

BOOK REVIEWS

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Snow, Donald M., *When America Fights: The Uses of U.S. Military Forces*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2000. 221pp. \$ 24.95

“Timing is everything,” so the saying goes. Timing was certainly a factor in developing a fair and reasoned review for this book; it arrived in this reviewer’s mailbox on 12 September 2001. Since the major thesis of Donald Snow’s concise and cogent work is that peacekeeping will be the most likely type of early twenty-first century military operation for the United States, the book initially appeared quaint and somewhat nostalgic: how nice and simple it would be to deal with questions of how to bring and sustain peace to *other* lands.

However, when the inevitable strong feelings associated with the horrific attacks of 11 September dissipate somewhat, one finds this book to be a valuable, if flawed, addition to the professional national security studies student’s library. There is no other single work available comparable in scope to this book in its thorough investigation of the driving forces, necessities, and demands of peace operations.

Snow, recognizing the ad hoc nature of much, if not most, national security literature, has attempted to develop an integrated approach, connecting theory to practice, and yielding findings and

conclusions that should awaken and disturb those in the national security strategy establishment. He begins with a broad diagnosis of a national security policy “adrift” in the first decade following the end of the Cold War, explaining well why realist and neorealist paradigms of international relations and the use of force no longer can explain or predict real-world behaviors. Similarly, he introduces the concept of a two-tiered world, with developed free market democracies in the first tier, and all others in the second. It is with this second, heterogeneous group of nations that Snow finds that the realist paradigm cannot explain or describe behaviors and relationships, which in that group are sometimes chaotic.

Snow uses this observation to develop in the second chapter a theoretical construct by which the United States can adapt its strategic “lens” to focus better on security problems with second-tier nations, combining the still-relevant aspects of the realist legacy with idealist paradigmatic tensions (between internationalism and isolationism). Carefully constructing his case, Snow then describes the spectrum of conflict that he

believes the United States might experience. He finds that the most likely form of conflict will be Kosovo-like peace operations, and he explains why operations addressing these conflicts are so difficult. This section provides some of the most dramatic and compelling information and analysis in the book, particularly concerning his operational distinctions between conflict suppression and state building (the latter being the most problematic for this country). *When America Fights* concludes with a recommendation of realistic internationalist national strategy based on five major influences of modern grand strategy, and it offers the reader fifteen guidelines on how to increase the probability of success in peace operations.

The book provides a consistent thread of argument and analysis on the use of American armed force. However, notwithstanding the author's preface, *When America Fights* is a highly opinionated work. It does not comprehensively analyze the implications of other possible points on the spectrum of conflict, nor does it pursue alternative or possible conflictual guidelines that might be generated by applying the theoretical framework to those other types of conflict. Further, the two-tier world concept simply is neither the only way nor the most widely accepted one of attempting to organize the chaos of the post-Cold War international environment. Finally, the conclusion that there are two types of armed force employments—of necessity (forced on the nation) or of choice (at the nation's discretion)—is most intriguing (I have already adopted the lexicon in my courses) but it is not the only typology that one might consider.

There are two admittedly minor but irritating faults in the book. First, being a

very old-fashioned academic, this reviewer appreciates the value and information provided by footnotes; they are totally lacking in this work. True, there is a bibliography following each chapter, but that is an empty vessel for serious research. Second, Ralph Peters, a most insightful strategist of the current age who is quoted in the last chapter, is a retired Army, not Air Force, officer.

When America Fights is an excellent book on the use of armed force as applied to peace operations. It is a book with a point of view and a strong theoretical base. Regardless of whether one agrees with the author on the flow and form of his argument, the reader will find the material engrossing and invaluable—even though this nation is now engaged in what Snow has viewed as the less likely scenario for force employment, that of necessity.

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Carter, Ashton B., and John P. White, eds. *Keeping the Edge: Managing Defense for the Future*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001. 326pp. \$50

This book “addresses a need widely recognized but long neglected: to adapt and modernize the system by which the United States manages the largest and most successful security establishment in history.” Do not be misled into thinking that the word “managing” in the title suggests a dry treatment of managerial practices requiring extensive change. *Keeping the Edge* deals with that, but it primarily examines many key organizational strategy issues; these studies will have comprehensive value to anyone within academia or the national security

environment wishing to improve what the authors regard as management and organizational shortfalls that impede implementation of wise strategy and policy choices. Collectively, the distinguished editors and authors contend that, if unattended, these shortcomings will seriously diminish our unmatched military capability. At the same time, they hold that the “national security establishment is deficient not so much in deciding what to do” as in lacking the means to implement defense policy effectively.

The book is organized into eleven chapters, each of which discusses deficiencies in a key area of national security. Each chapter describes the changing security environment relevant to the subject of discussion, then offers comprehensive suggestions to improve the execution of whatever policy choices are made. Most of the chapters also provide superb insight into what future policy choices should be. Among the chapters are: “Managing Defense for the Future,” “Keeping the Edge in Joint Operations,” “Exploiting the Internet Revolution,” “Keeping the Edge in Intelligence,” “Countering Asymmetric Threats,” “Keeping the Technological Edge,” “Advancing the Revolution in Business Affairs,” “Ensuring Quality People in Defense,” “Managing the Pentagon’s International Relations,” “Strengthening the National Security Interagency Process,” and “Implementing Change.” Each chapter is comprehensive and would serve as an excellent guide to new policy makers who wish actually to see their policies implemented. I doubt that any organizational or managerial improvement has been omitted.

The material in the book resulted from a research collaboration project between the Kennedy School of Government,

Harvard University, and Stanford University. The list of contributors represents a who’s who in national security experience and in the study of national security processes: Ashton B. Carter, David Chu, Victor A. DeMarines, John Deutch, Robert J. Hermann, Arnold Kanter, Michael J. Lippitz, Judith A. Miller, Sean O’Keefe, William J. Perry, Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, Brent Scowcroft, John M. Shalikashvili, and John P. White. The core group of authors have occupied practically every senior position in the national security environment, while others have dedicated their professional lives to the study of national security policies and supporting structures. They speak with as much authority as one could possibly find in a single book.

This book addresses those in policy positions who wish to reform organizations and practices that, according to the authors, increasingly sap the vitality of our military capability; it is concrete as well as comprehensive in its recommendations. *Keeping the Edge* will also help people who are not currently in positions to affect policy to understand the substantial flaws in the anatomy and physiology of the organizations that implement national security policies. Experienced national security scholars and practitioners will respond to the authors’ contention that existing policy-implementing practices themselves are a threat to future U.S. national security.

The book must be read by anyone interested in improving these processes and structures; it contains important guides for people who can marshal the influence at least to begin organizational and managerial change, if only on the margin. The preface warns that the authors have no illusions that the chronic organizational

and management problems will be solved any time soon. One can only hope, nevertheless, that this book's comprehensive recommendations will encourage and guide courageous leaders to make a start.

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Steinbruner, John D. *Principles of Global Security*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000. 270pp. \$44.95

Unconvincing—that one word accurately describes this effort of the prolific author and former Brookings fellow John Steinbruner to explain why and how the “potentially catastrophic consequences of traditional security practices” mandate radical changes in U.S. defense policies.

Steinbruner argues that discontinuities in the international system make obsolete the realist view that nation-states need to rely on military power for their security. From this premise, he implies that the United States should not seek to maintain military superiority over potential opponents. In this new formula, deterrence, which he describes as a Cold War doctrine, should be “subordinated to the countervailing idea of reassurance.”

Globalization, Steinbruner holds, has made it “too expensive to rule by force,” and competition among nations or societies is being replaced by cooperation; therefore, the whole notion of needing a strong military defense is dangerous. Unfortunately for his premise, Steinbruner then turns around and uses a pseudo-realist argument to explain why other nations would “naturally” seek to oppose and confront American military superiority in a world in which they are

benefiting from United States–led globalization.

At its core, the book's fundamental problem is that it approaches all military issues as if they were but subsets of strategic nuclear deterrence. The irony of this approach—Cold War thinking at its grimmest—appears completely to have eluded the author, who spent much of his scholarly career worrying about issues of deterrence theory and nuclear command and control. At the same time, Steinbruner does not see the end of the Cold War as a victory for deterrence or democratic ideology. Referring to it rather as an unexpected “spontaneous event” that took everyone involved by surprise, he sees it as the result of “the working of very large forces”—presumably the forces of globalization, although he is never very clear on that.

Steinbruner's treatment of globalization itself—which he describes only in terms of advances in technology and population dynamics—is disappointing. Others have written much better treatments. The book does not contain a serious examination of the direct impact of globalization on national security or military forces, only a continuing assertion that globalization has effects and that, whatever they are, they justify adoption of the author's “reassurance” policies. These policies are similar to, but more radical and seemingly less practical than, those put forward as “cooperative security” by former secretary of defense William Perry. He certainly would not agree with Steinbruner that all national militaries must be equalized in capabilities and force structure. Steinbruner cites the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the founding of Nato as examples of reassurance and equal treatment of nations in regard to security, but he forgets to

mention violations of the NPT or to explain why nations would have joined Nato had there been no inequitable Soviet threat. Even those who share the author's beliefs in a smaller American defense structure or minimal deterrence would be confused by many of his supporting reasons. At one point, Steinbruner castigates the former colonial powers for not intervening quickly enough in the civil wars of their violence-prone former colonies. How would they do so without possessing superior military force? Steinbruner describes the internal conflict that plagues much of the world, including terrorism, as a "contagion"—as if it were a theoretical illness that had nothing to do with actions of actual people. As in the logic (some might say illogic) of the prisoners' dilemma and tit-for-tat games once used to describe the theory of nuclear deterrence, neither the magnanimity nor the fears of the human spirit play a role in this book's equation.

Despite the publisher's reputation and the implied support of influential (mostly retired) authorities, serious students of globalization or defense policy should avoid this book. It is not merely a weak argument; these are not principles of global security for the real world.

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Williams, Cindy, ed. *Holding the Line: U.S. Defense Alternatives for the 21st Century*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001. 289pp. \$21.95

This is the rare book that actually lives up to its blurbs. It should be required reading for U.S. defense planners, especially Bush administration officials for whom

increasing defense spending rather than "holding the line" is an article of faith. They would profit greatly from the volume's analysis of where *not* to look for the savings that might pay for the administration's promised transformation of the military. *Hint*: cutting infrastructure will not pay for military transformation.

Cindy Williams, a senior research fellow in the Strategic Studies Program at MIT and a former assistant director for national security at the Congressional Budget Office, has assembled an impressive group of contributors. In a focused, well integrated volume, they take on a range of pressing defense issues that converge on a central, critical question: how can the U.S. military be reshaped—transformed—while holding the line on defense spending? Holding the line means maintaining defense spending at about \$300 billion (in fiscal year 2000 budget-authority dollars) for ten years. That amount, it is argued, is sufficient for transformation if it is spent effectively and efficiently—which requires merely discarding outmoded strategy and force structure.

In her introductory chapter, Williams lays the foundation for what follows with an instructive discussion of the post-Cold War drawdown, the pressures generating rising defense costs, the reasons we should not succumb to those pressures, and the need to reconcile strategy and practice and to recalibrate the two-major-theater-wars yardstick that was used to size U.S. conventional forces after the Gulf War. An effective force-protection device, the two-major-theater-wars standard is both the source of rising defense costs and an obstacle to a fiscally responsible transformation of the U.S. military. Williams is especially struck by the fact that each service's share of defense

spending has been held essentially constant since the end of the Cold War. Strategy and force structure alternatives advanced by three of the contributors propose to take care of that problem.

Lawrence Korb develops Williams's account of contemporary defense planning with a critical appraisal of the Pentagon's three post-Cold War reassessments—the first Bush administration's 1990 "Base Force," which introduced the two-major-regional-wars construct; the Clinton administration's 1993 Bottom-Up Review; and the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review, which also embraced the two-war view. Korb also delightfully exposes the misleading assumptions that inform the conventional wisdom about the inadequacy of current levels of defense spending.

The search for ways to utilize Department of Defense monies more effectively and efficiently begins with nonsolutions. Williams convincingly argues that infrastructure reform—eliminating functions, consolidating and collocating activities, privatization, and outsourcing—"will not be the miracle cure for the Pentagon's budget woes." Gordon Adams finds that for strategic, political, technological, and economic reasons, contemporary burden sharing by America's European allies can yield no more of a budgetary payoff than it did during the Cold War. Further cuts in nuclear forces will not result in significant savings either, according to David Mosher, who expects, not unreasonably, that "missile defenses will be the most likely cause of budget growth."

The resources required for transformation can only be extracted from the conventional force structure. It is the Army, Air Force, or Navy (and Marines)—take your pick—that will bear the brunt of restructuring. Owen Cote advances the

alternative likely to be most popular among readers of this journal—a naval-centric strategy and force structure that features a significantly more innovative Navy. Under this alternative, a somewhat smaller Air Force and a more significantly reduced but more mobile Army would be the bill payers. James Quinlivan proposes what he considers a balanced future force structure centered on a reorganized, modernized Army. The Navy would lose two carrier battle groups under this alternative; the Marine Corps and the Air Force would be smaller as well. To support what he labels a "flexible power projection strategy," Karl Mueller would shift resources from the Army and Navy to a modernized, more capable Air Force. The Army would give up 30 percent of its active combat forces and two-thirds of its National Guard units, while the Navy would have to make do with nine rather than twelve aircraft carriers.

Cote, Quinlivan, and Mueller each identify the strategic assumptions upon which their respective force structures are built. Their assumptions about the future security environment differ significantly. Unfortunately, we do not know what that security environment will actually look like. Defense planners, by nature cautious and conservative in the face of uncertainty, will want to hedge against each set of problems the authors identify; one way of doing this is to acquire the full range of capabilities they describe. In the end, while we know we should look to the conventional force structure to resolve the resource dilemma, the dilemma remains unresolved. What we still need is a reliable means of choosing among the assumptions—no small intellectual challenge. A larger dose of grand strategy

than provided in Williams's introductory chapter is required for that undertaking.

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Brasher, Bart. *Implosion: Downsizing the U.S. Military, 1987–2015*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2000. 257pp. \$67

Bart Brasher begins his retrospective discussion of *Implosion* with a simple synopsis in chapter 1, “The Last 1,000 Days of the Cold War.” Mentioned in this chapter is a discussion of the period of the Reagan administration when Defense personnel numbers and budget authority reached their peaks. He includes interesting *USA Today* statistics about defense spending in the United States and in the USSR, as well as a breakdown of how many soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines were serving. He also discusses how each service recruits, tests, and promotes its enlisted and officer personnel. Brasher then proceeds to the topic of the security environment (primarily by describing where U.S. military forces are deployed and in what numbers), the demise of the Soviet Union, and various operations that the U.S. military was involved in through the end of the 1980s. He closes this chapter with a discussion of the base realignment process, military readiness at the end of the Cold War, and the size of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, reserve components, and nuclear forces.

The book's style is readable, and Brasher takes time to explain acronyms, even to describe how civilian control of the military is organized. His explanations about the military and government processes are clear even for the uninitiated.

However, it is clear well before the end of the first chapter that the author's approach consists primarily of stringing together information gleaned from various sources; the first thirty-four-page chapter contains 151 endnotes. Also, the book is replete with numbers and statistics; the average paragraph contains at least two or three. For example, the following is the concluding paragraph of the discussion of Operation JUST CAUSE: “Casualty figures for the invasion included 24 Americans dead, including two who were killed accidentally by their own forces. The number of U.S. wounded was 324, while the PDF suffered 314 killed, 124 wounded, and 5,313 captured. Serious estimates of Panamanian noncombatants killed ran from 100 to 202. Within a few years, Panama was a democracy and Noriega was in a stateside prison, convicted of the narcotics charges brought against him.”

The next several chapters fall into a pattern. For each year from 1990 through 1994, Brasher uses statistical tidbits to discuss human resources, the security environment, the “Base Force” (and other alternate force structures), military readiness, and downsizing. Each chapter sets forth the “security environment,” a chronological account of defense and military issues, primarily illuminated by force-deployment statistics. Subchapters cover in a clear and concise fashion such subjects as contingency operations, the Bottom-Up Review, the base closure process, modernization, and “topsizeing.” Chapter 7 covers the downsizing of the military from 1995 and 1996, and chapter 8 covers the “Quadrennial Defense Review and the Out-Years, 1997 to 2015.” Brasher's conclusions, which occupy two pages, include: “Although many equate the initiation of personnel and force structure

reductions with the end of the Cold War in 1989 or the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, DOD, as a whole, started downsizing in 1988. The Army and Air Force started trimming forces in 1987 and the Marine Corps followed suit the following year. The Navy did not start reducing numbers until 1990”; “For the most part, it seems though DOD has managed to keep the cream of the crop in a smaller labor pool. . . . [T]he quality of the Army officer contingent, already high, has been improved by the SSB and VSI initiatives, as most of the commissioned soldiers accepting the bonuses were from the bottom third of their year-groups”; “Some were concerned that African-Americans, as well as other minorities, might bear a disproportionate share of military personnel cuts, but that has not transpired. Along the same line, opportunities for women in the armed forces have not been put on hold because of the downsizing. In fact, their representation has reached record levels”; “Local communities have been hurt by the reduction in the number of DOD installations that started in 1988. However, in many cases, that damages have been significantly less than originally estimated. Thanks to a higher percentage of personnel cuts than base closures, the infrastructure of our fighting establishment is now even more out of sync with force structure than it was in 1987.”

Other conclusions address the need for increased modernization funding, force hollowness (although not on the scale seen in the 1970s), and reductions in personnel and funding (unaccompanied by reductions in global security commitments).

The author (a former Air Force officer of thirteen years’ service) has consulted

hundreds of sources for his book. The bibliography is sixteen pages long. The numbers and statistics are interesting individually, though their sheer volume is overwhelming. The appendices are simple graphs showing a downward trend from 1987 to 1998. What is missing are conclusions and projections (beyond those contained in the Quadrennial Defense Review) about the implications. *Implosion* does a credible job of describing, with key statistics and simple explanations, the magnitude and process of the downsizing of the military (the active components were reduced 35.3 percent between 1987 and 1998), but Brasher seems too enamored of statistical pronouncements, leaving the reader waiting for an answer to the question “What does it all mean?” What will this massive force and budgetary reduction mean for the future of the United States military and its role on the international stage?

If you are looking for a book full of quotable, surprising, and interesting statistics, or for a concise, clearly explained, chronological timeline of how the military was downsized since 1987, this book is for you. However, you will not find pronouncements or predictions about how the reduction in military forces and funding, so carefully detailed and described, will affect the future. Nor does this book pass judgment or offer praise or criticism of how the downsizing occurred. Brasher discusses downsizing much as a good reporter might (just the facts), rather than as a commentator or political analyst. Given the time frame advertized in the title (1987–2015), the author has done only half his job.

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Daalder, Ivo H., and Michael E. O'Hanlon. *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000. 343pp. \$26.95

Since the end of the Cold War, Nato has been experiencing an identity crisis that has not yet been completely resolved. In the last decade instability has been Nato's principal adversary, and the Balkans, as a result of the atrocities of Slobodan Milosevic, became its prime area of interest. In March 1999, following the Serb tyrant's driving of eight hundred thousand Albanian Kosovars from Serbia, Nato fought, and won, a war to return and protect Kosovo's Albanian population.

Winning Ugly is a recounting of the causes, conduct, and consequences of this war. It is derived from interviews of many of its central players by experts on Balkan policy and security affairs. Not surprisingly, this conflict has been dissected and closely scrutinized by many pundits, because its lessons will play a central role in fashioning future alliance defense policies, as well as U.S. force planning and doctrine development.

Daalder and O'Hanlon scrutinize virtually all elements of the Kosovo operation, and they are both understanding and critical. As to the causes and inevitability of the conflict, the authors conclude that, given Milosevic's perfidy and malice, it would have been difficult for Nato to avoid taking military action. As to the result, they unabashedly declare Nato the victor, with few qualifications. In fact, the authors' assessment should be labeled "near term," since we have yet to witness enduring stability in the region as a result of the conflict and the subsequent Nato "occupation" of the province.

Daalder and O'Hanlon's examination of the conduct of the war, however, is the best part of the book, bringing to light the strategic and tactical mistakes committed by Nato's heads of state, diplomats, and generals alike. Perhaps the most important of the internal conflicts were between (and among) Americans, a point underlined in General Wesley Clark's recent account of the Kosovo conflict, *Waging Modern War*.

The role that the air campaign played to achieve overall success in the war is a point hotly debated in defense-policy circles. Kosovo was proclaimed exclusively an air war, President Clinton having promised that the United States had no intention of fighting a ground war in the Balkans. It was a remarkably successful one, at that; air defense capability by the Yugoslav armed forces was moderate, yet no Nato pilot lost his life in combat. But this was not initially the air war that U.S. Air Force strategists had envisioned—pilots were restricted to flying above fifteen thousand feet, and target sets were limited early in the war due to asset availability and bad weather. Most importantly, the thrust of "effects-based operations" (in this case, bending the enemy's will through paralyzing the country's infrastructure) was diluted, as the Nato alliance pursued elusive Yugoslav tanks in the Kosovo countryside.

However, as the war progressed, American air-combat strategy increasingly held sway, while Milosevic continued to hold firm. The authors conclude that the diplomatic consensus was that the Yugoslav dictator did not consider blinking until faced with a united alliance that began talking seriously about a ground war. Milosevic eventually yielded when his last possible ally, Russia, conspicuously associated itself with the message of alliance

resolve. The authors leave us with the (lukewarm) lesson that airpower, properly employed, is a necessary, albeit insufficient, tool of defense and foreign policy.

The Kosovo war provides today's students of international affairs a textbook case in the traditional art of statecraft in the world of *realpolitik*. Many old lessons are emphasized: strategy must be driven by policy, coercive diplomacy works only when one possesses military might and resolve, armed forces must be given proper strategic direction, and alliance solidarity is crucial.

However, *Winning Ugly* adds new lessons as well, because Kosovo was Nato's principal test to date in conducting military operations outside its borders against a sovereign nation for essentially humanitarian purposes. Nato's performance in Kosovo may have helped define the practicality and desirability of this role in the twenty-first-century world. This book enhances our understanding of what may become the future of Nato as well as some part of the future of war.

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House, Jonathan M. *Combined Arms Warfare in the Twentieth Century*. Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 2001. 364pp. \$45

A retired Army officer formerly on the faculty of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Jonathan House has written an updated edition of a text he authored in the 1980s to support the education of Army officers. His express intentions are to strip the jargon in order to make the subject intelligible to a more general

readership, and to update the book with an analysis of combined-arms progress in the 1990s. The result is a readable and lucid analysis of combined-arms warfare in the twentieth century, a work that a layman can follow without keeping a dictionary of military terms handy.

For those with a genuine interest in military affairs, this book is ultimately rewarding. However, it is more about organizational dynamics than about battles and tactics, and that may prove tedious to the casual reader. House methodically traces the development of combined-arms practice in the major armies of the world, offering just enough description of battles and campaigns to illustrate the effects of the various technical and organizational developments over the years.

House tends to focus his analysis through the lens of organizational design (an inclination shared by this reviewer) and comes up with some interesting results that do not always conform to conventional wisdom. For instance, he makes the case that the French and British defeat in the 1940 Battle of France can be adequately explained by their centralized and "stovepiped" organizational structure, which inhibited the formation of flexible combined-arms task forces. Moreover, the lack of experience in defending against a fluid combined-arms offensive caused the allies to create a rather brittle, forward-focused defense instead of the defense in tactical and operational depth that was later found effective against the blitzkrieg. In addition, the failure of the German advance into the Soviet Union in 1941 was due not so much to the oft-cited reduction in panzer divisions (which House cites as an actual advantage, in that it created more balanced divisional structures) as to the

failure of the Wehrmacht to prepare logistics support suited to the resulting depth of the theater.

If the book has a fault, it lies in the numerous maps and organizational charts that accompany the text. Though House's prose is clear and straightforward, the maps do not help the layman really grasp the dynamics of the battles. Similarly, although House thoughtfully includes a key to the numerous symbols that soldiers use to depict units on maps and tables of organization, he leaves out a number of the more esoteric ones that inhabit the book. This is a minor irritant—in general the book is well supported by a glossary of technical terms and acronyms, liberal annotations, and an extensive bibliography—but it should be fixed in the next edition if the book is to be considered a true introductory text.

House has a clear thesis that permeates his analysis: combined-arms structure (comprising tanks, artillery, infantry, helicopters, engineers, etc.) should be integrated at the lowest practicable level and balanced to provide the most flexibility to the commander. (In practice, this seems to occur only at the division or sometimes the brigade level.) The commander can then select various types of units to form combined-arms task forces that can address the type of operations planned. House's discussion of the long and painful history of armies' struggles to achieve this balance and flexibility brings to mind the equally painful attempts at jointness among services.

House inevitably addresses the issue of air support as a piece of the combined-arms puzzle. He analytically describes the objections airmen have to integrating airpower into a combined-arms ground organization, but in his conclusions he argues against separate, air-only

campaigns. Although his points are otherwise well made, on this issue he seems to overreach a bit.

In summary, Jonathan House has produced a useful and readable text for anyone who wants a better understanding of how modern armies fight.

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McBride, William M. *Technological Change and the United States Navy, 1865–1945*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2000. 352pp. \$45

This is not a technological history of the U.S. Navy per se but rather an exploration of how the dominant culture of the Navy's leadership drove specific technological choices in the transition from the sailing ship of the line to the battleship and then to the aircraft carrier.

McBride's thesis centers on two points: that the organization and culture of the U.S. Navy have traditionally been defined by its capital ships; and that new technologies challenging the relevance of the current capital ship are generally resisted by senior leaders, who seek both to maintain control over change and to inhibit any developments that suggest a transfer of power to individuals with the skills, functions, and organizational relationships of a new "technological paradigm."

These themes are familiar to those who follow the academic literature on technology and culture, but McBride is undoubtedly correct in his contention that there is no widespread understanding of the specific impact of the dominant service culture on technology selection. A thorough appreciation of the full range of forces that drive technological choices would appear to be particularly

important in the post–Cold War era, in which the technological options are so numerous and specific requirements for the Navy are so uncertain.

One of McBride’s major goals in this work is to refute the idea of technological determinism and demonstrate instead the importance of culture in technological innovation. He explores in some depth the intense professional competition between the Navy’s line officers and engineers during the transition from sail to steam, and between surface officers and aviators in the transition from the battleship to the carrier. He also offers interesting historical insight into internal competition for control over the design details of capital ships during different eras, with an informative analysis of the role of naval-industrial relations in the early debate over the adoption of turbo-electric drive.

Unfortunately, McBride’s argument against technological determinism tends to the opposite extreme, ascribing almost every technological choice to single-minded efforts by the Navy’s leaders to maintain the social and cultural status quo. He characterizes the battleship “paradigm” at the end of the nineteenth century as a “pre-Copernican Ptolemaic cosmogony,” as if the battleship were not only the wrong technological choice but somehow a violation of natural law. He castigates the U.S. Navy for rejecting a cruiser-centric commerce-raiding strategy and attributes the choice to blind adherence to the “paramount status” of the battleship. Yet ultimately McBride does not refute the case that the transition from the sailing ship of the line to the battleship was essentially a deterministic outcome, nor does he objectively evaluate the failed efforts by others in the

nineteenth century (most notably the French) to render the battleship obsolete.

In contrast, McBride largely admits that the adoption of the aircraft carrier was more a matter of fortuitous events than of technological determinism. As he points out, a narrow difference in timing in the appearance of radar and the proximity fuse might have doomed the aircraft carrier to irrelevance; it was not until well into World War II that a carrier could muster sufficient striking power to hold a combat-ready battleship at risk. Yet he condemns the Navy’s “battleship thought collective” as early as World War I for failing to move rapidly to a sea-based air strike force—including early adoption of torpedo bombers (which actually took another twenty-five years to achieve technological maturity). There have unquestionably been Luddites in the Navy’s senior ranks throughout its history, but there is great cost and risk in abandoning major military systems that have proven their worth. McBride is far too prone to condemn the technological caution of past decision makers, who lacked the benefit of our hindsight.

It is not clear whom the book was meant to inform. McBride’s insistence on turgid academic jargon like “intra-artifact combat” and “obdurate boundary artifact” to express fairly simple ideas suggests that he did not intend this work for the reader inside the military who might actually make the best use of it. On the other hand, an academic audience unfamiliar with naval operations might accept without question McBride’s somewhat preposterous assertions that the “blip enhance” mode of the ULQ-6 was intended as a suicide device, that an “old World War II–era destroyer” could sink a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, or that

the cruise missile has long since replaced the aircraft as the primary means of strike from the sea.

This volume does add some historical substance to the important topic of military innovation, but the prospective reader should be cautioned that it is neither a well balanced nor a comprehensive account of the impact of technological change on the U.S. Navy from the Civil War through World War II.

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Key, David M., Jr., *Admiral Jerauld Wright: Warrior among Diplomats*. Manhattan, Kans.: Sunflower Univ. Press, 2001. 438pp. \$22.95

For more than two-thirds of a century, a host of diplomats, military officers, and statesmen have been entertained in their wardrooms, clubs, and drawing rooms from London to Manila by Jerry Wright's stories and vignettes drawn from his remarkable career. After every session, the inevitable reaction would be, "Jerry, you've got to write a book."

Now that book has been written by David M. Key, Jr., a nephew of the admiral. Key, making good use of his Harvard A.B. in English, does an excellent job in letting his uncle and his contemporaries tell the story, while himself providing the historical context, one that is unusually rich in drama and import. Fortunately, Key had much to draw on, and he has done a thorough and discriminating job in his research. Wright wrote copiously—leaving journals, memos, articles, and letters—all flavored with the special brand of low-key, wry wit that was characteristic of him. Wright had plenty to write about. His career was replete with

one-of-a-kind assignments, from being in charge of President Calvin Coolidge's yacht to commanding a British submarine in World War II (though he was neither British nor a submarine officer).

Born in 1898 into an Army family, Wright adored his father, and clearly the feeling was mutual. "Pop" took his son on hunting and fishing trips around the world, and the young boy relished the experience. When Wright was only thirteen, then-Major William Wright, stationed in Luzon as commander of the Philippine Scouts, took the youngster, armed with his own shotgun, on a military expedition to Mindanao to suppress an uprising by the rebellious Moros, Philippine Muslims. It was an adventure from America's brief colonial period, more Kipling than Hemingway.

In 1914 Wright entered the Naval Academy (at sixteen) because there was no appointment available at West Point. He graduated in only three years, because of World War I. He was sent to Europe on blockade duty, which also provided the opportunity to visit his father, now Major General Wright, commanding the 89th Infantry Division on the Western Front. However, the trip became more than just a visit with "Pop" at his tented headquarters when Ensign Wright was caught in a German artillery barrage.

It did not take the young naval officer long to realize that the U.S. Navy was the right place for him. He derived personal as well as professional satisfaction from his assignment as naval aide to Coolidge and from his subsequent deployment to the China Station as executive officer of a four-pipe destroyer.

Wright remained a bachelor as a junior officer, but with his special charm and tall good looks, he was much in demand

in the social whirl of Washington, D.C. There he met Phyllis Thompson, a society reporter for the thriving *Washington Star*. They were married within a year. Throughout the rest of his career they remained a devoted couple. Phyllis was always the exemplary Navy wife (she published a book by that title), uncomplaining about the frequent moves and long separations, and a pillar of support for her husband in all his varied endeavors and often bizarre adventures.

During World War II, Wright commanded major forces in action and served on personal liaison missions for the Allies. After the war he served in the Pentagon, where, because of his combat experience, he was assigned to develop the operating policies for the postwar Navy.

The real star in Wright's crown, however, was his tour as Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, one of the two top posts in Nato. He handled that job with such distinction that he served for six years in what was normally a two-year assignment. His experiences in that critical post at the height of the Cold War should be of special interest to naval historians and students of modern history.

After retiring from active duty as a four-star admiral in 1960, he performed his final service to the country in 1963, when, at the urging of the secretary of state, President John F. Kennedy appointed Wright to serve as U.S. ambassador to Taiwan. Again Wright answered the call of his country to serve in an assignment of great responsibility and unusual sensitivity, one especially significant because of the instability of the Chinese Nationalist government and the potential threat to U.S. vital national interests.

David Key's lack of familiarity with military jargon has allowed an occasional

error to creep in, but these are few and minor, limited generally to a garbled acronym or the misspelling of a ship's name. Otherwise the book rings with the authority of an action report.

Admiral Jerauld Wright is a delightful book, easy to pick up and hard to put down. It is a biography of a splendid individual whose service and contributions to his country constitute a significant historical record in itself. It is a story that unfolds with the candor and humor of a special person whose intellect and charm made him a "diplomat among warriors."

J. L. HOLLOWAY
Admiral, U.S. Navy, Retired



Hoffman, Jon T. *Chesty: The Story of Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller, USMC*. New York: Random House, 2001. 629pp. \$35

In the heralded history of the U.S. Marine Corps, Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller occupies a unique position. Long revered as the greatest hero in the Corps, Puller is the only Marine to earn five Navy Crosses. His career spanned thirty-seven years, during which he mastered the entire spectrum of warfare, from chasing the guerrilla leader Augusto Sandino in the jungles of Nicaragua to commanding a Marine regiment in the bitter fighting near the Chosin reservoir. Most Marines are familiar with Burke Davis's 1962 account of Puller's life, but fellow leatherneck Jon T. Hoffman has produced what is likely to become the definitive biography of this extraordinary officer.

Hoffman is no stranger to biography. His *Once a Legend: "Red Mike" Edson of the Marine Raiders* earned rave reviews from a number of distinguished military historians and editors. As he did with Edson,

Hoffman uses private papers, personal military records, and recently declassified federal documents in his attempt to discover the “real” Puller, stripped of decades of mythology and near canonization. What makes this current biography so intriguing is Hoffman’s willingness to confront the more controversial aspects of Puller’s career, such as his performance at Peleliu, where his unit’s casualty rate exceeded 54 percent, as well as his alleged indifference toward junior officers and to other services.

Puller was born in the Virginia Tidewater in 1898 and enlisted in the Marine Corps on 25 July 1918, too late to fight in World War I. He first saw combat during the interwar period, when the United States frequently dispatched Marines to quell domestic disturbances throughout the Caribbean. The Puller legend was born in Haiti and Nicaragua, where he earned the sobriquet “El Tigre” and established a reputation as a brilliant small-unit leader. His aggressive leadership won two Navy Crosses. Extended foreign service in China and aboard Captain Chester Nimitz’s flagship, USS *Augusta* (CA 31), added new laurels to Puller’s growing reputation.

With the advent of World War II, Puller actively sought combat duty. In September 1942 his battalion deployed to Guadalcanal. One month later, he had earned his third Navy Cross, in the defense of Henderson Field. Following a short interlude, Puller won a fourth Navy Cross in the battle at Cape Gloucester, on New Britain Island. On both occasions, Puller’s spirited leadership prevented the desperate and determined enemy from penetrating his defenses. On Guadalcanal particularly, his officers and men were almost universal in their praise of his courage and leadership under fire.

It was on New Britain that Puller first attracted a great deal of criticism for allegedly using his own casualty figures as a measuring stick of how aggressively his men were fighting. This criticism reached new heights after Peleliu in September 1944, where a visibly tired Puller, now a regimental commander, sustained disproportionate casualties in eradicating the Japanese defenders. Hoffman rushes to his defense, noting that Puller’s unit did not have as much naval gunfire support available as the other regiments did, and that service doctrine dictated maintaining momentum, which Puller’s regiment had gained. Moreover, Hoffman points out, the terrain at Peleliu offered little opportunity for maneuver; frontal assault is almost always costly.

Allegations of Puller’s lack of tactical imagination resurfaced in Korea, where his regiment was instrumental in retaking Seoul in the immediate aftermath of the Inchon landing. House-to-house fighting proved slow and deadly, but Puller took justifiable pride in his regiment’s role in seizing the South Korean capital. Puller’s leadership during the fighting withdrawal from the Chosin reservoir, in contrast, attracted a great deal of favorable publicity. It was in fact nothing short of inspirational, earning him his fifth and final Navy Cross.

Unfortunately, the years following Korea brought only disillusionment to Puller. Like General George S. Patton, Chesty Puller was ill suited to the peacetime establishment. He was never politically astute; his blunt remarks about rugged training and a “soft” American public created a hailstorm of criticism from a country long tired of war. What Puller desired most was command of a Marine division, but soon after he finally achieved that lofty ideal in 1954, a stroke

felled him, and he was relieved of command. Rather than retiring gracefully, however, Puller fought the medical examiner's board for over a year before the secretary of the Navy informed him in October 1955 that he would be retired.

For Puller, his forced retirement from active service was the ultimate betrayal by the commandant and Headquarters, Marine Corps. In his twilight years, however, Puller mellowed a bit and took personal satisfaction in seeing his family reach maturity. He volunteered for active service during the Vietnam War (his request was understandably denied). A vocal critic of government policy during the war, Puller watched his son, Lewis Puller, Jr., carry on the Puller name in combat.

As a sidelight, Hoffman provides an intimate portrayal of the relationship between father and son in the elder Puller's last days. Lewis Jr., who later recorded his own experiences in a Pulitzer Prize-winning autobiography, *Fortunate Son*, was at his father's side when Chesty Puller, the greatest Marine in history, succumbed to pneumonia and kidney infection on 11 October 1971.

The Puller who emerges from these pages is not an altogether appealing figure but one who merits the accolades that generations of Marines have bestowed upon him. The fact that his Navy Crosses were awarded for leadership during critical stages of battle as opposed to individual acts of bravery in no way diminishes what Puller accomplished during his distinguished career. An unparalleled warrior and an enlisted leatherneck at heart, Chesty Puller remains the most famous and most revered Marine. It is fitting that we finally have a biography that does justice to this extraordinary officer.

COLE C. KINGSEED
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La Bree, Clifton. *The Gentle Warrior: General Oliver Prince Smith, USMC*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State Univ. Press, 2001. 268pp. \$32

Oliver Prince Smith was not present at Belleau Wood or Chateau Thierry. Neither did he chase Sandino in Nicaragua. He never served in Shanghai with the 4th Marines. He missed the fighting on Guadalcanal and Tarawa—early 1941 saw him with the 1st Marine Brigade in Iceland, returning to the United States in May 1942 for an eighteen-month stint in the newly formed headquarters Division of Plans and Policies. Consequently, Smith's first taste of combat did not come until early 1944—fully twenty-seven years after commissioning—at New Britain, where he served initially as chief of staff for the 1st Marine Division and shortly as commander, 5th Marines, for the Talasea Peninsula assault. Subsequently, at Peleliu he had the distinct misfortune to serve as assistant commander of the 1st Marine Division under Major General William H. Rupertus. He would finish his World War II service as Marine deputy chief of staff for the Tenth Army at Okinawa.

Smith went through the Reserve Officers Training Corps program at the University of California, Berkeley, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1917. He was ordered to Guam, followed by shipboard duty, then Washington, D.C., three years in Haiti, and the Army's Field Officer School at Fort Benning in 1931. Subsequently, Smith taught at Marine Corps Schools in Quantico, following which he became the first Marine officer to matriculate at the French *École de Guerre*. Returning to the United States, he was again assigned as an instructor at Quantico, where, because of his obvious

intellectual power, he acquired the nicknames “the professor” and the “student general.”

Smith was not a colorful character. A practicing Christian Scientist, he did not drink (although he did smoke a pipe), and he did not use profanity. In fact, when he spoke at all he rarely raised his voice above a normal speaking level. “Taciturn” probably describes him best.

Consequently, when in spring 1950, after serving as Marine Corps assistant commandant, Smith received orders as commanding general, 1st Marine Division, there was not a little heartburn among other Marine general officers, which only intensified when that division deployed to Korea.

Yet if ever there was an officer with the right qualifications at the right place at the right time, it was Major General Oliver Prince Smith.

It was O.P. who worked closely and effectively with Rear Admiral James H. Doyle on a very short time line to plan the September 1950 landing at Inchon, with higher echelons back-dating their operation orders to conform with those produced at the lower levels. Like Doyle, O.P. was a practical-minded, hardheaded professional who cared not a whit for high-blown rhetoric or elegant maps, only for getting the job done. It was O.P. who wisely resisted great pressure from his corps commander to accelerate his division’s advance on Seoul in order to meet an artificial schedule for securing that city; urgings to make a dangerous night attack once in Seoul; and attempts to interfere in his division’s internal chain of command.

The extraordinary performance of the 1st Marine Division at Chosin is widely known. Less obvious was O.P.’s

contribution to that performance. Again, he wisely resisted considerable pressure from his corps commander to quick-pace the division’s advance to the Yalu. Cognizant of the danger posed by the Chinese entry into the war, O.P. doggedly strove to keep his division concentrated. Smith developed a main supply route with defensible redoubts that made possible the division’s long fighting retreat from Chosin to Hamhung. Earlier, in the belief that the war would extend well into the bitter Korean winter, he had insisted on cold-weather gear for his Marines. He kept in continuous personal contact with his regimental commanders by means of helicopter (the first field commander to do so) and jeep, and yet he refrained from interfering with their exercise of command.

By these deeds, this reviewer is persuaded that O. P. Smith saved a great many fine men from certain capture, injury, or death. Much beloved by his men, O.P. reciprocated; in his personal log he kept handwritten daily and running casualty figures for the division. Perhaps the best-known photo of O. P. Smith is of him standing alone among graves of his men in the cemetery at Hamhung.

Smith was neither good news material nor well known outside Marine circles; he was a very private and modest person. For example, he confided to his wife his deep embarrassment on receiving a Silver Star from General Douglas MacArthur, an award he deemed inappropriate for a division commander not directly in the line of fire. Such humility and personal reserve neither attract biographers nor render their task easy (in Korea he was easily eclipsed by his 1st Marines commander, the colorful “Chesty” Puller). Thus, the absence of a biography of Smith until now is no surprise, but the lacuna has been a serious one. That there

is now such a biography is owed to the perseverance of the publisher's executive director, who served in the 1st Marine Division after the Korean War.

Fortunately for his biographer, O.P. kept meticulous records of his professional life, comprising some three dozen boxes in the Marine Corps University Archives and, more important, a detailed, daily personal log of his Korean War service. La Bree conducted interviews with officers who had served with O.P. to help fill in the blanks.

Gentle Warrior would have benefited had the author provided a broader context for the historical events in which its protagonist participated. It would also have been improved by more attention to the first decades of O.P.'s career, which are largely omitted—official records could have provided at least grist for the mill here. That O.P.'s youth and college years are absent from this account is due principally to his family's desire for privacy, which the author respected. Thus we do not really know the father to the man—the account really starts with O.P.'s deployment to Iceland.

Nonetheless, this is a good, honest book. It is probably not the definitive account of O.P.'s life and career, but we are fortunate to have it. He emerges as a consummate, dedicated professional military officer who served his country and his Marine Corps extremely well and did so with little fanfare or expectation of public approbation. On more than one occasion, Smith risked his career to speak truth to power. In short, there is much worth emulating in the character and career of O. P. Smith. Serving officers would do well to read this book and absorb its lessons.

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Probert, Henry. *Bomber Harris, His Life and Times: The Biography of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur Harris, the Wartime Chief of Bomber Command*. London: Greenhill, 2001. 432pp. \$34.95

In the 1920s, early in his career, when Arthur Harris commanded 45 Squadron in Iraq, he was concerned with improving the accuracy of his unit's bomb aiming. Can this be the same man who, twenty years later, was responsible for leading the Royal Air Force Bomber Command's area-bombing campaign against the cities of the Third Reich, the apogee of which was the apocalyptic raid on Dresden in February 1945?

Yes and no. As Henry Probert demonstrates in his admirable biography of this most controversial Allied airman, Harris did indeed stress the need for his bombers to operate efficiently and effectively as they policed their corner of the British Empire, and he continued to emphasize these qualities for the remainder of his career. Harris cannot be made to bear personal responsibility for either the area-bombing strategy in general, or the Dresden raid in particular. Although Harris became a lightning rod for post-war criticism of the strategic air offensive, the critical decisions were made higher up the chain of command by the Chiefs of Staff, the War Cabinet, and Winston Churchill. In pointing out this simple but often overlooked fact, Probert, like Robin Neillands in his recent *The Bomber War* (Overlook Press, 2001), seeks to debunk myths and set the record straight by putting Harris in his proper historical context.

In some respects this task is not an easy one, but Probert is well qualified to make the attempt. A retired RAF air commodore with a long record of service,

Probert is also a former head of the Air Historical Branch of the Ministry of Defence. For this biography he was given unrestricted access to Harris's substantial collection of personal papers. Probert has made good use of this archive and of the interviews he conducted with Harris's friends and associates. His aim, he writes, is to present a biography of the man rather than yet another history of the bombing campaign, and there is much detail here that cannot be found elsewhere, even in the authorized biography by Dudley Saward, which was written in the 1970s but not published until after Harris's death in 1984. Probert rightly judges Saward's book to be disappointing, not least because it leaves many questions unanswered.

Yet while the author attempts to offer a rounder picture of the man by examining Harris's pre- and post-Bomber Command life, readers will inevitably be drawn to those chapters dealing with the war years. Despite Probert's desire not to retell the story of Bomber Command, he feels it necessary to offer some verdict on the air campaign itself. Here he wisely follows the lead of Richard Overy (King's College, London) in concluding that the night area offensive did much more damage to the German war effort than it has been given credit for, mainly by diverting resources to the defence of the Reich, putting a ceiling on industrial production, and generally disrupting economic and social life.

The picture of Harris that emerges is in some ways all too familiar. He was just the tonic that was needed at Bomber Command Headquarters in High Wycombe when he took up his appointment in February 1942. He was a strong-willed, opinionated, and forceful commander who promised to inject a

sense of purpose into a force that was flagging, and to do his utmost to build up its striking power. In this he was spectacularly successful, but his success came at a price. Harris's personality was a liability as well as an asset, and this was never more apparent than in his dealings with the staff officers of the Air Ministry. One of Probert's strengths is his understanding of the decision-making machinery and the bureaucratic and institutional framework within which bombing policy was made, a dimension of the story that is too often neglected or misunderstood.

Relations between Bomber Command and the Air Ministry's Directorate of Bomber Operations were frosty, due in no small part to Harris's contempt for what he believed to be the Air Staff's ill-advised criticism of, and interference in, the operation of his command. To a certain extent his views were justified, although one does not get from Probert a full sense of the deep distrust that some members of the Air Staff had of Harris's judgment and of his readiness to obey orders. Yet it takes two to tango, and too often Harris was overeager to dance. In addition to possessing a weakness for exaggeration, he could be inflexible, intolerant, scathingly sarcastic, and narrow minded in his view of the war. The results were frequently counterproductive, introducing unnecessary friction into the business of running the bomber offensive. Sometimes he was right, as in his denunciation of the pointless attacks on the concrete-reinforced U-boat pens on the French coast. At other times, however, he was dead wrong, as in his dogmatic dismissal of oil as just another "panacea" target.

Probert is too conscientious a biographer to excuse Harris's lapses uncritically, but he also seems a bit too willing to give his

subject the benefit of the doubt, suggesting in his concluding remarks that others might have misinterpreted or misunderstood what Harris was trying to say or do. He is surely right in judging him to be one of the great commanders of the Second World War. If that is the case,

however, it is equally true to say that Bomber Command achieved as much as it did not only because of Sir Arthur Harris but in spite of him.

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