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Book Reviews

ARMED FORCES AND SOCIETY

The Sexual Economy of War: Discipline and Desire in the U.S. Army

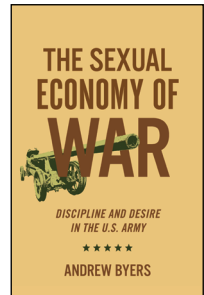
By Andrew Byers

Reviewed by Dr. Jennifer Mittelstadt, professor of history, Rutgers University

Three years ago, I taught a course at the US Army War College that explored the history of the US military's relationship to economics markets. Of all our topics, the lesson that generated the liveliest discussion was the one on sex—how the US military had historically, both formally and informally, regulated the market for prostitution. Our historical readings generated tough questions about the military and its perceived need to regulate sex work to preserve morale, protect individual and unit readiness, and ensure global military effectiveness. I wish we had been able to read Andrew Byers' powerful book to help us answer our questions. *The Sexual Economy of War* offers a broad history of the US Army's attempt to define and regulate sexual activity—from the beginning of the twentieth century to the cusp of World War II. Its case studies and conclusions provide a fruitful perspective on the military's complicated relationship to human sexuality.

Byers's book joins an increasingly robust subfield of histories on gender and sexuality in the US military. Most studies of sexuality and the military explore only one topic: prostitution, the regulation of military family life, the regulation of homosexuality, the treatment of women military personnel by male military personnel, marriage of local women abroad to US military personnel, or sexual relations within the military among personnel. Like no historian before, Byers combines these different aspects of sexuality under one umbrella and examines the US Army's treatment of them as an interconnected whole. His broad vision reveals sexuality as an unavoidable field in which the Army must operate.

Through his wide scope and careful research, Byers presents an argument that will capture the attention of military historians and historians of US foreign relations: the US military in the decades before World War II could not modernize or achieve political acceptability, operational effectiveness, or national and global strategy goals without regulating sex. In order to professionalize, improve effectiveness, and expand overseas, the military controlled same-sex desire among soldiers, supervised officers' wives and daughters, managed sex work, monitored sexual health, and censored servicemen's relationships with local women in the United States and abroad. Byers reminds readers that just as the military operates within a political economy of war—a regulation of who produces what materiel and weapons, who performs



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which services, what these goods and services cost—the military also operates within a sexual economy of war.

From a deep dive into the records of courts-martial, the US Army JAG, Inspector General, World War I training camps, and more, Byers reveals rich and surprising stories of the sexual concerns the military dealt with from the Spanish-American War until the onset of World War II. At Fort Riley, Kansas in the 1920s, the Army court-martialed soldiers who wed surreptitiously to enforce the ban on marriage for enlisted men. In the Philippines, the military subjected brothels to daily health checks and price controls to ensure servicemen's access to sex without compromising their health and readiness.

During World War I, the Defense Department Committee on Training Camp Activities imprisoned 30,000 American women whose potential sexual relationships with doughboys were felt to imperil relations with the local community and the sexual health of soldiers. In Europe, the AEF banned sexual relationships with nonprostitutes, monitored soldiers' sexualized street behavior, and discouraged troop marriages to foreign national women to avoid antagonizing local communities and national alliances. In Hawaii, the military cracked down on hundreds of men for same-sex relations as the military increasingly defined homosexual sex as a threat to morale and discipline.

Byers's survey of five locations and 50 years of military regulations and courts-martial reveals how the military regimes of sex regulation were sharply differentiated based on nationality and locale, class and rank, homosexuality versus heterosexuality, and racial identity. He explores how the military tried to stamp out legal and regulated prostitution in its post communities in the United States but created elaborate legal and regulated structures in the Philippines and worked within existing legal regimes in Europe.

The military treated its African American soldiers more harshly than its White soldiers everywhere, treating Black sexuality as more dangerous to local relations and unit readiness and morale than White sexuality. The military prosecuted all forms of nonheterosexuality brought to its attention, whereas it let some of the same acts pass for heterosexual soldiers. In France and Germany during and after World War I, the military prosecuted officers for nonmarital sex and sexually related conduct unbecoming, but not enlisted personnel. Still, at its permanent posts in Hawaii, the military prosecuted no officers for nearly 40 years—only enlisted personnel. And the military veered wildly between pursuing sexual regulation to preserve health and readiness versus pursuing morality and its perceived impact on military morale. Byers shows readers both resilient patterns and stark anomalies.

These patterns and anomalies might be easier to comprehend if Byers had organized the book thematically rather than geographically. Instead of centering each chapter on a different type of sexual behavior in the Army from 1900–41, Byers presents case studies of individual

posts in Kansas, the Philippines, Louisiana, France, Germany, and Hawaii. As a result, the book feels choppy and repetitive, as some chapters march readers through very short sections on the treatment of each type of sexual regime in each locale.

To account for every issue comprehensively, Byers sometimes misses opportunities for comparison and deeper causal argument. In the end, these weaknesses are overcome by the overall impact of Byers's careful chronicling of the many sexual regulation efforts over time and across the globe. Readers cannot put down the book without acknowledging the sexual economy of war was central to the US military's early-twentieth-century development, expansion, and performance.

Current military leaders should read Byers's history of the US Army's pre-World War II struggles to regulate sex to rethink the challenges facing the US military in recent decades. Today's efforts—and failures—to regulate and shape sexuality, sexual activity, sexual violence, and more have often been treated as novel problems resulting from the incorporation of women and gay, lesbian, and trans servicemembers into the military.

IRREGULAR WARFARE

**The ISIS Reader: Milestone Texts
of the Islamic State Movement**

By Haroro J. Ingram, Craig Whiteside, and Charlie Winter

Reviewed by Robert J. Bunker, instructor at the Safe Communities Institute
at the University of Southern California

The purpose of *The ISIS Reader* is simple yet effective: “to present the Islamic State movement in its own words, through the texts and speeches that shaped its evolution from the late 1990s through the second decade of the twenty-first century,” to provide clarity and nuance on ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham) thought and emotive processes, and to stress the critical importance of analyzing the primary sources produced by violent nonstate political actors (1–2). *The ISIS Reader* represents an ethnographic study—a strategic red teaming deep dive—into the hearts and minds of the ISIS intelligentsia who adhere to Salafi-jihadi norms and values bereft of a separation of church—here mosque—and state. As a result, all political matters are religious in nature, all religious matters are political in nature, and ISIS leaders and common fighters are viewed as holy warriors of God carrying out his will on Earth never as agents of the state as in the West.

Authors Haroro J. Ingram, a senior research fellow at George Washington University’s Program on Extremism, Craig Whiteside, an associate professor at the US Naval War College resident program at the Naval Postgraduate School and a retired Army lieutenant colonel, and Charlie Winter, a senior research fellow at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization at King’s College London, have extensive military and national security careers. Collectively, they have produced numerous professional and academic publications on the Islamic State and possess the requisite research expertise to produce this work. Anas Elallame of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, the translator of a number of the ISIS works in the book originally published in Arabic, should also be singled out for his vital contribution.

The work is divided into acknowledgements, an introduction, four parts (representing the bulk of the book), a conclusion, a glossary of Arabic terms-ISIS usage, and an index. The four parts are subdivided into two chapters on multiple ISIS works from 1994 and 2004; three chapters on multiple ISIS works from 2006, 2007, and 2009; five chapters on multiple ISIS works from 2013 through 2016; and five chapters on multiple ISIS works from 2016, 2018, and 2019. Each of the 19 readings is sourced to a speech, document, video communiqué, or other media with background on whether the reading represents an ISIS translation into English (which is given precedence), a US governmental translation,

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University Press, 2020

288 pages

\$44.95

or a translation specifically undertaken for readers and includes detailed analysis to place it into context and discuss its significance.

The content of the readings ranges from being laden with mystical metaphors and tribal rituals to presenting a practical strategic assessment and action plan to offering Caliphate gender guidance to utilizing strategic messaging to bolster the righteous cause of global jihad. From a strategic military perspective, the most important readings are “Zarqawi’s Strategy” (chapter 2), “Advice to Leaders of the Islamic State” (chapter 4), and “Media Jihad” (chapter 10). Readers will likely skim the more esoteric and religiously skewed material and rely on the analysis section to interpret their meaning.

The concluding chapter highlights “Several recurring trends . . . that are pertinent for scholars wishing to understand the movement and strategic-policy architects seeking to devise strategies to confront it” (303). These trends are strategic opportunism, a deft use of propaganda, and a willingness to openly disclose its future intentions as follows: “. . . the group’s strategic culture of critical reflection and innovation, evidence of which continually emerges and re-emerges throughout its history,” “. . . the central role afforded to propaganda a mechanism by which the Islamic State movement competes against foes who are conventionally superior to it by almost any measure,” and “. . . that [the] Islamic State has a history of telling its supporters exactly what it intends to do” (303, 304, 306).

The telegraphing of the strategic intentions of ISIS—like a boxer providing cues for the next punch he is going to land—is an important trend to isolate related to this entity. As we know, the global insurgent Salafi-jihadi struggle with ISIS, or al-Qaeda for that matter, is far from over.

Faults with the book are minimal. The glossary is missing some Arabic terms from the text but this omission represents a small oversight. The footnotes for the analytics section supporting each reading are solid, however, a “references cited” master listing at the end of the book would have proven beneficial. Further, no tables or diagrams were evident and could have been used to better organize conceptually the numerous readings appearing in the text, their relationship to ISIS evolutionary phases, and their sourcing and strategic significance in the introductory and concluding sections of the book.

The Isis Reader is a unique and well-executed resource on translated Islamic State primary milestone texts and their analysis. It will serve as an extremely useful primary reference for War College and related graduate-level program courses focused on a strategic analysis of the Islamic State as well as a secondary text in courses focused on Salafi-jihadi radicalization or al-Qaeda and Islamic State strategic competition.

Small Arms: Children and Terrorism

By Mia Bloom with John Horgan

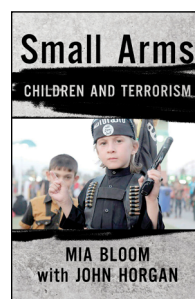
Reviewed by José de Arimatéia da Cruz, professor of international relations and international studies, Department of Political Science and International Studies, Georgia Southern University

Small Arms: Children and Terrorism addresses an important issue in terrorism literature—the use of children to carry out acts of terrorism worldwide. Traditionally, terrorism is a weapon of the weak and a tool used by groups to coerce a population or overthrow a regime either through military means or in a more clandestine fashion. Focusing on children who are recruited, kidnapped, or sold into slavery and turned into terrorists by organizations such as Boko Haram, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the Islamic State, and al-Qaeda authors Mia Bloom and John Horgan, both professors at Georgia State University, note that “children in violent extremist movements, [often] referred to as ‘child terrorists,’ are not born. Rather, they are made, and they learn to *want* to be a part of a violent group, either with or without the knowledge and support of their families” (1). The book further “explores the extent of children’s involvement in terrorist groups and examines their transition from victims to perpetrators, while demonstrating the interchangeability of these roles” (3).

Using an economic approach, Bloom and Horgan agree that “children are not used as substitute goods . . . but as a complementary goods able to accomplish something adults could not” (15). In many attacks against infidel forces, children are used for several reasons, including the fact that children are less likely to arouse suspicion and can act innocently. “The Taliban prized child operatives; one Pakistani fighter explained, ‘children are innocent, so they are the best tools against dark forces’” (15).

The book also examines the social ecologies of children and their socialization processes. It focuses on their “parents, families, peer groups, religious leaders, and other community based institutions, and how structural conditions pressure children to participate in hostilities” (5). Children who are recruited or forced into terrorism, especially the “Ashbal al-Khilafa” (or Cubs of the Caliphate), are groomed and exploited to victimize others (1). Several channels allow children to be recruited into terrorist organizations, either against their will or with the consent and encouragement of their parents or caretakers. It is important to note that “terrorist leaders across a variety of regions and cultures tend to shield their own children from involvement, instead focusing recruitment on young people to whom they are not related” (14).

Another important factor facilitating the recruitment of innocent children to do the dirty job of adults in terrorist organizations is the push and pull factors in many areas where the recruitment takes place. Push factors are “the structural conditions that facilitate involvement



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in terrorism” while pull factors are the “things that make involvement appear personally attractive to the individual” (16). Finally, recruitment does not take place *ex nihilo*. Instead, recruitment is a long process that “requires years of indoctrination by the media, sources of religious authority, schoolteachers, and the larger community” (21).

The connectivity explosion, which is shrinking the world and making sovereignty more porous, has been a force multiplier for terrorist organizations. As Bloom and Horgan note “the deliberate targeting of youth online, especially through social media, has exploded in recent years to near critical proportions, as terrorist groups have become increasingly savvy at using the internet to disseminate propaganda and attract new recruits” (25).

Another important contribution by Bloom and Horgan is the six stages of socialization into a terrorist organization and how the social ecology of terrorism enhances the appeal of child recruitment: “seduction, schooling, selection, subjugation, specialization, and stationing” (140). In the seduction stage, children are enticed to join a terrorist organization. The process, mainly through propaganda and outreach activities, shows potential recruits how their lives will be different once they join the organization.

A similar process takes place in Brazil’s notorious *favelas*, or shantytowns, where poor *favela* youth often join criminal organizations as a way out of poverty and a means for acquiring quick cash. Many terrorist organizations shower children with “toy/candy giveaways” and give speeches and “shows of strength” in addition to shows of executions and “indirect exposure to IS personnel” (140).

It is also important to remember many terrorist organizations, like gangs in the United States and worldwide, provide recruits with a sense of belonging and a purpose in life. Obviously, the outcome of joining is not optimal since most terrorists are usually captured or killed and leaving the organization can be complicated if not impossible. Bloom and Horgan, in their attempt to provide a solution to the very complex issue of children involved in terrorism, propose eight practical steps or best practices that could win hearts and minds in order to reintegrate children who served in terrorist organizations (179).

With the implosion of the Soviet Union and its replacement with Russia and the “end of history,” the United States, the newly lone superpower, must confront a new reality—not only terrorism, but also child terrorism. As Bloom and Horgan state “the ability to win hearts and minds is what has allowed many of the extremists to operate, by providing social services and offering benefits where states have failed to, but also by outlining what they are for and whom they are against” (181).

In conclusion, *Small Arms: Children and Terrorism* should be read by students at the US Army War College. It highlights a topic rapidly growing in prevalence around the world, and future military leaders must learn how to deal with this new pandemic problem.

Niche Wars: Australia in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001–2014

Edited by John Blaxland, Marcus Fielding, and Thea Gellerfy

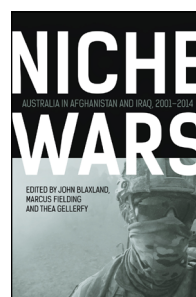
Reviewed by Dr. Russell W. Glenn, director, plans and policy, deputy chief of staff G-2, US Army Training and Doctrine Command

In addition to its availability as a free download, *Niche Wars* is unique for the breadth of its authors' expertise—a blending of strategic, operational, and tactical insights and a frankness rarely seen in such collective efforts. It provides a valuable opportunity to learn from one of the United States' closest and ablest military partners as they confronted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Niche Wars is organized into four sections and three appendices (two of which provide helpful chronologies of Australia's commitments in the two conflicts). The first section, "Policy and Strategy," presents a strategic overview of the country's national leadership decisions to commit forces from the perspectives of a minister of defence, a secretary of the department of defence (generally a long-serving senior bureaucrat), and a former chief of the defence force. This trio of chapters sets the strategic context for what follows, making it clear Australia's participation was a response to what its government perceived was, in the words of Minister of Defence Robert Hill, "not only an attack on our ally the United States but also, and fundamentally, an attack on our shared values" (23). Significantly, Hill addresses the failure of the leaders in Washington to include key partners in critical decisions, observing "I do not think we were even consulted on what turned out to be two of the most unwise decisions following the conflict: to disband the Iraq army and the Ba'ath Party," while admitting "I think we preferred to pass these responsibilities to others" (28).

There is much wisdom to be mined between these lines. US officials—civilian and military alike—too often default to a "not invented here" approach during both preparation and execution; a default that deprives them of what can be invaluable insights from knowledgeable parties who might assist in avoiding unfortunate missteps. Yet, ultimately, the responsibility for outcomes rests with the coalition lead nation. While partners might be hesitant to assert their views, lead partner solicitation of input constitutes a win-win. Resulting views often provide options those immersed in day-to-day planning or management of operations overlook. Solicitation also overtly recognizes the truth that the lead nation and partners alike are in this together and all legitimately have a right to be heard.

Authors of the second section have muddier boots than the authors of the opening chapters. Here special operations forces—air and maritime activities—and conventional ground force challenges in Iraq receive attention along with a rarely heard vantage point of an international officer embedded in a US headquarters. The tensions a tactical commander experiences in a coalition



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377 pages

\$70.00

environment are clear in Anthony Rawlins's chapter recalling his tour of duty as commanding officer of the Overwatch Battle Group West (Two) in southern Iraq. His force served alongside British and other partners to whom he felt a justified obligation to support in extreme cases. Those tensions came to the fore when guidance from the senior Australian officer restricted his force if commitments were thought to threaten casualties amongst Rawlins's soldiers. It was a situation exacerbated by the battle group's discomfort in not having full access to strategic intentions from Canberra—to include those regarding casualty concerns. A situation presenting a conundrum never fully resolved during the unit's time in-country.

Section three delves into specific functional areas spanning operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Military functions such as intelligence, command and control, and civil affairs find complements rarely provided in conflict compilations; the chapter on the military and media perhaps being an exception in that regard. Two authors address undertakings by the Australian Federal Police in Afghanistan during the period 2007–14, making clear the value of civilian law enforcement experts who are able to complement military training for a host nation's other-than-military security forces. It is a task more difficult than it might appear. This reviewer's interviews regarding the British Army's experience in the early years of its coalition commitment to Iraq reflected that while military police can undertake such training, the differences between military and civilian law enforcement are such that this approach is not the preferred solution.

The third section concludes with chapters analyzing Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) operations and gender considerations, the latter being particularly significant when dealing with populations in which female-to-female interactions are essential to successful intelligence collection, gauging local attitudes, and not violating social norms. Here as elsewhere throughout the book, readers will find observations that might stir unpleasant memories while also constituting worthy reminders of lessons too valuable to lose.

Dave Savage's "AusAID Stabilization," for example, rightly observes, "often enough, the provision of aid is the easiest part. The real challenge is ensuring the aid is what is really required, is compatible with the mission, is not supporting the insurgency, and is both viable and sustainable over time. Indeed, aid that is poorly delivered can often be worse than no aid at all" (232). This observation is again in keeping with several interviews this reviewer conducted during visits to Iraq and Afghanistan over the past now nearly 20 years, an observation that calls for providing effective training to personnel who might be tasked with the authority to disperse Commander's Emergency Response Program funds or some equivalent thereof during future contingencies.

The fourth section includes several essays that do not fall into the above three categories with two essays focused exclusively on lessons thought to be of value during contingencies yet to come. The five chapters in the closing section are an apt topper to a worthy collection of essays that will be of interest to readers seeking a better understanding of these ongoing conflicts and to other readers with specific functional area interests. Their value, and that of the book as a whole, extends to conflicts beyond those involving counterinsurgency to touch on coalition leadership, occupation responsibilities, and interactions with local populations and governments—in short, virtually any contingency the future might hold.

Cities at War: Global Insecurity and Urban Resistance

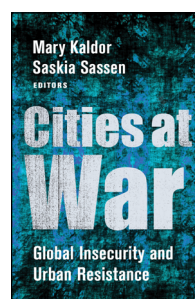
Edited by Mary Kaldor and Saskia Sassen

Reviewed by Dr. John P. Sullivan, senior fellow, Small Wars Journal El Centro

Urban warfare is a constant feature in current and future conflict. Ranging from civil strife and chronic insecurity to terrorist attacks, sectarian violence, and components of broader campaigns, urban war spans both international and noninternational armed conflicts and criminal armed violence. Most texts look at urban warfare challenges from the view of the combatant warfighter; others look at the tactical challenges, including those involved with protecting the populace. This edited collection, however, looks at urban insecurity from the perspective of the civilians inhabiting the cities at war.

Editors Mary Kaldor and Saskia Sassen are influential contemporary urban scholars. Kaldor is known for her theoretical work on networked conflict and new wars, while Sassen is noted for her work on global cities. Both scholars are concerned with global security, violence, and assemblages of power. Here they articulate the concept of urban capabilities through the metaphor of the “yogurt run” as seen in the ability of a farmer in Ghouta, Syria, to negotiate the distribution of dairy products to residents in embattled Damascus (1). Such urban capabilities epitomize community resilience and are key to understanding the dynamics of urban insecurity and conflict.

Kaldor and Sassen use the term new wars to describe a social condition involving conventional and irregular forces ranging from militias, private military companies, terrorists, warlords, and criminal gangs. These new wars are increasingly networked and urban. The global networks of transnational organized crime and the global economy connect seemingly disparate conflicts through a range of spaces and flows. Identity politics and fragmented spaces—including enclaves—are a means of negotiating the resulting global political economy. Informal and criminalized markets are integrated into global circuits and networked assemblages of power. Communities and combatants



New York: Columbia University Press, 2020
264 pages
\$30.00

adapt to these realities creating new threats and importantly new opportunities to forge security and political access.

These new opportunities are a means of coping with, and managing, perpetual war. Two major models for doing so are the “war on terror”—militaries directly engaging nonstate forces—and “liberal peace”—formal stabilization and peacekeeping (11–13). The interaction between these two models is explored in selected case studies on a range of conflict scenarios over time.

Chapter 1 by Ruben Andersson looks at Bamako, Mali, a West African city of almost two million citizens that became a safe haven for peacekeepers and humanitarian aid organizations. Andersson reviews the security mechanisms employed by international actors in context of the geography of intervention and assesses the fragility of the safe zone established for intervention and the social dynamics that can mitigate the perception of barricaded enclaves of remote intervention.

Chapter 2 on Kabul, Afghanistan, by Florian Weigand compares perceptions of security between urban and exurban residents of Kabul Province’s “zones of (in)security” (54). He argues that inclusive security practices can “enhance the level of perceived security and [state] legitimacy” (54). In Kabul both insurgent and criminal violence contributed to perceptions of security. Police are not always successful in meeting community perceptions. At times, state intervention—or misintervention when police are viewed as corrupt or predatory—raises levels of perceived insecurity. The Taliban is seen as a source of insecurity and security. Cooperation and community engagement are key.

In Chapter 3 Ali Ali assesses insecurity in Baghdad, Iraq, in the wake of US intervention and the establishment of green and red security zones. The “green zone” is a walled secure enclave that shelters its inhabitants from lawlessness. Citizens living outside the walls in the “red zone” are subject to violent assaults, terrorists, insurgents, and gangsters (85–87). State capacity is limited and the need for integrated and inclusive security measures based upon active engagement has been established.

Chapter 4, “A Tale of Two Cities” by Mary Martin, examines insecurity in the twin border cities of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. “Narco-insecurity” is explored in light of border securitization, the war on terror, and “neoliberal security”—including privatization and the interaction between globalization and development—as a prelude to reviewing community responses to counter the insecurity (123–28). Additional discussion on the role of criminal cartels, cross-border gangs, and *narcocultura*, as well as allegations of police collusion with cartels, torture, and corruption would have enhanced this chapter.

Sobia Ahmad Kaker surveys enclave making in Karachi, Pakistan, in Chapter 5. Social fragmentation leads to disparate (in) security perceptions and enclaves heighten insecurity and marginalize the urban poor. Chapter 6 by Karen Büscher assesses insecurity in

Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo. Goma became a safe haven for peacekeepers and humanitarian nongovernmental organizations and a refuge for internally displaced persons fleeing active conflict thus driving increased urbanization. Rebels exploited this stability to exert political and economic influence and as a foundation for financial support, recruitment (especially of child soldiers known as *kadogo*), and political action.

Chapter 7 by Johannes Rieken, Efraín García-Sánchez, and Daniel Bear looks at restoring perceptions of security in the aftermath of insurgent and criminalized conflict in Bogotá, Colombia. Community-based approaches show promise. Chapter 8 by Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic explores how (in)security in Novi Pazar, Serbia, is exacerbated by economic decline, the influx of refugees, identity politics, and clientilistic governance.

In their conclusion, Sassen and Kaldor emphasize the need for “tactical urbanism” in response to urban insecurity and future urban wars and adaptive community responses to conflict (227–29). It also requires military, diplomatic, and humanitarian actors responding to urban conflicts recognize the global assemblages of power needed to integrate local features and actors. Engagement must be direct and sustained to build trust. In all cases, as in evolving conflicts worldwide, criminals exploit and participate in conflict. Military leaders at the strategic level, intelligence and civil affairs personnel, military and civilian police, and humanitarian actors will benefit from reviewing this important text to recognize opportunities to enable future “yogurt runs” (231).

MILITARY HISTORY

Brotherhood in Combat: How African Americans Found Equality in Korea and Vietnam

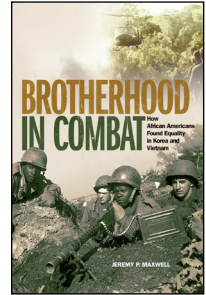
By Jeremy P. Maxwell

Reviewed by Douglas Bristol Jr., associate professor of history, and codirector, Center for the Study of the Gulf South, University of Southern Mississippi

Brotherhood in Combat is the first comparative history of racial integration during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. It views Black military service through the aspirations of Black soldiers, who hoped to prove their right to full citizenship. Jeremy Maxwell argues Black and White GIs in both wars forged bonds of care and trust in combat that created racial equality in frontline units, concluding they “found equality of experience in combat” (18). Maxwell, however, does not claim the experience of fighting beside men of a different skin color ended racial tensions in the military. He also distinguishes carefully between the environment in frontline units and in rear units—where racial tensions proliferated, especially toward the end of the Vietnam War. This distinction is important as the evolving civil rights movement increasingly politicized Black soldiers in Vietnam.

Chapters 5 and 7 substantiate the book’s thesis by analyzing the experience of combat in Korea and Vietnam through the soldiers’ personal accounts. Maxwell is the first scholar to use the oral histories of Black veterans from the Veteran’s History Project of the Library of Congress. Their stories are gripping: “Harold Bryant, a [B]lack combat engineer operating with the 1st Cavalry Division” during Vietnam, remembered “one of his platoon members,” who “was a card-carrying Ku Klux Klan member” (130). The platoon ended up in a firefight, and the Klansman was cornered. Although Bryant and others “laid down a base of fire to cover him,” he froze (130). A Black member of the platoon came to his rescue. The White soldier later said that action changed the way he viewed Black people. Maxwell uses stories like this one to demonstrate how the constant threat of danger on the front lines fostered cohesiveness beyond racial ties.

In contrast, the situation Maxwell describes in the rear units was racially divisive. To explore these racial tensions, he draws on research in military records at the National Archives, contemporary news articles, and oral histories. Enlisted men tended to self-segregate, which when combined with boredom, resentment against discrimination in the military, and widespread alcohol and drug use, lessened constraints on expressing racial animosity. In fact, most racial incidents in Vietnam happened between off-duty soldiers drinking at service clubs, although it should be noted Maxwell also discusses riots in stockades and aboard ships such as the USS *Kitty Hawk*.



Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2018

224 pages

\$29.95

Despite its broad scope, the book is narrowly focused in some ways. Maxwell concentrates on the experience of African Americans in the Army and the Marines, with occasional comparisons to the Navy and the National Guard. He does not cover the Air Force or the Coast Guard, nor does he examine women in the military. He explains their exclusion from combat in the period he studies means their experiences are not directly relevant to an analysis of *Brotherhood in Combat*.

Less justifiably, Maxwell does not examine gender, or to be more specific, masculinity. The recent trend in scholarship on Black soldiers in Korea and Vietnam has been to explore the impact of the desire of Black soldiers to have their masculinity recognized on their perceptions of military service. A study of men bonding in combat would benefit from investigating whether shared identities as men performing the ultimate masculine activity—fighting in war—helped lessen racial differences.

Senior members of the defense community will be interested in this book for three reasons. First, it illustrates through numerous examples the importance of placing constraints on expressions of racial animosity and the consequences of failing to do so. Second, it discusses the experience of Black and White soldiers in terms familiar to the defense community, taking into account the practical realities of the battlefield and rear units. Lastly, it briefly reviews the history of racial integration through the end of the Vietnam War for readers unfamiliar with the subject. The first chapter provides background on the issues facing Black soldiers from the Civil War to World War II. The next three chapters outline the forces driving integration in Korea, and another chapter highlights racial issues in Vietnam. Maxwell's graceful prose, moreover, is clear and free of social science jargon.

In conclusion, *Brotherhood in Combat* sheds new light on race relations in the military during the Korean and Vietnam Wars by exploring the impact of combat on troops. Maxwell concludes the military—despite ongoing discrimination—made greater progress toward racial equality than civilian society through the early 1970s. The book will be enlightening for anyone working for greater diversity in the military and trying to understand the persistence of racism.

Women of Empire: Nineteenth-Century Army Officers' Wives in India and the U.S. West

By Verity McInnis

Reviewed by Jody M. Prescott, colonel, US Army (retired)

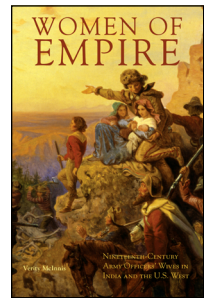
Verity McInnis's monograph on the role of army officers' wives in the 1800s in British India and the American West is a must-read for anyone who wants to better understand the evolution of gender roles among soldiers and spouses in the contemporary US Army. McInnis pulls no punches in addressing gender, ethnicity, race, class, and sexuality in these two different historic military contexts—topics still relevant today as the US military works to maintain a force driven by equal opportunity based on merit. Gender, for example, is increasingly important operationally because of the *Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017* and the Department of Defense strategy that implements it.

With thorough and careful research, McInnis illustrates her points through observations from the writings and journals of these women—and some of their husbands. She preserves their language and nuance, brings their voices to life in breadth and detail, and humanizes certain points of view modern readers will find unenlightened—and likely offensive—that must be considered for there to be a rich and meaningful discussion. Most importantly, the accounts make the book interesting to read.

McInnis identifies two important similarities between these two groups of women, bringing them together in her assessment of their impacts on the administration of both armies and the very different areas those armies helped administer. First, both groups of women largely bought into national ideologies based on notions of white racial and cultural superiority that legitimized the armies' roles in *civilizing* these conquered non-European territories. Significantly, as McInnis points out, these roles were fostered and implemented in large part by the officer products of the military academies of each country.

Second, these women, operating within a masculine military value system that emphasized selfless service and military professionalism on the part of gentlemen officers, did not merely reflect the prejudices of their times. Instead, in their complementary role, the women were active agents who reinforced these prejudices as a means of maintaining social control over indigenous people and even their own civilian nationals. This second point is significant when objectively assessing the women's impact on their military communities and in the societies these armies helped govern.

McInnis shows the officers' wives in these two nineteenth-century armies enjoyed a degree of responsibility and respect their civilian counterparts did not. It was common for officers' wives to derive authority and status from their husbands' ranks and create a mirrored



Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017

304 pages

\$34.95

rank hierarchy within their gender. Within the armies, and particularly in garrison settings, these women formed effective influence and communication networks that flowed around the military rank structure. For example, they often played an essential role in determining whether other women would make suitable brides for young officers (61–62).

External to the armies, McInnis shows how officers' wives often found themselves serving as ambassadors of their particular national values—from how they comported themselves in ceremonies and social settings to how they dressed and decorated their homes to how they interacted on a daily basis with their working-class servants. These roles all offered opportunities for agency when played well, but they were not without cost. McInnis notes that “Working within the military system, however, required the women to live highly regulated lives and to observe codes of conduct appropriate to their partners' position in the imperial hierarchy” (9). In addition, these women often keenly noted a decrease in their social stature and scope of responsibilities when their husbands took positions outside military garrisons or retired from active duty and returned to civilian life.

McInnis does not oversell her argument on the exercise of female authority in these two armies. She recognizes the women's accounts reflect their biases regarding their husbands' roles as officers and gentlemen. She also acknowledges these accounts are highly individualized and cannot fully cover the depth of experience of all the women who were married to officers serving in India or the American West. McInnis also appreciates that the voices of those whom these women considered their social or racial inferiors are generally not represented in their own words, such as the perspectives of enlisted men's wives or those of their African American, Native American, Mexican, or Asian servants.

The role of Army officers' spouses today is quite different than it was in the 1800s, or even in the 1980s, when officers' evaluation reports might include information about their spouses' work with unit functions or charitable causes. Other things have not changed, such as the challenges of moving families every couple of years to new duty stations. Today this challenge also presents professional disadvantages for spouses as they try to find new jobs, or in the case of dual-career military couples, equally career-enhancing positions. The military lifestyle is not easy. To make it work for their families, officers' spouses still need a system of shared positive military values to which they can subscribe.

Women of Empire is a valuable contribution to understanding the history of others who lived and managed the military life in their times. It provides a well-researched and well-documented launching pad for honest discussions today about the role of military spouses, both officer and enlisted, as the US Army evolves to reflect the diversity of the American people.

1774: The Long Year of Revolution

by Mary Beth Norton

Reviewed by Colonel Gerald J. Krieger, US Army, associate dean, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University

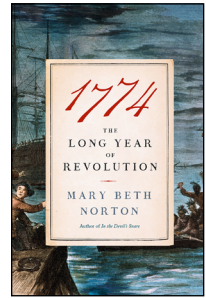
Mary Beth Norton, a historian who specializes in the history of the early American republic, is a history professor at Cornell University and the former president of the American Historical Association. Her latest book, *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*, examines the 16 crucial months between the Boston Tea Party (December 16, 1773) and the Battles of Lexington and Concord (April 19, 1775) and captures the voices of the colonists who debated and fumbled along the path to independence before fighting the formidable British Empire—the most powerful country at the time.

Norton shows the varied opinions among the colonists, from their concerns over the authority of England to the justness of British policy to the condemnation of London's attempts to levy taxes upon the colonies. Citing pamphlets, newspapers, and personal correspondence from the period, she skillfully weaves this material into her narratives, using the header "Advices from London" to highlight source materials. She also claims most historians gloss over the details of this pivotal window in American history and miss the variance of opinions and facts surrounding the events.

The book is divided into nine chapters, beginning with "The Cursed Tea" and the early colonial obsession for the dark beverage. Norton shows the divided public opinion on how to best deal with the tax on tea and how tea was issued as payment, purchased, and consumed—though many colonists abstained from using the tea. In each chapter of the book, Norton highlights the divided public perceptions in the colonies, leading up to the final chapter, "All Our Liberties at Stake," prompting the inception of the conflict that became the American Revolution.

Norton details how London taxed colonists in North America with the Molasses Act of 1733, along with a series of subsequent taxes, including the Cider Tax of 1763 and the Sugar Act of 1764. These taxes, however, were loosely enforced and circumvented by smugglers. She believes the issue of taxes in the colonies was most closely associated with tea.

As late as the early 1770s, the colonists viewed themselves as loyal British subjects of King George III. Even years later, many Americans maintained that view—although the colonists were adamant, the British Parliament did not have the authority to tax them. Surprisingly, some raucous New Englanders were eager to purchase and consume the tea, much to the chagrin of the activist group Sons of Liberty. This issue served as a foundation for the larger problem and debate about



New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020

528 pages

\$32.50

the authority of the British Parliament to tax the colonies, along with the mixed public reaction around the colonies.

The North American colonies officially drank over 265,000 pounds of tea in 1771; they also consumed another 575,000 pounds of smuggled tea. Most narratives only cover the seven ships loaded with East India Company tea bound for the colonies. The Boston Tea Party dictates that many authors primarily focus on the three ships (the *Dartmouth*, the *Elanor*, and the *Beaver*) that arrived in Boston laden with over 100 chests of British East India Company tea that would end up in Boston Harbor. Norton reveals there is much more to the story.

Through a rigorous review of source documents, Norton splendidly traces the cargo of the four other ships, including the *William*, the seventh ship that sank off the coast of Cape Cod in the middle of December. She pieces together the details of the shipwreck and the disposal of the tea down to the individual chest. She also provides vignettes of lesser-known figures, like Jonathan Clarke and John Greenough from Provincetown, Massachusetts, who oversaw the distribution of the salvaged tea—much to the frustration of Samuel Adams who wanted all the tea destroyed. Ultimately, the men used the *Eunice*, a Salem fishing schooner, to move the 54 chests and one barrel of tea to Castle William, located on an island in Boston Harbor.

Norton's conclusion points out that although Americans did not draft a Declaration of Independence when the first shots rang out at Lexington and Concord, colonial leaders had thought and functioned independently since the founding of the colonies. She closes with the poem "The Glorious 74," which extols 1774 as the crucial period leading up to American independence.

Students of military history and the American Revolution will appreciate *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*. Norton's in-depth research and varied source documents serve as a lens into the complex nature and multiple emotions of independent-thinking colonists who did not fully comprehend the implications and consequences of their actions.

REGIONAL STUDIES

The Battle for Pakistan: The Bitter US Friendship and a Tough Neighbourhood

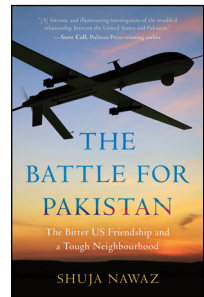
By Shuja Nawaz

Reviewed by James P. Farwell, associate fellow, Centre for Strategic Communication, Department of War Studies, Kings College, University of London, and non-resident senior fellow, Middle East Institute, Washington, DC

A distinguished fellow at the South Asia Center at the Atlantic Council, Shuja Nawaz earned high praise for *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, Its Army, and the Wars Within* (Oxford University Press, 2009), in which he provided unique insights into the complex dynamics of Pakistan's army. His new book, *The Battle for Pakistan*, validates those accolades and reviews many topics familiar to readers interested in Pakistan: the assassination of Benazir Bhutto in 2007 and its repercussions; the challenges Pakistan faced, from floods to internal security confronting her husband Asif Zardari, who took control of the People's Party upon her death and who refrained from investigating the assassination; the political maneuvers by former presidents Pervez Musharraf and Nawaz Sharif as they jockeyed for power; the byzantine relations between successive chiefs of army staff and their civilian counterparts; the fraught tensions with India; and throughout, the often contradictory and complicated relationship that exists between the United States and Pakistan.

While distinguished authors in multiple books have covered these topics well, *The Battle for Pakistan* stands apart. First, Nawaz knows Pakistan inside and out. He understands its byzantine politics—long dominated by the Bhutto and Nawaz families—in which confecting and unraveling conspiracy theories is as popular a preoccupation in Pakistan as NFL football is in the United States. Second, his work stems from a detailed exploration of these events through a wealth of first-hand accounts in the United States and Pakistan. Third, he possesses an unparalleled knowledge of Pakistan's military. And finally, he applies wisdom and insights to these events as only an expert with his knowledge and expertise can do.

Nawaz's dissection of how Pakistan perceives its relationship with the United States and the war in Afghanistan packs a punch. Too many American leaders, he argues, view Pakistan as a nation whose alliance can be purchased through aid leveraged to influence Pakistani security policy. American naivete, he notes, is well illustrated by the use of "Af-Pak" to identify the conflicts in Afghanistan and Pakistan (57). Richard Holbrooke, who considered himself the house expert on the region—and on probably most topics that drew his interest—was taken aback when the astute Bruce Riedel explained the tendency of some Americans to call Pakistanis "Pakis" was like using the N-word



London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020

428 pages

\$89.00

in America (67). It is a small item, but readers can draw broader conclusions from these insights about misfires in forging partnerships and alliances.

Nawaz is critical of the United States' failure to forge a coherent strategy for winning in Afghanistan, a reality Pakistan recognized and factored strongly into its posture in dealing with Americans. The United States prosecuted the war on a short-term basis, driven by domestic politics and the inability to persuade Pakistan to seal the border or adequately equip the Pakistan army to fight against the Taliban.

Nor, as Pakistani military commanders—especially Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani—repeatedly complained, did the United States credit Pakistan with sustaining the huge losses its military suffered in fighting Islamic extremists. The failure created bitterness and mistrust, even with the intellectual Kayani, whom Nawaz views as pro-Western in his outlook. Nawaz argues the United States was blind in expecting Kayani, for any reason, would put US interests ahead of Pakistan's welfare. Kayani understood the conflict would be drawn out. Like many countries in the region and members of Pakistan's political and military establishment, he doubted the United States would stick it out for the long-term.

Kayani was right, although his insight overlooks the broader strategic question of how deeply and for how long a strong US presence in Afghanistan made sense. In the meantime, nerves were rubbed raw by the takedown of Osama bin Laden, the Raymond Allen Davis affair in which an American—whom the Pakistanis branded a CIA agent—killed two Pakistanis, and miscommunications that led in November 2011 to the deaths of two dozen Pakistani soldiers at the hands of American forces.

Nawaz clarifies the strategic importance of this nuclear-armed nation of over 220 million citizens to stability in Southwest Asia and the tremendous work required to strengthen and stabilize relations between the United States and Pakistan. Improved relations are important even as Pakistan looks to strengthen its ties with China, which has dealt with Pakistan by providing aid more adroitly.

In a book laden with rich analysis of pivotal events, the final chapter with recommendations for the future bears close reading. There is not space here to recount all of Nawaz's suggestions, but the bottom line is that Pakistan must streamline its government, strengthen transparency and integrity, and bring civilian and military power into equal balance. While Pakistan's army has made strides in modernization to address the current threat environment, the Pakistan government needs to do more diplomatically, especially in persuading India to reduce the number of its forces facing Pakistan to stabilize relations more permanently and avoid a catastrophic nuclear war. Ultimately, Nawaz writes, "Pakistan's future lies in emphasizing and building a strong economy and creating opportunity."

Battle for Pakistan is required reading for students of Pakistan and professionals who deal with this byzantine nation of immensely talented but—to this observer—strangely insecure inhabitants. The nation’s stability is essential not only for Pakistan but for the region and the rest of the world.

China’s Western Horizon: Beijing and the New Geopolitics of Eurasia

By Daniel S. Markey

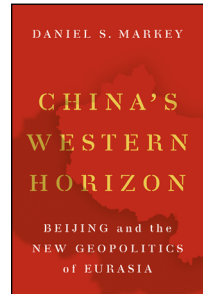
Reviewed by Dr. Andrew Scobell, RAND Corporation

During the past two decades, great-power rivalry for the United States meant intensifying competition with China. This rivalry for many American military professionals focused on the military realm, especially in the Western Pacific maritime domain. Yet, in recent years there has been greater awareness that the US-China rivalry entails competition in multiple realms. As the *2017 National Security Strategy* observed, bilateral rivalry with China also includes economic and political competition. This reality underscores China’s much-hyped “Belt and Road Initiative”—an ambitious and extensive effort to expand its economic presence and enhance its political influence worldwide.

China’s Western Horizon: Beijing and the New Geopolitics of Eurasia makes important contributions to our understanding of the processes and outcomes of China’s unprecedented and growing involvement in countries far beyond its western borders. This timely volume examines Chinese activities in three regions, focusing on a single country of particular importance to each region (Kazakhstan in Central Asia, Pakistan in South Asia, and Iran in the Middle East), and explores in detail the interactions between these countries and China.

The dominant Belt and Road Initiative narrative in the United States portrays China as the malevolent economic colossus consumed with waging “debt-trap diplomacy,” duping defenseless and gullible governments worldwide into signing predatory loan agreements to finance desperately needed infrastructure projects in these developing states. In a variant of this narrative, Beijing bribes local elites to mortgage their country’s future. The logic undergirding this narrative is that China fully intends for these governments to default on the massive debts, ensuring Beijing will own, or at least control, these countries.

China’s Western Horizon is a valuable corrective to this one-sided narrative. Countries such as Iran, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan are far from helpless or gullible and often hold significant sway over Chinese decisions and actions. Markey recounts the origins of the Gwadar port project in Pakistan. Contrary to conventional wisdom in the United States, China neither initiated the project nor propelled it forward. Almost 20 years ago, then Pakistani President Musharraf aggressively lobbied



New York: Oxford University Press, 2020
336 pages
\$29.95

Beijing to invest in Gwadar, and China reluctantly acceded. According to Markey, “Gwadar may eventually serve a variety of Chinese goals, but the port was initially the product of a Pakistani effort launched for Pakistani reasons” (ix).

Markey effectively captures the domestic dynamics in Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and Iran. He is especially adept at analyzing Pakistan’s internal workings and illuminating how the array of governmental and societal actors shape the outcomes of negotiations between Beijing and Islamabad. He also deftly maps the geopolitical landscape in the three regions showing local competitors within each region as well as external great-power rivals. With his extensive knowledge of South Asian dynamics, Markey also provides readers invaluable insights into three key dyads—China-Pakistan, China-India, and Pakistan-India. He concludes that Beijing’s growing influence and involvement in the subcontinent could likely produce the “worst of all possible worlds” by generating greater instability in an already tumultuous region (79).

Moreover, Markey’s nuanced discussion of the soft competition between Beijing and Moscow is fascinating and on point. While China-Russia ties may be the best they have been in many years, underlying tensions persist, and Central Asia lurks as the issue most likely to bring these tensions to the surface.

The final chapter outlines implications for the United States and offers policy recommendations. Markey’s assessment is ominous. South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East are all “primed for greater Chinese involvement, less reform, and more geopolitical competition” (156). Moreover, “Beijing shows little appetite for assuming responsibility for the many existing conflicts within and among Eurasian states” (164). This assessment means Chinese actions are unlikely to contribute to stability in many countries and may prove destabilizing for others.

Whether other great powers will be willing to assume responsibility for these regions is not clear. In the coming years, American military professionals should anticipate heated debates inside and outside the Beltway regarding the appropriate role and military posture for the United States on the Eurasian landmass. Markey’s primary advice for US policymakers is worth restating: acquiring “a clear grasp of local histories, interests and relationships will be essential to advance America’s specific . . . interests in Eurasia” (189).

China’s Western Horizon is a tour d’horizon and should be required reading for anyone grappling with the enormity of America’s China challenge—whether they sit in Carlisle Barracks, Camp Smith, MacDill Air Force Base, the Pentagon, or elsewhere.

Moscow Rules: What Drives Russia to Confront the West

By Keir Giles

Reviewed by Captain Jake Shelton, US Army Special Forces

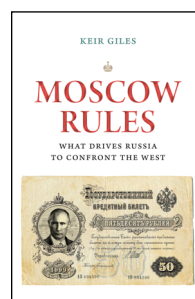
The US relationship with major nuclear power Russia is at its worst point since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In *Moscow Rules*, Keir Giles offers a unique perspective through his assessment of the sources of confrontation and shows how Westerners could better understand Russia and prevent conflict. Widely lauded in academic and diplomatic circles, the book also has applications for military leaders focused on countering Russian aggression and should be added to their reading lists.

Moscow Rules diverges from the popular claim that tension with Russia is based on Putin's incursions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria or election meddling as seen recently in *The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin* (Vintage Books, 2016) by Steven Lee Meyers and *Putin's World: Russia against the West and with the Rest* (Hachette Book Group, 2019) by Angela Stent. Instead, Giles suggests "The West" mistakenly views Russia as "Western" and incorrectly applies its standards as it would for other European nations. Through citations and extracts from Russian leaders and experts, he describes how Russia is not Western and operates by a different set of rules. While the book's sections cover topics from Mongol occupation to recent protests, two rules summarize the content military leaders can use to help craft their campaign plans. First, Russia views security as a finite resource, and second, Russia is culturally nondemocratic.

For the first rule, to Russia security is finite and "History Matters" (21, 117). This history long precedes the classically cited German invasions of the twentieth century. For thousands of years, Russia fell victim to its vast undefendable geography through invasions from every direction. *Giles* claims this historical context manifests itself today through Russia's continued effort to weaken and destabilize geographic neighbors and create a security buffer zone (13).

Military leaders who understand this rule can improve upon recent strategic failures. Russia views a destabilized Ukraine and Georgia unable to join NATO as directly beneficial to their security. While countering actions on the border of any country are difficult, the first rule could have anticipated Russian involvement in Syria and Crimea to maintain the strategically vital deepwater ports at Latakia on the Mediterranean Sea and Sevastopol on the Black Sea.

For the second rule, Giles argues the historical oppression of the Russian people has ingrained state servitude to the near "genetic level" and highlights public indifference to rigged elections, whitewashed history, state-sponsored assassinations, and Moscow-backed party line propaganda to support this assertion (64). An appreciation of this



Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press/London: Chatham House, 2019

256 pages

\$34.45

cultural difference can aid military leaders in predicting Russia's actions. In retrospect, Moscow seems far less rogue for annexing Crimea in 2014 when viewed from their perspective. The Kremlin simply combined ambition with its indifference to public accountability and annexed what they had long claimed was already Russia.

Additionally, this nondemocratic culture allows Russians to accept the "ends justify the means," such as barrel bombing Syrian cities, so leaders should not assume Moscow would adhere to the Law of Armed Conflict (91). Finally, the state oppression of the population has resulted in an inherent distrust of "outsiders," which could diminish the effectiveness of unconventional warfare, psychological operations, and civil affairs in campaign plans (111).

The book's only flaw is the author's bias against President Trump. While Giles cites facts, quotes, and excerpts throughout Russian history, he only criticizes the Trump administration. A more robust argument would include the influence of previous administrations on Russian relations. This criticism does not significantly detract from the validity of the book's arguments, however, as Giles identifies his bias and acknowledges Russia is only one country in the larger geopolitical world.

Moscow Rules can help Western leaders gain initiative over Russia in two ways. First, the sequential nature of Russia's foreign incursions indicates direct involvement by leadership at the highest levels. By creating "competent societies and militaries" across Russia's border, the West can overwhelm Moscow's ability to micromanage (169).

Second, Putin understands excessive defense spending caused the downfall of the czars and the USSR (156). Moscow, therefore, will increasingly pursue its interests through proxies and electronic means further from its periphery. By imposing costs on Russia's indirect approach, the West can counter future incursions. Combining these two approaches will force Russia into a dialogue, as Giles hopes, while avoiding direct conflict by simply understanding "Moscow's rules."

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

The Return of Great Power Rivalry: Democracy versus Autocracy from the Ancient World to the U.S. and China

By Matthew Kroenig

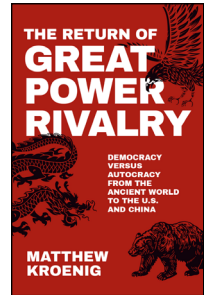
Reviewed by Colonel Gerald J. Krieger, US Army, associate dean, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University

Matthew Kroenig argues the United States will prevail in the great-power rivalry with China because democratic governments are superior to all other political systems. In his newest book, *The Return of Great Power Rivalry*, Kroenig surveys seven historical examples that highlight democratic superiority over autocratic governments. The book is well researched, though written primarily for laymen as it avoids jargon and terms familiar to international relations theorists. Kroenig, however, does highlight key works by Joseph Nye, Paul Kennedy, and James Robinson, to name a few.

Kroenig's thesis is that "democratic countries are better able to amass power, wealth, and influence on the world stage than their autocratic competitors," though many scholars might suggest China has the potential to provide a unique system that surpasses democracies (4). Many scholars point out the conclusion is not preordained, and the outcome is uncertain, contrary to Kroenig's claim. This topic is generating volumes of books, with some critics suggesting China's one-party system will more closely resemble Singapore's hybrid system that blends democratic characteristics with rule by an elite group. This timely book provides more data to fuel continued conversations on the topic.

The book is organized into four parts. The first part highlights potential benefits of each system, and the three remaining parts concentrate on democratic advantages presented from historical, contemporary, and future perspectives. The term democracy is deceptive, and Kroenig reviews one key distinction cited by political scientists "in which political officeholders are selected through competitive, popular elections" (18). The distinction, however, is more nuanced, and he should have added the qualification that the popular vote for key leadership positions in the government, given the emergence of hybrid forms of government.

A point of clarification for the layman is the fact that if one were to ask average Chinese citizens on the street about democracy, they would say China is democratic, while it will likely grow more democratic in the future. The confusion is based on a unique understanding of democracy in China. Economic progress is the crux of the ideological divide between occidental and orientalist conceptions of statecraft, and one underscored by the influence of Confucian influence via the



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304 pages

\$29.95

notion of moral economy. In other words, most Chinese citizens view the social contract with the government and the people as one that is predicated on material support and opportunities provided by the state rather than individual freedom.

Kroenig's detailed study of key transformations in the European world will inform students of history while highlighting the benefits of democracies in European history. His survey of ancient Greek political theory is useful, though Sparta ultimately won the Peloponnesian War and the dual monarchy was not democratic and Athens (a democracy) was defeated. Sparta's oligarchy, however, did not last long and fell to Alexander the Great. Kroenig's claims stretch the truth at times, such as when he writes, "[D]emocratic states produce better soldiers," and "Democracies also enjoy a military advantage due to their innovation edge," though most of Europe between 1939 and 1942 might have disagreed when the Wehrmacht rolled through Europe with their innovated combined arms blitzkrieg and panzer divisions (30).

If China's economy is the largest in the world, other metrics are meaningful when contemplating international influence. Soft power is one area where America continues to rank number one for several reasons including premier secondary learning institutions that are among the best in the world and an entrepreneurial spirit that is closely affiliated with democratic forms of government.

The literature surrounding the rise of China and the decline of the United States continues to be popularized by academics like Andrew Bacevich and countless others. In 2008 Fareed Zakaria warned we were entering a post-American world where the United States must share the world stage with emerging actors like China, India, and Russia. Since then, geopolitical specialists have highlighted China's growing economy and cited statistics from the World Bank to support their argument that China's authoritarian one-party system is more efficient than American democracy.

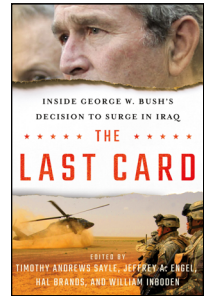
To cite an example, scholars point to World Bank reports that highlight the growth in China's share of the world's gross domestic product—in purchasing power parity terms—that skyrocketed from 4.5 percent in 1990 to 18.6 percent in 2018, while noting America's share dropped to 15 percent. Since 2011 Chinese patent applications have surpassed America's patent applications and have been climbing higher ever since (World Bank, <https://www.worldbank.org/>).

Senior-level leaders will find *The Return of Great Power Rivalry* helpful as a great summary of democratic governments from ancient Greece to the present, though its real value is in providing case studies for war theorists. Kroenig does not present a convincing argument that American democracy will prevail. He admits early in the book that "Perhaps China will be the sole exception, but every other state-planned economy in history has hit a wall at some point" (22). While this statement is true, the jury is still out.

The Last Card: Inside George W. Bush's Decision to Surge in Iraq

Edited by Timothy Andrews Sayle, Jeffrey A. Engel, Hal Brands, and William Inboden

Reviewed by Steven Metz, professor of national security and strategy, US Army War College, and nonresident fellow, Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft



Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019

416 pages

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The 2003 invasion of Iraq and the long stabilization operation that followed were seminal events in the evolution of American strategy. These events naturally spawned a growing genre of analytical literature—which, in broad terms, developed in three waves. Initial quick looks, most written by journalists, were published soon after the invasion and in the early stages of the insurgency. The second wave consisted of more detailed and rigorous academic assessments and participant memoirs on tactical and strategic operations. The third wave has only just begun and reflects newly available information and a greater degree of frankness made possible by the increasing distance from the conflict.

An initial contribution to the third wave was *The US Army in the Iraq War* (Strategic Studies Institute, 2019), a two-volume study based on thousands of declassified documents and dozens of new interviews with key participants and leaders. *The Last Card: Inside George W. Bush's Decision to Surge in Iraq* is another important part of the third wave, but it looks at a very different aspect of America's involvement in Iraq—President George W. Bush's decision in late 2006 to shift from a strategy based on training Iraqi security forces and disengaging as quickly as possible to the “surge.” This decision increased the number of US military forces in Iraq and committed them to working directly with Iraqi security forces. The surge was based on recognition that the conflict had changed from an insurgency primarily targeting US forces to a sectarian civil war; political progress—the ultimate determinant of success or failure in Iraq—was impossible without improved population security.

While President Bush gradually accepted the idea that the United States needed a new strategy over the course of 2006, he knew a major strategic shift would require adroit management and salesmanship. The Department of Defense and many senior military leaders still believed the old “train-and-leave” strategy was working, and the State Department remained skeptical of sustainable political reconciliation in Iraq. Additionally, the American public and Congress were increasingly frustrated by the cost of the operation. This book is a detailed study of how President Bush decided on the surge and how he brought the public and the rest of the government on board.

There have been other studies of the surge but none structured like *The Last Card*. The first half summarizes 28 interviews—completed in 2015 and 2016—with key participants in the surge decision. Nearly

every major player, except former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and US Army General George Casey, was interviewed, including President Bush. The second half of the book provides analytical essays by an all-star cast of security experts.

While the book's contributors vary on their acceptance of the idea that the surge snatched victory from the jaws of defeat for the United States, and was a textbook case of how to undertake a major strategic shift, most contributors agree the shift was an impressive performance by Bush. He united all the senior policymakers except Rumsfeld (who left government service shortly before the formal surge decision), all elements of the government, and much of the public and Congress behind this shift. Political scientist Robert Jervis outlines in his chapter that the process demonstrated Bush's "extraordinary skill . . . not in his making the decision, but in his ability to craft what he was doing so that it would minimize the opposition and allow him to proceed with a united government" (273).

While there are no stunning new revelations in the book, it does pull together much of what was already known about the surge decision and fills in additional details, however, it suffers from two problems. First, the editors rely on oral histories rather than a blend of oral histories and documents like the Army's Iraq study. Interviews are valuable but they are susceptible to selective memory by those being interviewed. Second, the editors have allowed extensive redundancy in the analytical chapters. All the chapters are valuable stand-alone studies of the surge, each with a different perspective or focus, but since the chapters rely on the same oral histories, identical narratives—and even quotations—show up many times.

Given the unusual structure of the book and the redundancy of information, few readers other than researchers performing in-depth analysis of the surge will find it useful to read cover to cover. That said, *The Last Card* is an excellent resource for scholars. It provides important and authoritative insights into one of the seminal events in American history.

STRATEGY

Adaptation under Fire: How Militaries Change in Wartime

By David Barno and Nora Bensahel

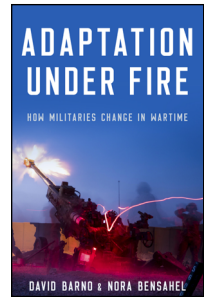
Reviewed by Major Zachary Griffiths, operations officer, 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne)

In fall 2020 the US Army terminated the Asymmetric Warfare Group and the Rapid Equipping Force. Both organizations adapted the Army to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but no longer seemed necessary in the Army's turn toward "great power competition" (1). Was this a mistake? In *Adaptation under Fire*, authors David Barno and Nora Bensahel explore whether the US military is adaptable enough to prevail in the wars of the twenty-first century.

Barno and Bensahel present a credible case that American military reform should include building a more adaptable force in preparation for twenty-first-century conflicts—and they bring tremendous credibility to the project. Barno commanded US forces in Afghanistan, while Bensahel achieved tremendous acclaim for her defense policy expertise.

Employing a comparative case methodology to validate their recommendations for both practitioners and policymakers, Barno and Bensahel analyze operational level wartime adaptation. Borrowing from Amy Zegart's work on military and intelligence adaptation, they define adaptability as "a dynamic process that must keep up with the rate of change" during war with two parts (9). First, adaptations must have sufficient magnitude to change what an organization does or how it does it. Second, the change must improve the fit between an organization and the environment. Big changes that fail are not adaptation. Small changes that work locally but fail to scale are not adaptation. Wartime operational level adaptation drives the entire project.

The book is divided into three parts, with the first part being the strongest. In the first part, Barno and Bensahel define their terms and identify the three components for their analytic framework: doctrine, technology, and leadership. They demonstrate the validity of their framework by comparing cases of successful and unsuccessful twentieth-century wartime adaptation. In the second part, they evaluate American adaptability in Afghanistan and Iraq through their framework. Finally, in the third part, they explore emerging trends and argue that the "adaptation gap"—the difference between the anticipated war and the war that will actually be fought—will continue to grow. They conclude with recommendations for improving doctrinal, technological, and leadership adaptation in the US military.



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Structure is one strength of *Adaptation under Fire*. From the outset, the book proceeds logically, defining the argument, validating each component of the framework in existing literature, exploring each component in the modern context, and then concluding. The early chapters defining the doctrinal, technological, and leadership elements of adaptability do this especially well. They start with a bulleted list of factors associated with adaptability and a two-by-two matrix of the cases to be explored. For example, the chapter on doctrine lists flexibility, assessment, inclusive development, and rapid dissemination of changes as crucial to innovation before exploring the cases. The matrix then buckets the four cases by whether they are or are not examples of adaptable doctrine and accurate doctrine. Because of the time the authors invested in laying out the chapter's argument, readers can rapidly advance through the material.

Thorough research is another strength of the book. The authors draw upon a rich array of sources, including history, political science, peer-reviewed academic articles, military journals, military doctrine, and interviews. Nearly 115 of the book's 430 pages are reserved for notes and the bibliography. The authors, however, sometimes lean heavily on one source for a particular case. For example, Steven Zaloga's *Armored Thunderbolt* accounts for seven of 10 citations in that chapter's supplemental tank armor case. Notwithstanding the occasional overuse of a single source, the bibliography is a valuable resource for scholars and practitioners.

Despite the book's strong structure and detailed research, the case selection deserves further scrutiny. As Barno and Bensahel never explicitly define their case selection criteria, they open themselves to criticism of either drawing on familiar cases or not fully considering the full range of possible cases. Despite the lack of criteria, some comparisons make intuitive sense. For example, the chapter defining technological adaptation compares four cases of tank innovation: the World War II "Rhino tank" plow, World War II supplemental tank armor, World War I French tank development, and World War II American tank development. With all cases focused on the same type of technological adaptation in roughly the same time period and theater, readers can assume omitted variables matter less.

The chapter defining leadership adaptability, however, does this less well. Can we directly compare the leadership of a captain in Grenada to a battalion commander in Vietnam, and then to theater-level commanders in Vietnam in the 1960s and India during World War II? The varying levels of command, the types of units (elite volunteer troops versus draftees), the theater of conflict, political conditions, and the time period wildly differ. While leadership adaptation may have been the critical variable explaining success, the large number of other factors at play challenge the conclusion that adaptive leaders must build a "climate of openness, trust, and candor" (97). Justification of case selection would better persuade readers of the argument and help them understand competing factors.

In all, *Adaptation under Fire* effectively argues for adaptability's importance in future conflicts. Barno and Bensahel identify and test doctrine, technology, and leadership as key components of adaptation analysis before evaluating the American military's recent performance and offering recommendations. Readers interested in understanding how the American military adapted (or failed to adapt) during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq must read this book. Likewise, scholars of military adaptability may lean on the common sense doctrine, technology, leadership framework, detailed notes, and bibliography. Finally, both uniformed and civilian policymakers may find the recommendations of Barno and Bensahel helpful as the services reorient away from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq toward great-power competition.

Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World

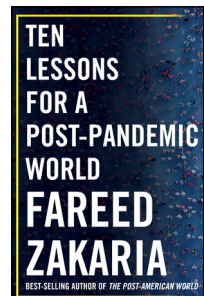
By Fareed Zakaria

Reviewed by Colonel Gerald J. Krieger, US Army, associate dean, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University

Fareed Zakaria is a prolific author, political analyst, host of CNN's *Fareed Zakaria GPS*, and a contributor for the *Washington Post*. His latest book, *Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World*, uses the COVID-19 pandemic as a springboard to reflect on broader globalization challenges and the evolving nature of human interaction in the world. The book's title is deceptive. Although the book is about COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, it focuses more on globalization and world politics than diseases.

The book's main thesis is that American exceptionalism has fostered complacency and inefficiencies that manifested during the COVID-19 outbreak. Zakaria argues eloquently that the US government is in vital need of an overhaul, though he does not outline specific policy recommendations or revisions that would be useful for senior leaders in the defense community. Overall, he provides a solid argument that would have benefited from more detailed analysis and potential solutions. Nevertheless, all senior leaders should read the book for a superb summary of the impact of globalization and the challenges framed by a more connected society. Readers will also gain a better understanding of epidemics that military practitioners will face in the future.

Zakaria organizes the book into 10 "lessons," reviewing the influence of effective governance, why we should listen to experts, the impact of the digital life, the social nature of people, rising inequality, and the transformation of international politics, to cite just a few. He begins with an overview of global epidemics—from the mysterious plague described by Thucydides to the infamous bubonic plague that wiped out half of Europe. Globalization transformed the world,



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virtually eliminating national borders, integrating trade, connecting remote regions of the world to megacities, and underscoring the nature of modern intermeshed society.

One conclusion Zakaria draws (lesson 6) is the social nature of human beings, which became a source of frustration for many Americans locked in their homes in some parts of the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, who craved human contact and interaction. They learned Zoom calls are a pale substitute for social contact. Solving this crucial human need must be factored into future productivity and innovative technologies moving forward.

The economic lessons of globalization come with a dire warning. Zakaria writes, “We have created a world that is always in overdrive . . . All of these strains and imbalances produce dangers—some that can be foreseen, and others that cannot” (15–16). Technologist Jared Cohen’s lesson that only two of the three characteristics of open, fast, and stable systems are viable without a system spinning out of control provides insight into modern trade networks (14–15). It is illustrative to use Cohen’s model to capture the challenges of capitalism that are open and fast but unstable which is a concern, though serving as a launching point for the spread of epidemics that will continue to haunt future generations.

As the global population moves up the income ladder, they will relocate to dense urban areas with modern technologies. At the same time, much of the rest of the planet will remain poor and without access to refrigeration so “wet” markets where animals are kept, killed, and sold will not be eliminated. The proximity of humans to animals is an elusive vector to control. Most new diseases, 75 percent of them, such as AIDS, Ebola, SARS, MERS, the bird flu, and the swine flu, originated in animals. Future pandemics will become more common, though Zakaria does not propose specific policies that will help world leaders manage these events more effectively in the future.

A Facebook post by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology that was quickly deleted reveals the unspoken reality of European derision with American systems, specifically health care systems. At the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic, school administrators directed students abroad to return home if they were in a nation with a poorly developed health-care infrastructure, *like the United States*. The message highlighted the fact that America is no longer the shining city upon a hill.

A Stanford study concluded the likelihood of someone moving from the bottom fifth of income distribution to the top fifth is only 7.5 percent for those born in the United States while Canadians are almost twice as likely to make the transition (70). Zakaria’s argument would be more effective if he had examined the same trends in China where young entrepreneurs have growing opportunities, given the shifting world demographics. The reality is the future is full of promise and uncertainty while globalization reminds us that the new

reality has shifted to an information age where knowledge is the critical determiner for success.

Zakaria reminds readers of the powerful scene in *Lawrence of Arabia* when Peter O'Toole, playing an unforgettable T. E. Lawrence, turns back to rescue a lost man, reminding those present that we are in charge of our destiny when he tells them "Nothing is written..." (234–35). He closes *Ten Lessons of a Post-Pandemic World* by capturing the new reality of globalization, rising inequality, and changing world leadership that is a shell of the post-American world. This liminal period in world history will provide unique opportunities and challenges as the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. The future is filled with uncertainty and new opportunities. It is up to American leaders with public support to take advantage of them.

TECHNOLOGY AND WAR

Killer Apps: War, Media, Machine

By Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves

Reviewed by Dr. Zac Rogers, research lead, Jeff Bleich Centre for the US Alliance in Digital Technology, Security and Governance, Flinders University, South Australia

Biological evolution, and its branch of human epistemology, is not the work of any naturally occurring optimization function. It is purposeless drift—adapting and changing as contingencies arise—with no specified goal or end state. Artificial evolution and machine epistemology, on the other hand, is pure optimization function. This distinction is critical in understanding the profound implications of our techno-anthropological reality. The latter emerged by way of the former but is in no way determined, controlled, or contained by it. The two natural forces are inimical—not complimentary or coconstructive in the way many popular accounts of our technological civilization would conceive. Part polemic, part historical analysis, part exploration, *Killer Apps*, in delivering this news, adds timely perspective to the existing discourse while avoiding several pitfalls.

The machine episteme is binary and goal oriented—it contains within it an approximate rationality in which the annihilation of human life becomes axiomatic. Crucially, the decision of the authors to position the book’s conceptual center around media is their most important and original aspect. They show, using well-researched historical and contemporary examples, how the proliferation of machine media—any technology that selects, collects, stores, processes, and transmits information and incurs a manipulation of time and space—has accumulated via the escalating strategic games of military competition, to the point where human existence now takes place inside the confines of an alien and inimical machine episteme.

Chapter 8 clearly states this point: “War is the condition of media escalation. Media technology propels competition between military powers in order that it may evolve” (108). Our world and the machine’s world are codetermined, coproduced, and deeply entangled by our shared media—but in no way commensurate. In this hybrid world, we have cocreated, humans are the weak, the slow, the stupid, and the soft (4). Yet we continue to behave and think, in a tragedy exceeding farce, as if we are master and conductor.

Within the machine episteme, humans are the noise and the fog. Our elimination is therefore simply a byline of the machine logic our strategic escalations have engendered. When expressed in geopolitical terms, this episteme holds, in the first instance, that the optimal way to make the world safe for Americans is to depopulate it of non-Americans.



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Something akin to what Carl Schmitt described as a state of “absolute enmity” (“The Political Character of Absolute Enmity”). Packer and Reeves show how this binary process of elimination by filtration was prefigured in early postwar continental air defense, continues in the ongoing expansion of automated drone warfare and spills over in the vanguard shift to low-cost, low-energy, fully autonomous AI-driven swarms. The corollary of this process has been steady human subordination to the binary machine episteme.

Continuing with the machine logic, the only way to make the world safe for the machines is to depopulate it of humans—or at least minimize the “human factor” to the point of its effective irrelevance (17). Packer and Reeves argue that existing legal constraints, such as the Department of Defense “human-in-the-loop” policy, are little more than ornamental (3). The machine episteme and its internal logic of operational speed and error elimination have overwhelmed any regulatory expression of normative or ethical prudence. They address head-on the misguided humanism of the techno-optimists and the swollen cohort of AI ethicists, who cling to the belief that this regime—any regime—of scaled media technology can be subordinated to human intentions. Their demolition of the naive anthropocentrism in this popular line of thought in Chapter 4 is alone worth the cost of the book.

In expressing this existential fear, Packer and Reeves join a litany of historical voices, to realize again that knowledge, activated and materialized via media, is a Promethean gift. They echo C. S. Lewis who wrote: “Each new power won by man is a power over man as well. Each advance leaves him weaker as well as stronger. In each victory, besides being the general who triumphs, he is also the prisoner who follows the triumphal car” (*The Abolition of Man*, 1943). While modernity and its wake has proceeded under denial of this truth, Packer and Reeves have updated the insight with penetrating acuity.

For the national security, intelligence, and defense communities, *Killer Apps* presents both a valuable scholarly resource and a deeply ambiguous set of questions. As the authors presage in the preface, are they friend or foe of this community? Defined as it is by the imperative of knowing the difference, the national security, intelligence, and defense communities might take *Killer Apps* as an opportunity to reflect. The media we have inherited from our forebearers—both human and machine—incarcerates us in an episteme in which the prospects of a peaceful existence is itself increasingly subject to automated annihilation. At a minimum, we should reflect on the incongruity that thinking of strategic futures might preclude the very possibility of being human. If it does preclude the possibility, what does winning mean?

A definitive account of this subject matter will remain elusive—such an undertaking is yet to be attempted by any authors, past or present. Reading *Killer Apps* alongside other related perspectives, however, such as Philip Mirowski’s *Machine Dreams: Economics Becomes*

a Cyborg Science (Cambridge University Press, 2002), Bruno Latour's *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Harvard University Press, 1999), and John Gray's *Enlightenment's Wake: Politics and Culture at the Close of the Modern Age* (Routledge, 1995)—which converges in its final pages with *Killer Apps* in its appeal to Heideggerian *Gelassenheit*—will reward readers seeking to fill out and augment their understanding of the phenomena at hand. The task of grappling with the techno-anthropological reality is immense.

Stylistically, some readers will find the combined narrative, historical, and analytical approach deployed in *Killer Apps* unappealing. Without doubt, critics will complain of the dearth of solutions offered. Misanthropes will relish the dystopian tones. But these types of responses suffer precisely the anthropocentric orientation to which Packer and Reeves are taking an ax, and for that their contribution is invaluable. They force readers to transcend the humanist epistemological orientation in order to understand what the machine age has truly ushered in.