

BOOK REVIEWS

DO NO HARM

Levinger, Matthew. *Conflict Analysis: Understanding Causes, Unlocking Solutions*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2013. 265pp. \$20

Conflict resolution is often compared to medicine. Both fields pursue research not as an end in itself but to relieve suffering and promote healing. Both have as their first tenet “Do no harm.” Writers on conflict too must display academic rigor yet show sufficient clarity and force to engage a diverse readership. Most importantly, they must offer ideas that will be helpful in real-world situations.

Levinger’s book excels on all these counts. This work, focused on large-scale violence, is intended as a “practical reference and field guide” for diplomats, military officers, development specialists, nongovernment organizations, and corporations operating in conflict zones. Levinger is highly qualified for this task, having held positions in executive education on conflict management at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the United States Institute of Peace, and George Washington University, where he is currently visiting professor of international affairs and director of the National Security Studies Program at the Elliott School.

A three-part structure addresses the nature and causes of conflict, analytical

tools, and a process for transforming analysis into action. Of particular value is the attention Levinger gives to the social dynamics of collaborative analysis, illuminating how interaction among individual and institutional participants can affect outcomes, both positively and negatively.

Levinger begins on a cautionary note, pointing out that while the level of conflict has declined since the Cold War, resource shortages and other factors could reverse that trend. He reviews leading theories on conflict’s causes, offering useful insights into the psychology of escalation and the role of women in reducing conflict as well as sustaining it. A chapter on risk assessment and early warning discusses monitoring systems, including the U.S. government’s Monitoring Progress in Conflict Environments program. Levinger stresses early detection of genocidal violence, which can be “more explosive and extreme than other conflicts.”

The section on analytical tools describes conflict assessment frameworks, narrative analysis, conflict mapping, and scenario analysis. All are

powerful instruments, but Levinger offers caveats. He recommends beginning with a self-assessment to clarify one's own interests, and he cautions that any analysis can only be a "snapshot." Moreover, "in many cases, the interpersonal relationships and the deliberative process established during the conflict assessment will be more valuable than any specific conclusions."

An illuminating chapter on "cognitive minefields" addresses three challenges familiar to many readers: groupthink, "black swans," and psychic numbing. Regarding the latter, Levinger argues that contrary to conventional thinking, emotional response is integral to sound decision making. In the words of psychologist Paul Slovic, the ideal process is "a dance of emotion and reason."

Levinger prescribes five steps for integrating analysis into program planning and implementation: framing the problem, defining objectives, conducting situational analysis, designing a program of action, and monitoring progress. More discussion would have been useful here on specific ways of integrating senior leaders' perspectives into working-level deliberations and on helping them in turn to grasp the dynamic complexity of volatile situations. As Levinger notes, "conflict analysts should not seek to become decision makers, but rather to help decision makers become better conflict analysts themselves."

Levinger offers illuminating case studies, tables, charts, and boxes highlighting key points. The comprehensive appendixes, glossary, and list of resources add further to the value of this book. It should be standard reading in every security-studies program.

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Harrison, Ross. *Strategic Thinking in 3D: A Guide for National Security, Foreign Policy, and Business Professionals*. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2013. 197 pp. \$29.95

Ross Harrison, a professor at Georgetown University and well-known strategic theorist, takes the novel approach that the basic tenets of strategy are applicable to nearly all human endeavors. Rather than accepting the traditional view that the strategic theory relevant to a national-security professional is inapplicable to a corporate executive, Harrison introduces a multistep approach to identifying and applying what he characterizes as universal strategic principles.

Harrison sees the aim of all strategies, regardless of the field in which they are utilized, as being to navigate a multidimensional external environment to the ultimate benefit of one's chosen endeavor. Whether you are a military officer confronting an asymmetric-warfare challenge or an entrepreneur seeking to expand your product's market share, the underlying principles of sound strategy remain constant. Harrison identifies three unchanging dimensions in any strategy: systems, opponents, and groups.

The author states that systems relate to the external environment confronting all strategies, a "web of relationships where a change in one part has an effect on the other parts." A "system" can be as defined as a formal alliance, like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or as diffuse as the entire Middle Eastern region and its political, economic, and cultural characteristics. Harrison's most subtle and nuanced proposition is that the formulation of strategy in the context of external

environments is directly impacted by the systems that shape that environment.

Harrison's discussion of the opponent—whether a transnational terrorist organization or a corporate competitor—as a universal dimension of strategy builds on his understanding of systems. While one can seek to change the external environment in one's favor by strategizing against a system—for example, U.S. efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East as a long-term strategy to prevent radicalization and extremism—there is a more direct approach available against individual opponents. Businessmen can assess their competitors' products and decide to invest in specific market areas where they perceive opponents to be weak. National-security strategists can recommend the implementation of counterinsurgency strategies focused on protecting local populations because they perceive opponents to be alienating the citizenry.

Finally, Harrison discusses the impact of groups on strategy, whether citizens organizing to protest a business's environmental record or mass public opinion impacting the strategies of governments. By enunciating his concept of groups, systems, and opponents, Harrison performs the service of providing broad categories encompassing virtually all the actors that confront strategists of either a commercial or security bent. In so doing he underlines the point that regardless of the area of endeavor, a strategist will face conceptual frameworks very similar to those facing colleagues in other fields. An important addition to the study of strategy, *Strategic Thinking in 3D* does much to expand the traditional understanding of strategic theory from a narrow subject lacking commonality between

multiple fields of activity to a universal framework for achieving one's goals.

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Simpson, Emile. *War from the Ground Up: Twenty-First-Century Combat as Politics*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012. 256pp. \$32.50

Emile Simpson served in Afghanistan as an infantry officer in the Royal Gurkha Rifles. At first glance, the book might appear to be an account of his experiences there; in fact, however, it is a sophisticated examination of twenty-first-century warfare and of the employment of the military instrument of power. Its front cover is embellished with the endorsement “Deserves to be seen as a coda to [Prussian military theorist/philosopher Carl von] Clausewitz’s *On War*.” This is no small feat, and Simpson delivers an intellectually sophisticated account of the changed nature of warfare, examining war through two lenses. The first lens is the traditional use of armed force to seek to create military conditions within which a political settlement can be reached. Second, he examines armed force deployed for a distinctly political purpose. While these modes are by no means mutually exclusive and can be employed by the same actor at the same time against the same enemy, Simpson asserts that understanding the difference between these two is essential to achieving national-security objectives in the twenty-first century.

Simpson continually refers to two ideas from Clausewitz. The first is polarity—the simple idea that wars are usually contests fought between two sides. The second idea is that traditionally, strategic

audiences are contained within the nation-state structure. When war is a contest between two sides, the audiences are easy to identify, and traditionally these audiences understand the outcome of the war in terms of the contest between the armed forces of the sides. When multiple strategic audiences, some of them not contained within or associated with nation-states, do not understand or interpret the military outcome in the same way, “the military outcome does not provide a stable basis upon which to define a conflict’s outcome.” Simpson argues that “strategic confusion can result when conflicts characterized by competition between many actors in a fragmented political environment are shoehorned into a traditional concept of war, which is two polarized sides.” The information revolution and advances in communications and social media have exacerbated this problem, forcing overlap not only between the tactical and strategic levels of war but between the tactical and policy levels as well.

Simpson describes war as a competition between strategic narratives. Accordingly, planners at all levels should be targeting strategic audiences as centers of gravity. It is a matter not so much of the Clausewitzian dictum that war is designed to compel your enemy to do your will but of compelling your target audience to understand your message. *War from the Ground Up* provides case studies for this proposition ranging from the coalition effort in Afghanistan in 2006 to the British strategy in the Borneo conflict in the mid-1960s. The author also addresses other insurgencies throughout the narrative, including the conflict in Sri Lanka and Russian operations in Chechnya, and refers to the work of prominent authors who

have weighed in on the changed nature of warfare in the twenty-first century, such as David Kilcullen, Colonel Gian Gentile, and Antonio Giustozzi. A visiting defense fellow at Oxford in 2011, Simpson fuses a firm grasp of traditional humanities and philosophy with his experience in Afghanistan.

He has provided us with what may be one of the most important books on strategy in a long time. No short review can do justice to this remarkable book, which should be read by all military officers and policy makers, as well as anyone involved with the planning and execution of military operations.

JEFFREY SHAW
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Erickson, Andrew S. *Chinese Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM) Development: Drivers, Trajectories, and Strategic Implications*. Washington, D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, 2013. 110pp. \$18

Andrew S. Erickson is a leading authority on Chinese naval developments. His research and linguistic abilities are matched by his careful, systematic analysis. In this work Erickson thoroughly surveys the existing literature in English and Chinese addressing Beijing’s efforts to deploy antiship ballistic missiles (ASBMs) able to strike large warships at ranges of more than a thousand miles.

The author credits China with developing ASBMs as part of its strategy of “using the land to control the sea.” However, this represents a misinterpretation of naval history. While it is true that “a ship’s a fool to fight a fort,” it is also true that no nation has successfully defeated a naval force with land power alone. Examples include President Thomas Jefferson’s

construction of coastal forts and of a fleet of inshore gunboats to fight Britain's global navy, and the successful U.S. amphibious campaign against Japan's island bastions in World War II.

Erickson's key question is, How successful is China's ASBM system? He concludes that a functioning ASBM has been developed by Beijing but that final operating capacity remains a work in progress. Erickson highlights a crucial weakness in China's efforts to deploy such a complex system of systems when he describes the "tremendously complex and difficult process" of ensuring "extremely close coordination" among several branches and agencies in a Chinese bureaucracy notable for lacking that attribute.

The ASBM-warhead issue is not satisfactorily addressed in the literature. Why would a U.S. commander assume that an incoming ballistic missile is armed with a conventional warhead and not a nuclear one? Employing ASBMs poses a possibly insuperable danger of escalation from conventional to nuclear warfare. As Erickson points out in his conclusion, "PLA sources reveal overconfidence in China's ability to control escalation, which is itself an extraordinary danger."

The author's conclusion that an aircraft carrier group "would have a large electromagnetic signature" ignores the progress made in the 1980s in operating under dramatically reduced electronic emissions conditions. Also, the author errs if he attributes to China a unique policy of "asymmetry" in the development of weapons designed to counter U.S. military strengths. Any intelligent military does that. I also question the author's conclusion that the United States is "on the 'wrong end of physics'" with respect to matching China

militarily, in view of his inability to describe countermeasures presently under development or in force.

However, these are minor criticisms of a thoughtful evaluation of current Chinese efforts to defend the homeland and exert control over the waters Beijing believes vital to national-security interests. Also impressive is Erickson's appreciation of the possibility of "deeply destabilizing" strategic effects of successful Chinese maritime control strategies on the Asian political situation—that is, a successful ASBM will not simply be a tactical weapon. This is a book that every naval officer and civilian analyst must read.

BERNARD D. COLE
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Nordquist, Myron H., and John Norton Moore, eds. *Maritime Border Diplomacy*. Boston, Mass.: Martinus Nijhoff, 2012. 366pp. \$146.98

In 2011 the thirty-fifth annual conference on the law of the sea and oceans policy was held in Bali, Indonesia. The conference attracted (as it always does) an impressive array of presenters and attendees. The editors offer with this work a compilation of the papers presented. Perhaps because they made no concessions to make the presentations "accessible," the result is something of a rarity—a compilation that remains interesting and useful. Each of the seven sections has much to recommend it. All are potentially useful, and the "Dispute Settlement Mechanisms" section is especially well presented.

This collection is a fascinating spectrum of topics ranging from specific cases, such as the "2008 China-Japan Agreement on Cooperation for the

Development of East China Sea Resources” and “Law of the Sea Aspects of Indonesian National Legislation on Submarine Communication Cable,” to much broader tropics. These include at least one discussion on climate change.

The issue of maritime boundaries (as one hopes most readers of the *Naval War College Review* will know) is highly complex, and some of the more notable disputes of the present are so charged as to carry with them the potential to escalate into hostilities. Perhaps the contending claims over the Paracel and Spratly Islands are the best known of these disputes, but maritime disputes can be found in every ocean in the world. Set against a backdrop of continuing tensions in the South China Sea and the U.S. “pivot” to the Pacific, this work is especially timely. It is also varied. Not only is the Paracel-Spratly dispute addressed, but so are issues involving the United States and Mexico, and Canada and France.

The contributing authors are an impressive lot. They include senior government ministers, ambassadors, senior members of foreign ministries, and scholars of international maritime law. Unfortunately missing from the lineup are military or coast guard authorities, who would have brought yet another point of view to the discussion.

Not surprisingly, this work ranks high on rigorous scholarship, meticulousness of citation, and careful crafting of arguments. The tone, however, is legalistic, and in many cases the authors clearly expected from the audience familiarity with ongoing arguments and history that a lay reader might not possess.

One of the more surprising facets of this book is the optimism of the authors, taken together, about finding

peaceful solutions to the issues. As Ian Townsend Gault points out, such techniques as zones of cooperation, while by no means perfect, may be more effective than they seem at first glance. Also, Rodman R. Bundy’s discussion on potential approaches to dispute resolution utilizing the services of a third party is illuminating.

Those with more than passing interest in these issues should definitely read this book. It is well written, organized, and delivered. It deserves a place on the bookshelf of any maritime-related business, government office, or law firm. Unfortunately, it is not likely to become a household item, because of its technical and legal focus, not to mention its cost.

RICHARD NORTON
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Struett, Michael J., Jon D. Carlson, and Mark T. Nance, eds. *Maritime Piracy and the Construction of Global Governance*. New York: Routledge, 2013. 226pp. \$29

Piracy presents an extraordinary set of challenges to navies, law-enforcement agencies, jurists, shipowners, and seafarers, challenges that have generated a voluminous literature. Historical piracy has become a subject du jour, and there is even an evolving discipline of piracy studies.

Piracy also challenges international-relations theory. Most theoretical responses have been either neorealist or neoliberal, viewpoints that assume that both states are the central actors, acting rationally under unitary governments. Neorealism seeks to explain piracy (most studies have focused on Somali piracy without reference to the attacks

that have occurred in Southeast Asia or off Nigeria) in terms of state failure, and counterpiracy as the maximization by states of their competitive advantage over other states in an international system where material capabilities are changing. For its part, neoliberalism argues that states seek to create norms and shape them through international institutions. These facilitate cooperation and enable states to act through them under international law, albeit for self-interested reasons. Exponents of this theory see United Nations action and UN Security Council resolutions as reflecting the aims and objectives of their sponsoring powers. It also explains why so many developmental initiatives have foundered within Somalia—because they seek to aid the creation of a Western-style liberal democracy rather than political arrangements that may align more closely with Somali political and clan structures.

However, the book under review also collects a number of essays articulating a third approach, called constructivism. That theory departs from state-centric, rationalist approaches to suggest that social processes, including norms other than international ones, as well as issues of identity, inform security interests across a range of players and shape their actions accordingly.

This collection focuses particularly on the topic of global governance, a construct that places particular emphasis on institutions and regimes (in this case security regimes) and implies that international institutions are actors in their own right. In this view, these actors have objectives that are often different from those of their member states and that in turn shape the behavior of those states and of nonstate actors. Interestingly, and rightly, it takes the view that

because piracy occurs in a space outside territorially bounded state authority, maritime depredation asks profound questions about who exactly decides what is right and wrong, and why.

Several contributors make the point that differences between state responses to piracy reveal governance gaps in the interstate system, gaps that pirates have exploited—and states too, a point emphasizing the indissoluble connection between piracy and state action. The role of international law comes under particular scrutiny. Legal discourse has played a crucial role in framing the piracy problem in the modern era, arguably at the expense of political and economic approaches.

In the end, this important and useful book asks everyone with an interest or a role in piracy issues to confront questions that affect all users of the sea, military and civilian. Are we witnessing the end of an old regime, the reactivation of old legal mechanisms, or the development of a global governance regime based on international institutions? Moreover, where will this process end and will notions of universal jurisdiction, and perhaps global citizenship, spread out from their current enclaves and touch us all?

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Anderson, Scott. *Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly, and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Doubleday, 2013. 592pp. \$28.95

As the subtitle suggests, the First World War, with its unintended consequences, unbridled imperial ambitions, and a

complicated maze of duplicitous dealings among untrusting allies, underlies the making of the modern Middle East. One could easily add martial lunacy to this list of horrors, as this brief but highly relevant treatment of Britain's mismanagement of the Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, and Gaza campaigns will attest.

None of this is news, but the topic has garnered a great deal of attention in recent years. Anderson covers the familiar ground well, outlining the political, diplomatic, military, and economic drivers of imperial ambitions as the Western allies plotted the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire. In telling this tale Anderson discusses the usual suspects: Mark Sykes, Henry McMahon, King Husayn, Faisal ibn Husayn, Lord Kitchener, and a host of others. More interestingly, however, he ties in as well a number of important players who generally get short shrift. The German diplomats Max von Oppenheim and Curt Prufer are major players in the story. So too is Djemel Pasha, the Turkish governor of Syria. The role of the American William Yale, first as an officer of Standard Oil Company of New York and later as a special agent for the State Department, is also significant, if only for beginning a ninety-five-year tradition of fundamentally misreading the region. Finally, the importance of Aaron Aaronsohn and his Zionist spy ring that supported British operations in Palestine receives its due.

Anderson's T. E. Lawrence is a complicated and enigmatic man who "seemed intent on baffling" historians. Noting his many admirable and not-so-admirable qualities, Anderson neither praises nor condemns but rather tries to understand this hugely talented but ultimately unsuccessful man. Relying heavily but not uncritically on

Lawrence's writings, Anderson attributes his tactical, operational, and essentially political-military successes to brilliance, timing, and sheer luck—the latter largely owing to his managing to avoid the consequences of having infuriated any number of very senior officers. Anderson portrays well the tension caused for Lawrence by the duplicity of British and French diplomacy vis-à-vis the Arab uprising between his loyalty to Britain and his sense of personal honor.

Among the cast of dishonest brokers Anderson paints as the worst Mark Sykes, a brilliant but unprincipled dilettante with no apparent compunction against lying to his own government or to Britain's allies. Working diligently to advance Britain's imperial interests by managing the flow of (and often inventing) information, Sykes accumulated a great deal of responsibility for the postwar mess that was and remains the Middle East. Others contributing to the mess are a whole bevy of senior British and French officials, and also Woodrow Wilson, whose profound ignorance, idealism, and arrogance opened a Pandora's box of ethnic and nationalist desires that still smolder throughout the region. As for the Arabs, often portrayed as victims, they seem here not to have been as gullible as it may appear. Citing Husayn's and Faisal's not-always-aboveboard diplomacy, aided by Lawrence's unauthorized revelation of the secret Sykes-Picot agreement, Anderson argues that the Arabs were not exactly "rubes" when it came to power politics.

A journalist by trade, Scott Anderson is a frequent contributor to a variety of periodicals and the author of two novels and several books of nonfiction. His bibliography is extensive, but the paucity in it of Arab and Turkish sources is notable.

In addition, his use of nonstandard notations can render specific citations a little fuzzy. This is a minor issue, however, as Anderson's synthesis is superb, his analysis is sharp, and his writing style is engaging. All in all, this is a very useful contribution to the body of work, one that helps foster a better understanding of the dynamics shaping today's Arab Spring and beyond. Given America's track record in the region, anything that helps broaden our understanding of the Middle East can only be a good thing.

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Boscawen, Hugh. *The Capture of Louisbourg, 1758. Campaigns and Commanders.* Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2011. 504pp. \$39.95

The British amphibious operation to capture the French fortress at Louisbourg in Canada during the Seven Years' War was the largest joint operation undertaken by British forces in that period. This major event in naval history has not been overlooked by historians, but no one until Colonel Hugh Boscawen, British Army (Ret.), has been able so effectively to combine the skills of an experienced army officer with those of an insightful modern historian in analyzing this campaign and its commanders.

A direct descendant of the British naval commander at the capture of Louisbourg, Admiral the Honorable Edward Boscawen, Colonel Hugh Boscawen brings his own experience of thirty years of active military service in the Coldstream Guards to bear on the subject, with his knowledge of modern-day campaign planning and execution. Such

credentials might have led an author in the wrong direction, resulting in an anachronistic and hagiographic tale full of modern military jargon. However, in Hugh Boscawen's hands they have led to a model of careful historical scholarship informed by professional military understanding, experience at sea as a yachtsman, and access to family papers. Starting out from the key conceptual point that campaigns and commanders should be seen in the context of the aims, ways, and means of their own day, Boscawen has carefully and judiciously examined the subject. Over many years, he made a thorough study of both the published English- and the published French-language scholarship. Going much farther and deeper, he examined in detail the extensive public and private records in four French and eight British archival depositories, as well as other primary-source materials in Canada, the United States, and private hands.

Colonel Boscawen opens his study with an overview of the strategic situation that the competing powers of Britain and France faced in the period immediately leading up to 1758, and of the contrasting organization of those governments and their leaders. Boscawen goes on to examine the background to the construction of the French fortification at Louisbourg, ranging from the reorganization of the defense of New France following the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 to the perception on both sides that Louisbourg had become an important trading point, the key bastion in the defense of the Saint Lawrence River and Quebec, as well as the French fisheries on the Grand Banks. When war broke out again between the two countries in 1755, neither was immediately prepared to react decisively.

Colonel Boscowen traces the initial planning for the Louisbourg campaign up to August and September 1757, when the Select Committee of the Privy Council in London began to look at priorities for the next campaigning season. By December a campaign plan had emerged and operational planning had begun; meanwhile, the French were taking their own action to strengthen their position in Canada. The British assault force began to gather at Halifax in April, while snow was still on the ground. By 2 May Admiral Boscowen had arrived, immediately selecting key land and sea officers to form a joint staff to plan the landing. Such a staff was a remarkable innovation, for which the need had already been made clear in earlier eighteenth-century British experience. Among several initiatives this group took were joint operational training and a system of operational control for the landing boats. In eighteen days in May 1758 at Halifax, fourteen British regiments, artillery, rangers, and the fleet were transformed into a cohesive expeditionary force.

Colonel Boscowen provides a detailed description of the initial assault landing, under the command of the newly arrived Major General Jeffery Amherst.

Once ashore, Brigadier James Wolfe was able to gauge the range of the fortress's guns and to locate the initial position that Amherst would use for the first parallel in the siege that ensued. Turning to the French side, Boscowen follows the French as they defended their position. He then traces the action in two parts—the siege, between 1 and 15 July, and the bombardment, from 16 to 27 July.

As Colonel Boscowen points out, British success at Louisbourg marked the beginning of the end of New France, and it also began a series of British joint amphibious operations during the remainder of the war. It also showed early signs of the coming changes in military affairs, marked by increasingly organized industrial and agricultural support for larger armed forces. Boscowen's study is a model of historical analysis, judiciously dealing with both sides of this joint operation in military and naval dimensions. It is a major contribution to understanding an eighteenth-century amphibious operation.

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