

BOOK REVIEWS

LIFTING THE VEIL ON PRIVATE MARITIME SECURITY

Berube, Claude, and Patrick Cullen, eds. *Maritime Private Security: Market Responses to Piracy, Terrorism and Waterborne Security Risks in the 21st Century*. New York: Routledge, 2012. 272pp. \$135

In April 2012 a video began to circulate of an incident that had taken place off Somalia. It shows private armed guards using heavy and repeated volleys of semiautomatic rifle fire to repel the close approach of two skiffs with armed pirates on board. Although most of the comments attached to the post were supportive, even “gung ho,” more sober analyses were largely critical, pointing to poor tactics, disorganized command, wasteful use of ammunition, inadequate defensive preparations, and more damningly, failure to observe proper procedures. In May, a U.S. company, admitting responsibility, claimed that the reaction had been justified and responsible because the guards believed that the pirates had rocket-propelled grenades and feared for their lives. The company also claimed the attack had been the second on its client’s ship in three days.

The challenge to maritime security mounted by Somali pirates is arguably the most substantial challenge to the lawful and peaceful use of the sea in fifty years. Responses to this challenge are beset with difficulties. The ocean

space from Somalia to India is vast, too large to be patrolled effectively by a force of a hundred ships, even if so many vessels were available. The onus, therefore, has fallen to the potential victims to protect themselves, a solution that has been promoted vigorously by the United States but for a long time has been resisted by the shipping industry and by most other states. The tide of opinion, however, has turned. Shippers now realize that the naval protection they demanded will not get any better than it is now and is in fact likely to recede as financial constraints diminish warship numbers and steaming hours. Instead, shippers have turned to the private sector, which despite a shortage of experienced operatives has responded with alacrity. Where once the number of maritime security specialists could be counted on the fingers of one hand, now there are probably nearly a hundred, most of them domiciled in the United States and the United Kingdom.

This volume of essays, edited by Claude Berube, who has already written on the expansion of private contractors into the maritime sphere, and Patrick Cullen,

sets out to examine “the evolution, function, problems, and prospects of private security operating in the maritime sector.” It suggests that the events of 9/11 were crucial in shifting port-security responsibilities away from the state and onto private industry, “reinterpreting,” as Cullen puts it, maritime actors from passive objects needing state protection to responsible subjects accountable for their own security. This shift has now been extended to ships transiting areas prone to piracy, including Southeast Asia, the Arabian Sea off Somalia, and the Gulf of Guinea. The implications of this new interpretation are enormous, particularly when added to the increasing use of private contractors in a quasi-military role, as exemplified by Blackwater—a dynamic particularly generated by the Iraq conflict. As the market potential of that war zone declined, companies and individuals reportedly started new ventures and new careers in the waters off Somalia.

Understandably, given the book’s focus, few of its essays delve deeply into the strategic and moral issues to which these activities give rise. The editors instead have chosen to emphasize the many practical implications of this development, including the early experience in the Strait of Malacca, by the acknowledged expert, Carolin Liss; the often-violent challenges to ship and fixed-platform operators off Nigeria; the uncertainties and complexities of a legal regime struggling to come to terms with rapid change; the role of private contractors in the security of ports; and the arguments for and against the use of armed guards on ships versus alternative risk-reduction measures that owners need to take into account. Other essays examine the equally complicated questions that arise when private operators

take on coast-guard and fishery-protection roles, drawing on examples from Sierra Leone, Somaliland, and Puntland.

This is a timely and well-informed introduction to a new industry about which most people—even people familiar with shipping—know relatively little. This veil must be lifted, because the demands for private maritime security are likely to increase in line with the growing economic importance of the seas and the criminally and politically inspired challenges to which that importance gives rise.

MARTIN MURPHY
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Little, Benenson. *Pirate Hunting: The Fight against Pirates, Privateers, and Sea Raiders from Antiquity to the Present*. Herndon, Va.: Potomac Books, 2010. 357pp. \$29.95

This is Benenson Little’s latest of three books about pirates. In this one he has done a superb job of recounting the violent history that surrounds pirates and raiders and the measures that have been taken to hunt and suppress them. Also, Little has not forgotten privateers, who, depending on available opportunities, easily switched from being pirate hunters to pirates.

Little opens by noting the differences between pirates, who are principally active on the seas, and raiders, who are more associated with attacking from, not on, the water. Additionally, he provides detailed information about pirate and raider ships and about tactics and weapons, which over the centuries progressed from rams, arrows, and spears to cannon and muskets.

The earliest attempts to counter and suppress pirates and raiders were undertaken by navies and armed merchant vessels, which were, in the latter case, fighting for survival. Pirates and raiders, such as the famous Vikings, carried out coastal raids, as well as attacking ships. Assaults from the sea led to the inland movement of many shore settlements, to the construction of fortifications, and to the creation of early-warning systems of watchtowers. Raiders were vulnerable to ambush, cut off from escape and exposing their landing vessels to possible capture and destruction.

Pirate tactics changed with technology and the skills of the hunters. In general, and for a long period in the history of piracy, pirates held the upper hand in terms of ships, vessel ordnance, and individual weapons. However, as navies became more proficient, the end result was that pirates in most cases avoided confrontation with naval vessels.

Over the centuries nonviolent measures to combat piracy were employed, with varying degrees of success. These attempts included antipiracy agreements of the type forged during the Middle Ages by the Cinque Ports (a group of harbor towns on England's southeast coast) and by the Hanseatic League (city-states on the North Sea and the Baltic). Essentially, these agreements served to deter pirates from one member of the alliance from attacking vessels of another member, state, or port. They also contained provisions that prohibited merchants, and others, from acting as fences.

As the author points out, notwithstanding nonviolent measures, the best defenses against seagoing criminals have proved to be a combination of a strong, prevailing naval presence and

stable governments ashore that are willing and able to deny safe havens.

The author devotes the final part of the book to modern piracy and pirate hunting. He mentions as part of the discussion the piracy that was widespread on the South China Sea in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the more virulent form now present off Somalia. Little sets out many of the difficulties encountered there, what is being done to protect ships transiting the area, and finally, provides suggestions for steps that might be taken to deal with the problem more aggressively.

In summary, Benerson Little has produced a good book that readers with an interest in maritime history and affairs will enjoy.

JACK GOTTSCHALK
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Mueller, John, and Mark G. Stewart. *Terror, Security, and Money: Balancing the Risks, Benefits, and Costs of Homeland Security*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011. 267pp. \$24.95

For a searching and all too often dismaying account of the homeland-security industry that has emerged after 9/11, look no farther. Mueller and Stewart's chief task is to apply cold analysis to the costs and benefits of homeland-security expenditures. The question, they argue, is not "Does the expense reduce the threat?" but "Is the size of the threat reduction worth the expense?"

Their answer is a resounding no. First, Mueller and Stewart demonstrate that individuals tend to exaggerate greatly the probability of a terrorist attack. They then present evidence, for example, that the risk of dying

from a terrorist attack between 2002 and 2007 was one in 1.8 billion. They offer a more transparent model that takes into account the probabilities of attack, potential losses, and the like.

Mueller and Stewart's discussion of the relative benefits of low-cost security measures is engaging. They argue that many of the far less expensive and less imposing measures are more effective. A RAND study claims that suspicious-package reporting reduces the risks to shopping malls 60 percent, while costly searching of bags manages only 15 percent.

Also, since 9/11 many of the few attempted terrorist attacks in the United States have been prevented by tip-offs and informants. Both the shoe bomber in 2001 and the underwear bomber in 2009 were stopped by fast-acting airline passengers. In addition, the public's pre-9/11 complacency is most likely gone for good, and that is a rarely discussed but valuable (and free) benefit for homeland security.

In perhaps their most provocative, but not unconvincing, chapter, Mueller and Stewart offer several premises that should form the foundation of homeland security. They argue that the number of potential targets is infinite, while the number and competence of terrorists are extremely small. (Risa Brooks has an excellent *International Security* article on the second issue.) If you protect one target, it is easy for terrorists to move to another. Subways cannot be truly protected without shutting them down.

Mueller and Stewart argue that political considerations play a major role in determining politicians' major incentive to "play it safe" and exaggerate the terrorist threat, at no cost to themselves. When George W. Bush stated, correctly,

that the war on terror could not be won but that the threat could be reduced, his Democratic opponents pounced on this reasonable statement, asking what would have happened if Reagan had felt the same about communism.

The book concludes with a discussion of politicians' responsibility to communicate risks accurately. The striking and unfortunate dissimilarity between the national-security and the medical professions struck me as I read this.

This book is serious and approachable, an important contribution. If it became the dominant mantra in Washington, we all would probably be exactly as safe as we are now, while spending a lot less.

ANDREW L. STIGLER
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Noble, Dennis L. *The U.S. Coast Guard's War on Human Smuggling*. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2011. 297pp. \$29.95

Of the eleven missions of the U.S. Coast Guard today, none is more fraught with human drama, tragedy, and the capacity to touch the soul than the interdiction of the smuggling of illegal migrant workers into the United States. Dennis Noble, long a chronicler of the history of the Coast Guard, sets out this story from the perspective of those who dare to enter the United States illegally and of the men and women of the Coast Guard who respond to the challenge. That the story unfolds at sea only enhances the urgency of the tale.

Noble centers on the unique stories surrounding the migrant flows from Cuba (in the Fidel Castro era), Haiti (since the fall of the despot President Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier), and mainland China. A constant thread that

runs throughout the narrative is how different laws, regulations, and political environments over time have resulted in disparate migrant policies. Cubans, for example, benefited from the “wet foot/dry foot” policy, which did not apply to Haitian migrants, who were viewed as fleeing not for political reasons but for economic ones. Noble paints a vivid picture that highlights the experiences of all the participants from all aspects.

A strong point of this work is Noble’s research, which includes visiting and photographing locations in Cuba that have played a significant role in the migrant story. He also excels in bringing out little-known aspects of migrant life. For example, a fact not commonly known is that since 1999 the U.S. Coast Guard has had a liaison officer assigned to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. The Mariel boatlift of April 1980, in which at least 7,665 Cubans arrived in southern Florida, is well documented, but the number lost in that exodus is unknown. The Mariel boatlift was actually the second of three large migrant attempts from Cuba by sea. The third wave of evacuees made for the United States between 1991 and 1994, when the Coast Guard intercepted over forty-five thousand Cubans. I was stationed in Miami in 1993–94 and recall seeing several Cuban fishermen who had been rescued by the Coast Guard and were detained at its base at Miami Beach. They chose to return. Was their look of apprehension because of what the United States would do or how their own government would respond when they returned?

Noble gives equal treatment to the plight of the evacuees of Haiti, while the Chinese migrant story has a peculiarly sinister aspect. Since June 1993, when the coastal freighter *Golden Venture* was grounded off Queens,

New York City, the Coast Guard has found itself involved in a human-smuggling operation the likes of which it has never encountered before. It has involved the canny smugglers known as “Sister Ping” and the “snakeheads.”

Noble rounds out his book with a look at the politics and policies of migrant interdiction and includes some of his own recommendations for the problem.

The only distraction, albeit a minor one, is the overuse of acronyms, which breaks up Noble’s otherwise smooth narrative. However, this in no way should deter anyone from reading this interesting work. It is obvious that Noble has a clear passion for the Coast Guard and a deep respect for the men and women who serve in it.

Dennis Noble has given maritime history a solid and well documented book on a mission unique to the U.S. Coast Guard—a mission not likely to go away anytime soon.

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Twomey, Christopher P. *The Military Lens: Doctrinal Difference and Deterrence Failure in Sino-American Relations*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 2010. 240pp. \$35

It has been said that “weapons speak to the wise—but in general they need interpreters.” Political scientist Christopher P. Twomey, associate professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, California, shows the difficulty of that interpretation. He makes a strong case that the existence of different military languages—that is, different doctrines—explains otherwise puzzling examples of deterrence failure and escalation.

The Military Lens is a welcome addition to the literature on deterrence, which too often treats actors as interchangeable “black boxes.” Twomey writes in the spirit of authors like Robert Jervis, who explored psychological factors that lead to misinterpretation of others’ actions. This work adds a new factor, however—military doctrine. All militaries have doctrines, or “theory of victory.” Doctrine is a service’s vision of how its resources are used to achieve operational success. The author’s core argument is that strategists look through a doctrinal “lens” when assessing capabilities and intentions, which weakens deterrence in two ways: the credibility of others’ threats is discounted if their doctrines are thought ineffective, and others’ signals are missed if one’s own doctrine is used as a template for indicators. This attention to misperceptions at the level of operational net assessment is new and of direct relevance to planners and analysts.

Much of the book tests this new theory against three Korean War episodes: China’s failure to deter U.S. movement north of the thirty-eighth parallel; U.S. failure to deter China from entering the war; and the less-well-known maritime story of the American deterrence of a planned Chinese invasion of Taiwan. Twomey traces the dramatic American and People’s Liberation Army (PLA) underestimations of each other’s land-warfare capabilities, leading to threats being noticed but not considered credible. The PLA Navy, with officers educated largely abroad, understood that U.S. air supremacy rendered landings impossible. The author’s choice of the 1950 cases was wise, because other than the PLA Army/Navy differences, most of the variables are constant. A notable feature of the case studies is the

author’s archival research, conducted in both the United States and China. The fresh documentation alone will appeal to Korean War specialists.

Doctrinal difference fits the Korean War, but the radical divergence of the revolutionary PLA and the atomic American military makes this an easier case, which Twomey acknowledges. How often do doctrinal differences lead to deterrence failures generally? An additional chapter argues that in two Arab-Israeli cases deterrence failure is correlated with doctrinal divergence. The evidence is suggestive but could be strengthened with a larger universe of cases, which might answer additional questions. For example: Are doctrinal differences more common in ground than naval warfare? Do opponents in long-lasting rivalries (compared to the United States–China in 1950) fare better at assessing each others’ capability despite different doctrines?

Twomey offers a warning that clear, credible threats may not be understood as such by others. Since doctrinal misperceptions take place at the military level, the lessons here are particularly relevant to planners, as they develop assessments and deterrent options for civilian leaders. This work also holds implications for professional military education. Officers should be encouraged to overcome doctrinal filters, scholars should study foreign doctrines, and educational exchanges might reduce misunderstandings (the author himself is involved in U.S.-Chinese dialogues). Perhaps weapons speak a common tongue, but Twomey reminds us that it is the militaries who need to be fluent in multiple languages.

DAVID BURBACH
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McNeilly, Mark R. *Sun Tzu and the Art of Business: Six Strategic Principles for Managers*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012. 330pp. \$19.95

Two millennia ago, the original author of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* presumably never intended the work to be applied to the twenty-first-century global marketplace. However, Mark McNeilly has taken the liberty of doing so. In a novel approach, he has compiled a list of strategic concepts derived from the ancient military strategist and translated them into a lexicon for modern corporate capitalists. *Sun Tzu and the Art of Business* is a guidebook for business managers looking to increase profitability for the sake of their companies and their employees. The book was originally published in 1996 but has been revised to address the influence of globalization, the increased use of the Internet, the increase in cooperative alliances, and the economic rise of China.

McNeilly, a former infantry officer and corporate strategist, derives six principles from Sun Tzu's philosophy that, if followed, will yield business success. The prescriptive list consists of winning without fighting—capturing your market without destroying it; avoiding strength, attacking weakness—striking where they least expect it; employing deception and foreknowledge—maximizing the power of market information; using speed and preparation—moving swiftly to overcome your competitors; shaping your opponent—employing strategy to master your opponent; and displaying character-based leadership—providing effective leadership in turbulent times.

McNeilly assumes there are natural parallels between ancient warfare

and modern commerce. For example, battlefield victory is likened to market share and industry dominance. In order to validate his points, the author juxtaposes numerous business case studies with military history. While certainly engaging, some of the parallels seem oversimplified and lacking in critical analysis. The inclusion of so many case studies tends to minimize the complexities of each one, and when taken out of context, the case studies become almost trivialized. There is also little discussion on risk assessment or how one's enemy or competitor may react to each of the principles outlined.

For those who want a simple approach to applying military strategy to the competitive marketplace, this book achieves that objective. It is an enjoyable and quick read, written in a style that is brisk and easy to follow. Included is a practical section designed to help readers develop and apply a business approach. What readers may find especially helpful is the inclusion of Samuel B. Griffith's translation of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* and a list of references for further study. Overall, this work may appeal more to a general audience than to serious students of strategy.

CDR. JUDY MALANA, U.S. NAVY
Naval War College



Wiarda, Howard. *Military Brass vs. Civilian Academics at the National War College: A Clash of Cultures*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2011. 176pp. \$60

Howard Wiarda's memoir of his time at the National War College is a startling book. During nearly a decade of teaching in the professional military

education (PME) program at the National Defense University (NDU), Wiarda amassed anecdotes that point to dire flaws in the way military education is conducted in the United States.

Unfortunately, the book is a missed opportunity. Every professor who has worked at a war college will recognize the stories Wiarda tells and can likely match many of them. However, because the book is written in the tone of an angry tell-all rather than with the detachment of a scholarly volume, too many legitimate points will be too quickly dismissed, especially by the most entrenched elements in PME, who are rightly the focus of Wiarda's criticisms. This is all the more regrettable because these are not the gripes of a disaffected or failed academic. Howard Wiarda's expertise and reputation are beyond question, and the government was fortunate to have him teaching U.S. military officers. Alas, if only NDU had felt that way about him and the other civilian scholars who have worked there.

Wiarda shows that he and other civilian academics at the National War College, a school within NDU, were treated by the administration as little better than irritants, necessary evils to be endured. Senior leaders at NDU cared little for education and not at all for scholarship. Their attitude toward the civilian faculty veered from benign neglect to sneering disdain, which sometimes manifested itself in weird ways. In one example, Wiarda was hauled into the commandant's office one morning after attending a reception and told he should not be "socializing above his rank," whatever that means.

Among these sometimes comical stories (a note to National's faculty: don't *ever* park in the commandant's

spot), Wiarda is making a serious point about a common problem in all PME institutions—the people in charge of education are not actually educators.

Wiarda provides this blistering description, for example, of the kind of president who is "the bane of NDU's colleges and institutes": a "heavy-handed one, full of fire and brimstone, who thinks he/she knows everything there is to know about military education or even education in general, wants to change and reform the entire institution, and especially seeks to put 'those independent professors' in their place. He/she will usually spend a year or two instituting grand, sweeping changes, fulminating at the scholars and teachers, and wondering why his reforms are not carried out."

This general hostility to the faculty and the educational enterprise has deep roots. Wiarda writes that in military culture, senior officers are taught that they are good at everything, especially anything civilians can do. Worse, any disagreement with these senior military leaders triggers what Wiarda accurately sees as a huge intellectual inferiority complex.

This insecurity not only makes officers more difficult to educate but warps the priorities of the institution toward an obsession with student happiness rather than educational results. The idea that the faculty should teach and the students should learn clearly chafed Wiarda's superiors, who saw education as far less important than protecting the well-being (and fragile egos) of the officers at NDU.

Here Wiarda is merciless in his description of the students as "pandered to" and "pampered." He provides plenty of material to support that description,

including the virtual impossibility of failing students for any reason. Wiarda was told, as all PME faculty have been for years, that the students were his peers, an assertion that Wiarda found “laughable.” Nor was it true. Wiarda shows that the students were actually treated as his superiors and that he was expected to serve them accordingly.

Academics, for their part, have no understanding of the military obsession with hierarchy and procedure—also a point Wiarda mentions. Yet in this too-brief volume, the author does not explore either culture as much as his title promises. Too much space is taken up with anecdotes and score settling at the expense of discussing remedies, the stories and problems being presented without priority. In one example, Wiarda is absolutely right to decry the often satiric manipulation of faculty contracts by some of the martinets for whom he worked. This is a widespread problem in the PME world. More time discussing the pressing need for a tenure system in PME, however, and less complaining about distractions (like student parking) might have been more productive.

There are other problems with the book as well. Although short, it is poorly edited—indeed, it seems not to have been edited at all. The same anecdotes appear again in different places, sections overlap, and there are avoidable lapses in grammar and spelling. An entire chapter, about Wiarda’s international travels while working for NDU, is out of place and disposable.

Nonetheless, the book’s flaws do not obscure the reality of the problem. Successful and highly regarded educators from every major PME institution—including George Reed, Dan Hughes, Judith Stiehm, and Joan Johnson-Freese,

among others—have stepped forward and written about the same issues. While Wiarda’s narrative is flawed in tone, it is still an important step in illuminating serious and continuing problems in the PME community.

THOMAS NICHOLS
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Hamilton, C. I. *The Making of the Modern Admiralty: British Naval Policy-Making, 1805–1927*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2011. 345pp. \$120

This book explores the history of the development of naval policy making in the British Admiralty from 1805 to 1927, from the Battle of Trafalgar to the aftermath of World War I.

The author, C. I. Hamilton, a professor of modern European history at the University of the Witwatersrand, writes that he first became interested in this subject because he wished to know who did what at the Admiralty and how they did it. Reading this book answers those questions and introduces a rich tapestry of interesting historical characters and complex naval policy issues.

Although the book paints an analytically cohesive picture of naval policy issues that plagued would-be planners for over a century, it also contains many colorful historical details. Beginning in 1805 with Lord Barham, who at age eighty could run the navy almost single-handedly from his desk, the book deals authoritatively with thorny issues of naval administration and policy.

Many fascinating professional and civilian characters appear in this period. Only naval historians may initially recognize some, but there are many other

individuals who are well known, such as Benjamin Disraeli, William E. Gladstone, Winston Churchill, and Sea Lords John Fisher and John Jellicoe. The Admiralty was consistently an important department of the British government, but it was never a guaranteed stepping-stone for a First Lord to prime ministerial power. Churchill's elevation in 1940 to prime minister arose from political considerations other than his having been a First Lord of the Admiralty.

The book illustrates how difficult it was during most of this period for any First Lord and his professional naval advisers to develop policy and administer a far-flung navy at the same time. Although day-to-day administrative matters almost always consumed attention, policy usually was made under crisis and only when it was demonstrably required, often without the benefit of any long period of careful examination. Personalities rather than processes usually drove its development, until the Admiralty finally agreed to the establishment of a permanent apparatus of policy making based on good record keeping. This important part of the machinery of government was especially necessary in times of rapid technological change and various financial crises. Its effective achievement did not, however, come to fruition until the 1920s.

To assist in understanding these developments, the author has included useful appendixes. One sets out the names of the First Lords and naval professionals in the Admiralty. Another is a list of acronyms. Interspersed throughout the book are tables, which, for example, show the duties of the Lords and the structure of the Admiralty over time.

Naval historians will appreciate this well-researched and well-written

and scholarly work, but even those without a detailed knowledge of the period will discover it to be an informative and agreeable read.

K. D. LOGAN
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Hillenbrand, Laura. *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption*. New York: Random House, 2010. 473pp. \$27

Although not a historian, Laura Hillenbrand is an accomplished researcher and storyteller. In *Unbroken* she chronicles one individual's tale of "the greatest generation," revealing how war, particularly the Second World War, spun the lives of common, and not-so-common, individuals out of control and set them on trajectories that would otherwise have never occurred. It is also a tale of extraordinary endurance, incredible luck (both good and bad), and what can only be termed a remarkable ability to forgive immeasurable wrongdoings.

Unbroken is the story of Louie Zamperini, a remarkable man who was, in succession, a streetwise "tough kid," an Olympian, an Army Air Corps bombardier, an air-crash survivor, a Japanese POW, a veteran who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, and a born-again Christian. That he survived the war is incredible; that he lived to forgive his captors is unbelievable.

At the most basic level *Unbroken* is a classic "gripping yarn." The story's drama is all the more compelling because the adventures, perils, and triumphs are factual. Zamperini did run in the 1936 Olympics, on the same team as Jesse Owens. He spent forty-seven days in a life raft, covering more

than a thousand miles of ocean, only to be captured by the Japanese. The endurance and courage of Zamperini and his fellow survivor, Captain Russell Allen Philips, is reason enough to read this book. The saga of Zamperini and Philips is a war story, a survival story, a prison story, and even a love story.

As it is, *Unbroken* warrants a positive review and will delight readers young and old. Yet it could have been much more. For example, although Hillenbrand never deliberately raises the issue, there is a lot to say about how and what we remember and how and what we forget. By all reasonable expectations, Louie Zamperini should have been widely remembered. He experienced an epic challenge of survival and returned home to headlines, and although he continued to be in the public eye, time after time, a reader's reaction to this book is, "Who was this guy!"

How is it that Zamperini is not a household name? How many others who deserve the honor of memory have been lost in time? The author refers to others who also have been forgotten, perhaps the most poignant of whom were nine Marines left behind during the 1942 Makin raid. They were captured by the Japanese, taken to Kwajalein, and sometime later executed. Although not apparently serendipitous, one of the book's major contributions is the inclusion of those nine names.

Perhaps because the book is so individual-centric, Hillenbrand provides little context for the events that sweep Zamperini along his path. She provides no analysis of the larger issues. To some degree this illuminates the

fundamental question: To what extent are an individual's actions, however heroic, essential to the conclusion of struggles of nations? Nor is there an effort to deal with what might be termed midlevel questions, such as how much of the attendant sadistic treatment in Japanese POW camps was the policy of the state. Or was it just aberrant behavior on the part of sociopaths?

Similarly, Zamperini's difficulties in adjusting to postwar life in the United States is described but with very little context, and even less attempt to use his story to deepen one's understanding of what current-day veterans are experiencing. Hillenbrand does not ask, much less answer, whether Zamperini's homecoming experience was typical of those of POWs dealing with a world in which post-traumatic stress syndrome was not even recognized, much less understood, or whether this was an unusual case for the time.

Hillenbrand admits to liking Louie Zamperini, and it is easy to see why she would. Although her feeling does not affect the book's balance, it may explain why sections detailing Zamperini's darker experiences (which include blackout drinking and spouse abuse) have a somewhat rushed feeling. It is as though Hillenbrand moves through his failings as fast as she can to showcase Zamperini's religious rebirth at a Billy Graham meeting.

Readers who see the book for what it is—a personal narrative of an extraordinary man in an extraordinary time—will not be disappointed.

RICHARD NORTON
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