failure for its inability to curb the naval arms race that came to dominate the 1930s, the London Conference provides historical parallels of the consequences and limitations of arms control regimes. Russia’s recent invasion of Crimea and China’s maritime expansionism seemingly reinvent the challenges the Western allies faced during similar periods of significant budgetary constraints.

For the authors, force reductions embolden potential adversaries and may compel erstwhile allies to seek independent defense policies, further destabilizing the international world order. *At the Crossroads* provides a cautionary historical analogy for contemporary policy makers on the perils of arms limitation.

Viktor M. Stoll, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

**CULTURE IN CONFLICT: Irregular Warfare,
Culture Policy, and the Marine Corps**

**Paula Holmes-Eber, Stanford University Press,
Stanford, California, 2014, 272 pages**

More than 50 years ago, two theoreticians proffered very different models of military professionalism. Samuel Huntington believed the military professional should focus on the management of violence and avoid incorporating non-military factors into an individual's intellectual processes. Morris Janowitz fervently believed the opposite. In a period of constant semiconflict, he opined that military professionals needed to incorporate nonmilitary factors in order to effectively perform their duties.

These two views as to the nature of the military profession have been implicitly or explicitly the basis for a whole host of debates within the military community and are the foundation for a fascinating book by Paula Holmes-Eber, *Culture in Conflict: Irregular Warfare, Culture Policy, and the Marine Corps*, although ironically, she never mentions Janowitz or Huntington in her text. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan evolved into counterinsurgency, the Marine Corps, as well as the other services, began to appreciate the necessity for the troops on the ground to understand the unique cultural environment within which they operated. Winning the population's "hearts and minds" became relevant again.

Holmes-Eber, an anthropologist by profession, was brought into the Marine Corps to help organize and facilitate the assimilation of this cross-cultural competence. She continues in that role today as a professor of operational culture at the Marine Corps University.

The first half of her book is a professional anthropologist's view of the Marine Corps subculture. This subculture epitomizes Huntington's manager of violence, primarily focusing on the Marines' warrior ethos and eschewing touchy-feely concerns in favor of the Corps' real mission—"killing and destroying" things. The small size of the Corps, along with its entire focus on its expeditionary combat role, creates an environment that requires maximum flexibility in order to accomplish the mission. While this section of the book may not offer a great deal of new insights, it is

fascinating to see how a military organization appears under such intensive anthropologic field observation.

It is the second part of Holmes-Eber's book, however, that makes this book important and relevant to today's military. During this portion, she discusses how the Marine Corps came to grips with the necessity to expose its officers and enlisted Marines to cultural awareness so they could more effectively operate in the combat arena. Yet, this Janowitzian approach conflicted with Marine Corps' warrior ethos. The result is a wonderful case study of an organization trying to merge two conflicting professional paradigms.

After a number of failed efforts, in part because of direction from the Department of Defense, the Marines have institutionalized a unique approach called "operational culture." This concept integrates the operational skills of the manager of violence with the cultural appreciation and awareness that are necessary to operate in the ongoing Global War on Terrorism, which requires a combination of skills—from nation building, to counterinsurgency, to conventional military operations.

The author does an excellent job of explaining how the different skill sets brought into the Corps by Marine reservists fit into this concept.

Whether the Marines' approach will become a template that other services can implement as they endeavor to enhance their cross-culture competence, only time will tell. But for anyone interested in professional military education and operating in the varied cultural environments that the Global War on Terrorism is going to demand, this book is a must read.

John C. Binkley, Ph.D., Annapolis, Maryland

**DANGER'S DRAGOONS: The Armored Cavalry
Task Force of the Big Red One in Vietnam, 1969**

**William C. Haponski, First Division Museum at
Cantigny Park, Wheaton, Illinois, 2014, 334 pages**

When people imagine the Vietnam War, they typically envision infantrymen stalking through restrictive jungles or warplanes dropping bombs and incendiaries. It is generally not appreciated as a conflict where armored or mechanized forces played an important role in fighting

the North Vietnamese army (NVA). William C. Haponski, a retired Army colonel, aims to correct this perception with a well-written and balanced memoir about his time as the commander of the 1st Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, north of Saigon in the wake of the Tet Offensive.

Danger's Dragoons arrives as a detailed read that civilians may find difficult to follow due to dense military terminology, but one that service members and military historians will likely find engaging. Complementing Gen. Donn Starry's foundational 1982 work, *Armored Combat in Vietnam*, Haponski defines the work simply as "the story of an armored cavalry task force in Vietnam." Yet this statement actually encapsulates two complex emphases that drive the narrative arc: it is principally a richly informed memoir of Haponski's wartime command in a challenging and sometimes dispiriting combat environment, but it also serves as a means to draw attention to the little known, but actually highly effective, performance of armored combined arms teams in the war.

Divided into eight chronological chapters that diligently incorporate primary sources, both friendly and enemy, the former armor officer immerses the reader into 1st Squadron's tour in Vietnam from late 1968 to mid-1969. Beginning with Haponski's initial assignment as a staff officer in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the work soon centers on the author's objective of getting "the division's most potent ground combat force," with its tanks and armored cavalry assault vehicles, transferred to its "proper role" of "combat against large main-force units." After spending his first months in command conducting low-intensity area security operations near Saigon, Haponski eventually gets his task force moved north to the Michelin Rubber Plantation area of Binh Duong Province, where they prove, though at a cost, the lethality of armored cavalry against the NVA's feared 7th Division in a jungle environment.

Aside from galvanizing interest in his own journey and personalized accounts of individual soldiers on each side, *Danger's Dragoons* holds additional interest for military professionals at the tactical level. Throughout the memoir, which is combined arms focused, Haponski never actually employs "a pure cavalry squadron" but rather leads "a task force of armored and

air cavalry with armor, infantry, mechanized infantry, and engineers" with support by "artillery and other U.S. or South Vietnamese ground and air units." With this kind of multifaceted formation, 1st Squadron conducts a variety of missions, including patrols, route security, convoy escort, ambushes, police functions, and ultimately, attacks.

The author includes a pragmatic assessment of armor utility in restrictive environments as he readily admits the futility of employing his tracks in stealthy ambushes while discussing limitations of mechanized movement. Despite aggressively using enemy killed in action as his primary measure of effectiveness during his command tenure, Haponski is careful to offer an otherwise balanced portrayal that regards the NVA as opponents to be understood and respected—but not hated.

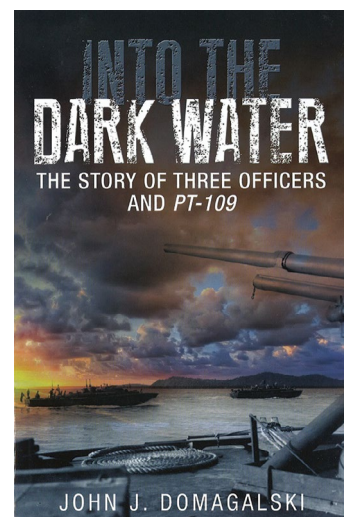
Capt. Nathan A. Jennings, West Point, New York

INTO THE DARK WATER: The Story of Three Officers and PT-109

John J. Domagalski, Casemate, Havertown, Pennsylvania, 2014, 280 pages

The naval vessel *PT-109* is fully ensconced in popular culture, given the aura of its final and most famous skipper—John F. Kennedy. Baby boomers may recall the 1963 movie, its enduring images of the doomed patrol torpedo (PT) boat, and its heroic young skipper amongst a backdrop of tropical islands, messages on coconuts, coast watchers, and a largely unseen but insidious enemy.

While JFK's rescue narrative has been told often and in great detail, author John Domagalski takes a



unique approach in an insightful and well-written new work that pays homage not only to *PT-109* but to the patrol torpedo community as a whole. Lt. j.g. John F. Kennedy, one of three skippers in the short life of *PT-109*, is preceded in command by Lt. Rollin Westholm and Ensign Bryant Larson. Each skipper is given equal time, and Kennedy himself does not appear until about midway through the book. The author effectively interweaves the story of all three, to include their accession into the Navy, their training, their deployment, and their experiences under fire. In this manner, *PT-109* is a microcosm of the many boats and their crews that made the journey from training at Melville, Rhode Island, and in Panama, to combat in the distant South Pacific.

The author is clearly at his best in his vivid descriptions of night combat—the *Dark Water* of his title—and the perils faced by *PT-109* and other PT boats as they confronted the vaunted Tokyo Express—the Japanese Navy’s destroyers and escorts that provided the vital lifeline to its forward bases in the lower Solomon Islands. He effectively captures the dark days of the early South Pacific campaign, when maritime supremacy was profoundly in question and the U.S. Navy was unable to maintain a permanent presence of larger surface craft. Hence, PT boats like *PT-109* took on the Tokyo Express at great risk, facing darkness, a superior night fighter, poor weather, faulty torpedoes, unreliable radar, and, last but not least, sharks.

The author effectively bookends his saga of *PT-109* and its three skippers with very useful context that puts the history and legacy of the PT boat in perspective. He traces its roots in naval history, marking its zenith during World War II with maximum industrial production and deployment in large numbers to the South Pacific. He then closes the loop by noting the influences of the PT boat on today’s Navy as evidenced in modern, multipurpose small craft, such as the littoral combat ship.

At only 280 pages, the book may seem superficial to some. As an example, character development of the skippers other than Kennedy is based largely on historical efficiency reports—and reads as such. However, it will appeal to general readers with its crisp, solid storytelling, effective photographs,

and useful diagrams. In 2002, the Navy positively identified the remains of the original *PT-109* in a well-publicized search sponsored by *National Geographic*. It was decided to leave the remains intact and undisturbed. With this new offering, John Domagalski brings *PT-109* and her crew back to life once again and, in doing so, honors all who served in the patrol torpedo service.

Mark Montesclaros, Fort Gordon, Georgia

WORLD WAR II FROM ABOVE: An Aerial View of the Global Conflict

Jeremy Harwood, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, 2014,
208 pages



Jeremy Harwood provides a concise narrative about the rise of Western Allied airpower during World War II. He begins with the initial development of air forces during World War I and the interwar years, when drawdowns and traditionalists checked the evolution of air power in Great Britain and the United States. Harwood describes the consequences in 1939–1941, when Germany swept most of Europe and western Soviet Russia, with its Luftwaffe controlling the skies, and Japan initiated its Pacific offensive with the audacious air raid against the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor. When Germany and Japan appear to have the upper hand, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union rebound with air

forces that reverse the tides of power in World War II. Throughout his book, Harwood's three themes are the evolution of photoreconnaissance, air supremacy, and strategic bombing. The third is driven home when the U.S. Army Air Force destroys two cities in Japan—each by a single bomber dropping an atomic bomb.

The book is of the coffee-table variety, written for readers interested in learning about the significant developments of aerial warfare without excessive detail. It is well illustrated with numerous photographs and features some remarkable overheard imagery, such as German shipping assembled for Operation Sea Lion, as well as battle damage assessments of strategic bombing missions. Key aircraft of opposing sides are highlighted, such as the Messerschmitt ME 109, which served as the main fighter of the Luftwaffe throughout the war, and the North American P-51D Mustang, which enabled the U.S. Army Air Force to protect its bombers deep into Germany. Also provided are graphic illustrations that enable readers to visualize the concepts and events of major operations featured in the book. Overall, it is an attractive format that will engage readers.

While concise, Harwood provides a comprehensive account of the Allies' successes and the Axis powers' failures in airpower. The British are credited with pioneering aerial photoreconnaissance during World War I. It is a skill Britain virtually had to reinvent in 1939 after development lapsed during the interwar years. However, Britain and the United States build the capability into a robust system that enables effective planning for air and ground operations. The Luftwaffe is noted for its early success in controlling the air during 1939-1940 but falls into a slow decline due to its inability to prosecute strategic targets or sustain operations as Allied and Soviet air forces increase in strength.

Japanese airpower also diminishes after Japan loses its naval carrier fleet at the Battle of Midway in 1942, which forces it to wage the rest of the war in a defensive posture. The Allies themselves almost falter in their initial attempts at strategic bombing in 1943, when their bombers are savaged by the Luftwaffe, but resurge after fielding long-range fighter escorts, inflicting devastating raids that erode the industries and national will of the Axis powers.

Harwood's overview of World War II airpower works well for those with limited knowledge of the subject, and he provides an encouraging message to

investigate the extensive bibliography provided in the book. Unfortunately, Harwood gives a limited account to the Eastern Front and the Pacific War, and he ends the book abruptly after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki without any final thoughts on the rise of airpower during this period. Nonetheless, Harwood inspires readers to reflect on the concepts of military airpower and to learn more about the subject.

**Lt. Col. Dirk C. Blackdeer, U.S. Army, Retired,
Tonganoxie, Kansas**

CORINTH 1862: Siege, Battle, Occupation

**Timothy B. Smith, University of Kansas Press,
Lawrence, Kansas, 2012, 464 pages**

Timothy Smith has produced a well-documented and researched history of Corinth, Mississippi, during the American Civil War. He articulates the vital strategic importance the town had during the war—a major intersection of two major railroad lines bisecting the Southern states. Smith inserts numerous personal accounts from Corinth residents, soldiers, and leaders who either fought or were impacted by the events in this town during the war. Early in the war, Corinth became an assembly area for newly raised Mississippi regiments and served as the base of operations for Gen. Johnston's advance to Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, in April 1862, which culminated with the Battle of Shiloh.

The author vividly describes the living conditions in the city, not only from the soldier's perspective but also from the residents, leading up to and following the April battle. The Confederates, led by their new leader, Gen. Beauregard, spent countless hours fortifying approaches to Corinth in anticipation of a Union Army advance from Pittsburg Landing. On the Union side, Smith brings to light the optimism and overconfidence Gen. Hallack had in his plans to capture Corinth. After taking command from Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, he boasted to the War Department in Washington that his forces would be in Corinth within days. After a month of entrenching, minor skirmishing, and an eventual evacuation of the city, the Confederate command faced the dilemma of what to do with its Army of Mississippi. In a twist of irony, the Union leadership was in the same

quandary after their capture of Corinth; at that time, it had to determine what to do with 40,000 soldiers living in an area that could not sustain an army of that size.

In late summer 1862, the Confederacy conducted a three-pronged advance into the border states of Maryland, Kentucky, and western Tennessee. To secure the western approach, Confederate Gen. Van Dorn was convinced the strategic and fortified town of Corinth needed to be taken. Smith articulates in great detail the September-October campaign in northern Mississippi, which resulted in the battles of Iuka and Corinth against the Union forces of Gen. Rosecrans. Smith vividly describes the two-day battle at Corinth through first-hand accounts and maps to illustrate each phase of the battle.

Following one of the most intense battles in Mississippi, garrison life and the continuous construction to improve fortifications consumed the Union soldiers stationed in Corinth until early January 1864, when they were directed to other fronts. The author discusses the governance and living conditions endured by soldiers and residents during 1863 and the return of Confederate forces in 1864. Although Union forces returned late in the war, the scars of 1862 could still be witnessed throughout the town and the surrounding countryside.

Corinth 1862: Siege, Battle, Occupation is a great read and is a must for the Civil War enthusiast.

R. Scott Martin, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

FIRST SEALS: The Untold Story of the Forging of America's Most Elite Unit

Patrick K. O'Donnell, Da Capo Press, Boston, 2014, 320 pages

Over the past decade, Patrick O'Donnell has firmly established himself as one of the world's preeminent military historians. It is a reputation developed by many factors, but two stand out for me. First, O'Donnell selects subjects that have received little or no prior scholarship, or he puts a different perspective on these subjects. Second, he is incredibly gifted in transforming his exhaustive research into a highly readable narrative. In the author's latest volume, *First SEALS*, both of these factors are evident.

Within *First SEALS*, O'Donnell details the origins of the Navy SEALs and those men who figured so prominently in its beginning. He addresses the significant planning that led to the creation of the Maritime Unit—the eventual SEALs—and the subsequent training the unit

conducted in preparation for entering World War II in November 1943. This discussion sets the conditions for O'Donnell to highlight the extraordinary missions the Maritime Unit was involved in during the closing period of the war and the years prior to the activation of SEAL Teams One and Two in January 1962.

Certainly, the origin of the unit is a critical component of the volume, but the true focus of *First SEALS* is on those who formed the unit and those who served with it. In particular, O'Donnell emphasizes the service of Jack Taylor and the significant role Taylor had in the formation of the Maritime Unit. The author continues with Taylor's service with the unit and the time he spent as a POW in a German concentration camp. Taylor's incredible story itself is truly worthy of its own book.

O'Donnell's past books were characterized by exhaustive research, and *First SEALS* is no different. The author began conducting research on this book in 2001, which included personally interviewing the few living members of the Maritime Unit and those associated with it. The vast majority of his research consisted of sifting through thousands of the pages of material tied to the unit. Interestingly, many of these documents were mislabeled and misfiled, and O'Donnell painstakingly searched and found them in the National Archives.

What sets the author apart from many of his peers is his ability to utilize his research. He converts interviews and documents into pages that readers



enthusiastically turn. Having read many of O'Donnell's past volumes, I was looking forward to a book that would inform and entertain—one that would gain and maintain my attention. *First SEALs* did not disappoint.

Because of the public's great interest in the U.S. Navy SEALs, this book will have great appeal to those unfamiliar with O'Donnell's previous works. They will read it purely for the content. Those who have read other volumes he has crafted will be drawn to the book because of the author. *First SEALs* will clearly add to his sterling reputation and his superb body of work.

Rick Baillargeon, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

BLOODY SPRING: Forty Days that Sealed the Confederacy's Fate

Joseph Wheelan, Da Capo Press, Boston, 2014, 448 pages

In *Bloody Spring: Forty Days That Sealed the Confederacy's Fate*, the reader is confronted with a campaign, the author asserts, that never lodged as deeply into the Nation's collective memory as had other battles and campaigns of the American Civil War. The Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, and Cold Harbor are detailed as the bloody, grinding affairs they were, using frequently quoted contemporary sources. This recounting of Gen. Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign relies heavily on participants' accounts to reinforce the author's premise that Grant's strategy of attritional warfare, and his determination to maintain the offensive, were the key factors that sealed the fate of the Confederate States.

The hallmark of the campaign was, without doubt, the bloody, nearly constant fighting from 5 May through 18 June 1864. Wheelan relies heavily on participants from both sides to recount the horror of fighting in the wooded country of the

Wilderness and the grisly trench fighting that followed. Soldiers and officers recount conditions that most readers would more likely associate with the Western Front in Europe a half century later. The recounting lends a feeling of hopelessness to the narrative of the soldiers' expectations of impending death—from days and then weeks of constant combat. What is today referred to clinically as combat stress has always haunted soldiers in combat and is made apparent to the reader.

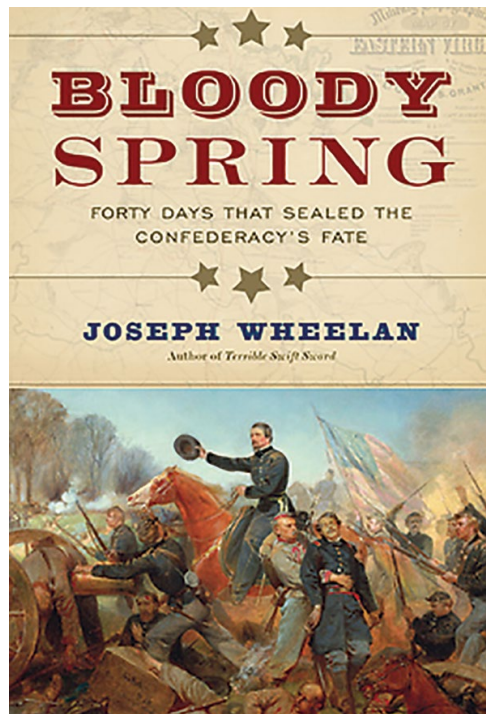
Wheelan also examines Grant's and Lee's decision-making processes as a decisive factor in the outcome of this grueling campaign as he contrasts the gritty tactical detail with the accounts of senior commanders. The often disconnected nature of the operational-level decision making contributed to uneven performance by the armies at different, often critical moments. While the Union Army's leaders, particularly Grant and Meade, commanded from considerable distances, issuing orders they never witnessed in execution, Confederate leaders were often exposed to grave danger, which resulted in many senior leaders being

killed or wounded. This placed further stress on Robert E. Lee at crucial moments during the campaign.

The book provides a fine overview of the 1864 Campaign; however, the lack of maps that would allow a reader to follow the movements of various units across the Virginia countryside can be frustrating at times. This is perhaps similar to the frustration the Union Army experienced at various times during its movements south around Richmond. Compared to earlier phases of the Civil War in Virginia, many of the locations are likely to be unfamiliar to readers without such an aid. Another criticism is the easy manner in which the

author jumps from tactical- to strategic-level topics.

Overall, *Bloody Spring* is an easily digested work, which explores the challenges experienced by the men who fought a critical campaign during the supreme



contest in American history. Although Wheelan makes a fine case to support his premise, his narrative seems rushed to completion in the epilogue. And yet, it remains a fine entry point for readers unfamiliar with the later battles of the Civil War in the eastern United States. It also makes a fine study in command and is well worth adding to any military library.

Maj. John Sackman, U.S. Army, Afghanistan

THE ROCKET MODEL: Practical Advice for Building High Performing Teams

Gordon Curphy and Robert Hogan, Hogan Press, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 2012, 198 pages

The book *The Rocket Model: Practical Advice for Building High Performing Teams* gets to the point quickly by providing the reader solid examples of the importance of leadership and the role it plays in building successful teams.

Early in the book the authors, Curphy and Hogan, reveal their strategy and give the reader “The Top 10 Reasons Why Groups and Teams Fail.” They provide an easy-to-follow road map on what it takes to succeed as well as areas in which many fail.

The concepts in this book almost seem too simple; but upon further reading, the authors bring to light how many people fail not only in the leadership role but in the followership role as well. Written in greater detail are topics ranging from decision making to differing levels of commitment, each giving the reader an easy-to-understand and solid plan that is valuable at any level of responsibility.

What stands out in this book is its format. Each chapter lays out a topic in a way that explains the issue but then also contributes ideas for possible solutions to improve the situation.

A helpful diagram that aids the reader in understanding the concepts is, of course, *The Rocket Model*, which is divided into six areas: mission, talent, norms, buy-in, morale, and power. While the outside of the model is surrounded by context, the top of the model is capped with results. Chapters are dedicated to explaining and providing further detail on each part of the rocket model.

The book provides its readers with an opportunity to start their own processes with ideas and checklists to form a new team and to progress with the information learned. I highly recommend this very straight-forward book on leadership. It can be easily used in the military and civilian sectors at any level.

Forest Woolley, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

BEHIND THE FRONT: British Soldiers and French Civilians, 1914-1918

Craig Gibson, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2014, 472 pages

If left to their own devices, most military professionals would prefer a “clean” battlefield. This wondrous engagement area would consist of open terrain and would be peopled only by a readily identifiable enemy. Most importantly, the battlefield and its general environs would be devoid of pesky civilians. As the Nation’s recent military operations have shown, this vision of a “clean” battlefield is an exceptionally rare thing, and we were forced to re-learn how to coexist with noncombatants and local governments.

Craig Gibson demonstrates that these facts have long challenged armies. In *Behind the Front*, he offers a well-researched and well-written examination of the myriad official and unofficial relationships that governed how the British army and its soldiers interacted with the French civilians living within its area of operations during World War I.

In theory, the interactions between the French and the British should have been relatively easy and cordial. The two nations were allies and close neighbors, with shared Western European cultural identities and values. However, as Gibson notes, even the most friendly and sympathetic of foreign militaries can quickly come to be seen as an intrusive occupying army by the locals. Although the two groups shared certain commonalities, most importantly a desire to defeat Germany, differences in language, customs, and norms made the *Entente Cordiale* a difficult thing to maintain in the towns and villages of northern France.

Gibson highlights how the British military's operational demands for billeting, fodder, discipline, and training areas often clashed with the French civilians' demands for making a living and trying to maintain as much of their personal freedom of action as possible. As much as it would have wanted a clean battlefield, the British army needed the support of the French population and was dependent on the goodwill of the locals to make the British military machine run.

Gibson uses the records of unit provost marshals, accounts of payments to French civilians for damage done by British and Commonwealth soldiers, and a host of other primary sources to help explain this complex environment. He covers the vast gamut of business, legal, personal, and even sexual interactions that occurred between the two groups. In the process, Gibson brings to light—and to life—the multifaceted relationships that simultaneously united and divided the French civilians and the British soldiers of the Great War.

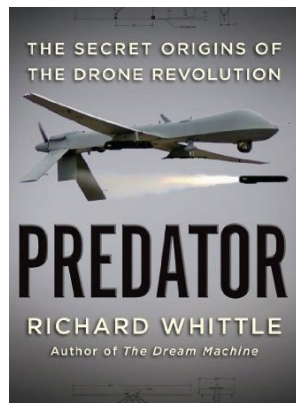
Given the recent difficulties in understanding and working together with Iraqi and Afghan civilians, this book would be a welcome addition to the reading lists of all civil affairs officers and those military professionals who wish to understand the challenges of operating in the "human terrain."

Lt. Col. Richard S. Faulkner, U.S. Army, Retired, Ph.D., Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

PREDATOR: The Secret Origins of the Drone Revolution

Richard Whittle, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 2014, 368 pages

This is a big deal. The U.S. military has a new toy, and it's the Predator. It can attack from above—without enemy detection. In *Predator*, Richard Whittle details the machinations, development, frustrations, setbacks, eventual success, and a cast of characters responsible for this effective, modernized instrument of war.



A noted author, Whittle meticulously guides the reader from the vision of Karem Abraham, an Israeli drone pioneer, to trigger-pulling Ginger Wallace, the first female to fire a Hellfire missile, in detailing the origin of the Predator.

Whittle delivers a brilliant narrative. He provides rich anecdotes and personal accounts, which ratchet up the suspense and angst to the point where readers feel as if they are in the story—or on the front lines themselves.

We learn the Predator was born out of necessity, during the Operation Allied Force operations in Kosovo, to detect the enemy without risking the lives of pilots. Easy sell, right? No. Although you could not tell today, the program was not well received at its inception. The Air Force objected, and Washington officials outright disregarded the program. Despite those hurdles, today, it is an indispensable terrorist-killing machine. Ironically, civilian and military leaders can't seem to get enough of them.

Approaches to technological advancements are never easy, and the Predator was no exception. Through extraordinary detail, Whittle recounts exchanges, confrontations, and predictions, ensuring readers comprehend the bureaucratic nature of the American defense system. Through his insights, readers will perhaps ascertain that the system is dysfunctional—which is sad to say because the resulting paralysis is perhaps the department's number-one enemy.

Next, the author sets his sight on Afghanistan as the development of the Predator nears completion. As a result of 9/11, Whittle surmises that defense and intelligence officials were determined to use it to hunt for and, ultimately, kill Osama bin

Laden. Interestingly, one riveting account describes how bin Laden could have been killed long before the war started—with a drone. Instead, bureaucracy took hold and the opportunity slipped away. Blame, however, could be spread evenly across the defense and intelligence agencies.

Despite significant drone accomplishments, President Obama's use of the Predator has propelled drone warfare to the forefront of military, political, and social debate. Many are uncomfortable

with its use overseas as well as its use here. We are witnessing drone encroachment in American lives; nonprofessionals are using drones for recreational purposes, and law enforcement agencies and private corporations are employing the technology as well. The use of drones raises both moral and ethical questions. For better or worse, drones have revolutionized U.S. warfare capabilities.

I highly recommend *Predator* for defense professionals interested in a detailed account of the Predator's development and deployment. It's an exhilarating read and is filled with anecdotes as recounted by those involved.

Maj. John L. Hewitt III, U.S. Army, Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina

KNIFE FIGHTS: A Memoir of Modern War in Theory and Practice

John Nagl, Penguin Press, New York, 2014, 288 Pages

John Nagl describes his memoir, *Knife Fights*, as “an intellectual coming of age” story, but the book is only briefly that. Nagl came of age so quickly, solidifying his belief in the importance of counterinsurgency (COIN) in American warfighting doctrine, that the majority of Nagl's memoir chronicles his advocacy of COIN—not the intellectual struggle that brought him there.

Counterinsurgency proponents will read *Knife Fights* as a history of counterinsurgency's golden era and lament that myopic politicians weren't willing to fully implement its principles. Detractors of COIN will find *Knife Fights* anachronistic and arrogant in the face of muddled outcomes in Iraq and Afghanistan. But instead of using *Knife Fights* to argue the efficacy of COIN—a question better answered by an academic study or military history—Nagl's memoir is better read to understand the military community's increasingly cohesive narrative of

its relationship with politicians—and who bears more fault for the failures of the last decade.

The author spent the years before Iraq and Afghanistan preparing for a time when asymmetric threats were seen as relevant to military affairs. *Knife Fights* recounts these formative years with a deft, if somewhat hurried, pen. The bulk of the book focuses on the now familiar “Global War on Terrorism.”

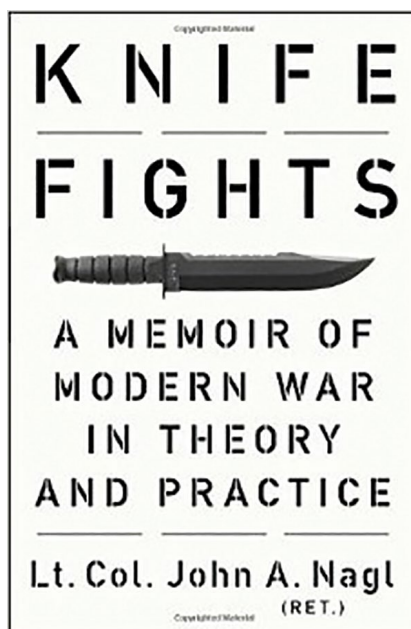
After September 11, the military was slow to adapt to low-tech threats. During this time, Nagl and a small but influential cadre built a case for applying counterinsurgency techniques from colonial-era wars. The COIN proponents waged their own insurgency, bringing in academics, journalists, and think-tankers to convince the Army to change its strategy. The military's acceptance of COIN principles coincided with a dramatic decline in violence in Iraq, vindicating COIN in the eyes of some. COIN advocates were rewarded with greater influence in Washington, D.C. For Nagl, this meant a move from tanker to think-tanker at the Center for New American Security and finally on to The Haverford School.

While the book's narrative ends there, the wars, of course, did not. The now-famous “Surge” may have delayed Iraq from slipping into civil war, but subsequent developments—including the rise of the Islamic State—preclude a clear assessment of COIN's efficacy. However, *Knife Fights* is, after all, a memoir, and it would do the book a disservice to read and review it as anything else.

Nagl uses an occasionally blunt “villains and victims” theme when recalling the relationship between military men and politicians, which mirrors an increasingly common narrative in the military community. He describes the military as a loyal, well-intentioned soldier—occasionally fumbling as he strives to serve his country. Politicians, however, are often portrayed as incompetent and cowardly, and Nagl's commentary seems to lay much of America's

recent military failures solidly at their feet.

For example, he writes that the Gulf War was “a military triumph without a political victory.” In the 2003



Iraq War, the military was given a “horrible start that was largely bequeathed to it by its political leadership.” In Afghanistan, Obama’s simultaneous announcement of surge and a timetable was “a disaster of the first order.”

Although the avid reader of contemporary military history may not find much new material in *Knife Fights*, the memoir is worth reading as it offers the intellectual history of COIN, which makes for a particularly interesting read today considering all that ISIS and European terrorism have added to the narrative.

While *Knife Fights* provides ample opportunities to reflect on whether COIN’s employment has advanced American interests, the memoir’s portrayal of civil-military relations can also prompt a less common question: Does the current state of relations between soldiers and their civilian masters threaten the very security both seek to uphold?

Capt. Roxanne Bras, U.S. Army, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

THE WAR OF 1812 AND THE RISE OF THE U.S. NAVY

Mark Collins Jenkins and David A. Taylor, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 2012, 280 pages

This is a gripping and stirring story that delves into the first truly global conflict that the United States was involved in. The author presents an all-encompassing look at the conflict, from the political and economic backgrounds to the operational status of the U.S. Navy, starting with its actions against the Barbary pirates. It discusses the drawdown after that action, its reconstitution just prior to the War of 1812, and the Navy’s actions in all theaters during the war.

The book is divided into five chapters, which basically provides a chronological story and explains the incidents that led to the war as well as the legacy after the confrontation. The authors delve into the role of the fledgling U.S. Navy against the Barbary pirates as well as the actions of the British government—its Navy—that continued to keep tensions high between the two countries.

The authors also discuss the practice of impressment, wherein men were forced to serve in the British

navy, and the early actions conducted by the U.S. Navy to protect American sailors and ships. The book follows an easy-to-understand progression of battles and results that affected both sides in the naval conflict.

One of the most interesting aspects of the book is the inclusion of numerous illustrations and personal memoirs from a wide variety of sources, to include wives, ship captains, spies, and ship surgeons. Of particular interest are the various professional and family relationships that helped to form the fledgling U.S. Navy. The authors also discuss the method in which prize (captured) vessels and cargo were disposed of through auctions.

The War of 1812 and the Rise of the U.S. Navy describes the sea-going conflict as well as the battles on the Great Lakes and the attacks on Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. The epilogue skips over the saving of the *Constitution* but, instead, addresses ships being demolished and broken up. The book provides a good summary of the significance of the war and the rise of the Navy. The authors place emphasis on the ships and, importantly, also on the men who sailed and fought on them.

I would recommend this book for the maritime history enthusiast and anyone interested in general U.S. history. The book is well written and well researched.

Lt. Col. David Campbell Jr., U.S. Army, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

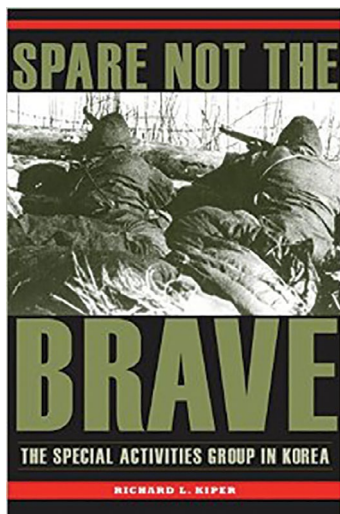
SPARE NOT THE BRAVE: The Special Activities Group in Korea

Richard L. Kiper, Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio, 337 pages

This book provides a detailed account of the Special Activities Group (SAG), a little-known special operations unit during the Korean War. The author, Richard L. Kiper, has conducted extensive research of U.S. Army historical records and also met with surviving SAG members, to include first-hand accounts of the unit’s short-lived tenure. In the book, the author chronicles the authorization and formation of the unit, its deployment from Japan in 1950, the constant challenge it faced due to a lack of proper resources,

and its battles against North Korean and Chinese forces during harsh winter weather conditions.

The Special Activities Group was activated for only eight months, from August 1950 through 31 March 1951, before it was deactivated and its members were reassigned to other units or returned to Japan for reassignment. Through the author's research and witness interviews, the book describes everything from the mundane day-to-day operations, such as straightening out newly assigned soldiers' pay, to harrowing accounts of being low on ammunition and surrounded by enemy forces during winter combat. In essence, it provides readers with an understanding of what it takes for units to operate while deployed to combat zones.



Of particular interest is the author's discussion of the continuous struggle by higher commands to determine the unit's exact purpose and mission. Originally constituted as a descendant of the World War II Marine Corps Raiders (Special Forces) concept, the SAG and its subordinate companies were originally conceived to be a ship-to-shore, littoral raiding force that conducted behind-the-lines operations. The SAG wound up performing primarily anti-guerrilla security missions in rear areas.

Perhaps one of the most overwhelming challenges facing the units arose when they were temporarily attached down to X Corps' subordinate divisions and regiments, which often resulted in the gaining commanders wanting to assign the unit missions normally assigned to traditional infantry units—thus negating their unique skill sets. Eventually the unit would return to corps-level control, where it would perform anti-guerrilla patrolling in the rear areas. Even this, however, was not necessarily an ideal mission profile, because the troops were never trained on how to distinguish North Korean infiltrators from the South Korean refugees.

The author introduces a topic that continues to elicit great discussion today: how to best resource and utilize special operating forces. The book is well written, flows well and, without a doubt, provides the most thorough analysis and records of a unit that received relatively little recognition during "The Forgotten War."

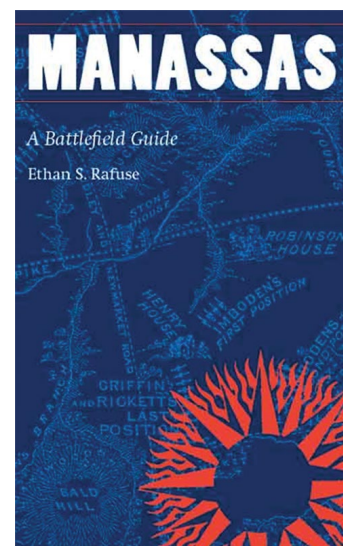
I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in the Korean conflict, the history of special operating forces, and those in the conventional forces who have yet to work with special operating forces. **Lt. Col. George Hodge, U.S. Army, Retired, Lansing, Kansas**

MANASSAS: A Battlefield Guide

Ethan S. Rafuse, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, 2014, 274 pages

Manassas, or Bull Run as it's known to the North, holds a special place in the nation's history. The first Battle of Manassas was the first large-scale battle of the Civil War. Fought in July 1861, it produced approximately 5,000 casualties, with less than 1,000 killed. However, by the second Battle of Manassas, which retraced similar ground and resulted in the same conclusion, the battle produced an astounding 26,000 casualties—and of those, more than 3,200 killed. This fivefold increase in casualties in just a year's time highlights a significant shift in tenacity that now defined the forces and stratagem.

This evolution in the opposing forces' determination and willingness to stand their ground, coupled with the maturation of their leadership, increased the lethality of Civil



War battles. In one example of tactical adjustments, a Union cavalry squadron rushed a Confederate brigade at Thoroughfare Gap and was allowed to pass through them—only to find that it now faced two reinforced brigades in the rear. It was forced to return the same way it came, exposing its soldiers to rear, flank, and frontal fire. As a result, a mere dozen returned to their own lines. More often, however, the units continued to battle in close proximity, reducing each other's forces through simple, brutal attrition.

The fight at Brawner Farm during the second Battle of Manassas provides another notable example of the increasing deadly and effective tactics employed by the belligerents. The battle showed that although a superior force may hold a position, that force can only bring so many guns to bear in a confined space. Here, two brigades held off more than two divisions of "available" Confederate soldiers.

The combatants killed each other in droves for several hours, firing into each other's lines from 80 yards apart until darkness finally made it impossible to see, thus forcing a withdrawal. However, even as the forces withdrew, they continued to fire at any observed muzzle flashes. It was a ferocious, if futile, conflict.

The *Guide* is a valuable complement for those visiting the site and provides an unbiased account of the battle. It not only covers the possible angles and locations of the units but also provides a concise history of the combatant actions. Without it, it would be very difficult to visualize and truly appreciate the details of this battlefield.

My organization took advantage of an opportunity to use the *Guide* during a staff ride in November. Standing at the preserved battlefield locations provides visitors with an awesome visual and physical manifestation of what combat must have been like for the belligerents. All of the stops and directions were addressed in the text, and the listed activities were based on the vignettes provided in the narrative. *Manassas: A Battlefield Guide* was a great addition to other supportive literature we used. It gives great credence to the work of Ethan Rafuse.

**Col. Thomas S. Bundt, Ph.D., U.S. Army,
Fort Lee, Virginia**

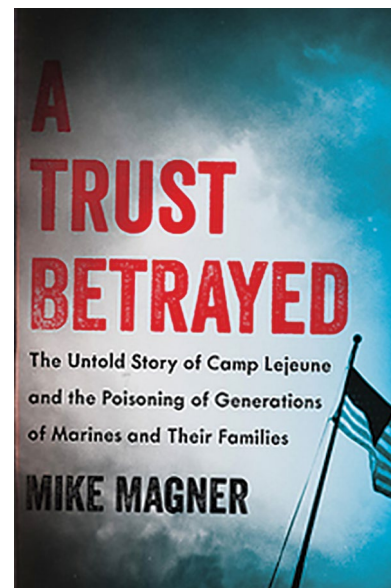
A TRUST BETRAYED: The Untold Story of Camp Lejeune and the Poisoning of Generations of Marines and Their Families

**Mike Magner, Da Capo Press, Boston, 2014,
301 pages**

Mike Magner's *A Trust Betrayed: The Untold Story of Camp Lejeune and the Poisoning of Generations of Marines and Their Families* takes readers through the sordid saga of the pain and suffering of unsuspecting Marine families, to the unbelievable lack of action by the U.S. Marine Corps in response to a contaminated water supply, and then the incredible efforts by the Corps to deny contamination while also obstructing efforts to detail its severity. He begins with the story of Maj. Tom Townsend, Marine Corps, retired, his death, and the death of Christopher, the third child of his wife, Anne, in 1967. Magner provides a brief history of Camp Lejeune and the issue of a marginally sufficient water supply that would play into decisions made for decades at the camp.

Magner walks the reader through the initial indications of contamination, the struggle for data, and the lack of records that would continue for years. Victims of the contamination eventually realized they were, indeed, collective victims and not solitary individuals with bad luck and poor health. The author documents the fight between government bureaucracies and the continual fight by the Marine Corps to not acknowledge its culpability. His epilogue briefly recaps the status of the story as his book went to print.

Magner details the many families dealing with babies born with birth defects and those babies who died



shortly after birth—within a day to a few months—throughout the 1960s and 1970s. There were so many baby burials in the Jacksonville, North Carolina City Cemetery, just outside of Camp Lejeune, that a section of the cemetery came to be known as “Baby Heaven” by Jacksonville residents and former Camp Lejeune residents. It was not until the late 1970s that the Environmental Protection Agency cited Camp Lejeune as a major polluter.

Magner documents the Marine Corps’ efforts to avoid responsibility. There were so many opportunities missed by those in authority to acknowledge the issue that it boggles the reader’s mind. The author quotes former Sen. Elizabeth Dole, who in January 2012 said: “Much of the human suffering caused by this problem could have been avoided if, years ago, some educated soul had picked up the phone and requested a water analysis, if only to err on the side of caution.” Clearly it would not have taken an educated soul, but rather just a concerned soul, to investigate the link between the baby deaths, birth defects, and general health issues of the Marines, family members, and civilian employees of Camp Lejeune—dating back from the 1950s to the present.

Magner does not explicitly state that there was a concerted effort by the Marine Corps to avoid acknowledging the contamination and the responsibility that would go with that acknowledgement. However, the length of time from the first official notification of the leadership at Camp Lejeune to the present spans a time period longer than the career length of most Marines—even those who are most senior. Therefore, the recalcitrance of the Marine Corps to investigate itself, or to cooperate with those seeking answers as to the severity of contamination, would seem to be an aggregate Marine Corps culpability rather than that of a single base commander turning a blind eye.

The book is essentially a documentary that traces the story of contamination at Camp Lejeune and the efforts of victims—many of whom died of health issues related to that contamination before the book was published—to force the Marine Corps to live up to its slogan: “Semper Fidelis,” Latin for “Always Faithful.” *A Trust Betrayed* is well written and has a page-turning quality. Readers will be surprised—and dismayed—again and again, by the Marine Corps’ lack of accountability.

I chose to review this book because my wife, a former military police drill instructor at Fort McClellan,

Alabama, told me she suspected her daughter’s birth defect (cleft lip) was due to contamination. Therefore, I chose a book dealing with the legendary Marine Corps base in my home state of North Carolina—Camp Lejeune. I find that I am more disturbed each time I read Magner’s book.

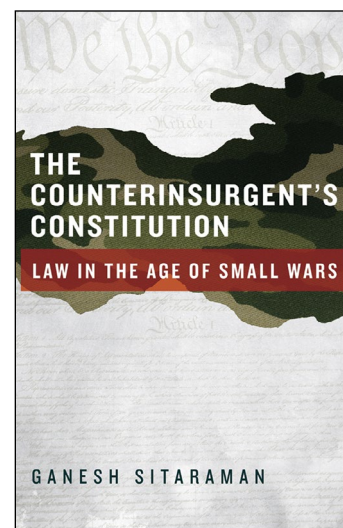
Readers will want to read this book to possibly learn if they, or any of their friends or family, may have health issues due to time spent at Camp Lejeune.

**Lt. Col. Kevin Lee Watson, U.S. Army, Retired,
Fort Belvoir, Virginia**

**THE COUNTERINSURGENT’S
CONSTITUTION: Law in the Age of Small Wars**
Ganesh Sitaraman, Oxford University Press, New
York, 2012, 352 pages

Ganesh Sitaraman’s book tackles the complex issue of the application of law, not only during small wars in the modern age, but also during the development of said law from the ground up. He approached his subject via three distinct “gates” in which each provides background and structure for the next; this method presents and develops his arguments. His sections: “The Law of War,” “From War to Peace,” and “The Reconstruction of Order,” are in and of themselves incredibly complex and worthy of comprehensive individual examination.

The author’s central theme throughout the book focuses on the critical interdependence between the three pillars of his *Counterinsurgency Constitution*: legitimacy, law, and war. While undertaking counterinsurgent operations, all three of these aspects must be approached concurrently if conditions are to be achieved whereby the counterinsurgent can revert responsibility back to the central government, police, and national



judiciary and, ultimately, stand down. As one progresses through Sitaraman's book, it becomes increasingly clear how challenging and difficult it is to achieve the tenants he is espousing; he is, in effect, providing a framework within which the nature of warfare, as traditionally understood, is realigned.

The ideas are presented to the reader in a linear fashion but with multiple "lanes." That is to say, the author identifies a concept and pursues it to a logical and linear conclusion, facilitating understanding for the reader. However, he does so with multiple concepts concurrently in order to better clarify the interdependence of his ideas or, as he suggests, the organic nature of the law, war, and society. His concepts are not new, nor are they particularly recent in development, but they are unique to a Western population, government, and military steeped in traditions of symmetric war and relatively quick fixes to issues.

This is an engaging and challenging read both for the concepts it espouses and the nature of its presentation. It is definitely a "thinking" book, and he uses it to focus attention on what is, for many in the West, a new and difficult way of war—one that is specifically suited to the asymmetric arena. He acknowledges that he does not have the definitive answers and, certainly, that international law has not kept pace with the changing nature of warfare. Additionally, he alludes to, but does not speak specifically about, the fact that not only has the nature of war changed in and of itself but also the level of tolerance amongst society—both within the conflict zones and the domestic populations of the engaging militaries. As an aspect of law and conflict, the counterinsurgent has to manage expectations in a world of instant information and sound-bite attention spans. This book is strongly recommended.

Maj. Chris Buckham, Royal Canadian Air Force, Stuttgart, Germany

IN UNCERTAIN TIMES: The American Foreign Policy after the Berlin Wall and 9/11

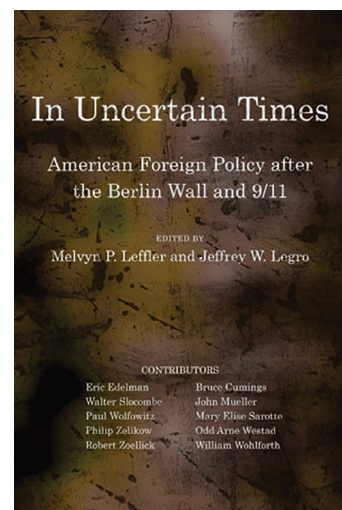
Edited by Melvyn P. Leffler and Jeffrey W. Legro,
Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 2011, 232 pages

Leffler and Legro edit a fascinating book about U.S. foreign policy development from after the fall of the Berlin Wall in November

1989 to 9/11—an ambiguous period of time in U.S. history. In doing so, they provide historical insight and critical analysis of American strategic thinking and planning as they relate to these and other significant events during this noteworthy period in time. These events include the end of the Cold War, the break-up of the Soviet Union, the 1991 Gulf War, and Operations Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, all of which have shaped the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. The editors' aim is to provide a better appreciation of the challenges that exist in designing and adapting strategy under uncertainty, and it is their hope that these shared lessons from the past will lead the way for future foreign policy development.

The book is divided into events-based chapters. Each event is presented chronologically, so the reader inherently experiences the evolution of strategic thought and its shaping of policy. The book reads like a "Who's Who" of academics and former U.S. policy makers of the time—from Melvyn Leffler and William Wohlforth to Paul Wolfowitz and Robert Zoellick.

The invaluable perspective provided by the authors, both of whom actually participated in the strategic policy building of the time, as well as the detailed research and rigorous analysis contributed by the academic scholars, is beyond reproach or comparison to any other works on this subject. The authors highlight the failures or inadequacies of strategic planning by various presidential administrations. These include nearsighted vision, faulty planning assumptions, competing domestic priorities, bureaucratic infighting, and procedural shortcomings. They also address the reluctance of planners to suggest or make real strategic changes to existing foreign policy—instead defaulting to the status quo—in spite of monumental events that would seem to necessitate policy revision. Scholars



writing during this tumultuous period were critical of missed opportunities, such as failing to seize the moment by reshaping NATO and the UN upon the collapse of the Soviet Union. In light of the uncertainty of the time, purposeful and effective strategic plans and foreign policy development did occur.

Among Lefler's and Legro's many significant observations and reflections, two stand out. First, strategy under uncertainty may be shaped as much by domestic politics as by the evolving international landscape. This can obviously prove problematic in developing effective foreign policy. Second, because of their varying perspectives and planning time horizons, there is a role for former officials and nongovernment experts in preparing strategic responses to crises as well as to shifts in the international landscape. The authors convincingly demonstrate how these views, if taken into consideration, could have positively contributed to effective strategy formulation and policy improvement.

The book is a must read for those interested in U.S. foreign policy and its development. It is also an informative read for mid-grade to senior-level military officers and government officials, who may find themselves involved in policy shaping activities.

Dr. David A. Anderson, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

STRATEGY IN ASIA: The Past, Present, and Future of Regional Security

Edited by Thomas G. Mahnken and Dan Blumenthal,
Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2014,
320 pages

This short volume on a very large subject might best be thought of as the Pacific Pivot Primer. Readers without extensive practical military planning or academic experience in this subject would do well to start their regional familiarization with this book. One of the editors claims in the preface that this work examines “whether, and to what extent, strategic studies remain valid for Asia of the twenty-first century.” If that was the goal, the individual chapters do not—in general—seem to be oriented in that direction. Indeed, the editors admit in the concluding chapter that the best this book could do was raise as many

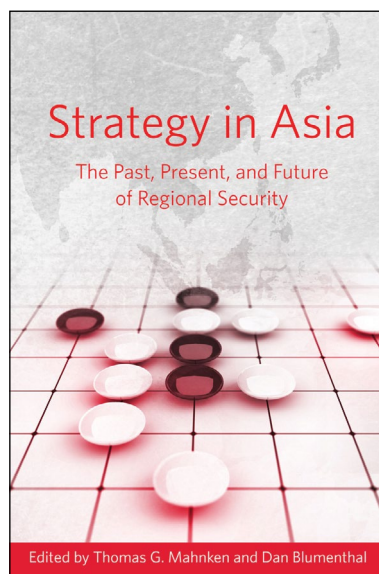
questions as could be answered in this vein. The book should best be considered an initial effort to marry strategic and Asian studies. Despite falling short of their idealized goal, the editors render good service in compiling a worthwhile series of essays outlining the challenges to American strategy in the Pacific.

The first third of the book, chapters 1 through 5, should be considered a basic orientation to the strategic issues and geographical aspects of the region. The essays are useful for those not already familiar with the subject. However, Pacific “old hands” will breeze right through most of them. Most of the discussion deals with “the tyranny of distance” and maritime issues. Bruce Ellerman's 14-page “The Cyclical Nature of Chinese Sea Power” offers a most insightful interpretation of its subject, is thankfully heavily sourced, and is well worth a slow read for all but the China expert. Land-power advocates should savor his section on “external threats affecting sea power,” as continental issues of environment and threat of invasion historically have trumped seafaring ones. The basic knowledge gained in these first chapters set the stage for remaining two-thirds of the work, which deals with higher-level strategic considerations and problems.

The reader will discern a noticeable change with chapter 6, “Strategy and Culture,” by Colin Gray. This is the best piece in the book. It is not concerned with strategy in Asia but, rather, the idea of cultural influences on strategy. Gray provides a nuanced discussion as a stage-setter for interpreting the following chapters

on the Chinese, Japanese, and Indian “ways of war.” The essays in the middle third of this anthology are heavily documented and provide readers with numerous signposts to guide further research.

The last third of the book deals with predominantly military aspects of strategy;



only chapter 11, Bradford Lee's "The Economic Context of Strategic Competition," is focused primarily on non-military instruments of national power. The remaining chapters deal with military modernization, nuclear deterrence, arms races, and irregular warfare. While informative, one might wish for more on the diplomatic and political, informational, and legal aspects of strategy analyzed in a more explicitly discrete way.

The concluding chapter, aptly titled "Towards a Research Agenda," selectively summarizes some of the preceding chapters and occasionally adds additional information. It does not attempt to integrate the body of work.

While this Pacific Pivot Primer is well suited for officers headed for U.S. Pacific Command for the first time, it is also useful to the "old hands" in that it helps to articulate those pressing strategic questions necessary in formulating—and executing—American strategy in this critical part of the world.

**Col. Eric M. Walters, U.S. Marine Corps,
Retired, Fort Lee, Virginia**

THE DEVIL'S ALLIANCE: Hitler's Pact with Stalin, 1939-1941

**Roger Moorehouse, Basic Books, New York, 2014,
432 pages**

In *The Devil's Alliance*, Roger Moorehouse has produced a highly readable, engaging and, for the most part, a well-informed account of the events leading up to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939—and the consequences that resulted from it. Perhaps because it is not a scholarly work, this book should attain a fairly wide readership among World War II buffs. The author makes good use of historical anecdotes involving key players, has a flair for capturing dramatic moments, and seldom withholds an opinion. Above all, the author captures the many implications of the pact, including the burst of public revelations during the Gorbachev era of glasnost immediately preceding the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Still, Moorehouse opens his introduction with the questionable assertion that the Molotov-Ribbentrop is virtually absent from Western histories of the war when he writes, "It is frankly scandalous that this

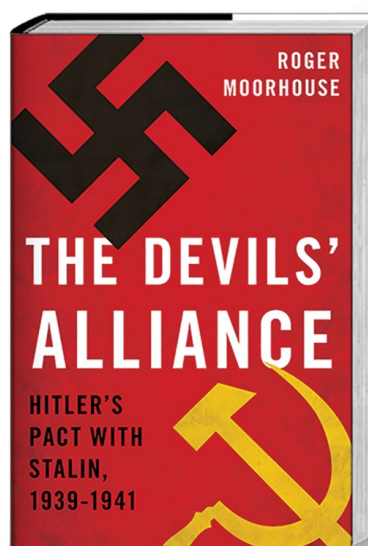
grim chapter does not find a place in the Western narrative of World War II." Thus, the author establishes immediately that his audience does not include the scholarly community, among whom the pact and its many consequences have been well-known for decades. While a case can be made that the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact has still not received the attention it warrants, the same observation can be made about most of the events involving the Eastern Front.

As for the substance of Moorehouse's narrative, his sources are wide-ranging but hardly all-inclusive. For example, there is almost no use of sources by Russian authors aside from a few works available in translation. Thus, he relies heavily on standard primary and secondary accounts available in English and German. To be sure, he employs these to good effect. However, he is sometimes quick to dismiss the Russian point of view.

Moorehouse has little patience for the Soviet interpretation, still popular among contemporary Russian historians, that Stalin made the pact primarily for defensive reasons. In this instance, the author's focus on Soviet exploitation of the secret protocol of the pact—to seize the Baltic states or to invade Finland—overshadows entirely the reasonable Soviet interest in creating a buffer in advance of the overwhelmingly likely eventual German invasion. Moorehouse rightly notes the terrible injustices and sufferings inflicted on civilian populations in these subjugated states. He also notes the massacre of Polish officers at Katyn, an event cynically attributed by the Soviets to the Nazis. However,

Moorehouse gives only passing consideration to the larger strategic context from Stalin's point of view.

Stalin had good reason, following Anglo-French concessions to Hitler at Munich, to expect that he could not



depend on strong support from the West. Moreover, having badly purged his own armed forces, Stalin knew he was not ready for a decisive conflict with Germany. The obvious move in that case was to buy time, a step that was achieved with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. To acknowledge the defensive aspects of Stalin's logic is not to condone his actions as just.

At his best, Moorehouse provides rich depictions of personal encounters and picks up well on the evolving public and private positions of Stalin and Hitler as war approached. Moreover, once Hitler's invasion was underway, the author guides the reader through early strategic perceptions or, frequently, misperceptions on both sides. In summary, even taking into account its limitations, this book is nevertheless worth reading.

Dr. Robert F. Baumann, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

A FEW LAWLESS VAGABONDS: Ethan Allen, the Republic of Vermont, and the American Revolution

David Bennett, Casemate Publishing, Havertown, Pennsylvania, 2014, 336 pages

David Bennett's *A Few Lawless Vagabonds* may be the best American Revolutionary War era book to come out in years. It is an account of the three-way relationship between Ethan Allen, the Republic of Vermont, and the British during the American Revolution. Bennett's Allen is far more complex than the larger than life American Patriot myth that has been perpetuated in previous biographies. Allen is far more focused on Vermont's sovereignty than independence from Great Britain.

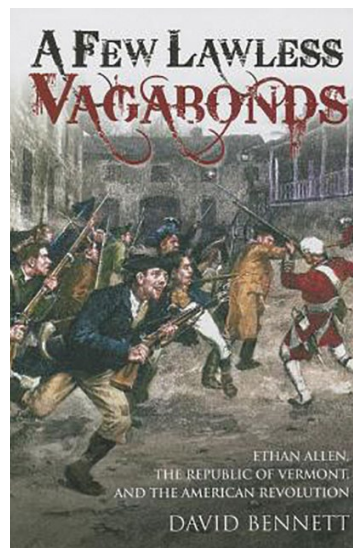
Disputed land grant claims originating from Crown representatives in neighboring New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts threaten Vermont's existence in the years prior to the American Revolution. The dispute became violent when New York decided to tax Vermont claims and evict New Hampshire land claim owners off disputed lands. Thus, Allen organized the Green Mountain Boys in resistance to New York.

The author's exhaustive research challenges many previous researchers, who downplay Allen's

role—in secret negotiations with British officials—to restore Vermont as a sovereign entity under the Crown. His research uncovered a variety of British records and letters that indicates Allen and British representatives engaged each other for years, going back to when Allen was a British prisoner of war following the failed attempt to capture Montreal in 1775. Bennett states Allen had no intention of seeking Continental Congress recognition of Vermont, and that he feared that the Continental Congress would acquiesce to the desires of New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

Any hope of a reunion between Vermont and Great Britain ended, however, with the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in October 1781. Bennett describes the secret negotiations that continued between Allen and British representatives

in Canada, with Allen declaring: "I shall do everything in my power to render this state a British province." The Peace Treaty of April 1783 placed Great Britain in a position where it could not aid Vermont without violating the treaty. Vermont was on its own, and Allen's influence declined as a result.



The Republic of Vermont maintained its independence amid all of the threats to its existence before eventually becoming the 14th State of the United States in 1791—two years after Ethan Allen's death in 1789.

Ethan Allen is rightly celebrated as the principal founder of the State of Vermont. Historians and biographers alike will be impressed with the author's depiction of Allen and his efforts to ensure Vermont's sovereignty. *A Few Lawless Vagabonds* is a must read for those with an interest in the period of the American Revolutionary.

Jesse McIntyre III, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

LINCOLN'S CODE: The Laws of War in American History

John Fabian Witt, Free Press, New York, 2013,
512 pages

While visiting the former Confederate Richmond following its seizure by Union forces, President Lincoln counseled operational commander Gen. Weitzel: “If I were you, I’d let ‘em up easy.” Along with political intuition and foresight for life after war, Lincoln articulated an ethic about the use of force—he focused on the ends. Ethical norms later took shape in the Hague and Geneva conventions. For anyone invoking these conventions or the laws of war, *Lincoln’s Code* is highly recommended.

John Fabian Witt, Yale historian and law professor, presents an account of U.S. moral and legal perspectives during the Civil War. Heroes in Witt’s account are Lincoln and Francis Lieber—one a great president; the other, a barely known, itinerate academic. Lieber, after being requested by Secretary of War Stanton and Henry Halleck, Stanton’s general-in-chief, produced a code of 157 epigrammatic articles linking conduct (ways) with the aims of war (ends).

Lieber’s Code is “a working document for the soldier and layman, not a treatise for the lawyer or statesman.” Issued by Lincoln as General Order 100 before the spring 1863 fighting season, it was not moral philosophy in a vacuum. These were lessons learned during conflict: “Laws of war typically come in the dismayed aftershock of conflict, not in the impassioned heat of battle.”

General Order 100 established four red lines—prohibiting assassination, use of poison, torture, and perfidy in violation of truce or treaty. It sharply

distinguished combatants and noncombatants. Lieber passionately contended the aim, the ends, and the purpose of war form the final measure of ethical conduct. He constrained war, emphasizing proportionality, and outlawing “destruction greater than necessary.” While specifying red lines, Lieber prioritized ends—seeking justice, preserving and protecting the nation.

From December 1862 through early 1863, Lincoln used Lieber’s Code to shift military thought and practice, which was inherited from Swiss diplomat Emmerich de Vattel. Vattel’s *The Law of Nations* (1750) long guided ethics and law in military practice, including teaching ethics at West

Point and Annapolis. Vattel’s Enlightenment framework emphasized proper conduct. Lieber subordinated conduct to the goal, purpose, or end of war. Thus, swift and extensive destruction was acceptable only if necessary to advance a legitimate war aim. Lieber adapted Clausewitz’s definition of war, a fight “to compel him [an enemy] to peace at my will.” For Lincoln, such a peace was an intact nation without slavery. To rebuild a nation after civil war, Lincoln counseled: “Let ‘em up easy.”

Witt shows how law and ethics shape practice in war. The law of war was central in

debates about American policies and practices toward al-Qaida and affiliates under Presidents Bush and Obama. Critics argue the United States violated the law of war or improperly cited it as support for policies. Witt’s account of Lincoln and Lieber presents dynamics of squaring national practice with application of international law. By deepening our conversation with voices from the past, Witt helps us to consider the ethical aims of war and to move beyond a “checklist” mindset that blunts moral thinking about using force.

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