

The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

Volume 31
Number 2 *Parameters Summer 2001*

Article 6

5-7-2001

Editor's Shelf

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Recommended Citation

Robert H. Taylor, "Editor's Shelf," *Parameters* 31, no. 2 (2001), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.2034.

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Editor's Shelf

From *Parameters*, Summer 2001, pp. 125-26.

The Brookings Institution Press continues its reputation for excellence with the publication of a number of recent works examining US defense strategy and the American security agenda. John D. Steinbruner's *Principles of Global Security*, an analysis of the effects of globalization on national and international security policies, includes insights into the management of military forces, control of civilian conflict, and weapons of mass destruction, and issues a call for the revamping of security relationships. One of the nation's leading specialists on defense issues, Steinbruner finds that the current US strategy of deterrence will not be sustainable in the new strategic environment. He advocates a policy of "reassurance" to replace dominance and deterrence. The author argues that America's security cannot be achieved unilaterally, and that only through acts of international cooperation--addressing such factors as the globalization of economic activity, advances in information technology, population growth, and the uneven distribution of wealth--will America ever be truly secure. This is a must read for scholars and policymakers involved in the study and development of a strategy for international security in the information age.

Also from the Brookings Institution Press are two new works by Michael E. O'Hanlon. O'Hanlon, a senior fellow in foreign policy studies at Brookings, follows his series of recent publications--*Winning Ugly* (with Ivo H. Daalder); *Technological Change and the Future of Warfare*; and *How to Be a Cheap Hawk*--with the release of *Defense Policy Choices for the Bush Administration, 2001-2005*. This latest book examines our defense strategy, provides a budget review, looks at current defense capabilities, and provides suggestions for the new Administration. In easily understandable prose the author presents a balanced strategy for dealing with the defense budget. While advocating a reduction in weapon modernization and manpower, O'Hanlon supports a real-dollar increase in the overall defense budget, largely to replace weaponry. The author also provides an illuminating examination of the impacts on US forces and our national defense strategy of the proposed missile defense system, the revolution in military affairs, homeland defense, and a possible China-Taiwan conflict.

In the second work by O'Hanlon, he joins James M. Lindsay (another senior fellow in foreign policy studies at Brookings) in a lucid and comprehensive analysis of the current Administration's announced intention to build a national missile defense system. Their book, *Defending America: The Case for Limited National Missile Defense*, examines the battle lines between arms control and missile defense advocates. With arms control and missile defense again being at the forefront of America's national security agenda, the authors warn against embarking on a "fool's errand" and building a missile defense fraught with technical flaws. In a detailed, nonpartisan analysis, they review the relevant technologies, assess the current threat, and outline the reactions of America's friends and foes to any decision to build such a system. Lindsay and O'Hanlon conclude that the proposed large-scale system is ill-advised and argue for a much more limited national missile defense.

Ashton B. Carter and John P. White have edited *Keeping the Edge: Managing Defense for the Future*, a collection of essays that goes to the very heart of many of the problems associated with the means by which America's defense policies are implemented. In an attempt to go beyond simplistic anecdotal analysis of current policies, the editors have collected insights from some of America's most respected and proven defense intellectuals. Resulting from the Preventive Defense Project cosponsored by the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and Stanford University, the manuscripts contained in this book outline a strategy for preventing future Cold War-scale threats. The underlying thesis of this strategy is "preventive defense," the development of productive security relationships with those nations and leaders around the world who have the ability to influence opportunities for international agreement and cooperation. Although associated with key figures during the Clinton Administration, this examination of a defense strategy based on preventive defense provides insights that many may wish to consider in formulating the tenets of a new national security policy and defense strategy.

When America Fights: The Use of U.S. Military Force by Donald M. Snow examines when, where, why, how, and to what end America employs the use of military force. This is a scathing review of the US involvement in a growing

number of peacekeeping operations. Snow addresses the hard questions regarding national interests and the seemingly limitless opportunities for military deployments. However, the real value of this work lies in the author's analysis of likely future patterns of violence and the direction our security policies will take to address them. Snow does not let theory get in the way of practicality in recommending how America should exercise her military power. Rich with bibliographical data and informative indices, this work is a must for students of American foreign policy.

Parameters receives many more books for review than we could ever possibly accommodate. Occasionally during the triage process to decide which books go to the library and which are reviewed, the editor may overlook a deserving work. Often it only takes a colleague's casual remark about the value of a particular book to alert the professional senses; such was the case with Michael D. Pearlman's *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle Over Military Strategy, 1700 to the Present*. Pearlman, an associate professor of history at the US Army Command and General Staff College, presents what many have termed the first comprehensive study of American war strategy from a domestic perspective. He examines the relationships and divisions among various segments of American society--including political parties, the Congress, the President, branches of the armed services, and soldiers and civilians--to illustrate just how complex, and at times impossible, it is to craft a national strategy. The author uses historical examples to demonstrate how military thinking from different eras created or exacerbated difficulties for national leaders in their attempts to formulate a national security strategy. From the beginnings of America's Army to the present, Pearlman draws on a wide array of political, military, and diplomatic sources, as well as numerous personal interviews, to explain many of America's wartime successes and failures. This is a book that anyone in a position to influence national security thought should read--and inculcate and exercise its dicta. -- RHT

For details on publishers and prices of books mentioned, see "[Off the Press](#)" or call *Parameters* at 717-245-4943 (e-mail: carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil).

Reviewed 7 May 2001. Please send comments or corrections to carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil