

BOOK REVIEWS

AN AMERICAN WAY FORWARD?

Lind, Michael. *The American Way of Strategy: U.S. Foreign Policy and the American Way of Life*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006. 259pp. \$24

This is a finely composed and extremely timely exposition on American grand strategy. Michael Lind, former editor of *The National Interest* and now a fellow at the New America Foundation, lays out an interesting thesis about a distinctly American strategic foundation. Where the late Russell Weigley described the “American way of war” (*The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*, Indiana Univ. Press, 1977) as direct, offensive, and absolute, Lind argues that its strategic counterpart always strives to retain a more delicate internal balance. Operationally, the U.S. military seeks annihilation; strategically, U.S. foreign policy avoids absolutism in order to preserve a distinctly American and limited conception of government.

The real purpose of American strategy, according to this thesis, is the preservation of the American way of life by ensuring that the rise of a foreign hegemon does not inadvertently corrupt or sacrifice our own liberties at home. Lind argues that this American way of life is founded upon a constitutional order of checks and balances, a free-market economy not

unduly constrained by government’s reach or interference, and a sacrosanct focus on individual freedoms. The author’s worst nightmare is the rise of a foreign opponent that would trigger an internal reordering of American government that undercut essential liberties and its carefully constructed institutions.

Such an idea would not have been foreign to the founding fathers. Benjamin Franklin once noted that those who would sacrifice a bit of liberty for more security deserved neither. This anti-statist perspective may also be seen in Princeton professor Aaron Friedberg’s well regarded book *In the Shadow of the Garrison State* (2000). Friedberg demonstrates that U.S. Cold War success was achieved by tapping into the creativity of the American people and the vitality of the American economy without creating a state that arrogated too much authority or control. This antistatist preference guided a series of U.S. administrations, even as the Soviet Union’s power continued to grow. Instead of becoming a garrison state, the United States ultimately outpaced its overly centralized and statist rival.

Lind contrasts his definition of the American creed—“republican liberalism”—against a set of alternative futures. These involve the rise of “Caesarism,” the establishment of a garrison state, subjugation to a tributary status, and the emergence of a “castle society.” A Caesarian tyranny would usurp individual freedoms, while the surrender of American sovereignty would result from either national defeat or intimidation. The garrison state would ultimately absorb the freedoms and economic energy of the population; a castle society, characterized as a country internally wracked by anarchy and massive insecurity, would also extinguish personal freedom.

In applying this American creed to contemporary challenges, Lind castigates the neoconservative thrust of the past few years, especially its focus on amassing military power and the extension of U.S. hegemony. Rather than perpetual military dominance, the author advocates a more prudent grand strategy consistent with preserving the American way of life. Lind argues that the United States should employ a “concert of power” that would prevent any hostile state from dominating the three key regions of the globe, “without requiring the United States to seek to perpetually control these areas alone.” Additionally, instead of an “irrational” post-Cold War strategy of isolation, the United States should seek “a special relationship” with Russia. However, Lind never addresses how such concerts and relationships might appear to China and Russia, powers that have not fully accepted the existing international system; nor does his approach offer much in terms of transnational threats.

Overall, Lind finds much of value in classical realism and state-based power balances. This approach, eschewing as it does crusades for democracy, may lack a moral compass, but it has a growing appeal, given the imbroglia we know as the Middle East. Lind is aware that a classical balancing approach does not apply to every region of the world—for example, in the Gulf region—but he encourages the United States to keep a lower profile, as an offshore balancer of last resort—“the least bad of several bad options.” Lind forcefully argues against what he perceives as the goal of global primacy that dominates current U.S. strategy. Such an approach is at odds with what Lind believes to be time-tested American traditions: “When American leaders have followed the American way of strategy, they have led the American republic from success to success, and when they have deviated from it the results have been disastrous.”

It is impossible not to find this book relevant to the ongoing debates over America’s strategy against global terror and the domestic implications of that strategy. Many have cautioned that we now live in the shadow of a security state. The advent of the Patriot Act, extraordinary renditions, aggressive surveillance protocols unchecked by judicial review, extended detentions without recourse to representation or due process, and military tribunals all suggest that concerns about a security state are well founded.

While its policy prescriptions are less than satisfying, this is a relevant and thoughtful book to be read and discussed by almost anyone involved in international relations and the American national security establishment. It could serve as a useful primer on

American foreign policy, as well as a cautionary tale on the dangers of trying to achieve preeminence overseas at the cost of undermining security at home. *The American Way of Strategy* could also inform today's emerging maritime strategy, for which its characterization of the benefits of various grand strategies has value.

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Kagan, Frederick. *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*. New York: Encounter Books, 2006. 432pp. \$29.95

How has American military strategic thought evolved since the fall of Saigon? How did each service reinvent itself, shake off old ghosts, and restore morale and purpose? How did each decide upon a different doctrine to guide its training, procurement, and deployment? How much influence do civilian defense officials wield over strategy and doctrine? Is the country well served by the process that produces strategy and doctrine inside the services? Military historian Fred Kagan provides here a tremendous primer on these issues. He has written a clear, definitive, and opinionated history of the development of strategy and doctrine in the American military since 1975. His clarity of prose and the evenhandedness of his presentation enable the reader to separate the history from Kagan's interpretation. That is the mark of a fine scholar.

Kagan is well known among military historians. A serious researcher and author of a major work on the Napoleonic wars, his greatest strength is his down-

to-earth, friendly, inquisitive style. As the resident military scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, Kagan has the venue and cachet to draw ambassadors and four-star generals routinely to his conferences, where they join captains and majors fresh from the battlefield. Building upon his years as a professor at West Point, Kagan has developed a broad network of military contacts that makes this book a blend of scholarship and insider knowledge. Though he is plugged into the daily skirmishes of Washington's political arena, as a historian Kagan's chief interest lies not in the immediate issues but in focusing upon the underlying trends.

The author blends brief synopses of such past campaigns as Bosnia, DESERT STORM, and IRAQI FREEDOM with portraits of strategic iconoclasts like John Boyd, John Warden, Douglas MacGregor, and Arthur Cebrowski, emphasizing how doctrine changed and with what results related to budgets and force structure. Kagan does not believe that force structure evolves slowly over the decades. Instead, he illustrates how the few influence the many, and how strategic leadership affects the direction of each service for good or ill.

On the positive side, Kagan recounts how in 1978 the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Thomas Hayward, came to believe that the downward spiral in the naval budget was the result of an intuitive strategy held by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and his senior staff. These civilian defense leaders were concerned that the Soviet Union was increasing its geopolitical pressure across Europe, gaining both economic and political advantage in the shadow of its presumed superiority in land forces. Accordingly, the Office of the

Secretary of Defense was focused on building up Army and Air Force strength in Western Europe, while naval forces languished because they were seen as of lesser utility. Hayward set out to challenge this strategic vision by commissioning and then championing a naval force-planning study called “Sea Plan 2000.” The essence of this plan was the assertion that any assault across the inner-German border would result in a global war. Naval forces provided strike capabilities that could be marshaled anywhere, while protecting the sea-lanes. The redoubtable head of the Soviet navy, Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, had enunciated a strategy of protecting his ballistic missile submarines in their northern bastions. Sea Plan 2000 advocated naval-based offensive strikes against the Kola Peninsula and against Soviet attack and missile submarines worldwide.

When President Ronald Reagan took office in 1981, John Lehman became secretary of the Navy and aggressively supported such an offensive maritime strategy. The U.S. Navy budget increased, and the Soviets worried. Their self-confidence was dented, as they later freely admitted. No one could predict what would occur in an actual war, but according to Kagan, “Hayward’s realization that the Navy’s greatest weakness was its strategic thinking made possible a transformation of the Navy’s capabilities with few new technologies. As a result, the Navy regained a considerable degree of balance against a waning Soviet threat.”

Conversely, Kagan cites the efforts of former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld to “transform” the services as flawed in both concept and process. He criticizes the recent focus on information

technologies, with the attendant assumption that fewer forces will be needed as a consequence. Further, he questions whether the process of transformation is really advanced by grafting an “Office of Force Transformation” (since abolished) onto the Department of Defense, arguing that the services were in fact taking full advantage of information technologies for a decade before a “revolution in military affairs” was decreed.

On balance, Kagan gives the services good marks for their stewardship over the past twenty-five years as the nation’s guardians. The current war in Iraq, however, worries him, because the military did not adapt swiftly enough. He is too good a scholar to make sweeping assertions about American martial superiority. Instead, he argues that the process of adapting in order to win is the nation’s greatest strength.

Finding the Target will make an excellent textbook for those whose operational jobs have not left sufficient time to keep abreast of the changing strategic perspective in the services.

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Goldstein, Lyle J. *Preventive Attack and Weapons of Mass Destruction: A Comparative Analysis*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2006. 268pp. \$50

Do nuclear weapons represent a source of stability in world politics, or does the acquisition of these weapons create incentives for established nuclear states or longtime rivals to destroy nascent nuclear weapons programs before they actually coalesce into significant strategic

forces? The answer to both key questions, according to Lyle Goldstein, is yes. The acquisition of nuclear weapons creates the incentive to prevent war, exacerbate existing rivalries, and produce crises, but over time even asymmetric nuclear balances tend to moderate enduring rivalries and calm more acute conflicts.

Goldstein's primary purpose is to address the contemporary debate between "proliferation optimists" and "proliferation pessimists." Proliferation optimists suggest that nuclear weapons will have a moderating effect on international relations. Because nuclear arsenals provide mechanisms for states to protect their fundamental security concerns while increasing the potential costs of war, leaders tend to be moderate when dealing with not only their own nuclear weapons but their opponents' arsenals as well. Optimists also believe that governments everywhere tend to be good stewards of their nuclear capabilities, generally treating them as political instruments, not as an enhancement to their war-fighting capabilities. Proliferation pessimists, however, argue that a situation of mutual assured destruction (MAD), not nuclear weapons per se, is what induced caution between competing capitals during the Cold War. In the absence of MAD, they believe, states face mounting pressure to launch preventive war to destroy nascent nuclear weapons programs. New nuclear states, according to the pessimists, lack the resources, technical expertise, and stable governments that are needed to construct survivable nuclear arsenals, especially those that remain under negative control and in times of extreme stress.

Goldstein addresses this debate with a survey of the most significant international confrontations involving nuclear and nonnuclear states, exploring the incentives, perceptions, and judgments of nuclear-armed leaders as they contemplate the prospects and pitfalls of launching preventive war to disarm emerging nuclear powers. His comparative case studies span the entire nuclear age: from the U.S. reaction to the emergence of a Soviet nuclear weapons program, American and Soviet responses to the Chinese nuclear program, and the Israeli strike against Iraq's Osiraq reactor, to both U.S. counterproliferation wars against Iraq. His case studies reveal that although the leaders in dominant states often contemplate preventive war, a host of issues conspires to prevent them from launching strikes to destroy emerging nuclear forces and infrastructures.

Goldstein's finding that preventive counterproliferation strikes are rare is offset by several observations that are not at all reassuring. Counterproliferation attacks have been contemplated from the start of the nuclear age, but actual attacks are a relatively recent phenomenon. Goldstein's analysis suggests that the revolutions in conventional precision guidance and global reconnaissance capabilities have tipped the balance in favor of preventive war, although risks still remain. U.S. officers and officials, for instance, were deeply concerned about the prospect that Saddam Hussein might retaliate with chemical or biological weapons when it became clear that the regime in Baghdad itself was the target of coalition operations in 2003; nevertheless, members of the administration were ultimately undeterred by what they considered to be a credible threat. Goldstein concludes

with an even more disturbing observation: that world politics might be entering a period of pronounced instability as the proliferation of nuclear weapons and associated delivery systems accelerates. More opportunities will soon present themselves to stop ambitious nascent nuclear states in their tracks.

Goldstein's narrative is compelling, theoretically informed, well written, and well organized. His comparative study sheds light on the proliferation optimism/pessimism debate, even though his conclusions are unlikely to satisfy either camp. Skeptics might point out that his case studies are a bit cursory and lack documentary evidence drawn from the various capitals in question. To its credit, however, Goldstein's work is relatively comprehensive and provides a global perspective on how preventive war dynamics play out among Western and non-Western antagonists. It also provides a chronological perspective on how the phenomenon of preventive war might, in fact, be changing. His work thus constitutes a significant and enduring contribution to the literature on nuclear proliferation, deterrence, and preventive war.

JAMES J. WIRTZ
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Kennedy, Paul. *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations*. New York: Random House, 2006. 384pp. \$26.95

An institution as central to the contemporary world's political and geostrategic landscape as the United Nations is constantly in need of thoughtful, scholarly attention. Paul Kennedy delivers just this with *The Parliament of Man*.

Kennedy, the author of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* and *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*, approves of the idea of the UN but is not blind to its failings. He believes that "since this is the only world organization that we possess, we need to make it work in the best way possible, in order to help humankind navigate our present turbulent century." Consequently, while the book is mostly historical, a consistent tone of apology runs along with the narrative. It is a story, Kennedy writes, of "evolution, metamorphosis, and experiment, of failure and success," but a story that is ultimately justified.

A solid introductory chapter traces the deepest roots of the UN back to post-Napoleonic Europe, but Kennedy very naturally spends most of his time examining events in the wake of World War I. Here Kennedy rehearses the prehistory of the UN from the advent of its predecessor, the League of Nations, through that organization's failures and the consequent outbreak of World War II. While this chapter contains little in the way of new information or startling revelations, it is well written, succinct, and peppered with insights.

What follows are several thematic chapters on such topics as the working of the Security Council, the execution of peacekeeping missions, the idea of human rights, UN economic policies, and so on. Here one comes to appreciate the true breadth of the United Nations. Kennedy's examination of the Security Council is especially timely, given the growing pressures for its expansion and restructuring. Kennedy's account of the UN's track record in peacekeeping operations (arguably its highest-profile role in much of the world) is prefaced by a keen observation, one that is rarely

mentioned in more critical examinations and that forces us to take fresh stock of such missions: "The most astonishing thing," he writes, "is that the UN Charter contains absolutely no mention of the word peacekeeping and offers no guidelines as to this form of collective action." This will be news to many.

The greatest effect of this worthwhile volume is the appreciation one gains for the great complexity of the United Nations and, more to the point, of the tasks it faces. Kennedy also shows the institution to be worthy of a bit more sympathy than many are currently inclined to give it.

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Gross, Michael L. *Bioethics and Armed Conflict: Moral Dilemmas of Medicine and War*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006. 384pp. \$26

Debate rages today in Congress and amid the public on the tolerable limits of coercive interrogation and torture associated with armed conflict, and the alleged complicity of military health care professionals in these purportedly nefarious activities. These allegations make this tome of ethical analysis a pertinent starting point for academics interested in contemporary issues affecting the practice of military medicine during war.

The author is neither a professional soldier nor physician but a former conscript in the Israel Defense Forces, and currently professor of applied and professional ethics in international relations at the University of Haifa. The book confronts multiple subjects of practical relevance, among them such issues as what patient rights caregivers

must respect; how best to distribute scarce material and health manpower resources; which among the wounded should receive priority within the triage process (and the related question of what military utility should be assigned to certain casualties); changed priorities of informed consent and confidentiality among soldiers; the dilemma of torture, ill treatment, and the role of physicians; the legitimacy of physician contribution to the development of chemical and biological weapons; physician civil disobedience and assistance in draft evasion; and the widely presumed but equally debatable status of medical neutrality, impartiality, and immunity during war.

Michael Gross argues that medical ethics in times of armed conflict are not identical to medical ethics in times of peace. Military necessity, reasons of state, and the war effort impinge upon moral decision making and often overwhelm the axioms that animate medical ethics during peacetime. He repeatedly emphasizes that during war the everyday principles of biomedical ethics must compete with equally relevant and conflicting principles anchored in military necessity and national security, where the welfare of the individual has far less importance than the welfare of the state and the political community. During armed conflict, military necessity trumps the right to life, self-determination, and patient welfare. Physicians care for sick and wounded soldiers for reasons different from those applicable to other patients: soldiers are treated to preserve manpower and to protect the vitality of a collective fighting force. In fact, the entire range of moral decision making changes under the exigencies of war. Collective interests overwhelm individual welfare, and this extends even to the

moral authority of the military to enforce its regulations regarding administration of such agents as Anthrax vaccine to military forces, or to new but not yet fully recognized scientific discoveries. Equally provocative is the thesis that medical contributions to interrogational torture may be morally defensible under conditions that offer the possibility of preventing egregious harm to others.

As a treatise addressing contemporary ethical issues in military medicine, this is a useful contribution. Unfortunately, the writer's style at times intermixes elements of the arcane phraseology of the professional academic ethics community. "The uninitiated" must read and reread some passages if they are motivated to comprehend fully the ethical dilemmas being debated and dissected.

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Vego, Milan. *The Battle for Leyte, 1944: Allied and Japanese Plans, Preparations, and Execution*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2006. 479pp. \$55

There have been many books published about the battle for Leyte Gulf. This book, however, is unique, because it is not only a narrative but also a critical analysis of the planning, preparation, and execution of that famous battle as viewed by both the Americans and the Japanese. Milan Vego, professor of military operations at the Naval War College and author of a textbook on operational warfare, is also a former merchant marine officer. He has tackled the subject of this work with much

vigor and depicts the battle with clarity and in great depth.

The book is organized into eleven chapters. Chapters 1 through 5 show how both sides planned and organized for the battle, and chapter 6 discusses the background and operations just before the engagement. However, the heart and soul of the book are in the final section that depicts the battle itself.

Vego begins by noting that in the early days of the Pacific War the Americans split their command arrangements, with General Douglas MacArthur in charge of the South West Pacific Area (SWPA) and Admiral Chester Nimitz commanding the Pacific Ocean Area (POA). This scheme worked well enough until the Leyte operation, when it produced much confusion over command relationships, leading to problems between Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey and Vice Admiral Thomas Kinkaid, Commander Allied Naval Forces that almost lost them the battle. Vego is critical of the delays in communications between various American components. He concludes that the Americans relied too much on Japanese intentions—as interpreted via information gleaned from the MAGIC intercepts—and less on actual capability. He believes that the Americans' strength was in their operational-logistic plans and programs.

However, Vego argues, the Japanese were even worse in comparable ways. Parochial competition between the army and navy cost them dearly. The Japanese had little intelligence that could compare with that of the Americans, and they had serious logistical problems that were never properly resolved.

Among the book's strengths are the subheadings of each chapter, which allow the reader to skip around. Vego's sixty-seven pages of notes are excellent, enabling the reader to delve deeper into the battle, and his bibliography is outstanding. There are sixteen appendixes showing the order of battle of the adversaries, as well as six excellent maps. Vego's conclusion, while offering nothing new, does an outstanding job of summarizing the battle. Also, his summary of Halsey's failure in the battle is superior. Professor Vego concludes that "the Japanese came close to accomplishing their mission not because of their skills but because of the mistakes that Halsey made."

DONALD M. GOLDSTEIN
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Tyerman, Christopher. *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2006. 1,024pp. \$35

Christopher Tyerman, a lecturer in medieval history at Oxford University, offers this work at a crucial moment. With world attention focused as it is on the Middle East and on the social, political, religious, and military interactions between the Muslim East and Christian West, *God's War* could not have come at a more opportune time, especially for those who wish to have a better understanding of this exotic and violent period. Over the past decade, the subject of the Crusades has become a popular one for writers, but Steven Runciman's three-volume *History of the Crusades* remains the primary standard of comparison. Tyerman accurately, if perhaps with a bit of hubris, notes that Runciman's

work is now outdated and seriously flawed. What makes Tyerman's work stand out is the extent of his knowledge of the entire crusading era and his ability to deploy that knowledge in a clear, concise, and generally readable manner in the course of a single (if massive) volume.

God's War is reasonably if not totally comprehensive. The first four Crusades are covered in minute detail, the later Crusades less so. Tyerman, however, also discusses many related movements not normally considered as crusades, such as the *Reconquista* in Spain and Teutonic campaigns in the Baltic, and even the expansion of the concept of holy war to the conquest of the New World. This breadth of coverage makes up for an occasional lack of depth. At times the book does suffer from an overreliance on name-dropping, some of which is repetitive and, for the novice, confusing.

Tyerman stresses that one cannot know how the Crusaders thought or felt—making it ironic when he comments, as he frequently does, on what did or did not motivate them. This is peculiar, as one of the strongest points of the book is its explanation of how the movement originated and the ways in which the Crusades were products of the sometimes paradoxical social, religious, and political forces of the Middle Ages. Another strong point is his descriptions of the personalities of the Crusaders. Tyerman fleshes out the leaders, men like the Christians Godfrey of Bullion and Bohemond, Frederick Barbarossa, or Richard of Anjou, and the Muslim leaders Saladin and Baybars. These people are described from the standpoint both of their apologists and their critics and enemies, and thus as true three-dimensional

personalities. Through these descriptions, Tyerman creates after all a snapshot of how the *crucesignati* and *jihadi* thought, and in particular how they were influenced by the concept of holy war.

Tyerman avoids the controversy of the influence of the Crusades on events in the Middle East today. He outlines the Christian concept of just war and holy war without assessing whether the Crusades were just. He describes the Muslim concept of jihad, yet does not pass judgment on the initial conquest or reconquest of the Holy Land by the Arabs. Additionally, he does not address Western guilt over the Crusades or the Islamic feeling of having been wronged. Only in passing does he mention a certain pope's apology and a certain politician's ill-timed use of the word "crusade." In a word, he neither condemns nor apologizes for the actions and violence of Christians or Muslims but clearly lays out the social, religious, political, and economic causes and results of the Crusades.

For readers searching for a single-volume survey of the crusading movement, Christopher Tyerman's *God's War* is invaluable.

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Reynolds, David. *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006. 363pp. \$45

In this insightful and elegantly written set of essays in international history, David Reynolds ruminates on the causes, evolution, and consequences of

what came to be called the "special relationship" between the United States and Great Britain during the Second World War and thereafter through the Cold War. Geostrategically, this relationship originated with the fall of France in May 1940, which Reynolds treats quite rightly as the "fulcrum of the Twentieth Century." Until then, British leaders had counted on France to contain Germany, with England making only a limited commitment of ground forces to the continent and relying on a powerful deterrent based on strategic bombing. In 1940, with the French knocked out of the war and England's small army in ruins, whether the British could fight on against Germany's Wehrmacht depended above all on support from the United States. Winston Churchill's decision to continue fighting turned out to be the right policy chosen for the wrong reasons, because Franklin D. Roosevelt was initially unwilling to supply more than material aid and was later unable to bring Americans into the war until both Japan and Germany declared war on the United States. Shared hatred of a vicious enemy, a more or less common language, generally similar liberal political principles, shared intelligence, combined military staffs, summitry, and the industrial prowess of the United States was to make the Anglo-American alliance perhaps more effective than any other in history.

Year by year, however, British influence within the Grand Alliance waned as American power waxed. In the spirit of Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt sought an alternative to traditional alliances in his vision of postwar international peace and security cooperation by means of

the “Four Policemen”—the United States, the United Kingdom, China, and the Soviet Union—each of which would earn a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council. Despite Roosevelt’s hopes of extending wartime cooperation with the Soviet Union into the peace, the ever more closed systems of government established within Soviet-occupied East-Central Europe increasingly induced both British and American leaders to begin to fear the USSR as the Second Coming of the Third Reich. This shared perception, fueled (somewhat unintentionally, Reynolds claims) by Churchill’s “iron curtain” speech in Fulton, Missouri, in 1946, brought the two wartime allies ever closer together again. Fears that appeasement would merely whet the aggressor’s appetite for more then sustained the growing transatlantic consensus that the Soviet Union needed to be contained.

As the Cold War heated up, the British and the rest of Western Europe needed American power; Americans needed British bases around the world, as well as the legitimacy and self-assurance that the support of this ally, especially, might supply both at home and abroad. Although the *Pax Britannica* collapsed in the eastern Mediterranean in 1947, it was replaced rapidly and smoothly by the *Pax Americana*, as exemplified in the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the especially close relationship between Britain and the United States serving as the foundation of transatlantic unity and cooperation. Henceforward, England would play Robin to America’s Batman, gambling that loyalty to the United States would enable it to punch above its weight.

Loyalty would purchase Britain a disproportionate influence in American foreign policy, though some in England might occasionally wonder whether the price in national honor was too high, especially when prime ministers appeared to be mere “poodles” serving American masters.

Reynolds does not romanticize the special relationship. The Suez crisis of 1956 made it clear that Americans would not prop up declining empires; indeed, it was American policy to hurry them into their graves. Nonetheless, Americans were there when the British needed them, with satellite intelligence and other support, in the Falklands War. However, the Iraq war of 2003 suggests that sometimes Robin might be too loyal to the caped crusader, who needs to look before he leaps and benefit from wiser counsel from his most loyal ally. For all these difficulties, Reynolds shows that the current international order rests on common Anglo-American liberal principles and overlapping political cultures that shaped how both the British and the Americans defined their interests from World War II to the end of the Cold War and beyond. Though the relationship may always have been more special to the British than the Americans, Reynolds shows why it needs to continue to be especially close. Arguably far more than Roosevelt’s United Nations, Churchill’s union of English-speaking peoples saved civilization from barbarism again and again in the twentieth century. Our prospects in the current century require us to keep that union especially in mind.

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Till, Geoffrey, ed. *The Development of British Naval Thinking: Essays in Memory of Bryan Ranft*. New York: Routledge, 2006. 214pp. \$125

This collection of nine essays on British naval thought from the eighteenth century to the present is both useful in itself and a fine testimonial to an individual significant in the field of maritime and naval historiography. Bryan Ranft (1917–2003) fought as a gunner in World War II and then went on to teach generations of British naval officers at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, England. For many years Ranft occupied a rather lonely position, academically speaking. Amateur naval historians like Richard Hough abounded but made no impression upon scholarship and methodology. The two modern giants Stephen Roskill and Arthur Marder were for various reasons not equivalent to the likes of Sir Michael Howard in developing military history. Naval matters were hardly taught in the academy; the Vere Harmsworth Chair at Cambridge University (Richmond's former seat) had been long lost to colonial historians, and Greenwich itself was a service institution.

However, Bryan Ranft persisted in teaching, writing, and editing naval history. His output was not great; I count two of his edited works, *The Beatty Papers* and *Technical Change and British Naval Policy, 1860–1939*, among the best of a half-dozen volumes. By the early 1980s, however, Ranft was a visiting professor of naval history at King's College, London, which was among the first of the United Kingdom's academic institutions to recognize the stupidity of ignoring British and international naval history.

Within another fifteen to twenty years this subject would witness an escape from those scholarly doldrums, indeed a serious revival, particularly in such forward-looking universities as Exeter, Southampton, Hull, and London, which were at last recognizing their own cities' deep maritime heritages. Many of the contributors to this volume teach, or have taught, in those very institutions.

Professor Geoffrey Till—in many ways Ranft's natural successor—has edited a tight and coherent Festschrift, which hangs together in large part because all essays concentrate upon naval *thinking* and writing rather than operations or technology. It is difficult, then, to single out for special praise certain contributions, for they range from Nicholas Rodger's chapter on eighteenth-to-nineteenth-century British naval strategic thought to Eric Grove's equivalent piece regarding the close of the twentieth century. Readers might take special interest in the contributions by Jock Gardner and Richard Hill, longtime naval officers become significant authors of maritime and strategic matters.

There is a useful bibliography, but the index is rather thin. However, these days one is grateful to see such an item at all. This is, in sum, a most useful addition (volume 38) to the Cass series on Naval Policy and History, of which Professor Till is the general editor.

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Gilbert, Alton Keith, ed. *A Leader Born*. Drexel Hill, Pa.: Casemate, 2006. 230pp. \$32.95

Alton Keith Gilbert, a retired naval officer, uses a descriptive survey method of research through letters, operational documents, fitness reports, personal accounts, and awards to chronicle the biography of Admiral John “Slew” McCain.

The book builds a strong sense of the character and tenacity of McCain and his ability as a warfighter through one of the most difficult periods of World War II. From his commissioning as an ensign to admiral, McCain was influenced by the Navy’s greatest leaders. The author describes the development of McCain as he progressed through his sea and shore assignments. The study culminates in a detailed description of the war in the Pacific and the tactics used, particularly when dealing with Japanese kamikaze pilots, under McCain’s operational leadership.

An intriguing aspect of this book is the detailed description of the political dealings among the Navy’s senior leaders. This allows the reader to understand some of the activity behind the scenes that ultimately shaped the outcome of the war. It is clear that McCain was a warrior’s warrior who literally worked himself to death: “After Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945, McCain flew back to his home in the U.S. and died in his bed the next day—perhaps from heart failure but more probably from exhaustion.” His dedication to the country, accomplishment of the mission, and loyalty to his superiors are constant themes of the book.

The extensive resources and the author’s personal experience as a naval officer make this a credible, historically accurate work. Gilbert’s style brings to life the experience of the Pacific War. In addition, specific data regarding the

losses of personnel and equipment only enhances the understanding of the impact of that war on both the U.S. and Japanese forces. The bibliography is a great resource for anyone who desires additional information on the topic.

The only criticism I have relates to the title. The book comes up a little short on the actual leadership characteristics of McCain, and I found myself searching for those qualities in his style and character. Yet this is a must-read for anyone who desires to learn about another one of the great admirals of World War II.

THOMAS ZELIBOR
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Osborne, Eric W. *The Battle of Heligoland Bight*. Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 2006. 141pp. \$27.95

Butler, Daniel Allen. *Distant Victory: The Battle of Jutland and the Allied Triumph in the First World War*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2006. 251pp. \$44.95

After two decades of unrelenting publishing on the land war of 1914–18, it is nice to see attention being paid to the war at sea, for that effort ranged from distant blockades, mine warfare, unrestricted submarine warfare, and dashing destroyer melees, to the largest pitched surface fleet battle to that time. Both authors tell their stories with a passion for narrative, paying close attention not only to admirals but also to the “common sailor” at war. Both come well prepared: Osborne, of Virginia Military Institute, has published *Britain’s Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914–1919* (2004) and *Cruisers and Battle Cruisers:*

An Illustrated History of Their Impact (2004), while Butler, a former U.S. Army officer and media commentator, is the author of *The Age of Cunard* (2004).

Osborne's *Battle of Heligoland Bight* is solid naval history. On 28 August 1914 British cruisers, destroyers, and submarines descended into the Heligoland Bight and surprised German scouting forces, which lost the light cruisers SMS *Mainz*, SMS *Koln*, SMS *Ariadne*, and the torpedo boat *V-187*, as well as 1,251 officers and men killed, wounded, or captured. The British, in contrast, suffered damage to one light cruiser and three destroyers, as well as thirty-five officers and men killed and forty wounded. Beyond these losses, the importance of the battle lies in the fact that it reinforced the already timid stance of the German High Sea Fleet command.

Osborne's two major contributions are at the command level and at the tactical level. Senior commanders, British and German, performed woefully. There was a lack of coordination with the forces at sea and among the forces engaged in battle. There were also problems with communication (delays in decoding messages and jammed transmissions) and an overall failure to provide commanders with intelligence on the composition and position of enemy forces.

Officers who today fear that in a "real" war the enemy may well deprive them of cybernetic capabilities must read this book. Heligoland showed what it was like to fight "blind" and under adverse conditions. Clausewitz's "fog of war" was omnipresent, especially on the British side: battle signals were misread; major units put out to sea without

notifying other commands; cruisers attempted to ram their own submarines; submarines made attack runs on their own cruisers; and destroyers engaged a Norwegian neutral, mistaking it for a German minelayer. The German command did not perform much better. It failed to appreciate the size of the British force and refused to recognize that it was supported by battle cruisers. It also hesitated to send out its own battle cruisers in time to assist. The fact that German battleships had to wait hours for high tide so they could cross the Jade Bar at Wilhelmshaven did not help matters, nor did the true "fog of war," namely, a heavy fog that swirled around Heligoland all that day. In short, this is a superb book on the all but forgotten first surface battle of World War I.

Distant Victory, of course, has the advantage that it is about a well known battle, the greatest in history to that date. On 31 May 1916, off Denmark's Jutland Peninsula, twenty-four British dreadnoughts and their escorts squared off against sixteen German dreadnoughts and their escorts—in all, 151 British warships against ninety-nine German warships. Butler relates the resulting battle in gripping, dramatic style. He has a keen eye for the bold narrative, whether speaking of a destroyer or a battleship, a commander or a gunner. He follows the traditional reading of Jutland, that it was a tactical German victory (fourteen British ships were lost to the Germans' eleven, and 6,784 British casualties as against 3,058 German) but a British strategic victory, insofar as the High Sea Fleet failed to break the Grand Fleet's iron grip on the exits of the North Sea. As the *New York Herald* trenchantly put it on 3 June 1916, "The German fleet has assaulted

its jailer, but it is still in jail.” Unfortunately, Butler fails to draw on the greatest strategic lesson for the Germans: on 4 July Admiral Reinhard Scheer, the “victor of the Skagaerrak,” informed Kaiser Wilhelm II that further fleet actions would be futile and that only “the defeat of British economic life, that is, by using the U-boats against British trade,” could swing the balance in the war.

Lamentably, Butler’s lack of familiarity with German documents and recent historiography mars an otherwise interesting book. Apart from misspelled German words and ships’ names, there are major howlers. Thus Ludendorff is raised to the nobility as “von,” Hugo von Pohl in 1914 is listed as the High Sea Fleet’s chief of staff rather than as Chief of the Admiralty Staff in Berlin, Karl Doenitz is cited as a World War I “destroyer captain,” and German diplomatic and naval files are situated at Koblenz rather than at Berlin and Freiburg, respectively. Further, while one can accuse the German naval command of timidity, it seems unjust to ascribe “cowardice” to them. Hyperbole abounds. Did Jutland really “dictate” that “Germany would lose the First World War”? Was it “the decisive moment of the First World War”? Did it “decide” the “very course of the war”? Was the German failure to intercept British cross-Channel troop transports in August 1914 the “lost opportunity” that “ultimately decided the course of the war”?

Finally, Butler’s claims that “three generations of histories” have failed to look at the “strategic aftermath” of the battle and that they have failed for ninety years to ask why the Germans never again faced the Grand Fleet in battle, or why they turned instead to unrestricted

submarine warfare, are not just inaccurate but make a mockery of that scholarship. Careful editorial work could have averted some of this. Regrettably, it did not.

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Henriques, Peter R. *Realistic Visionary: A Portrait of George Washington*. Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2006. 256pp. \$26.95

The man who was “first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen” is also first as a subject in the contemporary revival of popular interest in the founding fathers. In this work Peter Henriques has provided a concise, balanced, and scholarly companion piece to the more comprehensive recent books concerning George Washington. Rather than a conventional biography, Peter Henriques, a professor emeritus of history at George Mason University and a distinguished scholar of the vast collection of Washington’s writings, has provided an analysis of ten of the arguably most important issues and relationships Washington dealt with during his life. Especially for those familiar with Washington’s basic biography, these thoughtful and fair-minded essays will inspire further reflection on the character and career of the indispensable man of the American founding.

Henriques’s erudition and balanced judgment may be at their most effective in his consideration of the private Washington, including an examination of his beliefs on slavery and religion, and a reflection on his final illness and death. Washington, who can be justifiably criticized as a slave owner, in

Henriques's view experienced a "tortuously gradual" evolution on slavery that mixed increasing moral consideration with ever-present economic assessments. Washington never publicly took a stance against slavery or called for its end, although his personal growth on the issue of slavery and race is impressive—in his will he ultimately freed his own. Henriques writes that Washington was a realist, a man who should be judged against the standards of his day, and notes that he made the unity of the new republic a higher priority than attacking slavery, an institution Washington came to write of as "the only unavoidable subject of regret."

Perhaps the most moving chapter in this well written book is the last, where Henriques addresses Washington's death. His detailed research reveals that Washington's last day of life was excruciatingly painful, that orthodox Christian beliefs had no apparent influence on his actions during his final hours, and that important aspects of his

character were highlighted by his behavior throughout this tormenting struggle. (Washington slowly suffocated to death over many hours, almost certainly from acute epiglottitis, a virulent bacterial infection of the throat.) As Washington wrote some four months before he died, "When the summons comes I shall endeavor to obey it with a good grace." He endured the attempted treatment from his doctors and an agonizing death with stoic courage, patience, and grace, completing his life with his honor intact.

Henriques's accessible book illuminates Washington's character through, in some measure, the lens of his honor and the importance to Washington throughout his life of preserving it. *Realistic Visionary* provides a trustworthy and insightful guide to a further understanding of Washington and confirms, in the words of his secretary, Tobias Lear, that "he died as he lived."

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