

# The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

---

Volume 33  
Number 3 *Parameters Autumn 2003*

Article 8

---

8-1-2003

## Editor's Shelf

Robert H. Taylor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters>

---

### Recommended Citation

Robert H. Taylor, "Editor's Shelf," *Parameters* 33, no. 3 (2003), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.2161.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by USAWC Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters by an authorized editor of USAWC Press.

## Editor's Shelf

---

The American public has learned one overarching lesson from its military's conduct of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the necessity for robust strategic planning. To that end, *Strategic Thinking: An Introduction and Farewell* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2002. 199 pp. \$49.94 [\$19.95 paper]) written by Philip Windsor and, after his death, completed and edited by Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides, offers readers insight to one of the world's great strategic thinkers, Philip Windsor. The book highlights Windsor's contributions during his tenure at the London School of Economics (1967-1997) to the evolution of what he termed "strategic thinking." This work serves as a reminder of the need, not only for students of international relations and military practitioners but also policymakers, to question any assumptions about their profession related to planning and strategic thought.



Those with an interest in strategy may want to examine Edward A. Olsen's, *US National Defense for the Twenty-first Century: The Grand Exit Strategy* (Portland: Frank Cass, 2002. 210 pp. \$52.50 [\$24.50 paper]). This deliberately controversial book draws on the evolution of US foreign policy from the beginning of the United States through the start of the 21st century. A call for a return to "Fortress America," it is unfortunate that the book was published prior to current operations in Iraq, but the parallels are well-established. Mr. Olsen does an excellent job of drawing the reader's attention to the belief that a focus on homeland security and dedication to fighting the war on terrorism would be far more beneficial for America than the numerous "entangling alliances" we have pursued.

Seyom Brown advances a different view of the future of US foreign policy in his *The Illusion of Control: Force and Foreign Policy in the 21st Century* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2003. 196 pp. \$46.95 [\$18.95 paper]). Brown builds a thesis focused on the disturbing trend by US policymakers to readily use military force as an instrument of diplomacy. He points out that this trend was developing long before the events of 9/11, and it shows every sign of persisting long into the future. The author provides the reader with much more than a simple warning against the abuse of power, he critically assesses the strategic, political, and moral implications for the United States if military power is seen as a panacea for diplomatic challenges. Of special note are the guidelines the author sets for decisionmakers contemplating the use of military force.

*New Challenges, New Tools for Defense Decisionmaking* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2003. 414 pp. \$40.00) is another quality product from the folks at RAND. This edited work of Stuart Johnson, Martin Libicki, and Gregory Treverton provides new techniques and tools for defense planning. Drawing on a series of RAND studies, the book outlines advanced analysis methodologies for strategic planning. The 13 papers that constitute the book present the reader with a number of advanced decisionmaking techniques, including coping with uncertainty, incorporating information technology, exploratory modeling, and what RAND terms "day after methodology." This is a must-read for defense planners, policymakers, and those interested in futures assessment and strategic planning.

Andreas Wenger and Doron Zimmermann provide tremendous insights for those seeking greater understanding of how nations interact in periods of uncertainty in

their *International Relations: From the Cold War to the Globalized World* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2003. 405 pp. \$59.95 [\$22.50 paper]). Tracing the evolution of international relations since the onset of the Cold War, the authors have produced an innovative textbook of world affairs from 1945 to the present. Of special interest to students of international relations is the clear, concise explanation of the key theories and concepts associated with the relationships between nations. This is a comprehensive, illuminating analysis designed for students of international relations, security studies, and world history.

Anatol Lieven and Dmitri Trenin follow on the theme of how nations successfully coexist with their latest edited work *Ambivalent Neighbors: The EU, NATO and the Price of Membership* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003. 352 pp. \$45.00 [\$24.95 paper]). A collection of essays by distinguished scholars from both east and west, the book attempts to analyze whether an enlarged European Union and NATO can survive for the long term. A number of the essays warn that if these organizations are to grow and provide their members with the desired stability and economic growth, the members of the organizations must learn to interact more productively not only with one another, but also with those nations that are not members. What makes this book particularly noteworthy is the fact that the perspectives presented are not all from the western point of view, but also encompass the viewpoint of the former communist countries of Eastern Europe. This work should be of immense interest to those concerned with the future of the relationship between Western Europe, Russia, and America.

At a time when the United States appears to need all the tools in its foreign policy toolbox, Meghan L. O'Sullivan, a former fellow at the Brookings Institution and now at the US Department of State, reminds us that sanctions, if designed and applied properly, can be an effective tool for policymakers. *Shrewd Sanctions* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2003. 424 pp. \$49.95 [\$19.95 paper]) provides the reader with a revisionist's view of the utility and impact of the sanction-dominated strategies used by the United States toward Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Sudan. The author presents a thesis based on the belief that policymakers really do not care if sanctions "work," rather, they only want to know that sanctions "deliver results" in specific instances. The book offers insights into the utility of sanctions in a world characterized by globalization and American hegemony. O'Sullivan determines that in fact sanctions do have a role in US foreign policy, but it is not the role that most Americans envision. She concludes that sanctions, if crafted for a given circumstance, will accomplish the objectives of policymakers.

We must receive for review about 30 biographies a year from soldiers who fought in a particular campaign or war. Most are the everyday remembrances of someone with a story to tell or an axe to grind. A few actually add to the history of the profession of arms, and one such is *Shavetail: The Odyssey of an Infantry Lieutenant in World War II* (St. Cloud, Minn.: North Star Press of St. Cloud, 2001. 180 pp. \$24.95) by William L. Devitt. From the title one immediately understands this is about Bill Devitt's experiences in World War II, but the book is so much more. It is a brutally honest recounting of what war is all about. From his criticism of the decisions made by senior leaders to insights into his own perceived weaknesses and misgivings, Devitt tells a tale that all who have experienced combat or the fear of battle can empathize with. This is no old soldier's tale, but a reflection by a true "shavetail" on his experiences in the profession of arms. It is an excellent book for anyone with an interest in the history of the military profession or World War II, and especially for cadets or young officers. — RHT □