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# Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War

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ambiguities characterize the entire series.

If the reader is willing to wade through the redundancy and mass of details, this trilogy may prove a useful contribution.

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Fialka, John J. *Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War*. Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1991. 75pp. \$9.75

This compilation of Fialka's experiences and those of his fellow journalists during the Gulf War offers a revealing look through experienced eyes at the relationship between the military and the media. In addition to two chapters dedicated to media interaction with the Army and Marines, the author has provided an interesting overview of the processes associated with coverage in Southwest Asia, media pools, and independent media representatives (unilaterals). He also offers several suggestions regarding media coverage of future conflicts. However, because no discussions regarding the U.S. Navy and Air Force and the media are included, *Hotel Warriors* is not the comprehensive and authoritative collection it might have been. One cannot help but wonder why the Navy and Air Force were not included, since so much of Fialka's work is not contingent upon his own experiences.

That aside, the compelling evidence in these pages provides

several inspirational, but more often than not disturbing, insights into the complex and deficient relationship between the military and the media. Overall, Fialka's presentation is even-handed and could (or should) compel military public affairs and operational personnel, as well as media representatives and their supervisors, to agree that there is definite room for improvement in their relationship.

The most important message to come across in this work is that the mind-set toward the press differs within and between the branches of the military as well as in the numerous media organizations. Fialka explains how that chemistry influences the integrity of public perception during a military conflict. This is the most laudatory attribute of this work.

Anyone familiar with the history of the working relationship between these two institutions, and especially with the tempestuous character of that relationship since the Grenada invasion in 1983, will be forced to appreciate the inherent truth about leading a horse to water but being unable to make it drink. How many times must someone of Fialka's outstanding repute examine significant instances of this interaction and conclude that there is an "attitude problem" before the message is received that neither they, nor the American people, are well served by squabbling about mutual support? Old, ingrained attitudes supported by institutions die a slow death. Fialka has provided the nails for the coffin.

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This work should be required reading for any professional in the military and the media. They may learn how to work together and understand why cooperation on behalf of the American public is a worthwhile objective, before the next balloon goes up.

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Zukerman, Mortimer B. et al. *Triumph Without Victory: The Unreported History of the Persian Gulf War*. New York: Random House (Times Books), 1992. 477pp. \$25

Mortimer B. Zuckerman, editor in chief of *U.S. News and World Report*, credits his entire staff with group authorship of this comprehensive, short-term history of the Gulf War. While authors are not individually named, sources are.

This work examines the classic political-economic-military decision triad through five stages: (1) the August 1990 decision to reinforce Saudi Arabia as a United Nations endeavor; (2) the October 1990 decision to increase the coalition force to an offensive level; (3) the January 1991 decision to start the air war; (4) the February 1991 decision to initiate ground operations; and (5), the February decision to terminate. The U.S. aspects of the land and air wars are covered in detail through the eyes of both on-site journalists and military officers. Unusual for a short-term military history is the coverage of

United Nations political activity and its linkage to actual military decisions in the field.

This work is proof that an honest and objective appraisal of a limited war is possible, leading to the conclusion that civil-military relations in the Western world just may be in pretty good shape. Thus, Bob Woodward's flashy volume *The Commanders* (Simon & Schuster, 1991), full of speculative "villain" theories and "inside source" revelations, is exposed by comparison as a mixture of polemicism, journalism, and creative fiction. By contrast, *Triumph Without Victory* takes no leaps beyond the evidence yet fully explores possible errors and hidden agendas.

However, this work does have three weaknesses. First, the title was apparently designed to boost sales, for the allied coalition's stated objectives were accomplished, as one sees if one really reads the full text. Second, allied operations do not get much attention; command-and-control issues involving any multinational force must be appraised in analysis of future conflicts. Third, naval contributions are not fully evaluated. That the Navy-Marine fake amphibious-landing threat worked well is all the more reason to assess the total seapower dimension, including logistics, future positioning, force configuration, allied contributions, and offshore command and control, at the least.

The book opens with a brief account of an alleged unsuccessful effort by U.S. forces to eliminate Saddam Hussein with a precision missile system?