Troy Mosley’s book, *The Armed Forces and American Social Change*, has a narrow but deep focus and presents the author’s personal views on African-American and other minorities’ contributions to our armed forces since our Republic’s founding. The specific focus is on the ebbs and flows, since the creation of the Department of Defense (DoD) in 1947, of DoD leaders’ efforts at diversity and inclusion. In the author’s words, “Unwritten Truce . . . pivots on the notion that our nation’s military may be the best force we have to combat the overwhelming force of the systemic, institutionalized racism that we still face today” (3).

Originally the book was self-published in 2018 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of President Harry S. Truman's integration of US armed forces in 1948 by Executive Order 9981—the detailed retelling of which is one of the finest chapters in the book. Rowman & Littlefield published the reviewed version of the book in 2021. In his reintroduction to the reviewed version, US Army Lieutenant General (retired) Russel L. Honoré quotes Sun Tzu, “See the enemy, see yourself, see the terrain” (x). He then states, “Unwritten Truce provides an opportunity for the nation and the armed forces to do precisely that and have a frank discussion on removing the final barriers to inclusion” (x). My reading of Mosley’s work affirms Honoré’s assertion of that opportunity. This book will inform many readers for the much-needed “frank discussion” in this time and place of social change in our Republic.

As mentioned, the author includes an excellent analysis of Truman, whom he describes as the “grandfather” of the American civil rights movement because of his political maneuvering around the Dixiecrats to produce the executive order directing the integration of our armed forces (6). Another strength is found in the chapter detailing the experiences of Black Americans in World War I, particularly the 92nd and 93rd Divisions and the 369th Infantry Regiment. How many serving Army officers, beyond our historians, know of that Regiment’s exploits or of the tragic Houston mutiny and riots of 1917 and the egregious
responses by the War Department? Mosely’s searing assessments of the treatment of our Black World War I veterans should be read by any officer seeking to understand the implications of that legacy today.

The weakness of the book does not lie in its content, per se, but rather in the impression Mosley leaves with readers as to the way ahead that advances in diversity and inclusion are the most important challenge facing DoD leaders. In his conclusion, the author addresses “Remaining Challenges and Implications for the United States and its Armed Forces” (181ff). Here he summarizes what the Department of Defense has gotten right over the decades and writes, “[w]hile the DoD has fallen short of achieving its goal of representative populations amongst military leaders, its commitment to diversity had become bedrock policy” (196).

The author correctly identifies the strategic imperative of diversity in our armed forces. But readers will ask: how big of an advantage is “diversity and inclusion” compared to applied technology across multiple domains of warfare, civil-military relations across differing administrations, and the willingness of citizens to volunteer for service? What other policies in human resources should the Department of Defense pursue as aggressively as diversity?

Fortunately, Honoré, a veteran of many direct combat operations, provides the answer in his reintroduction: “Though resistance to social change did not go easily, today the military can boast that the tenants [sic] of diversity and inclusion are central building blocks for our nation’s military, a dynamic, global, merit-based force unmatched worldwide” (x).

Honoré rightly understands that only a merit-based force has the potential to be militarily effective in modern warfare. Why? Because only a meritocratic culture that rewards achievement and talent can build indispensable, interpersonal trust among its diverse members. Such trust is created when those advanced within all units and commands are promoted on openly demonstrated merits of professional competence and moral character. Anything else destroys interpersonal trust being rightly understood as advancement on the basis of privilege of one sort or another.

With this added context that establishes the real limits for DoD policies advancing diversity and inclusion, this book is a very valuable read for all aspiring and current leaders in our armed forces and for their civilian counterparts.

Keywords: diversity, American civil rights, World War I, integration, Truman, 369th Infantry Regiment
Some predict globalization will fail. Peter Zeihan asserts the current world order peaked in the early twenty-first century and is in decline. With a comprehensive analysis of the economic, demographic, technologic, and geographic factors that contribute to the trajectory of the current Breton Woods–established world order, Zeihan argues globalization will not endure.

A self-professed geopolitical strategist, Zeihan will be familiar to many from his work, *The Accidental Superpower* (Twelve Books, 2014). Now spending his days providing geopolitical analysis to a broad spectrum of clients, he supplements his writing with YouTube videos to share his perspectives. Zeihan injects gallows and cynical humor into his books, producing readable works with a personable tone.

In *The End of the World*, Zeihan provides a thorough and sequential review of the transportation, finance, energy, industrial materials, manufacturing, and agriculture systems arrayed around the world to paint a picture of the mechanisms for his view of globalization's decline. He confirms and extends Jared Diamond’s geographical and environmental thinking from *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (Norton, 1999). Although I considered myself knowledgeable about transportation before reading the book, Zeihan's examination of global transportation systems laid bare my ignorance. Zeihan's dissection of molybdenum's resource cycle exemplifies his depth of analysis and breadth of understanding of a single resource's impact on our civilization. (Spoiler alert: you will despair for your children’s future.)

Zeihan predicts three main results of globalization's end. First, he describes how the world will descend into a new global system where trade and transportation are not guaranteed. Competition for dwindling resources will drive us from a world order where transportation of resources is almost an afterthought to a world where societies constrain themselves to resources immediately or, at best, regionally available because global transportation
is not secure. Second, many nonintegrated economies (those not containing an entire resource chain from source to processing to consumption) will struggle to survive as demographic shifts conflict with resource availability. These nonintegrated societies will become increasingly belligerent to secure the resources their expanding populations require. Third, only a few countries and regions will have success, which Zeihan defines as both political and economic stability, given their demographic and geographic realities. Zeihan is bullish on North America but notes the United States will survive only with critical support from Mexico, counter to the isolationist narrative. He has similar projections for only a few other nations, including Argentina, France, and New Zealand; Zeihan asserts China has passed its prime and will continue to wane through the twenty-first century.

One could take issue with a few major points in Zeihan’s analysis. He develops great projections and displays well-considered thinking. Zeihan, however, bases his conclusions only on current knowledge and circumstances. Logically, we can see the proposed future state as if looking at distant terrain from a moving train. We have an idea of what lies ahead, but as the train moves on the tracks, things may appear very different. Our world moves through time without the benefit of tracks, so to speak, to guide its course. Zeihan squarely acknowledges this fact, which we must bear in mind with all prognostication, lest we become overly enamored with a proposed future state.

Zeihan presents excellent graphs, tables, and figures. His data support his claims and thoughts. (Note: if you are inclined to listen to an audiobook instead of reading a hard copy, you will benefit from Zeihan’s own voice providing tone to his humor and will find all the graphs, tables, and figures are available on Zeihan’s website.) He does, however, make a few assertions for which he provides no basis. For example, he describes the Japan Maritime Self-Defense (JMSD) Force—the Japanese navy—as the world’s second largest. Although Japan’s navy does operate outside the Pacific region, any objective measure (such as tonnage, personnel, or funding) would place it further down the list of world navies. Zeihan supports most conclusions with data, but there are a few misses.

All security, policy, and military leaders would benefit from considering Zeihan’s thoughts, especially leaders who want a projection of the future world order and a framework in which to examine it.
Former UN Senior Police Adviser Mark A. Kroeker cleverly captured the challenges he faced in peacekeeping operations in 2005, stating, “We need to stop reinventing the flat tire.” Rufus Phillips aspires to address the same affliction prevalent in US attempts to stabilize fragile states, beginning with Vietnam in the 1950s, and articulates “why they [fragile states] represent a serious national security challenge, what to do about them, and how to do it more successfully” (2).

He draws on nearly 60 years of experience, spanning his time as a practitioner in Vietnam in 1963 in the USAID Rural Affairs Office, Saigon, where he worked with General Edward G. Landsdale, to Afghanistan, where he was an adviser to the Free and Fair Elections Foundation during the 2009 elections. He derives his conclusions from case study analysis of US efforts to stabilize Vietnam, El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The “flat tires” he repeatedly observed were failures to realize “achieving a reasonable degree of country stability is inherently a political endeavor,” “we need a combined political and security strategy adapted to the prevailing conditions of the target . . . state,” and “stability assistance depends above all on the personal skills of the workforce needed for its implementation” (248–49). His recommendations address two challenges stemming from these recurrent failings: the “need to develop a strategy and approach that works” and to “develop and assign a trained and skilled workforce” (21).

The leitmotif of his discussion is the need for an expeditionary cadre of stabilization specialists in diplomacy and development who would be used to implement a political and security strategy. He seizes on the 2019 Global Fragility Act (GFA) that allocates up to $200 million a year “to [stabilize] [sic] conflicted areas and prevent violence and fragility globally” as a vehicle for the implementation of his proposals (16). The Biden-Harris administration has identified seven countries as locations where these funds will be expended. Phillips correctly notes that “[t]he act appears to assume that existing State
and USAID personnel will be used” (224). To address the requirement to prepare these personnel for the unique rigors and challenges of stability operations, he proposes to “[s]et up a special expeditionary diplomatic and development stability assistance school to create such a workforce” with enrollment open to military and CIA personnel (249).

This desideratum has now been realized with the creation of the Joint Interagency Stabilization Course run by the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, the State Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations, and the USAID Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization and is supported by the US Army War College. It falls short of Phillips’s “expeditionary” vision because it has fewer contact hours, but it has the advantage of a three-day stabilization tabletop exercise. As for the strategy, “[t]he deployment of stability assistance personnel should occur within the framework of a general fragile country political and security stabilization strategy . . . (a requirement of the Global Fragility Act)” (221–22). Ideally, therefore, Washington would provide the ends and the means, and experts in stabilization deployed to the Embassy would develop the ways.

He concludes the book with a 20-page appendix providing a curriculum for the training program and how to organize the school. This constitutes Phillips’s legacy to his target audience—those who manage the Joint Interagency Stabilization Course and practitioners responsible for crafting stabilization strategies, that is, those who have inherited the profound challenges of stabilization.

Although Phillips states one of his purposes is to explain “why [fragile states] represent a serious national security challenge,” he devotes little attention to the topic other than to assert that there is a “propensity of these types of states to become havens for organizations such as the Islamic State (ISIS) and al-Qaeda” (2). He is also troubled that chapter 7 of the National Defense Strategy “is on peer-to-peer competition and no longer characterizes stabilization efforts as a priority” (18). His book was written, however, well before Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Overall, Phillips has succeeded in his aim of creating a program to prepare practitioners to implement the Global Fragility Act’s obligatory strategies so that future administrations can “stop reinventing the flat tire.”
Paul Kennedy came to the attention of many national security students with his 1987 book, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (Lexington Books, 1987). It is difficult to imagine a bigger topic. The book's scope and ambition were breathtaking, even if the core idea was not terribly surprising: Kennedy argued that the economic strength of an alliance or coalition had a significant role in determining the strength of its military and hence the outcomes of military conflicts.

*The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* landed at a time of American insecurity regarding her status in the world, before the Soviet Union’s collapse and when Japan seemed about to supplant the United States as the world’s greatest power. In fact, my copy’s cover shows a weary Uncle Sam handing global leadership to a Japanese man holding a rising sun flag as an even more tattered John Bull staggers off into the shadows.

*Victory at Sea* again arrives at a time of American concern about the rise of an Asian great power, albeit a different one, but its lessons regarding China are somewhat more obscure.

It also has exemplary illustrations. In fact, while the ambition of the book is again notable, this time it is the pictures that are breathtaking. The 53 paintings by the late Ian Marshall, former president of the American Society of Marine Artists, are some of the most beautiful depictions of ships of war ever produced; they are worth the price of admission by themselves in this gorgeous volume.

Most naval histories of World War II, by far the largest naval war in world history, focus on one of the three main theaters: the Atlantic, the Pacific, or the Mediterranean. Kennedy ties together events in all three, all through the same lens.
used in his earlier book, with eye-opening results. Kennedy thoughtfully explains the huge role interactions between the theaters had in the course of events.

There were six navies of note prior to the war, Kennedy tells us—the American, British, French, German, Italian, and Japanese. In a book that could have been subtitled “The Rise and Fall of the Great Navies,” we learn why the Italian and French navies played such relatively small roles in World War II, how the German submarine campaign had a strategic and almost decisive role in the Battle of the Atlantic before technology and a dogged Royal Navy (and merchant marine force) prevailed, and how the Imperial Japanese Navy triumphed early in the war and then faded into irrelevance. Mahanian dreams of big gun battles at sea fell to Julian Corbett’s theories of commerce raiding and the growing power of naval aviation—to the lasting dismay of the battleship admirals.

Mostly, though, we marvel at the way the latent industrial power of the United States exploded during Lend-Lease and then went supernova after Pearl Harbor, making the American Navy the nearly undisputed global sea power by the end of the war. The book includes a mind-boggling final chart, “Overall warship tonnages of the Powers, 1943–1960.” Rosie the Riveter enabled victory at sea—a well-fed Rosie at that, Kennedy notes, even as global counterparts worked on starvation rations.

In a book that may be criticized for economic determinism, Kennedy does pay tribute to the courage of the (mostly) men who manned the ships and flew the planes produced by the American industrial machine—the Brits and Russians in American Studebaker trucks and the Yanks flying Grumman Hellcats. American industrial might did not determine the course of the war on its own, but what Winston Churchill called the world’s boiler room, once lit, powered the way to victory.

Other critics have noted Kennedy’s overreliance on Wikipedia in his footnotes, and this reviewer also found it jarring that a book of this stature, even one written under COVID-19 restrictions, takes a lazy path that would draw rebuke if chosen by a student. But Marshall’s paintings and the scale of Kennedy’s ambition and understanding make this a book that should be widely read not just here but perhaps even more diligently in the war colleges of our pacing threat. The People’s Liberation Army would do well to take careful note of the long-term danger of engaging the US Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Army in battle in the wide Pacific. It will not end well for them.
The American Army in Germany, 1918–1923:
Success against the Odds

by Dean A. Nowowiejski

Reviewed by Dr. James D. Scudieri, senior research historian,
Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

This monograph covers the US Army’s largely forgotten first round of occupation in Germany after World War I. An introductory overview cites earlier military governance from the Mexican War of 1846–48 through the nineteenth century (3). The same chapter references the domestic debate between President Woodrow Wilson and the Senate and the subsequent administration’s challenges under President Warren G. Harding.

Chapters 2 through 8 feature Major General Henry T. Allen as the central figure, whom General John J. Pershing chose to lead the American Forces in Germany (AFG). Author Dean A. Nowowiejski suggests the Army had no better general to work with allies until General Dwight D. Eisenhower (1–2). A veteran of the frontier and the Philippines, military governor of Leyte, and organizer of the Philippine Constabulary, Allen commanded the 90th Division in France.

Chapter 2 explains the initial occupation by US Third Army under Major General Joseph T. Dickman. It consisted of the III and the IV Corps, with three divisions each, and the VII Corps, in reserve with two divisions. Third Army conducted the post-Armistice advance into Luxembourg and Germany and reached the Rhine on December 9, 1918. The text’s frank categorization of this period as an uneven, if not inept, “pickup game” requires critical context: Third Army advanced into Germany during armistice, and hostilities might have resumed (32–33).

Chapter 3 discusses the Inter-Allied Rhineland High Commission (IARHC) amidst coalition, interagency, and nongovernmental organizational issues. Chapter 4 begins to focus on the armed forces in Germany itself and how the establishment, largely composed of new recruits, became a premier American force. The text has many superlatives. The success of American forces in Germany rested upon Allen’s leadership, quality officers, and an enlisted force that rose to the occasion. Many officers had a progressive philosophy. Most, if not all, were steeped in riding culture, and their further education involved foreign language study. The armed forces in Germany developed international respect
and set a standard with its exercise of “benign impact” in occupation (88). Peaking at some 15,000 troops in 1920–21, its military presence lent authority to Allen’s conduct on the international stage. Chapter 5 flows into a detailed analysis of individual and collective training and has separate sections on the training cycles for 1921 and 1922.

Chapter 6 examines issues of occupation, beginning with the work of Civil Affairs officers in the transition to civilian authorities. The wide complexity of tasks includes confiscation of German war materiel, disposition of surplus stocks, fortification dismantling, movement control, police and public safety, public health and sanitation, and public works and utilities (146). Chapter 7 examines the junior soldiers who wielded substantial financial and economic clout. Chapter 8 clearly views the AFG withdrawal as premature and a missed opportunity.

Appendix 1 recounts individual experiences. The officers’ mini-biographies demonstrate the quality of Allen’s staff and provide a “who’s who” guide to World War II. Appendix 2 showcases a “Chronology of Horse Events.” Appendix 3 is an essay on the sources.

This monograph fills a void with a major case study in US Army stability operations. Through widespread research in primary sources, this paean to Allen articulates how the general set the standard, remained engaged in AFG training and welfare, and developed personal relationships with coalition civilians and generals.

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**Keywords:** World War I, Germany, Major General Henry T. Allen, General John J. Pershing

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**The Union Assaults at Vicksburg:**

**Grant Attacks Pemberton, May 17–22, 1863**

by Timothy B. Smith

Reviewed by Dr. Gregory J. W. Urwin, professor of history, Temple University

Major General Ulysses S. Grant’s capture of Vicksburg, Mississippi, on July 4, 1863, ranks as the most brilliant campaign of the Civil War. Combining deception and rapid maneuver, Grant overcame seemingly insurmountable geographic obstacles, bewildered his opponents, battered the forces defending the “Gibraltar of the Confederacy,” and caused those Confederates to tumble pell-mell behind the protection...
of the city’s fortifications. When Vicksburg finally capitulated after a six-week siege, Grant succeeded in cutting the Confederacy in half along the Mississippi River. The city’s 30,000 famished defenders became the second of three Rebel armies that Grant took captive. Vicksburg also yielded its conquerors a mountain of enemy materiel—including 172 cannon and 60,000 small arms.

The only thing that marred Grant’s triumph was the costly frontal assaults he directed against Vicksburg’s fearsome fortifications on May 19 and 22, 1863. These futile attacks cost the Army of the Tennessee 4,141 casualties, convincing Grant the only way to take his objective was by siege. Historians who disparage Grant’s generalship reference these failures to the exclusion of everything else he accomplished but do not examine the attacks in detail. The voluminous literature on the Civil War mostly ignores the largest battles of the Vicksburg Campaign, despite the important stakes that hinged on their outcome.

Timothy B. Smith, the author of The Union Assaults at Vicksburg, is eminently qualified to cover the crucial days that compelled Grant to adopt a more gradual approach to securing his prize. It is hard to imagine any other historian better qualified to tackle this task. A former ranger at Shiloh National Military Park who currently teaches history at the University of Tennessee at Martin, Smith has published at least 14 other books on the Civil War in the Western Theater—including five on different aspects of the Vicksburg Campaign. His mastery of the sources is evident on every page of the book. In the best traditions of Civil War operational history, Smith covers his subject from the top down and the bottom up, weaving a story that abounds with the voices of officers and men, including the humblest privates. While Smith’s narrative teems with arresting details and revealing anecdotes, he never lets readers lose sight of the big picture.

Smith does not denigrate Grant, but he admits that the assaults of April 18 and 23 exposed the Union commander’s chief flaw as a general—overconfidence. Nevertheless, Grant had good reason to rush the capture of Vicksburg. Beginning on May 12, Grant whipped elements of the Vicksburg garrison in four pitched battles over a five-day span, which ended with the enemy’s rout at Big Black River on May 17. Assuming Lieutenant General C. Pemberton’s surviving Rebels too battered, stunned, and demoralized to mount a determined defense, Grant directed the Army of the Tennessee to storm Vicksburg at 2 p.m. on May 19. Grant’s success up to that point had hinged on celerity, and he feared a resort to siege tactics would give other Rebel forces time to concentrate and relieve their trapped comrades.

The next five days would demonstrate the disparity between what generals desire and what their troops can deliver. Smith calls the three veteran corps
Grant assembled outside Vicksburg “the best army the United States fielded in the Civil War” (180). The odds facing those Midwesterners and border-state Federals, however, turned out to be more than even the bravest and most disciplined soldiers could overcome. To begin with, Captain Samuel H. Lockett, the Confederate engineer who fortified Vicksburg, had done his work with consummate skill. Once inside that network of forts, redoubts, redans, and other earthworks, Pemberton’s garrison rebounded with unexpected speed from its previous reverses, and the Rebels would fight tenaciously when the Federals tested their defenses. In addition, ravines, ridges, timber, and thick undergrowth crisscrossed the ground leading to Vicksburg, which complicated the coordination of a grand assault by an entire army.

Terrain challenges prevented all but one of Grant’s divisions from getting into position to launch an attack on May 19. That effort netted the Army of the Tennessee 942 casualties in all—613 in the assaulting division alone. Three of Grant’s corps threw their weight against Vicksburg on May 23, but victory eluded them. Most Union troops behaved with incredible bravery, driving to the very base of the mammoth Confederate earthworks where they planted their bullet-riddled colors and blazed away at any enemies who poked their heads above the protective parapets. Pinned down by Rebel fire, the surviving Federals had to wait for the cover of darkness before they could retreat to safety.

The hubris of one of Grant’s senior subordinates caused the slaughter to go on longer than necessary that bloody day. Major General John A. McClernand, the former politician commanding the Union XIII Army Corps, exaggerated the size of two small penetrations his divisions managed to effect near the Confederate center. Claiming possession of two enemy forts, McClernand demanded that Major General William Tecumseh Sherman’s XV Corps and Major General James B. McPherson’s XVII Corps renew their efforts to prevent the concentration of Rebel reserves against him. McClernand had angled earlier to wrest command of the Army of the Tennessee from Grant’s hands, but no army commander could ignore a plea for help from a subordinate who claimed to be on the verge of victory. Consequently, more Federals surged forward and died for nothing while the Rebels managed to erase McClernand’s fragile salients. Grant took his revenge by making McClernand the scapegoat for the failed assaults, which resulted in a personal victory for the Union commander—McClernand’s transfer to Illinois.

*The Union Assaults at Vicksburg* presents a thoughtful study on the challenges of command and the temptation to count an enemy vanquished before he is ready to admit defeat.
Major General Ulysses S. Grant’s capture of Vicksburg, Mississippi, on July 4, 1863, capped the most brilliant campaign in the US Civil War. Utilizing maneuver, surprise, and a gift for joint operations, Grant trapped a hostile army and compelled its surrender after six weeks of siege. Historians have waxed eloquent about the operations that brought Grant’s Army of the Tennessee to the outskirts of Vicksburg in April and May 1863, but they gloss over the final phase of the campaign that set the seal on Grant’s war-shortening victory.

Timothy B. Smith claims *The Siege of Vicksburg* is the first detailed academic study of the events that culminated in Grant’s masterpiece. With this volume on the siege itself, he cements his dominance over this significant slice of Civil War history.

Smith conducted his research among nearly 80 archives across the United States, not to mention many printed primary sources. Smith tells this story with the authority that comes from long years of study. In addition, he and his publisher, the University Press of Kansas, deserve credit for providing 19 well-executed maps that permit readers to observe the progress of the siege and its ancillary operations. The book also features photographs of the leading commanders on both sides and views of a few siege scenes. The knowledge Smith acquired from that prodigious effort enables him to place readers among the sweat-drenched soldiers in the opposing trench lines, the stifling hot confines of the Union gunboats and mortar boats that rained destruction on Vicksburg from the Mississippi River, and the caves Confederate civilians hewed out of the city’s surrounding bluffs once their homes became targets for Yankee guns.

While Smith sheds abundant light on the experience of the common soldier, *The Siege of Vicksburg* unfolds primarily as a command history. Grant functions as Smith’s chief protagonist, and with good reason. After Grant decided on a siege as the surest way to pry the Confederate Army of Vicksburg out of its stronghold, he did not lapse into a sedentary role. He ensured his prey did not escape by completing an airtight line of circumvallation around Vicksburg’s defenses. He stripped Union commands in the upper Mississippi
Valley of every available soldier to hasten this work and to cover his rear with sufficient troops to detect and check any Rebel army that might assemble in Mississippi’s interior to save the city. By late June 1863, roughly 33,000 Federals composed this blocking force under Major General William Tecumseh Sherman, Grant’s favorite lieutenant. At the same time, Grant did everything he could to intensify the misery of Vicksburg’s defenders. He kept the soldiers in his siege lines digging constantly to tighten the noose around his objective’s neck. Regardless of Confederate countermeasures, Union parallels crept closer to the enemy’s works, which would ultimately provide the besiegers with jump-off points for successful onslaughts. Other Federal troops strove to dig underground mines below Confederate strongpoints. If successful, those efforts would create breaches that would facilitate assaults. Finally, Grant coordinated with his willing naval partner, Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter, to augment the bombardment battering Vicksburg.

On the Confederate side, the prevailing mood smacked of fatalism. Once Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton placed his 30,000 troops behind Vicksburg’s defenses, he thought his best option was to hold the city until another Rebel army could be organized to raise the siege. Many of Pemberton’s enlisted subordinates believed their Pennsylvania-born commander to be a Yankee agent who had deliberately marched them into a trap. Despite such distrust, the Vicksburg garrison consisted of good soldiers who endured constant shelling and sniping, dwindling rations, and ceaseless duty under a broiling sun to deny their post to the Federals.

Confederate President Jefferson Davis entrusted the task of saving Vicksburg to General Joseph E. Johnston and his patchwork Army of Relief. Johnston lacked the boldness and imagination necessary to accomplish his mission. He hoped Pemberton would stage a breakout and claw his way unassisted through Grant’s siege lines. When Pemberton failed to save himself, Johnston flatly told him less than a week into the siege, “I am too weak to save Vicksburg” (97). Johnston never wavered in his defeatism, even as reinforcements reached him from different quarters of the Confederacy. Concern for his career prospects, however, impelled Johnston to make every appearance of preparing to succor Vicksburg. As Smith concludes: “Johnston had done as little as possible but enough to make a show of effort, planning all the while never to get close enough to risk his force in a fight or, by extension, help Vicksburg’s garrison in any meaningful way” (505).

Convinced Vicksburg was the first real siege in US military history since Yorktown and the “quintessential siege” of the Civil War, Smith introduces his text by exploring that form of warfare (xviii–xix). He describes how future Civil War commanders learned about siege craft at West Point and the time-honored steps involved in reducing a fortress. He also discusses the use of such devices
as gabions, fascines, and sap rollers. Having explained how sieges were supposed to be conducted, Smith proceeds to relate how a shortage of trained engineers and resources, along with extraordinarily difficult terrain, forced Grant and his subordinates to deviate from the rules and trust in adaptation and improvisation.

By taking Vicksburg, Grant did more than any other Union general to decide the Confederacy’s fate. He cut the Rebel republic in half, draining the enemy’s power and morale in the Mississippi Valley. No longer could Confederate quartermasters and commissaries draw on the supplies previously ferried across the Mississippi from the Red River Valley. Finally, Grant’s victory set the stage for the great campaigns of 1864 and 1865 that would cut the Confederacy into quarters and grind its hopes for independence into the dust.

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Keywords: Civil War, Vicksburg, Ulysses S. Grant, General Joseph E. Johnston, siege tactics, Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton, Army of the Tennessee, Mississippi Valley

Regional Studies

Rebuilding Arab Defense: US Security Cooperation in the Middle East

by Bilal Y. Saab

Reviewed by Dr. Robert Mogielnicki, senior resident scholar at Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, adjunct assistant professor at Georgetown University, and professional lecturer at George Washington University

Bilal Y. Saab’s *Rebuilding Arab Defense* is timely and informative. Saab assesses US-Arab defense and security cooperation to date, determines how to improve an “unimpressive record,” and explains why the issue matters amid competing foreign policy priorities (1). To accomplish these aims, Saab delineates between the “old, transactional model” of US-Arab defense and security cooperation that held sway from the 1970s until the mid-2000s and the emergence of a new model in recent years (23).

After an instructive description of defense institution building, Saab covers the primary country case studies Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), whose varying fiscal capacities possess important implications: wealthier Arab governments *pay for* many security partnership costs, whereas other governments mostly *receive funding* from the United States to facilitate cooperation in this domain.
Saab pulls no punches in his discussion of Saudi Arabia, describing the oil-rich kingdom as possessing “one of the most underwhelming armies in the world” (51). He is more optimistic about prospects for the defense transformation plan advanced by Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS). The focus on Saudi defense transformation offers a refreshing take on MBS’s reform agenda, which other studies and media publications tend to view through economic and social prisms.

The chapters focusing on Jordan and Lebanon present a mixed bag of cooperation. References to “pockets of excellence” within the Jordanian Armed Forces bring to mind Steffen Hertog’s “islands of efficiency” concept used to explain surprising examples of effectiveness in Gulf Arab economies (87). While Saab depicts the Lebanese Armed Forces as setting a low bar, he also writes that “[w]ithin a decade, the United States essentially was able to transform the [Lebanese Armed Forces] from a decrepit force mocked by all its regional peers to a professional military that has earned the respect of [Central Command’s] leadership” (28). Saab documents plenty of insufficiencies associated with the Jordanian Armed Forces and Lebanese Armed Forces as well as various dysfunctional aspects of US-focused cooperation.

Saab heaps praise upon the UAE for its competent and effective armed forces. Early in the work, he challenges himself to reconcile the UAE’s achievement of military effectiveness with its substantial gaps in defense institutional capacity. His repeated explanation that “no one has sought opportunities to grow and learn from the Americans more aggressively than the Emiratis” does not settle this debate (147).

Saab utilizes cooperation-related experiences with other Arab countries for occasional insights. Later, short descriptions of US defense and security cooperation with Colombia, Georgia, and the Philippines contribute additional comparative dimensions to the work. The author draws upon a diverse array of sources, including anonymous interviews. The tone of the work is that of a seasoned practitioner interested in quickly identifying an issue and eager to find a better path forward.

The final chapters’ task involves diagnosing sociocultural challenges and establishing a dynamic pattern of engagement able to achieve US regional objectives and build Arab military capability for a rapidly changing world. Saab stresses that improving defense and security cooperation must involve both US decisionmakers—especially those in Congress—and Arab actors. It becomes increasingly clear throughout the work that the objectives the United States and Arab partners pursue through defense and security
cooperation are not always in alignment. Refreshingly, Saab acknowledges the United States may not always be the best partner for Arab states in all areas of defense and security cooperation.

Readers encounter a list of unsatisfactory US military assistance programs in the broader Middle East at the book’s outset. Structured, in-depth comparisons to successful defense and security cooperation models across the globe would have provided a stronger analytical launchpad. Figures and charts could have helped quantify and visualize unwise spending on assistance and cost-effective avenues forward.

Saab correctly notes that fears of Chinese and Russian influence in Middle Eastern defense and security realms can be exaggerated, especially when compared against the longer history of US involvement in the region. Given the current course of US-Arab defense and security cooperation, however, the United States may encounter fewer and less desirable posture options there over the coming years. Additional research and clear thinking on this topic can help the United States avoid such a predicament.

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Keywords: China, Russia, Middle East, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia Strategy

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The Strategy of Denial: American Defense in an Age of Great Power Conflict

by Elbridge A. Colby

Reviewed by Dr. John A. Nagl, associate professor of warfighting studies, US Army War College, with Colonel Manoj Thapa, Nepalese Army, student, US Army War College (Class of 2022)

Pentagon strategist Elbridge A. Colby has an intense, myopic focus on China in The Strategy of Denial. Early in the book he argues, “The top priority of the US defense establishment should be ensuring that China cannot subordinate a US ally or quasi-ally in Asia, with the first priority being developing and maintaining the ability to conduct a denial defense of Taiwan” (xvi). His insistence on deterring China is so strong he suggests America
“also maintain a missile defense shield against North Korea and Iran if this is not too costly” (emphasis added). Although he seems to consider deterrence of China the only strategic goal truly worth pursuing, he writes, “...if the United States does want some additional insurance ... it can make some provision for ... defeating a Russian fait accompli attempt against an eastern NATO ally” (xvi). Colby then casually suggests discarding decades of extremely successful US counterproliferation efforts because America may want to encourage “selective friendly nuclear proliferation,” which he considers “the least bad option, though this would not be a panacea and would be dangerous” (xvii).

It is beyond ironic—and is in fact extremely dangerous—that Colby would so nonchalantly walk away from America’s commitment to our European allies, given Colby’s recommended strategy of denying China regional hegemony depends upon a system of alliances in Asia, some formal, others less so. Colby correctly notes, “The main purpose of the American defense perimeter is thus to provide enough reassurance to enough important states that might otherwise bandwagon with China that they can prudently work to balance it alongside the United States” (239). Somehow, he fails to realize current and prospective American allies in Asia, when making their own strategic calculations, will notice America has made optional its solemn obligation to defend its NATO allies. The effects of the botched American withdrawal from Afghanistan are not yet clear, but an America that reneges on its treaty obligations to NATO partners would certainly do more than raise the eyebrows of Colby’s suggested deterrence partners against China in Asia.

Colby’s recommendations regarding the deterrence of China are uncontroversial—conventional wisdom, even. He correctly prioritizes assistance to Taiwan, to make it harder for China to seize the island. In his analysis, “[i]f the United States can defend Taiwan, it can almost certainly defend the Philippines,” which he identifies as China’s second most likely target (240). Where Colby goes astray is in suggesting the defense of Taiwan and the Philippines is the sine qua non of American strategy.

This book, with its near-exclusive focus on China, damages the credibility of our current and future security guarantees and makes proliferation and war more likely—exactly what we do not need the former author of the National Defense Strategy to do, even if he no longer exercises responsibility for the security of the United States and our allies.
Zero-Sum Victory: What We’re Getting Wrong about War

by Christopher D. Kolenda

Reviewed by Dr. José de Arimatéia da Cruz, visiting professor, Center for Strategic Leadership, Homeland Defense, and Security Issues, US Army War College

Christopher D. Kolenda is no stranger to understanding the shortcomings and outcomes of conflict. A retired US Army colonel, he was the first American to fight the Taliban as a commander in combat and to engage them in peace talks. Kolenda’s *Zero-Sum Victory* is an eye-opener for current and future military leaders. He contends that “the belief in the military’s centrality to waging war until a decisive zero-sum victory is achieved has limited the presidents’ policy and strategy options, damaged America’s reputation and strategic position, given the generals and admirals an inappropriately large voice in national security affairs, and heightened the risk of quagmires” (4). Kolenda’s case studies of Iraq and Afghanistan highlight the US Army’s fixation on winning at all costs, regardless of the lack of a clearly defined victory or exit strategy. *Zero-Sum Victory* “explores the systemic problems in US policy and strategy that emerge from flawed presumptions about war termination” (8).

According to Kolenda, “the United States’ lack of an organized way of thinking about war termination and its fixation on decisive, zero-sum victory have induced three major, systematic issues” for the Army, thus leading to a potential “quagmire” (15). Furthermore, the Army’s inability to “[differentiate] between successful war termination outcomes and their role in policy and strategy” presents some concerns (36). For example, “the presumption that success requires decisive victory is restricting policy options, placing undue emphasis on a military force and inducing militarycentric [sic] strategies that have low probabilities of success” (36). Another issue is that “the US government was slow to modify a losing or ineffective strategy due to the cognitive bias, political and bureaucratic frictions, and relationship problems with the host nation” (10). Finally, according to Kolenda, as the war dragged on, public support waned, and the administration gave up on decisive victory, the United States forfeited critical leverage in announcing a withdrawal and a desire to see negotiations or transition (36–37).

The author notes the Army currently faces a “chronic problem” due to three elements: the deviation of actual results from expected results,
the deviation's unknown cause, and the need to correct the deviation (245). Kolenda’s book provides a series of implications for US foreign policy in addition to observations and recommendations that future US Army War College students should consider in their next mission. The implications are as follows:

End the zero-sum decisive victory fixation. The United States created and persisted too long in following strategies that sought decisive victory in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Vietnam. . . . Develop an interagency policy and strategy framework for waging war so that US officials can communicate clearly and reduce confusion. . . . Right-size the military’s role in the policy and strategy process, so the president receives integrated rather than military-centric options. . . . Reduce cognitive obstacles that impair decision-making. . . . Address America’s Bureaucratic Way of War by decentralizing to an in-theater, interagency command so that someone is accountable for results. Congress can hold meaningful hearings, and senior officials can stop misleading Americans with their claims of in-silo progress . . . (255–62).

Finally, the United States must reduce patron-client problems so partners do not hold them hostage, and they must develop expertise in wartime negotiations to stop making bad deals and avoid manipulation from corrupt partners.

Kolenda’s _Zero-Sum Victory_ is an essential contribution to the existing literature on the war. It highlights the shortcoming of overemphasizing a winner-takes-all approach. When the Army employs such an approach, there is less room for compromise and cooperation, which could advance and improve outcomes for all parties involved. The United States should rethink its continuing zero-sum approach to conflicts in the twenty-first century, where enemies and near-peer competitors are constantly in flux, adapting and adopting new tactics, techniques, and procedures. All future military leaders should read _Zero-Sum Victory_—especially US Army War College students—in preparation for mission assignments.
New Principles of War: Enduring Truths with Timeless Examples

by Marvin Pokrant

Reviewed by Dr. Frank G. Hoffman, US Marine Corps (retired), Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University

Marvin Pokrant, a long-time analyst of naval affairs, has produced a useful assessment of the utility of principles in the study and conduct of war. This book offers many provocative comments and proposed revisions to our longstanding canon.

Traditionalists will take issue with two points. The author contends unity of command should be adapted into “unity of effort” (50). Based upon the complex character of protracted counterinsurgency and armed stabilization operations over the last two decades, many veterans and interagency participants from Iraq and Afghanistan will agree. Existing Joint Doctrine, however, defines the purpose of unity of command as the need to “ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander for every objective” (Joint Publication 3-0 [2011], A-2). The author does not examine or leverage discussions about the value of collaborative leadership (per Anthony King’s Command: The Twenty-First-Century General [Cambridge University Press, 2019]) or the need to apply mission command and initiative in an era where command-and-control systems will be the subject of intense attack and corruption.

The second issue is Pokrant’s proposal to displace mass with a principle of relative advantage. This will be controversial given the growing appreciation for the role of attrition in warfare—especially in large-scale military operations—and an argument made by historians, such as T. X. Hammes, that mass is returning to the battlefield due to the use of numerous swarming drones and cheap attack systems. More useful in Pokrant’s definition is the stress on seeking a relational edge consistent with competitive strategies and creative asymmetric approaches. While most professionals do not embrace the mindless bludgeoning of opponents, the term mass does not connote the creative aspect the author rightfully emphasizes.

To Pokrant, mass measures the wrong factors and is out of context. His principle seeks advantage in effective combat power engaged over that of the adversary at a critical point and time that gives it context. In his terms, relative advantage “consists of concentrating the bulk of one’s own effective combat power
against a portion of the enemy’s power, or attacking in an unexpected location . . . or in a manner that is unfavorable for the enemy” (87).

The last three chapters of the book lay out a triptych of new principles: “Know the Enemy,” “Know Thyself,” and “Environment.” In the latter, Pokrant incorporates the physical battlefield and terrain. The late Colin S. Gray offered similar insights in his effort to dissect the concept of the revolution in military affairs in the mid-2000s (Strategic Studies Institute, 2006). He devoted several pages in his critique to the need to appreciate context deeply. In his emphasis on the “sovereignty of context,” Gray stressed the political, socio-cultural, technological, and economic context in developing a strategy. Pokrant’s recommendation is not artful or concise, but his intent is spot-on and completely consistent with Gray’s.

All in all, Pokrant offers a comprehensive assessment of something too many consider uncritically. A wholesale revision of the fundamentals would be unnecessary and ill-advised. War offers more continuities than changes. Yet, we should expect to see alterations in the way the principles are articulated and applied given the changes of context generated by the Information Age and the putative Fourth Industrial Revolution. The principles of war and warfare are not immutable and should be subject to periodic adaptation to reflect Clausewitz’s notion that war is more than a chameleon (On War, bk. 1, chap. 1, sect. 28).

These principles are often offered for rote indoctrination, but that was never their proper purpose. As noted in my 2012 Armed Forces Journal article, the principles were not developed to simplify things “for those with no tolerance for critical inquiry, no taste for contemplation or no patience with the deep study of history.” Instead, they are starting points for inquiry and adaptation in application. For those about to deal with the messy complications of human conflict, a set of fixed and rigidly applied principles will never suffice. They help only to frame our broad study of the many forms warfare can take, in many different contexts, in order to prepare leaders in the transition of theory to actual practice.

New Principles of War has useful history and insights for serious students of war, young and old. This book appears designed to serve professional military schools and is best suited for intermediate-level professional courses and senior noncommissioned officer schools. For readers seeking a thoughtful reflection on war—and the application of fundamental principles to past battles—Pokrant’s nicely composed book offers value.

Keywords: Colin S. Gray, T. X. Hammes, principles of war, Clausewitz, history
Strategic Leadership

Mastering the Art of Command: Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and Victory in the Pacific

by Trent Hone

Reviewed by Colonel Jonathan Klug, US Army, assistant professor, Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations, US Army War College

Trent Hone’s *Mastering the Art of Command* is a novel and superb study of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz as a strategic leader and theater commander throughout the Pacific War (1941–45). Hone’s use of complex adaptive systems and contemporary leadership theory allows him to investigate Nimitz’s leadership in ways other authors have not. His impeccable research provides rich strategic, operational, tactical, technical, and logistical context to explore how Nimitz helped win the war against Imperial Japan. The vision for this book is ambitious and unique, and Hone delivers an artfully balanced discussion of Nimitz as a leader and the learning capabilities of his command as a complex adaptive system.

The structure of *Mastering the Art of Command* reflects its purpose well, providing a discussion of the ideas the author will use to explore how Nimitz’s leadership helped win the war. In the introduction, Hone details complex adaptive systems, including emergence, sensemaking, and rapid learning. He then explains how Nimitz would use these ideas (though the terminology or notion of complex adaptive systems, per se, had not yet been conceptualized) to foster evolutionary change in his organization and to practice the art of strategy. Finally, through 10 subsequent chapters of history, Hone demonstrates Nimitz’s successful use of these ideas. The book starts with Nimitz assuming command in Hawaii on December 31, 1941, and ends with Nimitz becoming a signatory of the Japanese surrender document on the deck of the USS Missouri on September 2, 1945.

Within the 10 chronological chapters, Hone relies on five key themes: collaborative sensemaking, decentralized execution, organizational unfolding, continual reorientation, and relentless pursuit of options. While focused on how Nimitz practiced collaborative sensemaking inside his command, Hone also examines the context of strategy making of the Allies’ Combined Chiefs of Staff, the Anglo-American
Joint Chiefs of Staff, meetings between Nimitz and Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, and various conferences with General Douglas MacArthur and Washington officials. Nimitz’s approach to facilitating and demanding decentralized execution was apparent. Hone introduces a new concept of “organizational unfolding,” which addresses how successful organizations continually change their structure to harmonize with their surroundings, thus naturally “unfolding” from their surroundings (344–46). Continual reorientation is related to organizational unfolding in that Nimitz and his command had to maintain constant awareness of changes in the operational environment and quickly realign their mental models to address new situations. Finally, the four previous themes facilitated Nimitz’s relentless pursuit of options, which Hone describes as the attempt “to create advantage and accelerate the progress of the war” (349) that created “a collection of options” that allowed him to practice strategic artistry (353).

Attesting to Hone’s impeccable scholarship, a wide array of primary documents serves as the foundation of his work, which includes extensive endnotes, a bibliography citing many superb sources, and a detailed index. Furthermore, Hone’s acknowledgments note the assistance of several luminaries of naval and military history, especially of the Asia-Pacific War. Excellent maps help readers understand the critical strategic and operational points of Hone’s discussion. Similarly, the figures assist with understanding key topics, such as the evolution of Nimitz’s headquarters or the employment of Marine and Army divisions. Finally, the charts support the discussion of Allied strategy and operational planning.

Blending history with other contemporary academic fields—such as complex adaptive systems and executive leadership—provides new insights. As Hone uses the ideas of different academic fields, he deftly avoids getting bogged down by their jargon and ideas, instead using their concepts to illuminate more significant concerns. Readers will appreciate his efforts as the topic of complex adaptive systems, for example, has its own vocabulary that can prove challenging without prior experience. Hone’s methodology in *Learning War* (Naval Institute Press, 2018) and *Mastering the Art of Command* make both books unique and outstanding contributions to the body of knowledge of leadership and naval history. This book is a must-read for military leaders and those interested in naval or World War II history. In addition, it is an excellent historical case study reading for professional military education, especially for command at the theater level or for senior leadership in general.

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**Keywords:** Chester W. Nimitz, leadership, navy, Imperial Japan, World War II
Concerned with soldiering at multiple echelons, *Watchman at the Gates* is a rare, nonpartisan autobiography of a twentieth-century general, retired four-star George A. Joulwan. He retraces his 40 years in the Army chronologically, from his entry at the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1957 from a Lebanese family in Pennsylvania to multiple tours in Vietnam in the 1960s, rebuilding the Army in the 1970s as a field-grade officer, and his significant roles in South America and Europe in the 1980s and 1990s as a general officer and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR).

Each chapter presents an aspect of Joulwan's leadership growth. Early chapters cover his formative years at West Point, initial troop duty in Germany and Vietnam, and graduate school in Chicago. The middle chapters describe his strategically broadening service, from his White House duties to his command of V Corps in Germany. In the final chapters, Joulwan lets readers enter the mind of a combatant commander in two different theaters during competition and conflict.

As Joulwan explains his military experiences, he made the most of learning opportunities from several significant superiors. As a cadet, Joulwan learned values from and played football for the legendary Red Blaik. In Germany, as a lieutenant, he learned Army fundamentals from William E. DePuy. In 1966, as a captain in Vietnam, he was assigned to DePuy’s 1st Infantry Division. He took command of B Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry under Paul F. Gorman and was the operations officer for Alexander M. Haig Jr. during the Battle of Ap Gu.

Joulwan’s career significantly differed from those of current US Army general officers. He experienced several significant opportunities as a field-grade officer that benefited him later as a general officer. Not only did he obtain a master’s degree in political science from the University of Loyola while teaching ROTC, but he also served as a tactical officer at West Point. He left West Point early to serve from 1972–74 as an assistant and later deputy...
to Haig as White House chief of staff in the Nixon and Ford administrations. When Haig left to be SACEUR, Joulwan moved to Europe as his special assistant. Additionally, after his student year in the Class of 1978, he remained and spent a “watershed” year as an instructor at the US Army War College (109). After brigade command and a year as division chief of staff, he spent three years (1982–85) as the executive officer to John W. “Jack” Vessey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In that role, he saw problems the US military had with joint operations and “witnessed an extraordinary transformation not just of the army . . . but also of the entire US military” (131).

As a new brigadier general, Joulwan served on the Army Staff as a director for combat support systems. In June 1986, he arrived in Europe as the operations officer for US Army Europe, where he had “the widest possible overview of our European theater war planning,” especially the challenges of logistics, reinforcements, and “organizing the rear of the theater” (135). Next, he took command of the 3rd Armored Division guarding the Fulda Gap and learned to read the battlefield during advanced simulations and the last great Return of Forces to Europe exercise in 1988. He conducted this last exercise in front of Soviet observers, who were incredulous of the Spearhead Division’s rapid and decisive maneuvers. Next, Joulwan took command of the V Corps, during which time the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War ended.

As SACEUR and commander of the European Command, Joulwan helped convince the then President Bill Clinton to approve a NATO and American intervention in Bosnia while ending the bloodshed in far-off Rwanda. While implementing the Balkan Dayton Peace Accords, Joulwan sought cooperation with Russia and “obtained the deployment of a Russian brigade under the operational control of [Joulwan] as SACEUR” (220). Joulwan concludes the United States “made a fundamental mistake” by not cultivating better relations with Russia, contributing to Europe’s current situation (235).

Watchman at the Gates is not a typical memoir by a recent senior retired officer attempting to explain his actions favorably. Joulwan provides candid insights valuable for serious students of successful military leadership at multiple levels. His career is a case study of how broad assignments in diverse contexts help senior leaders better to deal with complex situations.
Readers are encouraged to consider the human factor in strategy, even when the strategist is not technically human, in *To Boldly Go*, an anthology of essays drawn from a spectrum of professional military education and civilian academics. Characters in speculative fiction can offer lessons we might otherwise miss in more prosaic sources. In the forward to the anthology, Australian Major General Mick Ryan, a leading thinker on the future of war, emphasizes the value of science fiction in encouraging creative approaches to strategic problems. He recommends the book to “those who dare to imagine radically different ways of thinking about military leadership, the profession of arms, and how to use national resources more effectively and creatively to defend our peoples and our ideas” (x).

The anthology has a range of sources and topics as impressive as the contributing authors, who have produced 35 essays, organized into six parts, covering themes from individual command responsibility to civil-military relations to the problems sentient machines pose. The concluding part features essays on the seductions and dangers of “the dark side.”

Throughout the book, the authors invite readers to contemplate the challenges and potential costs of preparing for conflict. Several essays touch on Orson Scott Card’s classic novel *Ender’s Game* (Tor, 1985), which remains on many military reading lists and raises uncomfortable questions about the training of warriors and what it means to kill others to save one’s own people. Will Meddings includes Ender’s story in a meditation on leadership, concluding that, since we are only human, it is not necessary to be superhuman like Ender to lead others. Thomas Bruscino also writes on *Ender’s Game*, focusing on the ethical dilemmas of Ender’s teacher, Hyrum Graff, who cannot escape that “the guilt of what happens in war, even the most necessary of wars, belongs to the teachers of military leaders too” (76). In another essay on leadership and responsibility, Julie M. Still and Kelly A. Lelito analyze the informal power of the “Bene Gesserit,” the shadowy priestess caste in Frank Herbert’s *Dune* (Chilton Book Company, 1965). The authors note how the group’s extensive power...
and ability to pursue a long-term strategy made them overconfident. They are “so focused on a specific plan and so certain they know how it will unfold that they lose perspective on what is actually occurring” (149). The Bene Gesserit miss the significance of events and individuals who do not fit their expectations.

In considering the human factor of strategy, several authors examine female or feminine-coded strategy. Heather S. Gregg highlights Princess Leia in *Star Wars* and her successful use of deception (based on the ancient Greek concept of *métis*—the strategy of combining cunning and wisdom) against the brute force of the Galactic Empire and the First Order. Leia’s actions suggest indirect approaches, often coded as feminine, must be part of any sensible approach to future strategic challenges. Jacqueline Whitt analyzes the novels of Octavia Butler and considers the need for empathy and pluralism in a society’s response to challenges, advocating for awareness of “whose voices and experiences we are missing when we build organizations that are more homogenous than not” (109).

An important leadership lesson from a Mel Brooks film is one of many surprising insights in this collection. In one of the final essays, on the appeal and danger of “the dark side,” Dan Ward chooses a peculiar example—Dark Helmet from *Spaceballs*, Mel Brooks’s classic *Star Wars* spoof. The Dark Helmet parody of Darth Vader has real-world educational implications. Dark Helmet, a terrible leader, ultimately fails, just as Vader does. In comparing the two, Brooks reveals the absurdity and futility of Vader’s (and the Empire’s) authoritarian leadership model. Ward concludes, “Dark Helmet’s story shines a light on the consequences of terrible leadership. He shows us that when people in positions of power are condescending and abusive, they are also childish and pathetic. . . . Armed with that insight, we can chart a course to a better result, and we can discover the wisdom of leading with empathy, compassion, and humility” (254).

Faced with so many rich topics for reading and discussion, the reviewer can only encourage readers “to boldly go” look for the book in the nearest bookstore or library.
Matthew Ford and Andrew Hoskins have written a comprehensive analysis of the new age of information warfare and understand what it means to have an information advantage. They provide a thorough review of modern history as it pertains to the intersections of war, people, data and technology, and how the manipulation of all three has redefined war. Further, they illuminate how the removal of traditional boundaries between these fields has led to a sustained period of low-grade persistent political violence.

The main contribution of this work is its holistic perspective of the topic. Most writing on this subject focuses on the weaponization of social media alone, but this work expands on the traditional thinking of digital weaponization to include all media, data, and mediums and examines the overall end effect of the weaponization of the captive mind. Ford and Hoskins do an excellent job explaining the mechanism of this type of asymmetrical warfare, the cognitive mechanism at issue, and their effects, which are extremely important but often overlooked topics.

The second and equally important contribution of this monograph is its reexamination of the use of information in asymmetrical warfare. The authors dive deep into the structure and foundations of information and politics to understand how this phenomenon has occurred. By examining current means and methods, Ford and Hoskins lead readers to an organic and disturbing conclusion that information warfare is a collaborative, cooperative, and collective endeavor requiring participation from adversaries, civilians, soldiers, government, society, and Big Tech alike, where success in disrupting a given information ecosystem depends on every actor. Readers will easily and uncomfortably recognize their own complicity in this space.

The authors are well-known longtime figures in the academic field studying the digital aspects of international warfare and cognitive studies. Their varied considered sources reinforce their arguments, and their
well-chosen examples and case studies support the work’s overarching concepts. Refreshingly, Ford and Hoskins do not shy away from supporting claims with topical news sources, despite academia’s bias toward traditional academic publishing. In the digital space, the prolonged pace of academic publishing does not match the speed of technology and its evolving usage, so respected media outlets writing about technology should not be dismissed.

I believe this work is very relevant to senior members of the defense community as it provides not only a very good systems approach to understanding this phenomenon, but also uses a distinct cause-and-effect analysis of a thoroughly redefined battlefield—one that many defense leaders may not fully understand, unfortunately, as it depends on their own knowledge of the modern information environment. That said, considering the clear strategic implications this book provides, hopefully the US defense community will break out of its thinking of information advantage as only an offensive measure with strictly defined parameters and start considering broad defensive measures and how the current information ecosystem likely affects the average soldier and society.