

1995

Clash of Wings: World War II in the Air

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Recommended Citation

Mets, David R. and Boyne, Walter J. (1995) "Clash of Wings: World War II in the Air," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 48 : No. 4 , Article 19.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol48/iss4/19>

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harshest criticism for Bauserman's use of victims' names in captions of photographs of body recovery and even autopsies. This practice should be avoided by military historians.

The value of this work stems from the substantial amount of fresh information it contains about the massacre. Its faults notwithstanding, the book does illuminate the vastness of military history's virgin prairies, which, but for the plows of energetic researchers like John Bauserman, will never yield harvests.

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Boyne, Walter J. *Clash of Wings: World War II in the Air*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994. 414pp. \$25

The message of *Clash of Wings* is: "Year by year, as the war expanded the industrial efforts of the combatant nations, airpower became evermore important, to the point that it became a necessary condition for victory in Europe in 1944, and the decisive element in the Pacific in 1945." That is an argument that will appeal to Air Force retirees like Colonel Walter Boyne and me, but it is liable to cause others to demand qualifiers on the last clause at least. The publisher's hype is correct in the assertion that this book is the first survey (in any case one of very few) of the history of airpower in World War II. The blurb is more open to question in calling it "the definitive, comprehensive history of air power during World War II." That would be impossible in a single

volume, especially one written for a wide market.

Walter Boyne's combination of education and experience equipped him well to write a survey for the popular market and to produce a work far above the norm in terms of balance and accuracy. He was born on the eve of the Great Depression and began his twenty-five-year career as an Air Force aviator not long after the onset of the Cold War. It seems clear to me this has brought a leaven of the practical aviator not often found in this kind of a survey. Further, his long experience at the Air and Space Museum put him into a favorable position, in that it allowed him personal contact with many survivors of the events that he covers—veterans from not only the other American air forces but also from the air arms of our allies and even our enemies. Boyne's long association with the museum and his many writings about various airplanes yield a grasp of aviation technology of other services that exceeds what is expected of a writer educated in business administration, or even of most U.S. Air Force veterans. Though *Clash of Wings* was not written only for aviation buffs, it does contain more information on the design and performance of individual aircraft than is usually found in surveys.

Its focus, however, is on the operational dimension of the Second World War. It is sound on logistics and strategy, but its emphasis is on the employment of air power. It was a pleasant surprise to find in a book by an Air Force retiree that the Pacific War and naval aviation receive such thorough and accurate treatment

(doubtless a result of Boyne's experience at the Smithsonian). Although some attention is paid to the Soviet and Japanese air forces as well as to the Luftwaffe and Mussolini's air arm, Boyne looks at the Pacific War from the viewpoint of the Western Allies.

Boyne has organized his work along chronological lines and avoids the common practice of dealing first with the war against the European Axis and then flashing back to the conflict in the Pacific, as though they were different struggles entirely. He therefore captures the simultaneity absent in many other works. Boyne's writing style makes this book a pleasure to read, and it is not surprising to find that he holds orthodox opinions on many issues concerning airpower historiography. But his two appendices do not contribute much about the types of aircraft used in World War II, and instead of a bibliography he has included a list correctly labeled as "Selected Readings"—the works of the most acerbic revisionists (like Michael Sherry) being conspicuous by their absence.

Clash of Wings is a competent and well written history of World War II. For a general reader wanting a quick picture of the operational dimensions of the struggle in the air, the book is worthwhile. However, others, like the readers of the *Naval War College Review*, will find most of the material in Boyne's work already familiar. If some among them need a survey of the subject that casts a wider net and covers the non-operational dimensions of airpower history more thoroughly and equally competently, I recommend instead R.J. Overy's *The Air War, 1939-1945*

(New York: Stein and Day, 1981). Unhappily the latter is no longer in print.

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Gailey, Harry A. *The War in the Pacific: From Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay*. Novato, Calif.: Presidio, 1995. 534pp. \$29.95

Harry Gailey, professor of history at San Jose State University, has drawn upon his extensive knowledge and previous writings on World War II in the Pacific to offer an important, encyclopedic, general account of the Pacific War. Although the author concentrates on the Pacific theater, he does include relevant aspects of the war in East Asia that affected such strategic decisions as the 1944 Japanese *Ichi-Go* offensive in China. The book succeeds admirably. While both expansive and accurate, it is a lively study chronicling not only the source of conflict between Japan, Britain, and the United States but also the bloody war that ensued for control of the Pacific.

While not dwelling on questionable actions of the American on-scene commanders (including MacArthur) at the outbreak of war, Gailey keenly portrays an America not ready for war in the Pacific. He then discusses the remarkable Anglo-American and ANZUS efforts to defend remaining strongholds like New Guinea and Midway after the rapid, far-reaching Japanese advances following 7 December 1941. Gailey