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## Book Reviews

Parameters Editors

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## *Book Reviews*

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**Looking for Trouble: Adventures in a Broken World.** By Ralph Peters. Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 2008. 368 pages. \$27.95. **Reviewed by Colonel Robert B. Killebrew, USA Ret.**, who served in Special Forces, mechanized, air assault, and airborne infantry units, and held a variety of planning and operational assignments during his 30-year Army career.

Anyone faintly involved in the study of international affairs these days knows of Ralph Peters, the retired Army intelligence officer, author of 22 books of strategy and fiction, a columnist and commentator who leaves in his wake a succession of red-faced academics, generals, and defense contractors. Marching through conferences and laid-back strategy seminars like an Old Testament prophet, Peters's summary judgments crackle and burn like fire from above: "I entered a bitchy network of fiefdoms where desk officers formed petty alliances reminiscent of English boarding schools." Reading any one of Peters's five books on current strategy (including his most recent, *Wars of Blood and Faith*) may irritate the reader or send him to the dictionary, but the experience will never be boring.

How Peters moved from the coal-mining country of Pennsylvania to international fame is the story of the Army at its best. A kid just out of high school packs up and leaves home for the bright lights, except that in the author's case, his "bright lights" aren't in Scranton or Harrisburg, but in London and Belgrade. Who now remembers the hedonism of the early 1970s? Drawn already to Europe east of Berlin, he hitchhikes around the fringes of the Soviet Union. Living on beaches, bumming rides and meals when he could, Peters winds up on a Greek beach, "... where I slept under the open sky, read Homer on topless beaches, and survived on honey, yogurt, bread, and wine." When the money ran out, he went home and enlisted.

As the saying goes, Peters found a home in the Army. "I enjoyed basic training, with the vibrant obscenity of its cadence calls and the surprising ease of regimented life." Following basic training he is assigned to the military intelligence school at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, becomes an enlisted intelligence specialist, and joins, at the height of the Cold War, the 8th Infantry Division in Bad Kreuznach, West Germany. Although he later returns to Germany as an officer, his memories are fondest of his enlisted days:

The Army was incalculably good to me. I would spend a total of ten years in Europe, but none were as precious as those first three when I was an enlisted man. And it was thanks to the Army that I missed most of the disco era back home, the lowest point of culture in humankind's history.

After Officer Candidate School in 1980, Peters returns to Germany and to a top-notch infantry battalion, where competition with talented and aggressive peers almost convinces him to become an infantryman, but he desists because "my talents and desires were better suited to intelligence work." To be a better soldier, he

reads Clausewitz in German. He begins to write for professional journals and makes a name as a military intellectual. Later assigned to Fort Hood—“. . . the only time that the Army assigned me to a post that was utterly wretched”—he senses the end of the Cold War, requests assignment as a Foreign Area Officer (FAO), and gets back to Germany in 1989, just in time for the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

What follows in Peters's narrative—the majority of the book—are memories of his and his brother FAOs' odyssey through a decaying Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, traveling through the central and southern reaches of that vast empire as the grip of the bureaucracy falters and social controls are loosened. While the United States government looks on with indifference, Peters and other FAOs wander through the wreckage of the Soviet Union:

Urgench displayed a few ancient tombs and high-rise graves for the living. Everything threatened infection; the air, the water, the earth . . . . The Soviets had built biological warfare laboratories and test ranges on the Aral Sea's islands. Now some were so close a rodent could splash over to them. Others, the worse, would soon join the dry land.

Peters's travels in Russia set the tone for his later career; going to the place, talking to the natives, coming back, and reporting honestly, and damn the consequences. As a major, he becomes a trouble-shooter for the brass; General Barry McCaffery sends him on a swing through South America to assess counternarcotics strategy. "The CIA station chief seemed the least competent man I had ever encountered in such a position." He goes to Pakistan in 1995 to judge the rise of terrorism. "A crisis is looming in the Pak officer corps . . . . By cutting off Pak access to our education system, we lost potential advocates and voices of reason." By the time Lieutenant Colonel Peters decides to retire, in January 1998, he is recognized as an utterly professional intelligence officer and a uniquely authentic, if iconoclastic, intellectual. More promotions may lay ahead, but Peters wants to quit, he says, before creeping careerism grips him too strongly. Following retirement, he says, "life got interesting."

In a world already full of distinguished strategists, what makes Ralph Peters so unique? What characterizes his work and makes it stand out, both as literature and analysis? First, probably resulting from his love of literature and experience with fiction, Peters is simply fun to read. His descriptions of places and people can get overloaded in spots, but other passages approach poetry. Even his official reports in the 1990s were passed around the Pentagon like dime novels.

Second, Peters will take a stand. Acting with the best instincts of an intelligence professional, his career as a FAO was driven by a desire to actually see and report on events as they unfolded (sometimes at the risk of his skin) rather than reading secondhand accounts or assumptions by desk-bound staff. While it did not make him particularly popular at US embassies, getting his intelligence firsthand satisfied his own belief that developing intelligence has to be up close and personal. And conclusions have to be drawn. "It is absolutely wrongheaded to approach intelligence as a just-plain-facts business," Peters writes in an earlier work, *Never Quit the Fight*, that "intelligence work inevitably involves intellectual (and sometimes

physical) risk-taking . . . It is the intelligence professional's duty . . . to be willing to stand in the fire and tell the commander and planner what he, the analyst, thinks."

Thirdly, the author sees himself as a realist—he believes that it is through the exercise of power that things are ultimately decided in the world, and applying sufficient force from the beginning of conflict ultimately saves lives. "This means killing," he writes. "Our goal should be to target the insurgents and terrorists so forcefully that few survive to raise their hands to surrender. We need terrorists dead in the dust. And the world needs to see their corpses."

Finally, Peters is often hyperbolic; blunt-spoken when he is convinced he is right, he can also be needlessly insulting. As a result, he sometimes alienates his audience when he starts to target institutions around him. In *Wars of Blood and Faith*, for example, he charges that "the new counterinsurgency doctrine is dishonest and cowardly," certainly not true and definitely not a comment that will endear readers to his views. *Looking for Trouble* helps the reader better understand the turbulent drive bottled up inside Peters during his service in an Army he loved, but which in the end simply became too restrictive. "A career is like a love affair," he writes, "and you need to know when it's over. Dragging it on just spoils the happy memories."

For friends and detractors alike, Peters has done us all a service with *Looking for Trouble*. It is his best book to date. Every generation and age has its restless men and women who, as Kipling put it once, "can't sit still." Peters's story gives us a glimpse into the fringes of civilization that many will never see, much less experience. This is an Army life well spent, pushing beyond frontiers to see and report some of the great events of our time. Contrary to what Peters said about the end of his affair with the Army, both *Wars of Blood and Faith* and *Looking for Trouble*—indeed, all his books—are, in his own way, love letters.

**Soldier's Heart: Reading Literature through Peace and War at West Point.** By Elizabeth D. Samet. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2007. 259 pages. \$23.00. **Reviewed by Dr. Bruce Fleming,** Professor of English, US Naval Academy.

Elizabeth Samet has written a readable, thoughtful, and wide-ranging consideration of the strangeness of teaching English at a military institution, in her case the US Military Academy at West Point. She poses and teases out possible answers to questions such as: What is the point of becoming a more reflective human being if what you are going to end up doing is waging war?

The closest the author offers to an answer comes in one of the book's last chapters, "Anatomy of Sacrifice," which is largely about Samet's former students serving in Iraq. In writing to them, she notes of herself, "I seemed to be promoting literature as a kind of elixir, as something that had the power to bestow a particular kind of courage and a particular kind of knowing." The courage is "the deliberative variety that could withstand all the accidents that might derail the merely brave." The knowledge "consisted in an ability to know more than one truth."

So literature, which looks on the outside like something antithetical to the action of battle—you read it quietly, for one, and all you do is talk about it—in fact

turns out to be related to all human action, battle among them. It is an attractive conclusion for Samet to come to, and one this reviewer largely subscribes to. Samet has taught for a decade at West Point; the reviewer has taught for two decades at Annapolis and also written an “English professor at a military school” book. As a result, Samet’s experiences with her cadets caused frequent nods of the head. The big-picture question in both cases is the same, namely—why read English literature in a military institution? It is because someone who is purely a (wo)man of action rather than also a (wo)man of thought is doomed to make mistakes the more reflective person will not. Teaching literature helps people articulate the other person’s point of view, understand motivation, and perhaps most fundamentally, realize that the picture is frequently bigger than one’s tiny part of it—just for starters.

These are important skills for anyone, including and perhaps especially people who act under stress, for example, soldiers. Of course Samet is far too savvy to be playing to the crowd that requires her to justify her undertaking in terms of body counts, or even “Mission Accomplished” slogans. What crowd is she playing to? It is a crowd that asks, in effect: “What is a nice Ivy League type like you doing teaching English at, of all places, the US Military Academy?” If you cannot envision asking this question, this book really is not for you.

Samet takes us through her application process from Yale to the military, step by step (this part is slow going): her initial perusal of the Modern Language Association’s job listings, the interview, and arrival at West Point. She outlines the structure of the teaching staff at the Military Academy as background: For the record, it has far fewer civilians, and those are a much more recent development, than the Naval Academy, which has always had civilian professors, and where civilians are a much larger percentage of the teaching staff. Because civilians are more of a rarity at West Point than Annapolis, they do not receive tenure.

Samet is clearly fond of her students and invests a good deal of herself in teaching and corresponding with them. At the same time her presupposition is that her readers share her sense of being a stranger in a strange land. One scene has her watching a documentary film about soldiers in Iraq at the Tribeca Film Festival, a place where not many military people venture. She “gets” the film the way the rest of the audience does not, because of her strange job. As she puts it: “I laughed alone when I heard a soldier make a wry observation that might have come from one of my students.” By the same token, she takes seriously something that reminds her of a letter from Iraq: All the people around her laugh, and Samet leaves before the question and answer session because she “could imagine only too well the tenor of the conversation”—presumably, finding soldiers’ concerns ridiculous, as Samet no longer can. “Now,” she concludes, “the gap between my two worlds felt wider than ever.” This statement too is pitched at her home world, the Ivy League graduate students who do not work at military institutions, and instead go to the Tribeca Film Festival where they laugh at soldiers. She wants to coax them to realize that the concerns of the military and those about to join it are real and need to be taken seriously. For that reason alone *Soldier’s Heart* is a valuable book, and ideally it will reach many readers.

The volume may have less value for those in the military seeking to understand their own strange undertaking and how it fits into the world at large. Samet

notes the civilian-military split, which is related to the liberal-conservative split in politics, without having much to say about how to bridge it. Samet seems puzzled by her students' attitudes, which she fundamentally cannot share, though she cares for them as individuals and cannot merely brush them off the way denizens of her other "world" would do.

For example this business of some male cadets' attitude toward women. Samet wants outsiders to understand that they are not Neanderthals. These are young men who do not really want to be fighting beside a woman; instead, they need to believe they are putting themselves at risk to defend the women at home. The author is nuanced while describing the quandary, and of course articulate, caring, and anecdotal. This reviewer cannot help feeling she really just does not understand why men would feel that way. The reader senses Samet's sympathy with her students on every page. The tenor of the book is quizzical distance mixed with human compassion. But what is missing is the kernel of true understanding for the cadets' point of view. The author assumes her job is to make them more like her. Will she wake up one day to find that they have made her more like them? There would not be a book in that. How would you report that metamorphosis back to the other world? They would not understand.

**Castles, Battles, and Bombs: How Economics Explains Military History.** By Jurgen Brauer and Hubert van Tuyl. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. 403 pages. \$29.00. **Reviewed by Michael J. Fratantuono**, Associate Professor, Department of International Business and Management; Chair, Department of International Studies, Dickinson College.

In this ambitious, well-organized, and extremely thorough book, economist Jurgen Brauer and historian Hubert van Tuyl apply a handful of core principles from the field of economics to more than 1,000 years of military history, in the hope of disseminating new insight. The authors initially describe six principles they regard as most relevant. Those principles are all associated with microeconomic analysis, the branch of economic theory that focuses on the choices made by individual consumers to maximize their well-being, efforts of individual producers to obtain the highest possible profits, and market-based interactions between both sets of parties. While four of the principles had become foundation stones of neoclassical economics by the early 1900s, two others, which deal with the economics of information, were developed following World War II. The authors explain that in each of the ensuing chapters, they will examine a particular era of history; select a key development from that era to serve as a case study; and employ one of the six economic principles as a point of reference for commentary related to manpower, logistics, technology, planning, and operations. Finally, given their assertion that all six principles are at work in every era, Brauer and van Tuyl summarize the relevance of the other remaining principles. How then does this all play out?

Local rulers in the High Middle Ages had limited access to revenues. When it came to military expenditures, a ruler had to choose between having castles

or armies. Primarily due to the multifunctional nature of a castle, a ruler most often opted for the former. When he did so, he incurred an opportunity cost—the value that would have been derived from organizing a large standing army. As a result, there was a preponderance of defense over offense in strategy, tendency toward siege warfare, and general absence of open-field battles.

During the Renaissance, the city-states of Italy vied for power and influence. Instead of raising large indigenous armies, city leaders hired contractors, who headed their own bands of itinerant mercenaries, to provide both offensive and defensive capabilities. To overcome deficiencies in information relevant to hidden actions and incentive alignments and protect their respective interests, city leaders (principals) and commanders (agents) drew up detailed and comprehensive contracts. Those arrangements implied that all military matters, and even operational outcomes, were influenced by monetary incentives.

By the Age of Battle (more generally, the Age of Enlightenment), dynastic powers had marshaled their own standing armies. In the context of complexity and uncertainty, and during an era in which annihilation of the enemy was recognized as a legitimate strategic objective, general officers had to weigh expected marginal benefits against expected marginal costs when confronted with opportunities to engage in large-scale, high-stakes battle. Famous generals such as Gustavus Adolphus, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon all excelled in their ability to make those assessments and decisively act.

During the American Civil War, commanders on both sides were often confronted with limited information about an opponent's whereabouts, troop strength, and intentions. Victory or defeat in a battle frequently hinged on the ability of a general officer and his staff to either leverage or overcome asymmetrical information about the hidden characteristics of a situation. One of the book's recurring themes places new emphasis on the extraordinary importance of military intelligence at the tactical and strategic levels.

In World War II, the US Army Air Forces engaged in strategic bombing—in an effort to destroy Germany's war-making capacity, it was targeting the enemy's economic assets. Data analyzed through the lens of a production function, a key construct from microeconomic theory, strongly suggests the presence of diminishing marginal returns: Ever-increasing numbers of bombs did not curtail German production below a certain threshold, which would suggest that the Army Air Forces inefficiently used resources.

The Cold War era was dominated by the world's two superpowers. In an effort to regain a level of national prestige and international influence, France's Charles de Gaulle developed an independent strategic nuclear capability. One might say that since acquiring nuclear weapons provided the same benefit as developing a large-scale conventional force, at relatively lower costs, France had engaged in substitution. (As the authors point out, one could also cite moral concerns about civilian casualties and reject the notion that strategic nuclear weapons offered the same benefit as a conventional force; in turn, that would lead the analyst to think more closely about the underlying meaning of substitution.)

In the eighth and final chapter, the authors offer commentary about how economic principles might be applied to twenty-first century issues, including attempts by nation-states to counter terrorist organizations; implications of a volunteer force on military manpower; and rationale for employing private military companies. They also provide thoughtful words about their own intellectual journey and their perceptions regarding the relationship between economics, historiography, and military history.

Brauer and van Tuyl should be applauded for their efforts to cross disciplinary boundaries. But how might readers respond? Most likely, they will fall into two camps. The first includes those who are well-schooled in economics (will appreciate the fact that the core principles of their discipline are being recognized in new arenas) and those having a strong interest in organizational structures and systems theory (will find new, intriguing images and models). It is likely, however, that after thoroughly reading the first chapter, most in this group will lose patience and be satisfied to read remaining chapter summaries, skimming all else. The second camp, which includes students of military history and professionals in the defense community, is the target audience. They will find this serious-minded work of history fascinating, well worth the investment, and a catalyst for further exploration.

**Victory in War: Foundations of Modern Military Policy.** By William C. Martel. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 418 pages. \$35.00. **Reviewed by Dr. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr.**, Professor of Military History, US Army War College.

To a soldier or historian *Victory in War* is a book of theory. As a good political scientist, its author, William Martel, an Associate Professor at Tufts University's Fletcher School, calls it pretheory, since it is not definitive but only establishes a framework for future analysis. He is, of course, technically correct, but to the layman this book passes the duck test—if it quacks like a duck, it is a duck. By claiming a pretheory Martel is perhaps too humble about his accomplishment. He has taken a great stab at an underdeveloped portion of the theory of war—what victory is and how one achieves it. In the process he has written an important book. Professor Martel is correct, however, that this is just the starting point for a theory of victory. The thesis is that soldiers and statesmen have thought and written for millennia about theories of war; however, they have done so without the benefit of a complementary theory of victory. Unless one understands theoretically what winning is and how one achieves it, all the effort expended on the details of how to win a war or how to conduct campaigns is at best incomplete. This is an important thought leading to the quest for a fundamental framework that establishes precise language and organizing principles—or a typology—so we can understand what winning is and how it is attained.

Martel organized *Victory in War* in three general blocks. The first, a review of historic thought on victory, is perhaps the weakest. Although his span of historical theorists is impressive, and there is certainly nothing wrong with his interpretation, getting theories of victory from authors who were writing about a different subject is at best a tortuous exercise. It added little to the development of his thought.



The second block is the actual theory (or pretheory) and the meat of the book. Martel addresses victory using four scales. First is the “level of victory.” He sees victory ranging from tactical through political-military to grand strategic. This sounds like tactical, operational, and strategic, but Martel is actually talking more about the size and impact of the victory than the level of war. His use of tactical would include the military tactical and operational levels of war since they comprise results both of single and multiple battles. Martel’s political-military level, which looks like it might equate to operational, is really strategic in that he means the nation achieved some or all of its political objectives. The grand strategic level of victory does not relate to grand strategy—the national integration of all the resources available to a state to achieve its ends. In Martel’s scheme it means winning really big and effecting profound changes in the international system. That paradigm is unnecessarily confusing since a large number of the people Martel wants to interest in the theory already use the language with different meanings. It is, however, a valid point about victory—some wins are bigger than others.

The second scale is “change in the status quo,” which refers to the changes the victor effects in the defeated country. These might range from causing a specific policy change all the way to regime change. Thus, the US air raid on Libya produced a policy change while the 2003 invasion of Iraq produced regime change. The difference between the scales of “change in status quo” and the “level of victory” is subtle. While the two scales often coincide with victories on the upper-end of the scale producing significant changes in the status quo and vice versa, that is not always the case. The last two scales are more straightforward. The “degree of mobilization” is a measurement of the effort a state makes to achieve victory while “post-conflict obligations” measure the postwar costs associated with winning.

Martel’s final block is an assessment of the American way of winning and its application to six modern case studies. The American way of winning is reflective of historian Russell F. Weigley’s American way of war. The case studies apply the pretheory framework as a means of demonstrating its utility. These are interesting and illustrative.

Martel restates his intent in his conclusion as seeking “a coherent and systematic framework for understanding what it means for a state to achieve victory.” This is actually a slightly different objective than he stated initially, but closely aligns with what he achieved. Professor Martel definitely addresses what it means to achieve victory; however, that is more than a theory of victory. This reviewer believes he conflates elements of a theory of strategy with his thoughts on a theory of victory; a tendency he warned against early in the book. The scales of “degree of mobilization” and “postwar obligations” really measure costs and have little to do with a theory of victory; other than pointing out that victory is not free. What victory costs and what it produces are not functions of victory per se but of strategy. The strategist’s job is to manage those costs and outcomes, and how he does his job affects those scales much more than any intrinsic quality of victory. Nevertheless, William Martel has taken a giant step toward a theory of victory. It is incomplete by his own admission, but a significant contribution to the scholarship of a neglected subject.

**Just War Thinking: Morality and Pragmatism in the Struggle Against Contemporary Threats.** By Eric Patterson. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2007. 140 pages. \$50.00. **Reviewed by Martin L. Cook**, Professor of Philosophy and Deputy Department Head, Department of Philosophy, US Air Force Academy.

Eric Patterson's small and eminently readable volume can easily serve as a digestible short introduction to the history and major components of the Just War tradition. His approach is especially helpful as a result of his concern with the changing nature of conflict in the contemporary environment. Because much of the tradition of Just War in recent centuries (at least since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648) reflects a particular arrangement of international affairs focused on sovereign states, the modern challenges of stateless terrorism, globalized economic systems, and so forth fit that version of Just War poorly. This is especially true of the versions of Just War codified in international law since they were written and ratified by precisely such states.

In light of these emerging challenges, Patterson rightly reaches back to the older history of the development of Just War thinking, especially under the auspices of the Christian church and associated with names such as Augustine and Aquinas. For that older tradition, the central value was not the maintenance of states and their sovereignty (which did not exist at that time in any case). Instead, the emphasis was on the need for appropriate use of coercive and even lethal force to maintain what Augustine referred to as "tranquility of order." Without the order so maintained, these thinkers argued, society would rapidly degenerate into something resembling Thomas Hobbes's State of Nature.

The job of the ruler, therefore, was to make prudential judgments regarding when the use of military and other coercive force was indeed required to maintain the orderly arrangements of society within which social processes could play themselves out. Just War thinking, therefore, was not (Patterson is eager to stress) intended as a philosophical or theological exercise of interest only to intellectuals. Instead, it is and was meant to be a living tradition of practical wisdom to be of use to those who have responsibility for the welfare of the community.

Patterson is hardly unique in making these points, nor does he pretend he is. But he makes them cogently and concisely. The central point: that "settled" Just War tradition as codified in much academic writing and legal analysis is maladapted to the challenges of the present and that it needs to be adapted. Drawing on its deep history is important and valuable. Patterson makes a useful contribution to that adaptation.

The author applies Just War thinking to the decisions to militarily engage Afghanistan and Iraq (on the *jus ad bellum* side of Just War analysis) and to the Taliban prison revolt in Afghanistan, the problem of suicide bombers, and the question of targeted killing of individuals (on the *jus in bello* side of analysis). These brief treatments usefully illustrate the kinds of adaptation to new practical realities Patterson calls for in his analysis.

Patterson also explores an emerging third component of Just War thinking that historically received much less emphasis: *jus post bellum* (i.e., ensuring that the post-conflict period results in just outcomes as well). This is an important area of recent

development and is highly relevant to the kinds of conflict we have seen in Afghanistan and Iraq where the heavy combat phase goes relatively quickly, but afterward we have struggled to figure out how to accomplish stabilization and reconstruction.

The book rightly takes on one pernicious development in Just War thinking in recent decades. As James Turner Johnson among others has argued pointedly and repeatedly, a modern interpretation of Just War has emerged that might best be called “Just War pacifism.” According to this approach, the “checklist” of requirements for Just War is interpreted in such a way that no actual war would ever “pass.” This interpretation has gained wide currency in many circles, but it perhaps is most visibly identified with modern Roman Catholic thought as it has developed since the US Catholic bishops issued their document, “The Challenge of Peace,” in the 1980s. There they develop a view that Just War starts with a premise of a “presumption against war” (i.e., with the assumption that war is virtually never justified). The pacifist method then uses the criteria of Just War to set the bar for acceptable war so high that no envisioned use could ever be judged sufficient (at least prospectively—perhaps, in rare cases, retrospectively). Even the first Gulf War (the closest modern war to the “ideal” Just War model of a collective security action to repel obvious aggression) is, in this interpretation, morally dubious because the requirement of “last resort” can be interpreted to indicate there is always something more one could do.

Patterson excoriates this interpretation, powerfully pointing out that if so interpreted, Just War thinking ceases to fulfill its fundamental purpose of providing action-guiding practical wisdom to political and military leaders charged with keeping their communities safe. One need only review the official statements of many religious communities, academic groups, and others to see clearly the targets Patterson has in mind. The point is not, of course, that every modern use of military power has, in fact, been warranted in light of properly applied Just War thinking, although Patterson argues in favor of both Afghanistan and Iraq. The point is a more fundamental one: that Just War tradition becomes useless and meaningless unless it can make discriminating judgments about practical choices facing responsible leaders. If the answer is “no” to each and every contemplated use of military force (as it often becomes in the hands of the thinkers the author has in mind), it simply cannot serve a real-world useful function. Patterson usefully adds his voice to many others attempting to save this august intellectual tradition from such irrelevancy.

**Napoleon: The Path to Power, 1769-1799.** By Philip Dwyer. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008. 672 pages. \$35.00. **Reviewed by Colonel James P. Herson, Jr.,** Commander, 8th Transportation Brigade, Fort Eustis.

Philip Dwyer has produced a well-written and thoughtfully argued account of the early life of Napoleon Bonaparte. An account that comprehensively details Napoleon’s development and military and political maturation from birth to the *coup de Brumaire*. In this very important contribution to the field of Napoleonic studies, Dwyer richly captures Bonaparte’s early rise to intercontinental stardom,

providing the reader an in-depth analysis of the protagonist's growth, and arguably, emerging hubris of France's nascent nineteenth century Generalissimo.

Although Dwyer's favorable bias is easy to discern, his scholarship is first-class and holds up to scrutiny. His clear prose yields an erudite examination of Napoleon's blossoming as an increasingly ruthless and effective politician, and a somewhat less successful practitioner of war. Fortunately for the knowledgeable reader, Dwyer's less-than-balanced presentation in evaluating this modern era Italio-Frankish warrior king may be forgiven in light of the book's many redeeming merits.

Dwyer divides the life of the young Napoleon into five chronological and intellectually digestible segments, all of which are deftly woven into a nested and interconnected construct for analysis. Ever mindful of the European political dynamics at the time of Bonaparte's birth in 1769, Dwyer contextualizes Napoleon's childhood experiences with the social and political forces that helped to shape him into the self-described "figure of destiny." One of several impoverished sons of father Carlo (a minor noble and self-serving Corsican politician), young Napoleon was raised in a world of limited political and monetary options. Only by means of self-study, angst-ridden introspection, and a patronage-derived military scholarship secured by his otherwise dilatory father, was he able to view a much broader horizon. Napoleon's long-term fantasy of freeing his native Corsica from French control and the subsequent participation in island politics (resulting in Bonaparte's eventual political divorce from Paloli and the Corsican separatist movement) are particularly well-covered. Dwyer thoroughly examines this difficult "outsider" period in Napoleon's young life, articulating the hard-learned lessons of Napoleon and their impact and influence on his character development. This becomes a dominant subtheme throughout the remaining sections of the book. By tracing the development of Napoleon's political and military expertise the author convincingly builds a case that this young leader could have consciously chosen to become a Franco Cincinnatus; yet he selected another darker path.

The portion of the book that examines Napoleon as "the conquering hero" is perhaps Dwyer's most interesting work. In describing Bonaparte's assumption of command of "an Army naked on the rocks" and his exercise of decisive leadership throughout the Italian campaign, the author is able to analyze the hero's inner man, painting a picture of an exposed and unhappy Napoleon whose one-sided love affair with Josephine alternately fills him with joy and depression. Dwyer captures these many emotions amidst the backdrop of the battlefield and the accompanying political drama. Napoleon's victories in the Alps and his ability to sustain the Directory with financing from the plunder of the territories of Piedmontese, Sardinians, and former Hapsburg permitted him to be celebrated as the man of the hour by the people of France. Bonaparte quickly discovers that winning a battle is much easier than securing a lasting peace, yet he emerges from the Italian campaign as France's new "Pure and Great Giant of Glory," albeit with a new Brobdingnagian appetite for greater acclaim and power.

After being fêted and promoted as the savior of the Revolution and hero of Italy, Bonaparte successfully petitioned the Directory to support his plans for an in-

direct attack on Britain. He would accomplish this feat by means of an attack on Egypt as a way to threaten the British hold on a much-coveted India. Among the most storied of Napoleon's early exploits (purposely so opines Dwyer) is his Oriental expedition. Unlike prior European-based invasions, this one included some of France's best minds alongside its finest soldiers. Termed "savants" these volunteer natural philosophers, scientists, artists, and linguists formed the nascent Institute of Egypt. This organization produced works of science and scholarship that even today stimulate interest and study of Egyptology and the ancient world. Strangely, Dwyer does not elaborate on the Institute's contributions to the arts or even mention the finding of the Rosetta stone by Napoleon's forces. He chooses instead to generally portray the organization as an apparatus designed by Napoleon to propel him into the body politic while gaining acceptance from the period's illuminati.

The author shines an increasingly unflattering light on Napoleon's leadership and lack of empathy for his forces and the local populace during the Egyptian campaign. Although suffering the impact of a severed sea-line of communication, a fact brought about by Admiral Horatio Nelson's brilliant victory at Aboukir Bay, Napoleon nonetheless was able to place military pressure on the Ottoman and coalition forces arrayed against him, winning several critical victories. Weakened by plague, short of supplies, medicine, shot, and shell, Bonaparte recognized that without replacements and external logistical support delivered and protected by a powerful navy, he could never hope to dislodge the Ottomans from Egypt, much less threaten the British position in India. In some ways, Bonaparte's strategic conundrum in northern Africa served as a prologue for what fellow European invader General Erwin Rommel would experience some 140 years later. Dwyer rightfully takes Bonaparte to task for his stealthy evacuation from Egypt, damning Kléber and his army to "hold the fort" while he dashed off to seize the Republican scepter in France. Dwyer writes of Bonaparte following the Egyptian campaign, "He now seemed to be possessed of a cynicism that would grow over the coming years as his own warped philosophy of life continued to develop."

As excellent a work as this book is, Dwyer fails to fully posit young Napoleon's unprecedented military expertise within the context of the period or measure it against his contemporaries. Instead, the author opines that rather than being the military enigma of his age, Napoleon was more of a self-manufactured martinet, who exploited the masses by means of propaganda, deciding to build the Napoleonic house on legend, even before becoming Emperor. This view detracts from what otherwise is a credible and absorbing argument.

Dwyer skillfully uses illustrations, art, and print accounts to support his thesis that Napoleon studiously used propaganda to develop his base of power with a hero-seeking public. These sources offer fresh evidence of Napoleon's popularity among the people of France—although as the author correctly points out, some of it was penned or authorized personally by Napoleon. *Napoleon: The Path to Power, 1769-1799* is a valuable work and one recommended to those interested in the personality of Napoleon Bonaparte and the French Revolution. It should also be of great interest to political scientists studying the blend of the political and military arenas personified in one man.

**George C. Marshall: Rubrics of Leadership.** By Stewart W. Husted. Carlisle, Pa.: US Army War College Foundation Press, 2006. 264 pages. \$23.95. **Reviewed by Colonel Alan Cate, USA Retired.**

“The art of war has no traffic with rules,” warns the opening line of the classic *Infantry in Battle*, prepared in the early 1930s under the supervision of the Infantry School’s Assistant Commandant, Colonel George C. Marshall. Some might argue that neither does the art of leadership. Stewart Husted, however, would beg to differ. His treatise on leadership, keyed to Marshall’s exemplary career of service to the nation, claims to offer more than 180 such rules or “rubrics.” This reviewer found only 71 enumerated. Regardless, there are definitely a sufficient number in the book.

Writers of how-to guides often invoke the sanctifying power of successful practitioners. The bookshelves and remainder tables groan under the weight of tomes advertising the leadership secrets of sundry military heroes, winning coaches, and wealthy entrepreneurs—even Attila the Hun apparently has something to say about building high-performing organizations. Husted, a former business school dean, retired US Army Reserve officer, and current chair holder in free enterprise business at the Virginia Military Institute, has chosen well in selecting Marshall as his paragon. During World War II, as Army Chief of Staff, Marshall was, in Winston Churchill’s estimation, the “organizer of victory.” As Secretary of State, he launched the eponymous post-war plan that helped rebuild a devastated Europe. If one of the functions of biography is to teach ethics by example, there can be no finer subject than Marshall, a selfless pillar of integrity.

The book contains 11 chapters. The first examines “Building a Solid Foundation,” surveying Marshall’s early life. The rest of the volume is organized topically around challenges such as “Managing and Planning the Impossible,” “Building and Maintaining Morale,” and “Turning Crisis into Success.” Each chapter incorporates a number of vignettes from Marshall’s career meant to illustrate a given theme, and then summarizes the main points at the end. Most of what Husted offers is unexceptional and unexceptionable: “show compassion,” “avoid favoritism,” “develop a vision,” and so forth. Some of the lessons the author extracts from Marshall’s service are a bit more dubious, however. For instance, he proclaims that “part of a commander’s trade is knowing and understanding the battlefields of old.” Well, yes, the Gettysburg staff ride is a marvelous educational tool, but, as others have noted, immediately after 9/11, one problem our officers faced is that they knew a lot more about the Army of Northern Virginia and Little Round Top than, say, al Qaeda and counterinsurgency.

Several other shortcomings mar this effort as well. To those unfamiliar with the US Army’s twentieth-century history or Marshall’s career, the author’s habit of continually jumping back and forth chronologically will likely prove bewildering. Leaps between such episodes as the Meuse-Argonne offensive, the interwar Army in China, and planning for the cross-Channel invasion occur frequently within the span of a page or two. Decidedly nonfelicitous writing and embarrassing grammatical errors further detract from the intended message. Another aspect is

mildly puzzling. Each chapter starts with an epigraph attributed to the likes of Sam Walton, Theodore Roosevelt, or Ralph Waldo Emerson. Why not use Marshall's own words, or at least others' words about him?

This book might be suitable for a young reader as a leadership primer or introduction to the life of a great American. More sophisticated audiences seeking inspiration and interested in senior leadership would be much better served by consulting some of the excellent works already extant on Marshall. Foremost among these are Forrest Pogue's magisterial, four-volume, *George C. Marshall* and Mark Stoler's concise biography. Another study that can be read with profit is Mark Perry's *Partners in Command*, an insightful examination of the relationship between Marshall and Eisenhower.

**Statecraft: And How to Restore America's Standing in the World.**

By Dennis Ross. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2007. 370 pages. \$26.00 (\$15.00 paper). **Reviewed by John W. Coffey**, retired Foreign Affairs Officer, Department of State.

This judicious account of statecraft by its distinguished practitioner, Dennis Ross, analyzes how the "faith-based" foreign policy of the current Administration went awry and offers a "neoliberal" alternative for future policy. While statecraft is not simply diplomacy, Ross explains, but the effective employment of the full range of assets to achieve national objectives, persuading others is its salient feature. Negotiations are the key to statecraft. The political virtues of prudence and moderation inform Ross's masterful treatment of his subject.

The cases of German unification within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Bosnia after 1995, and the rollback of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait all exemplify the successful exercise of statecraft: (1) establishing clear, coherent objectives; (2) realistic tailoring of objectives to reality and means to ends; (3) adroit framing of the issue to win public and international support; and (4) intensive diplomacy, including the use of back channels. President Bush's Iraq war, in contrast, provides a model of "how not to do statecraft:" (1) flawed weapons of mass destruction (WMD) assessments; (2) confused objectives and naïve planning; (3) denial of realities on the ground; and (4) disregard of international legitimacy.

Drawing on his experience as head of President George H. W. Bush's State Department policy planning staff and President Clinton's Mideast peace coordinator, Ross offers practical precepts, richly illustrated with examples from Russia, Europe, Bosnia, Northern Ireland, and the Mideast, for conducting negotiations and mediation. Statecraft in the post-Cold War world of nonstate actors and terrorist organizations seeking WMD will rely principally on persuasion rather than coercion, where cooperation with others, particularly moderate Muslims in countering the threat generated by radical Islamists, will be critical.

Ross applies the principles of statecraft to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, radical Islam, the challenge of Iran, and China's rise. The competition with jihad, the author maintains, depends upon discrediting it, with Muslims taking the lead in this ef-

fort. Ross recommends avoiding the now-jaded term “democracy” in any strategy related to the Mideast, promoting instead reforms such as good governance, combating corruption, and respect for minority and women’s rights. He urges dialogue with Muslim reformists and support of programs and services that enable individuals and groups to provide a social safety net for the local populace, just as radical Islamists have done. In this regard, the author espouses, we should heed the experience of British counterterrorist officials, who have supported local Muslim organizations and disaffected militants in challenging al Qaeda’s ideology. According to various polls, support for al Qaeda has declined throughout the Muslim world in recent years.

Ross scathingly criticizes the faith-based policies of the current Administration for its blunders in Iraq; its ideological misexecution of policy in general; and a wanton disregard of international support. It is unclear to this reviewer, however, how Ross’s preferred neoliberal agenda for US foreign policy appreciably differs from neoconservatism. Unlike commentators such as Zbigniew Brzezinski, Ross does not curtly dismiss neocons. The author believes that as with neocons, neoliberals realize the world is a nasty place and understand the need for force, sometimes even preemptively, in international relations. Neoliberals, on the other hand, are more skeptical about the utility of force, especially in “democratic transformation,” preferring instead to modify a regime’s behavior. Neoliberals harbor no illusions about the efficacy of international institutions, but pay greater deference to international consensus and are more attuned than neocons to the soft as well as hard elements of power.

These may be prudent propositions, but Ross affirms that a neoliberal foreign policy should be guided by principle and that, like neocons, would take into account what happens within regimes. This type of policy, he asserts, doesn’t require “a loss of American ambition.” America would still be a global promoter of all manner of good works, and would not surrender democratic transformation as an international goal. According to Ross’s version, neoliberalism does not substantially differ from neoconservatism, except that it would be more cautious in execution and multilateral in approach. Rather than an alternative, neoliberal foreign policy appears to be a distinction without a difference from neoconservatism.

It is not isolationist to suggest that a tempering of America’s vaulting ambition in the world, a trimming of its sails, is precisely what is needed to reconstitute a viable US foreign policy. Meddling in other states’ domestic affairs and clinging to the fool’s-errand of democratic transformation will forever preclude a match of available means to such lofty ends, ensnaring the United States in the chimera of regime change. The self-absorbed vanity of democratic transformation ignores the paramountcy of culture in defining human communities; the fact is that few other cultures, least of all Arab, can equal the Anglo-Protestant mindset for fostering self-government under the rule of law and social justice.

Henry Kissinger once observed that one cannot responsibly discuss foreign policy without a concept of what constitutes a vital interest and recognition that international equilibrium sets a precondition for the pursuit of other goals. *Statecraft* illumines the nexus between means and ends in the execution of foreign policy, highlighting that neither neoliberalism nor neoconservatism pragmatically discriminates among national interests and makes that vital connection possible.



**Down to the Sea: An Epic Story of Naval Disaster and Heroism in World War II.** By Bruce Henderson. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. 368 pages. \$26.95. **Reviewed by Captain Albert F. Lord, Jr., USN,** US Navy Senior Service Representative to the US Army War College.

*Down to the Sea* is a tale of those who go down to the sea in ships told in the grand tradition. Much more than the story of the Philippine Sea typhoon of December 1944, it is a micro-history of the US Navy in World War II told from the perspectives of those who crewed four small ships.

The destroyers *Hull*, *Monaghan*, and *Spence*, the destroyer escort *Tabberer*, along with their crews are the protagonists in Bruce Henderson's latest effort. The three destroyers were lost in the massive typhoon that engulfed the US Navy's Third Fleet commanded by the legendary Admiral William F. Halsey. The *Tabberer*, a smaller but more seaworthy ship, in a truly heroic effort rescued most of the survivors in the aftermath of that storm.

Henderson cleverly presents his story from several perspectives. The first half of the book is devoted to a description of the ships and crews. The stories and backgrounds of those who gave these vessels personalities and their combat reputations are told with a familiarity only gained through in-depth interviews with the sailors and their families. Henderson begins his story with the attack on Pearl Harbor where the vintage destroyers *Hull* and *Monaghan* were moored; the later wartime exploits of those ships as well as the actions of the newer *Spence* and *Tabberer* provide the underpinning for a climactic battle with the elements.

An important subtext is the growth of the Navy during the war. Although Henderson does not place these four ships in the larger context of building the Navy for its epic struggle across the Pacific, their stories serve as a microcosm of that total effort. In July 1940, the US Navy consisted of 203,127 men and 1,099 ships. Five years later, the fleet had grown to 3,408,455 men with 68,936 vessels, 1,166 of which were major warships. *Down to the Sea* clearly shows the challenges associated with wartime growth; for example, *Tabberer*, commanded by a 29-year-old reservist, is placed in service a scant ten months before the devastating storm. Adding to her downfall was the fact that only ten percent of her crew of 200 had even been to sea. Shipboard leadership lessons come through loud and clear to the most novice reader.

The climax of the book is the typhoon itself and the failure of the commander of the Third Fleet to recognize the threat it posed. Admiral Halsey, stung by criticism of his performance at the Battle of Leyte Gulf (where he left a critical strait unguarded), was determined to fully support General MacArthur's invasion of Luzon by keeping his carrier force, and their supporting ships, at sea and in position. His focus on executing critical preparatory airstrikes against airfields on Luzon left him blind to the worsening weather. This oversight, in addition to the fact his smaller ships were running short of fuel (a fact impacting their stability) as the storm approached, led to disaster.

The *Hull* and *Monaghan* had recently been through a period of refit where a substantial portion of their veteran crews departed and the ships were outfitted with equipment that compromised their already limited seaworthiness. They had also received new, rather young commanding officers (the first from the Naval

Academy class of 1938). At the time of the storm *Spence* had been unable to complete her required refueling, and as a result was not properly ballasted, with less than ten percent of its fuel on board. Caught in a typhoon with winds of 160 knots and seas of 90 feet, these three small ships were lost, along with 756 of their crews; miraculously, 92 sailors survived to be rescued by *Tabberer* and other ships.

With a total of 28 ships damaged and 146 aircraft destroyed, the loss to the combat power of the Pacific Fleet was comparable to the damage inflicted by a major battle. Admirals King and Nimitz were livid, and repercussions were not long in coming. A court of inquiry was convened and heard testimony from the major participants, to include survivors from the sunken ships. Henderson effectively describes the proceedings, highlighting a number of questions not asked at the hearings; his experience as a navy meteorologist provides the reader with critical insight. The meteorological support, commanding officer experience, and ship stability were all examined, with the greatest criticism directed to the fleet commander (Halsey), for failure to properly maneuver the fleet in the face of deteriorating conditions. In the wake of the inquiry, Admiral Nimitz wrote a letter to all ship commanding officers reminding them of the necessity to take proper precautions and warning that seamanship remained the foundation for combat readiness. This letter remains a key reference for the captains of US Navy ships to this day.

*Down to the Sea* is a splendid telling of an important story. This book should be mandatory reading for aspiring mariners of any stripe. The leadership lessons are obvious and the balancing of priorities between combat operations and ship survival is timeless. Bruce Henderson has made a major contribution to the literature of the sea, but more importantly, he has provided a window into the world of sailors and those who traverse the great waters.

**Churchill, Hitler, and the Unnecessary War: How Britain Lost Its Empire and the West Lost the World.** By Patrick J. Buchanan. New York: Crown Publishers, 2008. 518 pages. \$29.95. **Reviewed by Professor Jeffrey Record**, Department of Strategy, Air War College.

Isolationism has been a spent force within the Republican Party ever since Dwight D. Eisenhower defeated Robert Taft for the Republican presidential nomination in 1952. Within the party, however, isolationist voices remain, including Pat Buchanan and Ron Paul. Buchanan, who opposed both the George H. W. Bush Administration's war to liberate Kuwait in 1991 and the George W. Bush Administration's war to overthrow Saddam Hussein in 2003, has insisted that the United States is a republic, not an empire, and therefore should drop the role of international policeman.

Buchanan is an Anglophobic, "Old Right" conservative who despises the neoconservative agenda of foisting democracy on foreign states, waging preventive war to forestall challenges to US global military supremacy, and promoting Israel's interests in the Middle East. He also inveighs against the neoconservatives' adulation of Winston Churchill, an admiration shared by much of America's political leadership. "There has arisen among America's elite a Churchill cult," whose ac-

lytes believe that “Churchill was not only a peerless leader but a statesman of unparalleled vision whose life and legend should be the model for every statesman,” Buchanan contends in *Churchill, Hitler, and the Unnecessary War*. “To this cult, defiance anywhere of US hegemony, resistance anywhere to America’s power becomes another 1938. Every adversary is ‘a new Hitler,’ every proposal to avert war ‘another Munich.’”

The author believes that Churchill was both a war-lover and a warmonger who played key roles in propelling Great Britain into World War I and especially World War II. He contends that the World Wars were, at least for Great Britain, unnecessary wars of choice, and that had London stayed out of both conflicts, so too would have the United States. These claims cannot be easily dismissed. The neoconservatives do worship Churchill and have tarred their opponents as appeasers. Churchill did often speak of the exhilaration of war, and he most certainly did favor war with Germany in 1914 and 1939. On the matter of choice, Buchanan is right in the strictest sense: In neither 1914 nor 1939 was Britain initially attacked by Germany (indeed, Berlin did not want war with Britain). Britain chose to declare war on Germany—in 1914 out of a sense of obligation to France and because Germany violated Belgium’s neutrality, and in 1939 because London had extended a defense guarantee to Poland. As for the United States, it would not have had a compelling reason to go to war with Germany in 1917 or 1941 had Britain opted for neutrality.

Buchanan concedes that Britain’s participation in both World Wars was essential to Germany’s defeat, and that Britain’s abstention would have virtually guaranteed Germany’s domination of continental Europe. But Buchanan emphatically rejects the cardinal principle that for centuries governed British statecraft in Europe—namely, that no great power can be permitted to dominate the Continent because a Philip II, Napoleon, Ludendorf, or Hitler in control of continental Europe’s vast resources would sooner or later be in a position to threaten Britain’s vital trade and invade the United Kingdom.

For Buchanan, the European continent, especially Eastern Europe, contained no British interests worth fighting for. What really mattered was the preservation of Britain’s global empire, which no aspiring continental hegemon, certainly not Germany, could credibly threaten unless Britain made the mistake of involving herself in continental wars. A Britain isolated from the Continent would still retain her vast empire and access to the war production potential of the United States.

It was thus counterproductive for Britain to have threatened war over Czechoslovakia in 1938 and gone to war over Poland a year later. Both countries were beyond the reach of British power and devoid of any strategic significance. Indeed, “[h]ad Britain not issued the war guarantee to Poland and declared war over Poland, there might have been no war in Western Europe and no World War II.” Hitler’s ambitions lay in the East, and Britain should not have attempted to thwart those ambitions. Hitler was determined to subjugate Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and it was in Britain’s interest to cheer on a war between Nazi and Soviet totalitarianism. Buchanan approvingly quotes Hanson Baldwin, *The New York Times*’ military correspondent, who wrote following the war that Britain and the United States should “have encouraged the world’s two great dictatorships to fight each other to a frazzle.”

Implicit in the Buchanan thesis is the assumption that Hitler, having subjugated all of Europe east of the Oder River, might have left Western Europe's democracies alone. The author would have us believe that Hitler, having gained control of the vast resources of Stalinist Russia and southeastern Europe, would tolerate the continued existence of an independent France, Belgium, and the Netherlands (all of which he invaded in 1940), to say nothing of a powerful, politically hostile great power lying just offshore—a great power that could (and did) serve as the indispensable staging area for projection of America's military across the Atlantic.

*Churchill, Hitler, and the Unnecessary War* is an unconvincing counterfactual inquiry into what might have been. It ignores not only the extraordinary nature of the Nazi German threat, which Churchill, for all his impulsiveness and his record of misjudgment on other issues, rightly regarded as a clear and present danger to the survival of both Great Britain and western civilization. It also does not address the inevitability of Great Britain's relative decline as both a European great power and an extra-European colonial empire—a decline admittedly accelerated by financial exhaustion following two World Wars. Hitler posed a far greater threat to Britain than Stalin ever could have, and without British and American participation in World War II, all of continental Europe, rather than just its eastern half, might have been condemned to decades, perhaps even centuries, of totalitarian tyranny. Churchill was a man of enormous flaws as well as strengths, but he was right about Hitler. He was not right about how to stop Hitler before 1939; Churchill favored the politically impossible solution (at least before 1941) of a grand Anglo-American-Russian alliance, when in fact only assassination or preventive war, which were not in the policy repertoires of the democracies, could have brought Hitler down.

**Nuclear Weapons: What You Need to Know.** By Jeremy Bernstein. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 299 pages. \$27.00 **Reviewed by George H. Quester**, Professor of Government and Politics, University of Maryland.

Jeremy Bernstein has written a very interesting, albeit somewhat mistitled, book that offers a lively and anecdotal history of the evolution of nuclear weapons, but hardly all of "what you need to know." The book may be particularly illuminating for the reader who has already perused the more comprehensive histories of the emergence of nuclear physics and the resultant destructive weapons. It offers insight on the human side of physics; the author is a former staff writer for the *New Yorker* and a highly competent nuclear physicist with experience at the various weapon laboratories. Based in part on post-Cold War disclosures, the book provides intriguing updates for earlier histories, related to what we knew concerning Soviet, Pakistani, and earlier German bomb projects. For someone who is new to the subject of nuclear physics, the book explains a number of basic principles related to atomic and hydrogen bombs in a very readable form. Unfortunately, it offers far more detail on the history and nature of physics than most readers will really need or understand.

At its outset the book seems intended for the many Americans who (including the Congress, the executive branch, and perhaps a number of officers in the Air Force and Navy) are not paying enough attention to the role or condition of the American nuclear arsenal. But it then barely touches on the issues of nuclear strategy as they have evolved since 1945 and 1949, the respective years of the first American and Soviet atomic tests. What bothers this reviewer most about the book is its unevenness of the coverage. The author goes into great detail regarding nuclear physics, but relatively little is said about the extended debate on the strategic role played by such weapons. While more than half the text is devoted to the pre-1945 development of the first bombs, barely 30 pages are devoted to the contemporary concerns about such weapons falling into the hands of various nations.

The prose is lively, but set in a chatty conversational manner, with a number of offhand judgmental comments. The presentation of the material is mostly chronological, but not entirely so, as there are numerous digressions and asides. The text reads as an extended reminiscence by someone telling a long series of stories, for the pleasure of telling them. Some of the important facts are footnoted with sources, but others are not. Some of the interesting disclosures related to Pakistani nuclear proliferation or Soviet espionage are thus difficult to assess as to reliability.

In short, this book will engage someone who already has a basic understanding about the subject, but it might easily mislead or confuse the novice. It is enjoyable to read, but does not fulfill the promise of providing what one “needs to know” regarding nuclear weapons.

**Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia.** By Richard J. Samuels. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007. 277 pages. \$49.95 (\$19.95 paper). **Reviewed by Richard Halloran**, onetime lieutenant of airborne infantry, later a foreign correspondent in Japan for ten years.

The author, a scholar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who has specialized in Japanese affairs for many years, identifies his thesis in the opening line: “Many Japanese analysts do not believe Japan now has a coherent grand strategy, and more than a few insist that it has never had one.” This reviewer agrees with that judgment. Professor Samuels, however, strives mightily over the next 210 pages to show that Japan, indeed, has had a grand strategy since the Meiji Restoration of 1868 when it left its feudal age and leapt into the modern era.

“Japanese security policy,” Samuels asserts, “has traveled a consistent path since the nineteenth century.” In that time, Japan entered the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 to ally itself with Britain, then a powerful empire whose navy ruled the waves. In 1940, Japan signed the Tripartite Pact to join the Axis of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, which Samuels fails to mention. After that pact ended in utter defeat, Japan signed a mutual security treaty with the United States.

Samuels sees all those alliances and relationships as crafting a grand strategy. They might be better labeled, in the kindest interpretation, as a series of pragmatic and expedient maneuvers to align Japan with the prevailing power of the time.

Japan, a middle-sized, resource-poor island nation, is stuck in a rough neighborhood and needs outside friends to survive, not to mention prosper.

The author makes much of the “Yoshida Doctrine,” named for the late Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida, the towering figure who led Japan out of the valley of death following World War II. The Japanese, however, do not favor doctrines, preferring instead vague guidelines that permit freedom of action when circumstances change. Yoshida, ever the practical politician, is not known to have ever used the term. Nor did his “deshi” or followers such as Prime Ministers Hayato Ikeda, Eisaku Sato, Kakuei Tanaka, and on through Kiichi Miyazawa, a lineage lasting until 1993. Samuels says the first Japanese to cite the Yoshida Doctrine was Masataka Kosaka, who in 1963 was credited with first use of the term. It is interesting that the author only identifies him as an adviser of Yoshida’s.

In any event, most scholars agree that the concept of the Yoshida Doctrine rests on two principles: (1) Rely on America to ensure Japan’s security while Japan does the minimum necessary to defend itself, and (2) Place maximum effort on economic development, largely through export of goods to pay for much-needed imports. Japan has put those two principles of security policy into practice for the last half century. The nation spends only one percent of its gross national product on defense, a limit endorsed by Japanese taxpayers. Its armed forces are about the 25th largest in the world and are circumscribed with constitutional, legal, and political restraints.

Regarding trade, an American consumer need look only in his garage, at his television set, laptop computer, or a myriad of other high-tech devices to see the results of Japan’s enormously successful economic policies. For many years, Taro Watanabe, the “John Q. Public” of Japan, worked hard but lagged behind in getting a fair share of the nation’s earnings. Today, he is living fairly comfortably, and deservedly so.

Besides the author’s questionable contention that Japan has a grand strategy, his book is marred with several flaws. He succumbs to the scholar’s habit of not identifying sources quoted; as the fabled editor of the *New Yorker*, Harold Ross, would have written in the margin, “Who he?” Samuels says the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force has patrolled up to 6,000 miles from Japan’s coastline, which is patently untrue. He goes on to report, “Marine General Henry Stackpole was relieved of duty after referring to the [US-Japan] alliance as a ‘cork in the Japanese bottle.’” Stackpole, a major general when he was quoted as saying that, was subsequently promoted to lieutenant general and assigned as commander of all Marine forces in the Pacific.

Samuels concludes that today Japan is faced with four strategic choices:

- “It can achieve prestige by increasing national strength.” The author maintains that Japan, under former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, had already embarked on this path. In this particular case, Samuels may have been the inadvertent victim of bad timing because that effort lost its momentum under Koizumi’s successors, Prime Ministers Shinzo Abe and Yasuo Fukuda.

- “A second possibility is to achieve autonomy by increasing national strength.” This change would require nuclear arms and a sizeable conventional force “operationally independent of the United States.” Recent conversations with Japanese concerned with foreign and security policy suggest this option would have little appeal so long as the Japanese have confidence in the US security commitment.

- “A third choice . . . is to achieve prestige by increasing prosperity and reducing Japanese exposure in world politics.” Japan would seek “to maintain America’s protective embrace as cheaply and for as long as possible.” That approach seems risky as several US administrations have become increasingly critical of Japan’s “free ride.”

- “The final, least likely, choice is to achieve autonomy through prosperity.” This choice would call for a return to the pacifism that was the mark of Japan’s security policy for decades following World War II. As Samuels notes, “the Japanese public is unmoved by these prescriptions.”

In sum, the most likely prospect for Japan is that the nation will muddle through with a pragmatic, case-by-case resolution of issues and not a whiff of grand strategy.

**Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win.** By Jeffrey Record. Dulles, Va.: Potomac Books, 2007. 192 pages. \$24.95. **Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Wade Markel, USA Retired.**

*Beating Goliath* attempts to answer an interesting and important question: Is there some dynamic at work that explains why insurgents are capable of defeating larger, stronger powers? As a historian, this reviewer is inclined to deny that an infinitely complex human endeavor like warfare can be reduced to a simple model, preferring instead to explain the results of particular conflicts in terms of contingent circumstances. That inclination may be misplaced. Recently, insurgents have prevailed over major powers often enough to make one suspect the existence of some underlying dynamic. Similar outcomes in such disparate circumstances seem unlikely to be the result of sheer coincidence. The mantra that “every war is different” is singularly unhelpful to statesmen who cannot hope to master the social intricacies of every possible arena of conflict, or to the military bureaucracy which develops forces for those wars. Jeffrey Record does us all a service by raising the question in such a concise and readable form.

The author does a good job of assessing previous attempts to articulate that dynamic. Early on, he makes the point that most insurgencies fail, something we should all remember. The major schools of thought on why insurgencies succeed or fail include asymmetry of commitment (Andrew Mack), strategic interaction (Ivan Arreguin-Toft), and democracies’ inability to employ sufficient brutality in an effort to win (Gil Merom). There are significant theoretical and empirical shortcomings with each theory, which Record ably and dispassionately identifies. The biggest shortcoming, in Record’s view, is their failure to accord the factor of external support its due weight.

As the author puts it, “There are few if any examples of colonial or post-colonial insurgencies that prevailed without foreign help.” He illustrates the importance of such help with brief but pithy analyses of prominent insurgent victories, including the American Revolution, the Spanish guerrillas against Napoleon, the Chinese Civil War, France and America in Indochina, and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. In each of these cases, external support sustained the insurgency and sometimes, as the French, Spanish, and Dutch war against Britain during the American Revolution, subsumed it. Record reminds us that external help can be indirect, often in the

form of exerting military pressure on the stronger power in other theaters. These analyses amply support Record's argument that the role of external assistance has to be considered along with Arreguin-Toft's theory of strategic interaction and Mack's thesis of disparity of interests.

Unfortunately for Record, his analysis of the current war in Iraq is a "snapshot in time" and no longer up to date. *Beating Goliath* was published in the spring of 2007, when conventional wisdom held that the situation there was an irredeemable mess. One need not contend that the war is virtually won to maintain that conditions have substantially changed. Record's assessment is particularly ironic, given that the overall situation seems to prove his larger point about the importance of foreign assistance. Even though a clear disparity in interests and several erroneous US strategies did exist, the one thing the insurgency lacked was meaningful external support. A steady trickle of suicide bombers and homemade explosive devices from neighboring countries, however clever and deadly, is clearly not external support of the kind and to the degree that the American colonists received from France or North Vietnam received from China and the Soviet Union. This may explain why the war in Iraq seems to be winding down even as the one in Afghanistan stubbornly resists resolution.

A stronger theory might have considered the issue of change in wartime. In 1954, Algeria was part of France. By 1961, it had become an expensive luxury that threatened France's political stability, even as France's military hold on its colony had become apparently unshakeable. In 1965, the United States' political leadership clearly thought vital American interests were at stake in Vietnam. Just as clearly, by 1968 very few political leaders on either side of the partisan divide thought so. No greater hawk than Richard Nixon ascended to the presidency during the Cold War, and even he had come to believe the United States was frittering away its power and prestige in a tertiary theater. The British succeeded in Malaya by changing their strategy to fit the facts. The United States has changed its strategy in Iraq for the better after the horrific internecine violence between the Shia and Sunni. The essence of John Nagl's *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* is that the side that adapts most effectively will win. It would be interesting to see relative adaptability addressed as a systemic factor.

These quibbles notwithstanding, *Beating Goliath* is relevant to both America's current wars and to developing capabilities for future wars. If denying insurgents external support is critical to the outcome, how is it done? Sometimes, geography takes care of the problem; jungle and ocean isolated the Malayan insurgency. In Algeria, the Morice Line was a Berlin Wall in reverse, and effectively strangled the National Liberation Front inside the colony. Even the much-derided McNamara Fence cut off the Vietnamese demilitarized zone to the north, though it obviously had no impact on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. In future counterinsurgency efforts, perhaps we should simply implement such barriers immediately. In Iraq, US forces do seem to have isolated the insurgency with reasonable success, the disproportionate impact of suicide bombers notwithstanding. In Afghanistan, however, the Taliban have found sanctuary in Pakistan's ungoverned tribal areas. Given Afghanistan's lengthy and formidable border, constructing a new Morice Line might appear prohibitively expensive. The implicit question *Beating Goliath* poses, however, is whether interdiction is more expensive than defeat.