

PASSPORT

THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS REVIEW

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IN THIS ISSUE

Honoring *Passport's* 45th Anniversary
Historiography of Inter-American Relations
Roundtable on *American Umpire*

AND MORE...

PASSPORT

THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS REVIEW



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SHAFR's Formative Years: 1967-1982

Gary R. Hess

Editor's note: *This essay was written in part to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the establishment of the SHAFR Newsletter, which has evolved into Passport: The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Review. On behalf of SHAFR and Passport, we recognize the significant contributions of our emeritus editors since 1969: Gerald E. Wheeler, Nolan Fowler, William J. Brinker, and Mitchell Lerner. AJ*

In January 1967, Joseph O'Grady, a thirty-two year-old assistant professor at LaSalle College in Philadelphia, wrote to Thomas Bailey, the eminent diplomatic historian at Stanford University, to seek his support in establishing an organization of diplomatic historians. O'Grady had just returned from a meeting of the American Historical Association (AHA). There he had attended a meeting of the Program Committee of the Organization of American Historians (OAH), where he had learned that the 1967 program had no sessions on diplomatic history. Indeed, over the previous five years, diplomatic history sessions at both the OAH and AHA meetings had been declining (there was a total of seven in 1965 and 1966). Other specialists—labor, urban, immigration historians—had formed interest groups that gave them influence with AHA and OAH program committees. O'Grady proposed that diplomatic historians consider a similar initiative, to be spearheaded by a three-person steering committee of Bailey, himself, and “a mid-career person from the mid-west.”¹

While Bailey was “in complete sympathy with your proposed pressure group,” he declined and suggested that his former student, Alexander DeConde of the University of California at Santa Barbara, would be better equipped to “carry the torch.” DeConde responded enthusiastically to O'Grady's invitation to join the organizing group. Moving quickly, they called a meeting of prospective members of the unnamed organization during the OAH convention that was being held in Chicago in late April. The name was an important consideration. At first O'Grady thought it should be called the American Diplomatic History Society. Other suggestions surfaced. Ernest May at Harvard urged a name that would encourage a “comprehensive membership and mission . . . something like Society of Historians of International Relations.” After considerable deliberation, the steering committee, which by March included David Pletcher (Missouri), agreed to recommend the name Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, “first to narrow the Society to historians in any part of the world with interest in America . . . and secondly to broaden it to include those who view diplomatic relations in the context of ideas, cultural influences, etc.”²

With DeConde presiding, about eighty historians gathered in a hot and crowded room at the Palmer House on Thursday, April 27, for the founding meeting. Among the attendees was Bailey, whose presence, O'Grady wrote, “added that extra flavor of authenticity that is essential for an organization like ours.” Attendance surpassed expectations, but the meeting was inadvertently scheduled at the same time as a popular session featuring University of Wisconsin historians William Appleman Williams and

Fred Harvey Harrington (a few diplomatic history sessions having been added to the program).

DeConde set forth a broad focus for the group and outlined its essential grounding in historical scholarship: “[T]he view would be worldwide, but the picture will be taken from the United States. . . . [W]e will be a society for historians and not political scientists as such [T]hose from other disciplines would be welcomed but still the approach would be historical [W]e would not necessarily want to exclude anyone, but some basic approach is necessary and this is what we propose.” He concluded with the committee's suggestion for a name: “the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.”³

The meeting, described by DeConde as an “enthusiastic conversation,” brought forth suggestions for a wide range of potential activities, including regional meetings, a newsletter, liaisons with scholars around the world, and a specialized journal.⁴ The proposed name triggered heated discussion. Betty Miller Unterberger, who was the only woman at the meeting, recalled that “O'Grady wanted [the name] to be as broad as possible. Bailey suggested the name Society for Historians of American Diplomacy, with the acronym SHAD—a well-known fish. He thought we could use the picture of a fish as the symbol of our organization. The idea went over like a lead balloon. We went on to other suggestions and after much debate we finally agreed on the present name.”⁵

The group also endorsed the steering committee's proposal to have seven officers, six (president, vice president, a four-person board of managers) elected by the general membership. O'Grady was elected executive secretary-treasurer, an office which was thereafter to be appointed by the board of managers. The other officers were to be elected before the December meeting of the AHA in Toronto, where the group planned a business meeting, reception, and a joint session with the AHA.⁶

The enthusiastic response to the O'Grady-DeConde initiative underlined its timeliness. With the arrival of the baby-boomers in the mid-1960s, higher education expanded. Many history departments added specialists in diplomatic history, which spoke to the rise of American power and the all-absorbing Cold War. As the Vietnam War shattered the foreign policy consensus and raised questions about America's role in the world, enrollments in diplomatic history courses surged.

Within the profession, a new generation of scholars, led by William Appleman Williams, challenged traditional interpretations of America's foreign relations. Two former SHAFR presidents have positive memories of those times. “I vividly remember the excitement of those years,” writes George Herring (Kentucky). “There was a sense of real importance in what we were doing.”⁷ Melvyn Leffler (Virginia) reflects that “many people felt in those days that there was too much passion at our historical meetings, that the lines were being drawn too tightly. I am sure that was the case, but I personally did not feel it at the time. I felt the debates were vital. They imparted to me a sense that what I was doing was important. I was naively searching

for historical 'truth.'"⁸

While Herring and Leffler were representative of the majority of diplomatic historians, a few—most notably Richard Leopold (Northwestern)—questioned the need for a new organization (although Leopold agreed to be a candidate for its presidency). A few other prominent historians declined invitations to serve on the early committees.⁹

By the time of the AHA meeting in Toronto, SHAFR had elected its first officers. After the OAH meeting, O'Grady solicited nominations, and in the fall of 1967, 132 members cast ballots by mail. They elected Bailey (over Leopold) as president and DeConde (over Robert Ferrell of Indiana) as vice president. This would be SHAFR's only contested presidential election, as vice presidents were subsequently designated presidents-elect, beginning with DeConde, and ran unopposed for the presidency. Elected to the board of managers (in four paired elections) were Norman Graebner (Virginia), Wayne Cole (Maryland), Ernest May (Harvard) and Bradford Perkins (Michigan).

All of the candidates mentioned above became SHAFR presidents. After Bailey and DeConde served in 1968 and 1969 respectively, Leopold, Ferrell, Graebner, Cole, and Perkins held the office in that order over the next five years, and May was president in 1983. Among the losing candidates for the board of managers were Williams and Armin Rappaport (UC-San Diego). Rappaport became very active in SHAFR, serving as president in 1975 and as the first editor of *Diplomatic History*. After the first board election, Williams, generally considered the most influential diplomatic historian of his generation, never agreed to be nominated for a SHAFR office again.¹⁰

At the SHAFR business meeting in Toronto, William Franklin of the Department of State presented a paper called "Problems of the *Foreign Relations Series*." The invitation to Franklin, who became an active member of SHAFR along with a number of other historians from the State Department and National Archives, grew out of the society's interest in declassification issues and the publication of the *Foreign Relations* series. Franklin's presentation was timely. The "court historian" Herbert Feis was engaged in a very public and rather curious controversy with the Department of State over denial of access to documents, and he had appealed to the young organization for support.

In a joint session with the AHA, SHAFR finally sponsored its first program, which dealt with the U.S. entrance into World War I. Arthur Link (Princeton) presided, and papers were presented by Paola Coletta (U.S. Naval Academy) and Warren Cohen (Michigan State), with commentary by DeConde and Ferrell.¹¹

SHAFR's founders anticipated that business meetings, receptions, and sessions in conjunction with the meetings of the AHA and OAH would serve the society's interests. The OAH's decision in 1968 to end joint sessions meant that diplomatic sessions would have no SHAFR identity, even if they were proposed by SHAFR, as most were. The OAH did permit other professional groups to continue sponsorship of luncheons, so SHAFR decided to have a scholarly lecture at its luncheons, a practice that began at the 1969 OAH meeting with Lawrence Kaplan (Kent State) speaking about the United States and NATO.

The board of managers approached expansion of SHAFR's activities cautiously. From the beginning there were calls for a newsletter, a journal, separate meetings, and sponsorship of a bibliography of American foreign relations. In 1968 the board endorsed the suggestion for a newsletter, which was considered a necessary means of organizational communication, but deferred action on the other suggestions. During the next decade, however, SHAFR's leadership acceded to the sentiment of the membership and began to support all of these activities. None of them were easy to implement, however. Cost was

always the overriding consideration. The board reluctantly raised annual dues to \$3 (about \$20 in 2014 dollars) in 1968 just to meet basic operating expenses. LaSalle College provided nominal support beyond O'Grady's term as executive secretary. Institutional support and external grants were essential to the expansion of the society's work.¹²

These four initiatives—the newsletter, independent meetings, the journal, and the bibliography—marked a steady broadening of SHAFR's mission. Along with the Bernath prizes, which enabled SHAFR to recognize the accomplishments and promise of younger scholars, they stand as the most significant developments of SHAFR's formative period. All of them occurred within the context of steady growth and organizational and administrative changes. The adoption of by-laws in 1970 converted the board of managers to the council; membership expanded to six (rather than four) elected members, with the president, vice president, and the three immediate past presidents serving as *ex officio* members. The other elected body was the three-person Nominations Committee. The Program Committee solicited and coordinated proposals for diplomatic history sessions at the AHA and OAH. Annual membership rosters began in 1967, and in 1968 they included members' research interests. Warren Kimball (Rutgers-Newark) served as editor of the rosters for several years. Membership steadily increased, in large part because of the efforts of the Membership Committee, chaired for many years by Ralph Weber of Marquette University, but also because of the increase in SHAFR activities, which brought greater recognition to the organization. In 1968 there were 200 members; in 1973, 431; in 1975, 571; in 1977, 700; and in 1980, 912.¹³

By the early 1970s, as administrative demands increased, O'Grady requested that the society search for a new executive secretary-treasurer, with more substantial institutional support than that provided by LaSalle. In 1973, the council approved moving the national office to the University of Akron, with Warren Kuehl of that university and Lawrence Kaplan of neighboring Kent State serving as joint executive secretary-treasurer. Aside from four years in Texas, the national office has remained in Ohio ever since, supported by five universities there over the years. In 1979 it moved to Bowling Green State University, with the author as executive secretary-treasurer, and thence (for the first time) to Ohio State University in 1983 for a three-year term with Marvin Zahniser as executive secretary-treasurer.

By 1980, the growth of the endowment (thanks largely to the contributions of Gerald and Myrna Bernath) necessitated the establishment of the Finance Committee, and the need to add coherence and expertise to the society's longstanding interest in document declassification and *Foreign Relations* publication policies led to the establishment of the Committee on Government Relations. SHAFR was thus a thriving enterprise when it undertook its defining initiatives. But in three cases, unexpected sources—Tennessee Technological University, which supported the newsletter; Scholarly Resources, which published the journal; and ABC-CLIO Press, which took over the SHAFR guide—were instrumental in resolving financial problems.

The Newsletter

It took five years to establish firmly a newsletter. The effort to find an editor and secure institutional support proceeded by fits and starts. Four prospective editors, with various levels of institutional support, responded to the council's initial solicitation, and in April 1969 the council accepted the proposal of Gerald Wheeler, with the support of San Jose State College.¹⁴ In December 1969 the first issue of the SHAFR *Newsletter* was printed. It was an eighteen-page, letter-size mimeographed production. The cover featured

photographs of the Department of State's current building and its former home, the Executive Office Building. In a message from the president, DeConde called for members to "use [the *Newsletter*] to regularly and ruthlessly express your views, to spread the word about our discipline, and to crusade for the independence and scholarly integrity of historians of American foreign relations." He envisioned a publication that would include "scholarly essays, interpretive pieces, and debates between historians."¹⁵

The early issues of the *Newsletter* in fact focused on more practical information, with several essays on access to foreign archives, and bibliographical surveys. Also included were abstracts of papers and articles (submitted by the authors) as well as the minutes of SHAFR meetings and other information pertaining to the society.

The second issue of the *Newsletter* marked the beginning of an important tradition: the publication of the annual presidential address, which was delivered at the society's luncheon at the AHA. No one had thought of an address during Bailey's term, so it fell to DeConde, as the second president, to deliver the inaugural address. DeConde's title sounded a theme that would become familiar in the annals of SHAFR: "What's Wrong with American Diplomatic History?" Criticizing the field's "elitism . . . self-satisfying patriotism . . . complacency . . . [and] its condescending, and even racist [view] of American foreign relations as a series of triumphs over lesser peoples," he called for a broader understanding of the foundations of foreign policy.¹⁶

In early 1972 Wheeler indicated that financial problems at San Jose State made it necessary for him to relinquish the editorship. The council had difficulty finding a replacement; no one responded to a request for applications. In desperation, the council instructed O'Grady to contact the previous applicants. One of them—Nolan Fowler of Tennessee Technological University—was still interested and, moreover, was able to secure generous institutional support. The university agreed to support the printing and mailing of up to 600 copies of a 32-page quarterly newsletter. Tennessee Tech would remain home to the *Newsletter* for the next thirty years.

Increasingly, the *Newsletter* included the wide-ranging and provocative essays that DeConde had envisioned. For instance, in the December 1973 issue, Lester Langley and Thomas A. Bryson contributed thoughtful historiographical essays. Langley's "The Diplomatic Historians: Bailey and Bemis" defended those two scholars against critics who charged them with narrow, nationalistic, and "triumphalist" interpretations of American diplomacy. In "The Concept of Empire in American Diplomatic History," Bryson engaged in a wide-ranging overview of scholarship, using Williams's work as a starting point.¹⁷ Bailey, who made a number of noteworthy contributions, furnished an essay in 1975 that reflected on his distinguished career. "Confessions of a Diplomatic Historian" would have been his presidential address, he said, had he been asked to deliver one in 1968.¹⁸

Upon Fowler's retirement in 1980, his colleague, William Brinker, became editor. Brinker recently recalled the early days of pre-computerized, labor-intensive production:

The *Newsletter* was a "mature" publication when the editorship was transferred from Nolan Fowler to me. I came to appreciate the SHAFR work he had done for seven years. . . . [I]t was Fowler who left his stamp as editor which I worked to maintain – for a surprising twenty-three years! He left a well-oiled but labor intensive operation. . . . The membership, without pressure on my part, kept the newsletters full of information and insight.

The transfer occurred before Tennessee Tech had become more than minimally computerized. In the beginning of my tenure all of the text for each issue

was typed in double space, proof-read, and sent to the university print shop. A staff member there retyped the entire thing on a linotype machine. I, with my student help, proof-read it again, and in conference with the printing staff corrections were made. From there the process was in the hands of the printing staff. The staff sent the finished product to my office where the mailing process was undertaken. Again, the labor intensive operation continued. With a student helper or two, we applied mailing labels and sorted using zip-codes. Following Fowler's methods we tied each bundle securely with heavy string, using a *square knot* for each! In time, we used rubber bands and things went faster. The packages were off to the campus US post office as we started work on the next issue.¹⁹

Summer Conferences

The SHAFR founders' assumption that the society would meet only in conjunction with the OAH and AHA was abandoned in 1975, when SHAFR sponsored its first conference at Georgetown University. That initiative had to overcome questions about its viability. As early as the fall of 1968, a few members inquired about the possibility of independent meetings, and although the council in December 1969 enlarged the membership of the Program Committee in anticipation of that eventuality, it was not until two years later that the executive secretary was instructed to canvass the membership on the issue. The results showed mixed support for a meeting (47 percent of respondents in favor) and no clear preference in terms of when to meet and whether to meet on or off a campus, although Washington, DC was clearly the preferred location. The membership's position was not the council's only consideration. Under the leadership of Warren Kuehl and Armin Rappaport, the Program Committee had been successful in getting some diplomatic history sessions on the AHA and OAH programs, but many of their proposals had been rejected. Moreover, the dependence on the larger organizations limited SHAFR's visibility. Thus, the society's leadership gradually came to see that a national meeting was important as a scholarly as well as a political venture.²⁰

Prompted by O'Grady and then-president Wayne Cole,

Prominent historians link past to present

By Jenni Leking

The Department of History and the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations will sponsor the Bicentennial Foreign Policy Conference, Aug. 13-14, at the Holiday Inn and Fawcett Center for Tomorrow.

People such as Hugh Alexis Johnson, U.S. ambassador-at large; Walt Whitman Rostow, national security adviser to former President Johnson, former U.S. Sen. John W. Bricker and representatives from Japan and Peru will meet to determine what the first two centuries of American history tell about century three.

"THE BICENTENNIAL offers an excellent opportunity for prominent historians and national policy makers to take the past and make it relevant to today," said Alfred E. Eckes, associate professor of history. "Seldom do both historians and policy makers come together to practice history."

"The conference will hopefully stimulate public awareness and concern about America's position in global economic issues."

ECKES ALSO SAID, "We anticipate disagreements because we've stacked the sessions with people holding conflicting views. If we don't generate some sparks I will be very disappointed."

A student newspaper article on the 1976 SHAFR conference at The Ohio State University. Republished with permission of The Lantern (thelantern.com), The Ohio State University.

the council decided in April 1973 that the society needed to test the viability of a separate meeting. They proposed to Jules Davids, director of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown, that a conference be held at his campus in 1975. Meeting on a campus rather than at a hotel assured lower-cost housing, and holding the conference in the summer promised higher attendance than during the academic year. Meeting in Washington also enabled attendees to combine the conference with research at the National Archives. The Program Committee presented its tentative plans for the conference to the council in December 1973. Richard Leopold inquired whether it would become an annual affair. Rappaport, as the incoming vice president and outgoing chairman of the Program Committee, stated that future gatherings would be dependent upon the level of support, but he pointedly added that “the Society’s best efforts should be directed towards making the annual meeting a going proposition so that it would not be so dependent upon joint gatherings with the AHA and OAH.”²¹

The first meeting, held on the weekend of August 15–16, 1975, at Georgetown, was an auspicious beginning, spartan housing conditions notwithstanding. George Herring recalls that “the suffocating heat of a Foggy Bottom summer and a dorm room smack in the midst of National Airport’s flight path could not diminish my enjoyment of the more intimate setting providing the chance to meet people and discuss matters of mutual interest.”²² Two hundred fifty persons from twenty-nine states attended. A large percentage of attendees were DC-area scholars and representatives of government agencies. The program consisted of eight sessions (with a total of twenty papers) and two luncheon addresses. The meeting also provided an opportunity for the council to meet a third time during the year. At that meeting, Executive Secretary-Treasurer Lawrence Kaplan announced plans for a second national conference, to be held at Ohio State University the following summer.²³

Ohio State colleagues Alfred Eckes and Marvin Zahniser secured a grant from the Ohio Program in the Humanities to support that conference, which was coordinated jointly by SHAFR and Ohio State. With additional support from the George Gund Foundation in Cleveland and in cooperation with the Ohio Bicentennial Commission, the symposium, which was entitled “Bicentennial Foreign Policy Symposium: The Lessons of the Past,” was held on August 13–14, 1976, and brought together scholars, diplomats and other government officials, and the general public in eight sessions. Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson, former Ohio senator John Bricker, and former national security adviser Walt W. Rostow were among the participating officials. The 225 attendees at the Ohio State conference included only 80 SHAFR members (many of whom were on the program)—an indication of the difficulty of attracting large numbers when meeting outside the Washington area.²⁴

Mark Stoler (Vermont), SHAFR’s president in 2004, writes about how the first two conferences related to the quest of his generation to come to terms with the Vietnam War. “We soon found that SHAFR shared our preoccupation with Vietnam. Indeed, its first conference . . . featured two exceptional guest speakers who focused on Vietnam: Seth Tillman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Ronald Steel, who was then writing his prize-winning biography of Walter Lippmann. So too, albeit indirectly, did David Trask and Walter LaFeber in their fascinating debate during the second 1976 conference . . . over whether or not a Council of Historical Advisers to the President was a good idea (Trask in favor and LaFeber opposed).”²⁵

By the conclusion of the Columbus meeting, SHAFR was committed to an annual summer conference. Meetings at the University of Virginia in 1977 and George Mason University in 1978 drew well, but at the University of

Kansas in 1979 there were only fifty-five participants, nearly all of whom were on the program. This experience led to the decision to meet two of every three years in the Washington area (the University of Maryland in 1980 and American University in 1981) and the third year in a city with strong drawing potential (Boston University in 1982).

The annual meeting played a major role in SHAFR’s maturation. The reflections of SHAFR’s president in 1996, Mark Gilderhus (Texas Christian University), are representative of participants’ response to the conferences’ character and influence:

My earliest recollections have become blurred with the passage of time, but certain things stand out. The presence of big-name scholars and sometimes diplomatic and military officials instilled a sense of awe. I was hobnobbing with the very people whose books I had read and admired. . . . Most of the sessions exhibited a kind of sparkling intellectual vibrancy. . . . [O]verall the openness and civility of the participants in both formal and informal settings impressed me. We were not a gathering of opinionated and pompous stuffed shirts. I came away from those meetings with a strong sense of collegial affinity.²⁶

That “strong sense of collegial affinity” made the summer meetings a fixture on the schedules of many members.

Diplomatic History

By the time the *Newsletter* and the annual conference were firmly established, SHAFR’s leadership had become more receptive to the idea of sponsoring a journal. At the first meeting of the board of managers in April 1968, a journal proposal was dismissed on grounds of cost (the institutional support required for editorial and production expenses was initially estimated at \$15,000 per year) and academic standards (concern about being able to attract a sufficient number of articles of high quality).²⁷ Pressure—mostly from junior members—forced SHAFR’s leadership to reconsider.

At the April 1972 council meeting, two proponents—Warren Kimball (Rutgers-Newark) and Mary Kihl (Pittsburgh at Johnstown)—contended that a journal could be produced for much less than \$15,000. Everyone acknowledged the pressure for publication outlets, but some thought it was important to avoid a “cheap journal” that might have to be limited in size or number of issues per year. Thomas Bailey recalled the difficulty that the Pacific Coast Branch of the AHA had in starting the *Pacific Historical Review*. At length the council agreed that it needed firmer cost estimates, and it established a committee that included Kimball, Kihl, and three SHAFR members who had expressed informal interest in editing a journal.²⁸

At the December 1972 council meeting, Kimball and Kihl returned a “cautiously optimistic” report that strengthened the case for a journal. Diplomatic historians, they noted, had few outlets: only 2 to 3 percent of articles in history and political science journals dealt with American foreign relations. Moreover, a journal would be more affordable than previously thought. Based on contact with prospective university sponsors, Kimball and Kihl estimated that a journal would necessitate a relatively modest increase of \$12 (to \$15) in annual membership dues.²⁹

In 1973, the council solicited membership opinion. A questionnaire completed by 156 members showed strikingly strong support for a journal. Members responded to four questions:

(1) Was a journal needed? (yes: 121, no: 34); (2) Should SHAFR sponsor such a journal? (yes: 123, no: 28); (3)

Would you submit articles to the journal? (yes: 151, no: 5); and (4) Would you approve of raising dues to \$15 to cover publication cost? (yes: 129, no: 17).³⁰ Some members were skeptical about whether the results were representative (only about 30 percent of members participated, and presumably, supporters of a journal were more inclined to participate than opponents). The results, however, added momentum to the drive for a journal. At the council meeting of December 27, 1973, President Wayne Cole spoke of the "overwhelming mandate from the membership."³¹

Yet at that same meeting, the council again debated the need for another professional journal. Former president Richard Leopold stated that he had undertaken "a fairly extensive compilation upon this topic, and his investigations showed the lack of a need." On the other side, David Trask, who served on the editorial board of the *Journal of American History*, believed that there were "many, many good articles 'out there' which never saw the light of day because of the paucity of outlets, plus the high rejection rate." However, the consensus of council was that sponsorship of a journal remained dependent on an institution coming forth with a proposal that featured "adequate financial assistance and competent editorship."³²

Former president Robert Ferrell, who had become especially sympathetic to the pleas of younger members, took the initiative. Ferrell, as Cole recalled, "played a key role in making the practical breakthrough that made the journal a real possibility."³³ In the early weeks of 1974, Ferrell did his own investigation and was able to confirm the Kimball-Kihl conclusions about production costs. After Ferrell's report at the April 1974 council meeting, President Bradford Perkins appointed a three-person committee, headed by Ferrell, to pursue the financial picture more fully, examine the feasibility of any institutional proposal, and screen potential editors. By the end of the year, two members with institutional support—Thomas Schoonover at Southwestern Louisiana University and Joseph May at Youngstown State University—had expressed interest. The process stalled, however, when proposals from those institutions could not be formalized.

Then, in the summer of 1975, Michael Glazier of Scholarly Resources, Inc., of Wilmington, Delaware, met with Jules Davids at Georgetown and expressed interest in assuming the printing costs of a journal. Glazier's proposal substantially reduced the financial obligations of the editor's institution. In August 1975 President Rappaport re-constituted Ferrell's committee, replacing Schoonover and May with Davids and Leopold, who, as Ferrell wrote, "had none of our desire to make our way" and remained skeptical of the journal enterprise. Ferrell's committee was instructed to explore contractual arrangements with Scholarly Resources and to canvass for an editor.³⁴

Scholarly Resources' offer was indeed generous. In return for an annual subsidy from SHAFR, the publisher would assume printing, promoting, and mailing expenses. It would provide copies to all members at a cost of about \$4 per year (thus necessitating only a modest increase in dues) and would pay SHAFR a royalty on copies sold to non-members. Ferrell's committee moved cautiously. Scholarly Resources was a small, obscure publisher, mostly engaged in the microfilming of documents; its interest in publishing a journal for SHAFR was puzzling. Ferrell contacted several publishers of scholarly works and found that "they didn't know a thing about the Delaware operation." Thus he wrote that "Dick [Leopold] and I and [Warren Kuehl and Joint Secretary-Treasurer Lawrence Kaplan] are looking this gift horse in the mouth." As SHAFR procrastinated, Glazier pressed for a response to his offer. Allaying some SHAFR concerns, another publisher explained that Glazier likely "saw the journal as a reasonable risk that would redound to the advantage of his microfilm projects." So in the end, Ferrell's committee accepted the offer. Negotiations moved

quickly in early 1976, with agreement on the financial arrangements, the name of the journal, and a publication plan.³⁵

In April 1976, the council approved a contract with Scholarly Resources to publish *Diplomatic History*. In an audacious move, it made plans to publish its first issue that fall. Paul Holbo (Oregon) would be interim editor, with Rappaport taking over thereafter. A nine-person board of editors was already in place.³⁶

At least in terms of number of articles, *Diplomatic History* had an auspicious launching. Holbo reported that by early August, he had received thirty-eight manuscripts, most coming from junior members. Eighteen had been rejected. Three were on the "verge of acceptance"; three others were in need of substantial revision.³⁷

Diplomatic History's first issue (Winter 1977), with an image of Benjamin Franklin on the cover, marked an important milestone. But its first steps were unsteady: three editors between 1977 and 1982, limited institutional support, and a disappointing number of acceptable submissions.

The four issues of the first volume included essays written by a mix of established scholars (such as Albert Bowman, James Hutson, Walter Johnson, and Roger Trask) and "up-and-comers" (such as Lloyd Ambrosius, David Anderson, Tom Etzold, Gerald Haines, George Herring, Martin Melosi, Robert Messer, Frank Ninkovich). While the quality of those articles underscored that the journal was meeting a need, Rappaport reported that the overall quality of submissions was disappointing. The first year had brought 138 submissions, only 22 of which had been accepted. Rappaport's complaint was to be echoed by his successors. Facing the termination of UC-San Diego support, Rappaport, who had agreed to serve as editor reluctantly, asked within a year to be relieved.³⁸ The council then appointed Warren Cohen (Michigan State) as editor, beginning with the summer 1979 issue. Cohen spent three years in the position. "MSU was not supportive," he writes, "but I wanted to do it anyway. . . . [The] major problem I faced was getting a sufficient number of publishable submissions. [The] situation improved after a couple of years, but at no time did I have a backlog of good essays. I had to publish some mediocre ones just to put out an issue. My greatest pleasure was publishing first articles of scholars . . . who went on to be prominent in their fields."³⁹

George Herring, who took over as editor in 1982, recalls a similar struggle for quality essays. "I wondered whether the skeptics had not been right," Herring writes.⁴⁰ The early editors' steadfast insistence on a quality journal, however, was essential to *Diplomatic History's* maturation and earned it wide respect.

SHAFR's *Guide to American Foreign Relations since 1700*

In September 1968, Ralph Weber of Marquette University suggested SHAFR sponsor a bibliographical guide that would update the *Guide to the Diplomatic History of the United States* (1935), edited by the eminent diplomatic historian Samuel Flagg Bemis and the bibliographer Grace Gardner Griffin. The board of managers readily agreed that an updated guide would be an important contribution to the profession and in December 1969 appointed an ad hoc Bibliographical Planning Committee, under the leadership of Lawrence Gelfand (Iowa), to explore the sentiment of members and the financial implications of the project. After gaining a clear mandate from the membership, the committee, in its final report of December 1972, requested authority to begin the project. Council approved and named Gelfand as general editor.⁴¹

The quest for financial support was agonizing. In 1974 Gelfand applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a \$2,000,000 grant to be spread over eight years, but his application was rejected. Endowment officials

indicated a willingness to consider a revised proposal under a new Bibliographical Tool Project Program, which limited funding to \$50,000 a year for three years. That level of support would have meant a significant scaling back of the project, so that instead of covering foreign relations from the eighteenth century on, the guide might be restricted to the twentieth century. Gelfand and the council held firmly to a comprehensive guide.⁴²

A year later, at the December 1975 council meeting, Gelfand reported a “discouraging picture” and asked to be replaced. It seemed to some members that the guide was beyond the society’s resources and that the project might have to be abandoned. Executive Secretary-Treasurer Warren Kuehl took the initiative, however, and established contact with a potential publisher: ABC-CLIO Press of Santa Barbara, California, which was a leading publisher of reference books. Its editor encouraged the enterprise and entered into preliminary negotiations with Kuehl. This encouraging development led the council in December 1976 to appoint a new committee, under former president Norman Graebner, to oversee the search for an editor. Applicants for the editorship were sparse, but after a renewed appeal to the membership in the summer of 1977, Richard Dean Burns (California State at Los Angeles) emerged as the committee’s choice for the editorship.

Burns immediately renewed contact with the NEH to fund part of the project, solicited contributing editors, and began negotiations with ABC-CLIO Press (with whom he had worked on earlier projects) and another publisher of reference books, KTO Press of Millwood, New York.⁴³ He secured an NEH grant of \$45,000 and acquired an additional \$10,000 when the Alvin M. Bentley Foundation provided a \$5,000 grant and the NEH matched it. ABC-CLIO Press’s proximity to Burns’s base in Los Angeles and its knowledge of the emerging computer technologies gave it an advantage over KTO Press. Moreover, ABC-CLIO offered free copies for editors and contributors, discount prices for SHAFR members, and a general sale price of \$40. KTO offered no free or discounted prices and set its general sale price at \$100. At its April 11, 1979 meeting, the council accepted the ABC-CLIO offer.⁴⁴

From the beginning of the quest for an updated guide, Gelfand and those who followed assumed that it would be far more than a chronological update (the Bemis-Griffin guide began with the American Revolution and ended with the 1921–22 Washington Conference). The new guide would begin in 1700 and end with events of the 1970s. It would also be updated conceptually. The older guide defined diplomatic history in the narrowest of terms and was therefore limited to publications dealing with formal diplomatic relations. Among other aspects of the contemporary study of America’s foreign relations, it excluded domestic sources of foreign policy; ideas and concepts about America’s role in the world; the influence of individuals; cultural and economic relations; and the process of making foreign policy. All of those approaches were to be part of the revised guide.

The compilation of the guide was a monumental undertaking. Over 130 SHAFR members served in editorial capacities. Burns recruited forty-one specialists in various fields to serve as contributing editors for each of forty chapters. Those editors in turn recruited contributors — ninety-two in all—who assisted with the compilation of bibliographical entries. Fifteen years after it was first suggested, the 1,311-page *Guide to American Foreign Relations since 1700*, with 9,255 annotated entries, was published in 1983.⁴⁵

The guide was widely praised. It was cited by *American Libraries* as one of the six outstanding reference sources of 1983. *Choice* wrote that “not since Bemis and Griffin . . . has an up-to-date bibliographic guide to the history of American foreign relations of this magnitude even

been attempted. SHAFR and ABC-CLIO have succeeded magnificently.” *International Journal* described the work as “monumental...a collective enterprise on the grand scale.”⁴⁶

Perhaps fittingly, the most critical review was that of Richard Leopold in *Diplomatic History*. To Leopold, the volume’s chief value was its wide scope and “manageability” (largely the result of good cross references), which reflected Burns’s “experience as an editor and bibliographer.” He also praised Burns for his “uncanny ability to deal with people.” But the guide had its shortcomings. Its “main weakness [was] the sheer number of petty errors,” but there were also editorial inconsistencies, and the annotations had limited value, as they lacked substantive criticism and were frequently based on incomplete use of book reviews.⁴⁷ Leopold’s criticisms were reasonable. Nevertheless, the guide became an essential reference work.

The Bernath Prizes

Stuart L. Bernath was a promising young historian who completed his Ph.D. in 1968 under Alexander DeConde and whose dissertation, “Squall Across the Atlantic: American Civil War Prize Cases and Diplomacy,” was published to critical acclaim in 1970 by the University of California Press. Tragically, that same year he died of bone cancer at the age of thirty-one. His parents, Gerald J. Bernath, a Beverly Hills physician, and his wife, Myrna —described by Betty Unterberger as “two great human beings with a simple desire to support young historians”—wanted to establish a memorial for him within the historical profession he loved.⁴⁸ Initially they thought in terms of the AHA or OAH, but they responded favorably when DeConde suggested SHAFR as the home of such an award. The Bernaths agreed to fund the annual Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize for a first or second book judged to be the best of the year. At the presentation of the first Bernath Book Prize to the co-winners Joan Hoff Wilson and Kenneth E. Shewmaker at the SHAFR luncheon held at the AHA meeting in December 1972, Gerald Bernath spoke movingly of his son as a “gifted historian . . . a good musician, a fine photographer, [with] a strongly developed social conscience.”⁴⁹

Working closely with DeConde, Unterberger, and Kuehl, the Bernaths established two additional prizes in the next four years: the Stuart L. Bernath Scholarly Article Prize, which was awarded to one of a scholar’s first five articles; and the Stuart L. Bernath Lecture Prize, which recognized a “younger scholar of outstanding reputation” by inviting him/her to present a lecture at the annual SHAFR luncheon held at the OAH meeting. The article award was first presented in 1977, to John C. A. Stagg of the University of Auckland, New Zealand. The first Bernath Lecture was delivered by David S. Patterson of Colgate in 1979 and published in the *Newsletter*, as were all its successors. The Bernaths’ commitment to younger scholars was further underscored by their agreement to subsidize part of the cost of student memberships in SHAFR.⁵⁰

Thus the SHAFR of 1982 far surpassed the limited vision of its founders fifteen years earlier, and it has continued to advance in significant and far-reaching ways. As SHAFR approaches its fiftieth anniversary, we can point to the ever-broadening scope and international reach of its programs, its burgeoning membership, the academic stature of *Diplomatic History*, the transition of the *Newsletter* into the more comprehensive *Passport*, and the impressive number of prizes and fellowships it offers. All these developments speak to a continuing vitality in the tradition of its early leadership.

Acknowledgments

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Larry Kaplan, and Bill Brinker; for assistance in research at the SHAFR national office at Ohio State, Peter Hahn and Dave Hadley; and for assistance at the Cushing Memorial Library at Texas A & M, Robin Hutchison.

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2015 SHAFR Summer Institute The Ohio State University Columbus, OH

“The ‘Tocqueville Oscillation’: The Intersection of Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy”

As Robert McMahon pointed out in 2005 in the *Journal of Policy History*, the history of U.S. foreign relations is, “intrinsicly, a Janus-faced field, one that looks both outward and inward for the wellsprings of America’s behavior in the global arena.” Yet, despite the obvious links between politics and diplomacy, the connections between the two have been somewhat

obscured in the literature of the past few decades, largely overshadowed by newer methodologies, transnational approaches, and the incorporation of more multi-archival and multi-lingual works. To be sure, this new scholarship has changed the field for the better, and has returned diplomatic history to the cutting edge of methodological sophistication. Nevertheless, there remains a need for the field to remain attuned to the linkages between politics and foreign policy and appreciate the context in which U.S. foreign relations evolves.

These themes will be at the heart of the 8th annual Summer Institute of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, which will take place **June 19-23, 2015**. The Institute—which will be held immediately before the annual SHAFR conference at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View in Arlington, Virginia from June 25-27, 2015—will be hosted by the Mershon Center for International Security Studies and The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Designed for advanced graduate students and early career faculty members in history and related fields, the program will feature seminar-style discussions and meetings with leading scholars. The Institute will also provide a forum for the participants to present their research; an opportunity to publish a chapter of their work in an edited volume devoted to politics and foreign policy; and include seminars on professional development, teaching, and publishing. Each participant will be reimbursed for travel, will be provided free accommodation and most meals in Columbus, and will receive a modest honorarium.

The deadline for applications is **January 15, 2015**. Applicants should submit a c.v.; a brief letter detailing how participation in the Institute would benefit their scholarship and careers; a short (300 word) abstract about the research project they will present at the Institute; and a letter of recommendation, ideally from their dissertation adviser. Please send this material electronically in Word, PDF, or WordPerfect format to both of the Institute’s lead organizers: Andrew Johns, Associate Professor of History at Brigham Young University and the David M. Kennedy Center for International Relations (andrew_johns@byu.edu); and Mitchell Lerner, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Institute for Korean Studies at The Ohio State University (lerner.26@osu.edu). Please direct all questions to the Institute organizers.

Apply Now!

A Roundtable on Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, *American Umpire*

*Kenneth Osgood, Susan A. Brewer, Francis J. Gavin, Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, Fabian Hilfrich,
and Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman*

Introduction—Cobbs Hoffman Roundtable

Kenneth Osgood

When the veteran diplomat David Bruce and former defense secretary Robert Lovett were asked to review U.S. intelligence operations in 1956, they seized the opportunity to level a broad critique about the increasingly interventionist character of American foreign policy. Although the original document has been either lost or withheld, and the report represents but one small moment in the overarching history of American foreign relations, the Bruce-Lovett report points to larger conceptual challenges facing diplomatic historians seeking to impose an orderly framework on our understanding of the U.S. role in the world.¹

The freewheeling and often reckless interventions sponsored by the CIA were undermining U.S. foreign policy, Bruce and Lovett charged. A wide range of covert operations to manipulate foreign perceptions and politics were being conducted by “a horde of CIA representatives,” many of them naïvely entranced by the romantic allure of espionage and king-making. Should we not be concerned, they asked, that this “increased mingling in the internal affairs of other nations” was responsible “for stirring up the turmoil and raising the doubts about us that exist in many countries of the world today? What of the effects on our present alliances?”

Interventionism was one problem; coherence and coordination were another. Operations around the globe were often planned, conceived, and even approved by the Agency itself, which operated under very generic policy guidance, subject to imaginative interpretation. In many cases, only a handful of CIA representatives had any detailed knowledge of what was going on. This pointed to a larger problem for U.S. foreign policy: the left hand often did not know what the right hand was doing. As the Bruce-Lovett report explained: “CIA support and its maneuverings of local news media, labor groups, political figures and parties and other activities which can have, at any one time, the most significant impacts on the responsibility of the local Ambassador are sometimes completely unknown to or hazily recognized by him.” Moreover, formal and informal diplomatic negotiations were taking place between CIA field officers and foreign

heads of states. Ambassadors were often in the dark, and foreign diplomats were cleverly playing one agency against another. In short, the CIA was exerting a significant – “almost unilateral” – influence on U.S. foreign relations, but it was often doing so without cooperation or coordination with other departments and agencies operating overseas. It was, in effect, conducting its own foreign policy.

The Bruce-Lovett report calls attention to some of the irksome issues that will bedevil the debate about Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman’s important and provocative new book, *American Umpire*. Most obviously, the report underscores the deeply interventionist character of American foreign policy, particularly but by no means exclusively in the postwar period. How do we make sense of this interventionism? Is it a sign of empire by other means, or an “empire in denial,” as many historians have argued? Or, as Cobbs Hoffman suggests, is the term “empire” too imprecise, too loaded, too imperfect to be meaningful? Should we instead frame U.S. interventions abroad as but the steps and missteps of a great power toiling to enforce and promote norms that had earned “broad legitimacy” within the international community? (17)

Answering these questions will be complicated by the often confused and contradictory quality of U.S. diplomacy perceived by Bruce and Lovett. This raises the possibility that, at any given moment, there was not “one” U.S. foreign policy, but several. Does our tendency to look for broad patterns and overarching frameworks cause us to oversimplify? Are we afflicted by a sort of “containment syndrome,” that compels us to seek and to find a grand strategy or master plan, when the reality was much messier and less coherent? Are we too prone to see order amidst chaos? Cobbs Hoffman suggests that the trend of superimposing the concept of empire on American foreign relations is one of the most misleading and potentially damaging forms of such academic reductionism. She challenges the field to move beyond the analytical concepts of the 1950s, the tendency to rehash versions of the William Appleman Williams thesis. But in proposing an alternative framework that replaces “empire” with “umpire,” does her analysis fall prey to the same reductionist shortfall she discerns among the imperial theorists? Any master narrative will run into thorny contradictions that challenge the broader thesis. At what point are those contradictions merely anomalies, and at what point do they call the framework itself into question?

Such big and unanswerable questions form the subtext to the responses to *American Umpire* in the roundtable that follows. Given the supposed resilience of the empire thesis within the field, some readers may be surprised that there is no spirited defense of the concept of empire in these pages. By and large, the reviewers agree with Cobbs Hoffman that it is time to ask more pointed questions, to apply greater analytical precision in discussing the impact of U.S. power on the international stage. "It is sheer intellectual laziness," Francis Gavin writes, "to call everything the United States has done 'imperialism.'"

If most of the reviewers agree on this point, most express reluctance to embrace fully Cobbs Hoffman's alternative thesis that the United States acted as an "umpire" or a "player/umpire" that promoted and enforced, albeit sometimes selectively, the values of access, transparency, and arbitration in international affairs. Cobbs Hoffman is mindful indeed of the moments when the United States acted in violation of these principles. This is a careful, rigorously argued study. Yet Fabian Hilfrich and Susan Brewer are not entirely sure that the thesis of *American Umpire* adequately addresses the gap between American ideals and actions. Brewer concludes that Cobbs Hoffman "makes a better case for the nation's aspirations to the role of world umpire than for its realization of that role." Likewise, Hilfrich asks us to consider: "At what moment does a compromise of principles raise questions about the commitment to principles?" On this question, Evanthis Hatzivassilou is more sympathetic to Cobbs Hoffman and forgiving of the United States, noting that it may be foolish to expect either ideological purity or unadulterated realism, as both extremes invite calamity.

Clearly this roundtable spells out the major cleavages around which future debate of this important book will hinge: the applicability of the concepts of empire or umpire, and the challenge of accounting for the anomalies in both. The various reviews also point to other areas about which we need more careful research. For example, many see the concept of American exceptionalism as running through this work (despite Cobbs Hoffman's strong objection), but this concept remains murky, ill-defined, and under-studied – certainly it has received much less academic scrutiny than empire.² Likewise, the reviewers praise the way in which Cobbs Hoffman places the intellectual and pragmatic dimensions of American foreign policy within its international context. Yet, as Hatzivassilou suggests, more questions remain to be explored, such as the idea of "the West" that often informed American thinking, as well as "the post-Cold War shift from 'Western' to 'global' concepts."

In these and many other ways, Cobbs Hoffman has breathed life into an important and enduring debate about how we understand the U.S. role on the world stage. It is a work that demands thoughtful consideration. As historians grapple with the implications of the *American Umpire* thesis, they should be mindful not just of the gaps between aspirations and action, but of other matters as well: the impact of U.S. power "on the ground," the meaning of U.S. interventionism, and the persistence of multiple and often contradictory policies that call into question the very utility of the grand narratives that we look to for clarity.

Notes:

1. For background on the report, and elusive attempts to locate the original text, see Peter Grose, *Operation Rollback: America's Secret War Behind the Iron Curtain* (Boston, 2000), 239n17 and Michael Warner, "The Ellusive 'Bruce Lovett Report,'" *CIA History*

Staff Newsletter (Spring 1995), online at: <http://cryptome.info/ic-black5601.htm#report>. Tim Weiner reproduces an edited version of the document text in *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York, 2008), 667-671n154. All quotations from Weiner.

2. One of the roundtable reviewers, Fabian Hilfrich, thoughtfully analyzes the concept of exceptionalism in *Debating American Exceptionalism: Empire and Democracy in the Wake of the Spanish-American War* (New York, 2012).

Review of *American Umpire*

Susan A. Brewer

In *American Umpire*, Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman argues that historically the global role of the United States has been that of an umpire rather than an empire. From the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 to 1776 to the end of the Cold War in 1991, she explains, the world moved away from empire and toward the adoption of democratic capitalism. The United States advanced, enforced, and defended this trend in its own and everyone else's interests. Cobbs Hoffman's book "illuminates the historical costs, consequences, and contradictions" of taking on the role of umpire (3). The contradictions are striking: to begin with, the United States acted as a global enforcer of rules it did not always follow itself. At times it also made the wrong call or acted as a bully. But what is most controversial about the role it played is that it was not only an umpire but also a player.

All in all, *American Umpire* makes a better case for the nation's aspirations to the role of world umpire than for its realization of that role. Its review of U.S. foreign relations from the colonial period to the present shows that the United States frequently struggled to put

into action the ideal of the "umpire" role, often expressed in speeches or documents. According to Cobbs Hoffman, the United States opted for umpire over empire when it adopted the federal system of government under the Constitution. The early republic valued non-entanglement, neutrality, and the use of trade as a tool of power; nevertheless, it became entangled in Europe's wars. Cobbs Hoffman also argues that the pursuit of Manifest Destiny should be seen as anti-imperial, as the government's goal in pushing westward was to extend republicanism, even though doing so meant obtaining territory at the expense of the natives. They resisted, she observes, just as the native peoples of Africa and Asia resisted imperial conquest. The devastating Trail of Tears was a result not of imperialism but of nationalism.

Cobbs Hoffman dedicates two chapters to what she sees as the opposing policies of the 1890s: imperialism and the Open Door. The United States took the imperial route in its acquisition of a colony in the Philippines, although American opposition to "a violation of the principles of 1776" led to the colony's early independence (177). In contrast, the Open Door policy in China shows "How the United States Chose Another Way," because it placed "the United States on record in favor of self-determination regardless of a nation's ability to defend itself" (196). That kind of commitment laid the groundwork for Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points and Franklin Roosevelt's Atlantic Charter.

The turning point that made the United States the global enforcer was President Harry Truman's 1947 doctrine announcing that the United States would "defend the sovereignty of foreign peoples" (271). During the Cold War, U.S. aid helped Europe recover and U.S. defense pacts in

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East Asia “made everyone feel safe” (327). Cobbs Hoffman discusses Cold War-era policies carried out in violation of the principle of self-determination, as in Vietnam, for example, where fighting communism and assisting France were higher priorities. As the Cold War ended and the War on Terror began, the American umpire, Cobbs Hoffman concludes, made a good call when it intervened in the former Yugoslavia and a bad call when it invaded Iraq.

Cobbs Hoffman shows how the United States selectively enforced what she identifies as the goals and practices of democratic capitalism, including access to opportunity, arbitration of disputes, and transparency in government and business (6). For example, in contrast to its more forceful imperial competitors, the United States provided Japan with access to opportunity when Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in 1853 with “sweet reason” and a display of the commodities the Americans had on offer (114). In Latin America the United States played a more complex role, “part umpire, part policeman, and part banker,” as illustrated by the Roosevelt Corollary (168).

The Americans had a mixed record of support for the international arbitration of disputes. They proposed but did not join the League of Nations; they signed on to the United Nations; and they participated in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the World Trade Organization. As umpire, Cobbs Hoffman notes, the United States handed out penalties, using economic aid to reward good behavior and sanction bad. She also cites evidence of the American commitment to and abuse of the ideal of transparency. Under President Abraham Lincoln, the United States set a precedent of openness by publishing its diplomatic records. But covert operations conducted by the CIA—the first was called Project Umpire—violated the principle of transparency and cost the United States “much of the moral high ground it had won in World War II” (308).

Cobbs Hoffman’s study reveals the history of American ambivalence toward the “great game” of empire or umpire and shows the implications of that game for the principle of self-determination. She traces an Anglo-American relationship in which the United States emulated Great Britain as a global trader, but not as a global empire, and she describes the Monroe Doctrine as an “Anglo-American protectorate for republicanism” (106). She agrees with Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s depiction of the Atlantic Charter as an inspirational document rather than a legal one (253). She also notes that before the British and the Americans clashed over the Suez Crisis in 1956, they were optimistic collaborators in Iran, backing the overthrow of the Iranian government in the hope that “a better government would take its place” (306).

The United States delivered its most notable performance as a global umpire, according to Cobbs Hoffman, when it took over from the British the maintenance of pro-Western governments in Greece and Turkey. She recounts the congressional debate on the Truman Doctrine, which included Ohio Congressman George Bender’s comment that “if we go into this Greek thing we shall be pouring in money and the blood of our sons for generations” (288). She also examines drafts of President Truman’s speech announcing his policy to show how the administration chose to emphasize America’s humanitarian responsibilities rather than explain why Britain’s decline made it necessary for the United States to step in to maintain the status quo.

American Umpire contributes to a timely historical debate over the definition of the role of the United States

in the world. The exceptional role of player-umpire, Cobbs Hoffman claims, serves to inspire Americans to commit to the global responsibility of the United States “as the enforcer of what is, most of the time, the collective will” (337). Certainly, the perception of this aspiration as reality helps to explain why Americans, who see their actions as generous and self-sacrificing, feel such frustration when other players reject the umpire’s call or do not obey the rules. As Cobbs Hoffman shows, however, the United States has often been the sort of umpire who shows up late to the game or fails to attend at all, who plays favorites, who breaks or bends the rules or simply makes up its own. And, as the strongest player on the field, the United States has used its enormous power to get its way and has justified itself by saying that exceptions must be made for the exceptional. Although Cobbs Hoffman critiques William Appleman Williams by describing America’s global role as a triumph rather than a tragedy, she echoes one of Williams’ themes when she presents a United States that preaches what it does not practice. As for her characterizations of objective historical analysis and morale-damaging academics, they will no doubt prompt a lively discussion in many history seminars.

Review of Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, *American Umpire*

Francis J. Gavin

For historians, scholarly texts are often windows into the worldviews of particular times and places. Today, we might read Gibbon’s *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* or Charles Beard’s *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* as much to explore the intellectual milieu of King George III’s England or better understand class tensions in early twentieth-century America as to learn about Rome or the economic interests of the Constitution’s framers. New arguments by a familiar writer might also offer clues to larger changes in society. A future historian might identify shifting worldviews by analyzing, for example, how the arguments made by our most distinguished scholar of the Cold War, John Lewis Gaddis, changed over time. While new documents and accumulated scholarship no doubt explain many of the differences between Gaddis’s first book, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947*, and his later writings, it is also true that the decades since its publication have witnessed profound changes in the intellectual and cultural climate in the United States.¹

Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman’s engaging, wide-ranging synthesis of the United States’ role in the world, *American Umpire*, caused this reviewer to reflect upon how contemporary events and attitudes shape the choices and arguments we make as historians. Cobbs Hoffman’s book is very much of our time; it neither celebrates nor blames, and while it highlights the unique and critical role the United States has played in world affairs, it goes to great lengths to credit other global forces. Reading *American Umpire*, I found it hard to imagine it being written or finding favor in either the 1970s, a time of retreat and fear in the United States, or in a more confident, celebratory time like the 1990s.

Americans find themselves in a strange, uncertain place in 2013/14. Critiques that once caricatured the United States as morally equivalent to Stalin’s Russia or Mao’s

China have for the most part been relegated to, if not the dust-bin of history, then the discount bin of second-hand bookstores. On the other hand, the United States is currently disentangling itself from a generation of disastrous military involvement in the Middle East marked by hubris and miscalculation. While the post-Cold War triumphalism of the 1990s is thankfully long gone, the self-flagellation and navel-gazing that marked at least some of the historical work on America's role in the world during the 1960s and 1970s is largely ignored or discredited.

Where does that leave the reflective commentator of U.S. foreign relations? As the confused debate over the bloody civil war in Syria revealed, the United States is in what might be thought of as a grand strategic no-man's land: weary of its decades-long overseas engagements, yet unwilling to abandon completely what former Secretary of State Madeline Albright characterized as its role as the world's "indispensable nation." To those caught in this uncertain, liminal place—think, perhaps, of your typical member of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)—Cobbs Hoffman's thesis provides a lifeline. Covering 365 years of global and U.S. history, her narrative offers comfort for those who lament America's excesses but are unwilling to embrace calls for America to come home. One might think of it as the diet version of exceptionalism, or exceptionalism lite.

Cobbs Hoffman presents three big themes in the book. First, the United States was never truly an imperial power, no matter how that is defined. Second, it could instead be thought of as an *umpire* that acted "to compel acquiescence as necessary with rules that had earned broad legitimacy" (17). Finally, the United States both drove world historical forces and was shaped by them, in equal measure. The United States may have been the first and was probably often the most powerful advocate of the principles of access, arbitration, and transparency that mark the contemporary world system. But Cobbs Hoffman highlights the non-American origins of many of these ideas, even going so far as to credit Russian Tsar Nicholas II with being a father of Wilsonianism (185)! Regardless of parentage, these powerful and appealing ideas "achieved enough momentum to transcend their point of origin and the efforts of any one nation," as is illustrated by the fact that the rise of the United States occurred in tandem with the replacement of empires and monarchies by sovereign nation-states (10).

Cobbs Hoffman is most provocative and to my mind most persuasive on the first point. "Calling the United States an empire has yielded no practicable solutions because the nation and the world system in which it fits are simply not structured in this way" (336). Even its actual imperial efforts, like its disastrous policies towards the Philippines, were plagued by doubt and pursued half-heartedly. *American Umpire* takes sharp aim with the view, first propounded by two historians of the British Empire, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, and applied to United States foreign policy by William Appleman Williams, that even when the United States was not taking formal colonies or conquering overseas territories, it was pursuing imperialism by other means, especially through its economic policies.

The continuing popularity of this view is one of the most baffling and frustrating aspects of historical scholarship on U.S. foreign relations. The proponents of this strand of revisionism do not even possess the most basic understanding of economics. The United States, with its massive internal market and abundant resources, has, since

its birth, relied on world trade less than any other major power in modern history and most often focused on its own internal development behind high tariffs and protections, not free trade. When the United States did engage the globe over the past two centuries, the overwhelming majority of its trade and capital flows involved highly developed economies in Europe and, in more recent times, East Asia. Even the postwar economic order it built encouraged Japan and Western Europe *not* to freely open its markets to the United States.² I am not trying to excuse aggressive and often indefensible policies towards the Philippines at the start of the twentieth century, Guatemala in the 1950s, Vietnam in the 1960s, or, more recently, Iraq; but if these policies were motivated by dreams of empire – explicit, implicit, or by invitation – then we need to add economic idiocy to the charges against their authors.

To be clear, I don't want to try and justify U.S. policy since 1776—far from it. Like other nations, the United States has been, at different times in its history, noble and wicked, and also like other nations, self-delusional about its motives. But it is sheer intellectual laziness to call everything the United States has done "imperialism"; doing so stretches the world to the point that it no longer has any

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linguistic power. A smart college undergraduate can tell that there is a profound difference between subjects as diverse as the Roman Empire, British policy in North America in the eighteenth century, Belgian atrocities in the Congo in the late nineteenth century, the global influence of Hollywood, America's westward expansion, the rule of the Habsburgs and the Ottomans in Central Europe, the World Trading Organization, Hay's Open Door notes, Japan's "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty

Sphere," and the Marshall Plan, to name a random assortment of policies and phenomena that scholars have labeled imperialism. Historians are at their best when they draw distinctions, reveal nuance and context, and explain important differences between cultures and polities over time: that is what separates us from, say, economists or political scientists. Surely, scholars can do better than to brand all the complex, dynamic and historically contingent intellectual and political forces that drove the United States "imperialism," and Cobbs Hoffman deserves credit for making a powerful argument that is at odds with the conventional wisdom.

Cobbs Hoffman's labeling of the United States as an "umpire," however, is more problematic. She perceptively recognizes the "federal umpire" mindset of constituent states in the early republic. She also captures the fascination American leaders had with the idea of arbitration at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth—an idea that influenced President Theodore Roosevelt's mediation of the Russo-Japanese war and drove the ideas of important statesmen such as Elihu Root and Charles Evans Hughes.³ By the conclusion, however, she recognizes the problems with this analogy. It would be folly to describe the United States as "objective . . . with no stakes in the outcome"; she suggests instead that a lack of global resources led the United States to become something akin to a "player-umpire." But anyone who has ever played neighborhood whiffle ball or pickup basketball or watched how the United States has "forum shopped" or manipulated international institutions to achieve its interests recognizes how weak and problematic this analogy is. The United States has a unique and important history, and its development and actions abroad have been extraordinarily consequential for the world. But many would argue that its

preeminence owes as much to its overwhelming material power as its unique vision for world order—and perhaps more.⁴

Finally, the United States, like all nations, views itself the way the citizens of Lake Wobegon do, as a place “where all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average.” While the *American Umpire* analogy may resonate during cocktail hour at the CFR, I doubt it would sit very well among similar circles in Islamabad, New Dehli, Beijing, Lagos, Paris or even London.

What Cobbs Hoffman might really be describing is an idea first put forward by the economic historian Charles Kindleberger thirty years ago in *The World in Depression: the hegemonic stability theory*.⁵ Kindleberger argued that the United States had defaulted on the obligation of the largest power to help maintain the orderly function of the global economic system. The notion that a hegemon has both an interest and a duty to provide public global goods has been expanded to include areas beyond economics, such as global governance and international security. This view of America’s global role has been put forward most clearly by the political scientist John Ikenberry in *The Liberal Leviathan*.⁶ It has been increasingly challenged by those who wonder if the effort is wise or worth the candle.⁷

American Umpire is a creative, engaging book that will inspire much argument and discussion. As with all stylized, synthetic accounts of the past, there is much to like and much to argue with in Cobbs Hoffman’s book.⁸ Being of its time, however, can be a virtue. Our current debates over grand strategy and the role of the United States in the world would be much richer if they were historically informed and better still if historians were fully engaged with them. Whether you agree with her arguments or not, Hoffman is to be commended for contributing to this important conversation.

Notes:

1. Gaddis, for the most part, does not blame Washington or Moscow for the start of the Cold War in *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War*; he focuses instead on a variety of internal political and external structural factors, including the uncertainty and misperception endemic to an anarchic world order. This argument in many ways parallels the classic “security dilemma” arguments being made around the same time by Robert Jervis. See John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York, 1972); for the security dilemma arguments, see Robert Jervis, “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 30:2 (January 1978): 167–74; and *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, 1978). The de-emphasizing of the moral culpability of nation or its leaders found a welcome audience among those weary of the ongoing acrimony over U.S. foreign policy. For an excellent account of the “ill-tempered and vituperative debate which broke out in the 1960s over the origins of the Cold War” and the role of orthodox, revisionist, and post-revisionist arguments in this debate, see Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The ‘Objectivity Question’ and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, UK, 1988), 447–47. In his 1998 book, Gaddis places far more causal weight and responsibility on the (im)morality and actions of individual leaders, especially Josef Stalin, a view one might imagine future historians claiming mirrored the larger worldview of the mid-/late 1990s. John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford, UK, 1998). Interestingly (and more quietly), Jervis has also moved away from the security dilemma as an explanation for the origins of the Cold War. Robert Jervis, “Was the Cold War a Security Dilemma?” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 3:1 (Winter 2001): 36–60. Jervis perceptively recognizes the “no-fault” quality of the security dilemma. Gaddis and Jervis are not alone here; Ernest May’s *Lessons of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy* (Oxford, UK, 1975) effectively (if unknowingly) captures the particular zeitgeist of the mid-1970s, as Paul Kennedy’s *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York, 1987) does for the end of the 1980s. The fact that these texts reflect the eras in which they were written in no way undermines their long-term scholarly value.

2. I have made this point elsewhere. See Francis J. Gavin, *Gold, Dollars, and Power: The Politics of International Monetary Relations, 1958–1971* (Chapel Hill, 2004), especially pp. 197–202 (“No Way to Build an Empire”); Gavin, “Economists to the Rescue!” *Orbis* (March 2000): 324–332; and Gavin, “Free to be You and Me,” review of Thomas W. Zeiler’s “Requiem for the Common Man: Class, the Nixon Economic Shock, and the Perils of Globalization,” *Diplomatic History* 37:1 (January 2013): 1–23, on H-Diplo, February 13, 2013, at <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/reviews/PDF/AR385.pdf>.

3. I am grateful to Philip Zelickow for making both points to me.
4. The massive size of the United States means that whether and how it acts can have an enormous influence on smaller states without its own citizens or decision-makers recognizing it; the small state might interpret these actions or non-actions as a form of unintended imperialism. I am grateful to Jeff Engel for making this point. Ironically, U.S. isolation—or lack of action—in the 1930s, by hastening the rise of protectionism and ending free trade, probably harmed those smaller countries far more than if the United States had chosen a policy of “imperialism” through free trade.
5. Charles P. Kindleberger, *The World in Depression: 1929–1939* (Berkeley, 1973).
6. G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton, 2012).
7. The best argument against what is increasingly called liberal internationalism has been made by Barry Posen, “Pull Back: The Case for a Less Activist Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs* (Jan/Feb 2013). Posen will expand the argument in a forthcoming book: *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY, 2014).
8. Among the one-volume histories of the United States that one might imagine assigning for an upper-division undergraduate class, Hoffman’s book is better than several recent competitors but still comes up short of what I consider the best in that field, Walter McDougall’s *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World since 1776* (New York, 1997). Unlike most authors of one-volume treatments, who focus on a singular theme (nation-building, nationalism, empire, spreading liberty and freedom, etc), McDougall wisely recognizes the many competing, often contradictory traditions and forces that drive the complicated engagement of the United States with the world.

Review of Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman’s *American Umpire*

Evanthis Hatzivassiliou

The dilemmas of the exercise of power are as old as our written sources, but none seem to be accompanied by debates as tense as those that surround the application of U.S. power in the twentieth century. Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman provides an excellent discussion of this important issue. She focuses on whether the United States has acted as an “empire” or an “umpire” and convincingly concludes that the nature of U.S. power and international conduct is by no means imperial, although the function of umpire may sometimes involve the application of hard as well as soft power. She argues that the United States served as the pivot in a larger historical process of modernity: the coming-to-fore of democratic capitalism and of its three distinctive characteristics: access, arbitration, and transparency.

The first part of the book discusses the rise of federal institutions, which played the role of internal umpire in the young United States. Cobbs Hoffman shows that the federal system, devised gradually and painfully over many years—the last stage of its evolution occurred during the Civil War—created a union based on institutions that proved enduring precisely because they were able to evolve. The role of these institutions in a “new,” value-oriented union such as the United States was markedly different from what it was in a traditional (European) nation-state, whose cultural links are centuries old and are regarded as indissoluble or “eternal.” In other words, ideals and institutions were the very fabric that created and preserved the cohesion of the United States. Naturally, they gave rise to an American worldview that the United States

disseminated beyond its orders in later years when it began to act on the international scene.

The second part of the book discusses the international policies of the United States from the late nineteenth century to the present: America as an international empire. Although in 1898 Americans momentarily gave in to the general hankering for colonies, their most comprehensive early foreign policy initiative was the Open Door policy. That policy grew to become the basis for the League of Nations concept, with its vision of a fully organized international society. International organization—the crux of Wilsonianism—was not a new notion. Cobbs Hoffman describes extensively its intellectual origins, but a kind of international organization had been in place before 1914: the Concert of Europe. However, this had been an exclusive, conservative/aristocratic Great Power club and a profoundly cynical one, and it failed miserably in 1914, delegitimized by the First World War and the sheer irrationality of trench warfare. It obviously could not work in the new era in which legitimization presupposed broader political involvement and wider horizons, and Wilson brought that realization to the fore.

Discussing U.S. initiatives of 1918–20 also brings us into the realm of power politics. There were many problems in the post-WWI settlement. By placing the entire burden for the war exclusively on Germany, it effectively undermined the Weimar Republic—the victors' best chance for a lasting peace. Moreover, the settlement lacked the necessary blend of idealism and realism to prove stable. Scholars will continue to debate the problems of a "collective security system," especially in the conditions of 1919–20, but a major blow to international stability was America's return to isolationism. The League's failure was rooted not only in the notional flaws of collective security, but also in the fact that the new organization was never backed by sufficient power. The United States did not join; initially, at least, neither did the Soviet Union or Germany. In retrospect, it is clear that without the two would-be superpowers and the strongest European state/economy the League's chances for success were limited. This first U.S. attempt to make the world "safe for democracy" was a good idea, but it was doomed by America's failure to back it energetically. The Americans learned their lesson and refused to repeat their mistake in 1945.

After the Second World War, through a complicated process, Washington decided fully to assume its international responsibilities. In 1945–49 it led the effort to create international institutions (including the UN) and also helped launch a Western community, which was institutionalized economically through the OEEC, the Marshall Plan, GATT and the World Bank, and militarily and politically through NATO. It was, admittedly, a daunting experience for the relatively inexperienced Americans. They were not just active internationally; they led a great coalition in the Cold War. Some of the most important international initiatives of contemporary world history were undertaken then. The most significant of those was the Marshall Plan, which was the model of the utilization of soft power, the founding event of the contemporary West, and arguably the winning move in the Cold War.

Surprisingly, the book does not give much emphasis to this remarkable initiative. On the contrary, Cobbs Hoffman tends to overestimate the importance of the Truman Doctrine, although one feels that she uses it as a telling

example of direct intervention—of "power politics"—rather than as a specific strategy that was followed in the ensuing years. Cobbs Hoffman also discusses the effects of decolonization: both superpowers were against traditional imperialism, which died because it lacked *both* legitimacy and a sufficient power base. Inevitably, the postwar phase also witnessed the first significant failures of U.S. policy as well, some of which, including the Vietnam War, were particularly painful.

Arguably, the book did not have to deal in such detail with international affairs worldwide—in interwar Europe, for example, or Japan. On the other hand, there are themes that the author could have developed further. For example, the discussion of a "West" led by the United States could have been expanded, and William H. McNeill's classic *Rise of the West* could significantly document the analysis. Moreover, the post-Cold War shift from "Western" to "global" concepts, and the dilemmas that resulted from it, could have appeared more prominently.

These, however, are minor points that should not distract us from the book's important and thought-provoking argument about the nature of U.S. power and aims. The use of the term "empire" in connection with the employment of U.S. power does indeed sound somewhat hollow at times: historically, the term "empire" has not been synonymous with "power." In the past seventy years, the United States has contributed some elements of catalytic importance in international affairs. It supplied principled leadership instead of a crude emphasis on power politics, especially during a period (the early postwar years) when the capacity for leadership was lacking even from those "older," more realistic and more experienced powers, at least in the Western world. It introduced a sense of youthful dynamism

with its ideals. It proved capable of *acting*—a hugely important advantage in international politics, and one which we tend to appreciate only after losing it. It rejuvenated the West through its building of an organized Western system during the late 1940s and 1950s, thus enabling Western values to stay alive in a confused world that could easily have given in to totalitarianism, panic or irrationality.

It is true that, in our day, many scholars complain about the Americanization of Europe. But

this, again, is a dubious argument. By the 1940s Europe had failed miserably to deal with the effects of the Great Depression and the advent of totalitarianism. It was also torn by class distinctions and a painful social inertia that precluded the emergence of a truly open society, which the European states were able fully to develop only after their economic recovery. That recovery started with the Marshall Plan and flourished under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, which gave Europeans a sense of security that they were unable or unwilling to provide for themselves. Of course, it was not simply that the United States was acting on its own as a nation: what mattered was the role it played as the primary promoter of the ideals of the Enlightenment and modernity, ideals that manifested themselves politically in the American Revolution and then were disseminated throughout the postwar world. Cobbs Hoffman presents a strong case.

At the same time, the author is careful to note that all was not well with the exercise of American power. Relatively inexperienced and prone to a crusader mentality, sometimes tending to simplify things or to ignore local conditions, the Americans at times wielded their newfound power carelessly, causing pain to others as well as to

Cobbs Hoffman tends to overestimate the importance of the Truman Doctrine, although one feels that she uses it as a telling example of direct intervention—of "power politics"—rather than as a specific strategy that was followed in the ensuing years. Cobbs Hoffman also discusses the effects of decolonization: both superpowers were against traditional imperialism, which died because it lacked *both* legitimacy and a sufficient power base.

themselves. It would have been useful if the author had expanded on a related issue: U.S. policy appears to have been significantly more creative and successful in the early stages of the postwar era. It was then that American self-restraint in the exercise of power—especially in relations with its Western allies—was more manifest. By the late 1960s, the burdens of a Cold War that was not always going well sometimes induced Washington to compromise on its principles. The problem arguably acquired larger dimensions in the post-Cold War era, when the United States had to shoulder alone the political costs of a globe in which conflicts proliferated but lacked a clear ideological origin and the West and its leader lacked a clear enemy to help them define their shared interests and goals.

In short, this book raises questions of monumental importance to which there are no easy answers, and those questions will continue to torment the academic community. The dilemmas of the use and misuse of power are not new, but in our era they tend to surface with a novel intensity, boosted by breathtaking technological advances, social change, and intensifying cultural interactions. Since the Renaissance and the rediscovery of the Greco-Roman world, the mixture of determination and self-restraint has aided evolution. It is self-evident that a measure of both idealism and realism/pragmatism is necessary to meet the challenges of modernity. Extreme “realism,” taking little account of ideals and public expectations, ceases in the end to be realistic, if only because nations are not elegant, affluent and placid gentlemen playing a game of chess. On the other hand, in international relations or in politics ideals never appear in “pure” forms, as if they were products of a laboratory; and in practical terms, ideological “purity” can become a fearsome force. Ideas interact with social conditions, long-term trends, and the situation on the ground. Thus, it is impossible to find a “clear implementation” of them, and arguably it is better this way, since an idea, the product of human ingenuity, can never grasp the full complexity of reality. Commenting on the Atlantic Charter, Cobbs Hoffman makes the point eloquently: “Any statement of principle is a guide to behavior rather than a description of it” (252).

Finally, we need to take into account the burdens of success. For thousands of years now, a strange fate has awaited victors in history. The vanquished can always point to “lost opportunities” and claim that all would have been better if only they had prevailed. By contrast, the victors are always in an unenviable position. They may have brought about dramatic improvements, but these in time tend to be taken for granted; and together with these accomplishments, there always come disappointments, compromise, and a sense that many promises have remained unfulfilled. For all its power, capabilities, or idealism, eventually the United States will be unable to escape this fate.

Thus, we still face the need to strike the right balance (but what on earth is a “right” balance, and who determines it?) between continuity and change, tradition and innovation, practicality and vision. Unfortunately for our societies, it is impossible to write a users’ manual for these things, or take a pill and learn how to do it. We will have to continue to meet these challenges by such imperfect tools as knowledge, principled thought, and, last but not least, accumulated experience. In this momentous undertaking, the United States will continue to play the role of the leader—a leader characterized, for better or for worse, by its youthfulness, institutionally oriented schemes, and a certain (unavoidable) aura of self-righteousness. But those are the qualities that enable it to act (thus providing this elusive but essential element, leadership) rather than remain an observer of the world stage.

Partial Umpire?

Fabian Hilfrich

After a decade’s deluge of books on the American empire and its decline, prompted largely by the disastrous war in Iraq, Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman suggests a new paradigm for the interpretation of American foreign policy. *American Umpire*, a book without the ubiquitous subtitle, focuses all its energies on one central argument (and play on words): that the term “umpire,” rather than “empire,” accurately describes the role that the United States has played in the world since 1776. With this claim, Cobbs Hoffman also challenges more established revisionist works, most notably William Appleman Williams’s *Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959), written at the height of the Cold War.

Cobbs Hoffman’s argument is not purely academic. She warns that “inexact historical arguments can have dire, real-world consequences.” To prove her point, she relates the story of one of the Iranian hostage-takers in 1979. He had formed his view of the United States while studying at Berkeley, where he was introduced to the left-wing academic jargon of American “imperialism” and “racism” (19). Cobbs Hoffman implies that studying in the United States had given this Iranian his anti-American outlook and thus implies that American academics were at least co-responsible for radicalizing enemies abroad. This cautionary tale explains the verve and passion with which Hoffman approaches her topic. This animus and her sweeping attack on much of the existing scholarship will generate substantial discussion in the discipline and beyond.

Cobbs Hoffman criticizes the broad and loose understanding of imperialism that she claims is at the heart of numerous studies of U.S. foreign relations. She argues that the influential term “informal imperialism,” which was first applied to the dying British empire and then to U.S. foreign policy, is far too imprecise and open-ended (192). Instead, she champions a very narrow understanding of imperialism, synonymous with colonialism and restricted to formal rule over subject populations. According to her definition, the United States had only a brief and late flirtation with empire, when it annexed the Philippines in 1899. Almost immediately, though, the nation realized its mistake and set the Philippines on a course towards self-government and independence, which were realized by 1946.

Cobbs Hoffman’s interpretation echoes the orthodox scholarship of Samuel Flagg Bemis or Ernest R. May, who characterized the Philippine episode as an “aberration” in a foreign policy that was otherwise devoted to high principles and the ideals of national self-determination.¹ What sets Cobbs Hoffman’s book apart from these earlier works is her search for an alternative framework for U.S. foreign policy. She finds this in the image of the “umpire,” arbitrating between different nations and interests in the service of three key ideals and principles: “access to opportunity, arbitration of disputes, and transparency in government and business” (6). These principles underpin a system of “democratic capitalism” (4) that the United States has consistently championed since its founding.

Citing Geir Lundestad’s difficulties in grappling with similar terminology (he accepts the term “arbiter” but rejects “umpire” as too objective), Cobbs Hoffman admits that the term captures the essence of U.S. foreign policy imperfectly because the nation was rarely completely disinterested in the quarrels in which it involved itself (326). She therefore sometimes resorts to the more cumbersome formulation of “player/umpire” for added precision. Some readers may wonder, though, whether this qualifier does

not undermine the metaphor more fundamentally than Cobbs Hoffman admits.

The book follows a chronological structure that begins before the founding of the United States with the Peace of Westphalia, which inaugurated a system of equal and independent nation-states without the higher authority of an emperor or pope. Cobbs Hoffman then deduces the umpire analogy from a national rather than an international context, starting with the process in which the thirteen colonies, then states, delegated authority to a federal government to act as umpire in their quarrels. As Cobbs Hoffman puts it, “Americans’ first foreign alliances—and thus their first foreign relations—were with one another” (21).

In a world in which nation-states developed into the most important actors in the international arena, the United States was unique in granting such power to an authority above the state level. This experience, Cobbs Hoffman maintains, eventually paved the way to international cooperation in the United Nations and the European Union. If we accept the analogy, however, that American interstate behavior presaged the nation’s international behavior, would we not expect to see a consistent willingness to submit to an umpire authority beyond the national government? Yet although the United States was instrumental in the foundation of the League of Nations and the United Nations, we do not encounter such consistency. On the contrary, American international behavior has been characterized historically not only by an internationalist but also by a unilateralist streak that could express itself as isolationism or unilateral interventionism. Washington’s reluctance to submit to the authority of the International Criminal Court is only one recent example of such reluctance to submit to an external umpire. Cobbs Hoffman may, of course, counter that she is primarily interested in the United States’ role as umpire, not in its willingness to submit to another umpire.

In elaborating on the unprecedented nature of the American experiment with a federal umpire, Cobbs Hoffman emphasizes that “Europe then had nothing comparable” (22). While that is certainly true, I am not sure how comparable Europe’s eighteenth-century political landscape was to that in the thirteen colonies. Even if we grant that colonists felt more loyalty towards their states than to the federal government and that the North-South divide soon developed over the question of slavery, was the political environment in the United States really the equivalent of Europe’s deep-seated animosities and endless wars? The early common struggle against imperialist Britain helped inaugurate a more “national” outlook from the beginning, particularly over questions of foreign policy.

Cobbs Hoffman’s claim about the uniqueness of the early American experience also raises the question of her attitude towards American exceptionalism—a question that almost invariably emerges in such sweeping discussions of U.S. foreign relations. Is the United States exceptional? On the dust jacket, Jeremi Suri asserts that Cobbs Hoffman offers a “resounding yes” to this question. It is possible, however, that she would not claim that the United States was wholly exceptional. Throughout the book, she maintains that the United States was often the first nation to champion access, arbitration, and transparency, but she also emphasizes that these principles were not uniquely, let alone exclusively, American values. They were derived from a common Western heritage of classical and Enlightenment values and they were increasingly championed by European allies and the rest of the world—if not by governments, then at

least by their populations. In fact, during the Cold War, Cobbs Hoffman adds, it was frequently the Europeans who “took up the banner of idealistic political innovation when the United States dropped it” because it was too caught up in the confrontation with the Soviet Union (296). Exceptionalism is thus paired with an international and even universalist dimension in *American Umpire*.

In fact, the international contextualization of U.S. foreign policy is one of the strongest traits of the book, even when this context is sometimes sketchy (understandable, given the vast subject). Proceeding from the new state system inaugurated by the Peace of Westphalia, as previously mentioned, Cobbs Hoffman traces the Founding Fathers’ innovative use of economic incentives and coercion in lieu of military violence back to the French physiocrats (56–7). Still later, she emphasizes that, despite the United States’ pioneering adoption of such measures and of free trade ideals, Great Britain actually championed them more consistently throughout the nineteenth century (92). Similarly enlightening are her discussions of the rise of nation-states and the concomitant decline of empires and the rise of humanitarianism at the end of the nineteenth century, which infringed upon the previously sacrosanct principle of national sovereignty (138–42, 157–8). These international developments help her frame the United States’ brief flirtation with empire in the wake of the Spanish-American War. According to Cobbs Hoffman, they also helped shape the nation’s eventual preference for an anti-imperial policy based on Open Door principles.

Given her interest in refuting the imperialist label, however, it is surprising that Cobbs Hoffman devotes relatively little space—a mere sixty-five pages—to the postwar period, which is the era that prompts most of the discussion about the validity of the label. Although she concedes that Washington occasionally compromised its ideals during the Cold War, she ultimately advances a triumphalist narrative, with the United States as successful champion of global freedom presiding over a period of unprecedented economic growth. This period ended, as Cobbs Hoffman puts it, with the demise of the last empire,

the Soviet Union, in 1991—an event that creates an almost Fukuyama-like “end of history” moment in her narrative. Summarizing the Cold War, she argues correctly that the world was more peaceful in the second half of the century than in the first and that far fewer people died after 1945. Nevertheless, while she implies that this “progress” was a result of American leadership (294), she fails to take into account the structural stalemate of the Cold War and the existence of nuclear weapons, both of which made a major war unthinkable for both camps.

Readers may also wonder whether Cobbs Hoffman’s tour de force in the last two chapters does justice to the complex postwar period and whether it pays equal attention to light and shadows. At what moment, one might ask, does a *compromise* of principles raise questions about a *commitment* to principles? Although Cobbs Hoffman does not deny Washington’s mistakes, she tends to view the positive episodes as symptomatic of and the negative examples as exceptions to the pattern of U.S. foreign policy.

Consider the opening of the book, for example, where Cobbs Hoffman uses Eisenhower’s intervention against Britain, France, and Israel in the Suez crisis of 1956 to establish both her umpire analogy and the American commitment to national (in this case, Egyptian) self-determination and decolonization during the Cold War. Yet for every Suez, there was a Vietnam. In the latter case the same president

Cobbs Hoffman’s claim about the uniqueness of the early American experience also raises the question of her attitude towards American exceptionalism—a question that almost invariably emerges in such sweeping discussions of U.S. foreign relations. Is the United States exceptional?

Umpiring is a Function, Not a Compliment

Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman

preferred obstructing what he himself considered national self-determination: namely, the likely election of Ho Chi Minh in 1956. What was the nation's "default setting" when anti-communism clashed with decolonization in the Cold War? In Suez, the Eisenhower administration believed that anti-communism *and* decolonization demanded American intervention on behalf of Egypt. In Vietnam, however (and arguably elsewhere), Washington chose anti-communism over decolonization in propping up colonial powers like France or local authoritarian regimes. That is not to say that the United States ran its own global empire during the Cold War, an empire morally and politically on par with that of the Soviet Union, but these and similar U.S. decisions raise substantial doubts about the umpire analogy in this period. Some economic historians may also question Cobbs Hoffman's assertions of continuous economic growth and prosperity, because they were actually interrupted in the 1970s and again after 2008 in crises that might even throw the long-term viability of the capitalist global economic system into doubt.

In the conclusion, Cobbs Hoffman moves from analysis to advocacy. The introductory story of the Iranian hostage-taker foreshadows that transition. It serves as an attack upon left-wing historians who supposedly provide rhetorical ammunition for America's "anti-imperialist" enemies abroad. (Are the latter really in need of such help?) While Cobbs Hoffman argues that the historian's task is "to understand the past as objectively as possible" (339), the conclusion reads like an impassioned defense of more recent U.S. foreign policy. It seems more polemical than "objective," for example, to suggest that Ireland and Iceland enjoy free university education because the United States shoulders larger defense expenditures (337).

Cobbs Hoffman's choice of examples in the conclusion and the context in which they are used also raise questions. In discussing the likelihood and desirability of the United States exercising its umpire role in the future, Cobbs Hoffman focuses on the wars in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, when Europe proved unable to stop war crimes and atrocities and once again depended on U.S. intervention. Although the world may still benefit from continued American involvement in such conflicts, the historian should also acknowledge the problems in this narrative. After all, Clinton also hesitated before committing the country in Bosnia and, more tragically, failed to intervene in the Rwandan genocide. Cobbs Hoffman does mention the latter event, but in a much more "positive" context, when praising Clinton for being the first world leader to apologize for something "his nation did *not* do" (341).

Finally, Cobbs Hoffman refrains from engaging "the elephant in the room," the intervention that has prompted much of the recent literature on "imperialism" that she attacks. Of course, it is legitimate for an historian to refrain from analyzing such a recent event, but in view of Cobbs Hoffman's declared intention to discuss the likelihood of a continued umpire role for the United States, this largely unilateral intervention, which alienated key allies and recruited substantial numbers of anti-American and anti-Western terrorists, would have been an interesting object of discussion.

American Umpire thus invites further discussion and debate, which is definitely one of the strengths of this intelligent, provocative, and well-argued book. Given the element of self-interest at work in U.S. policy and the nation's recent reluctance to submit to supranational arbiters, the United-States-as-umpire may be an imperfect analogy, but it forces us to think again about the analytical validity of the politically charged epithet of "empire."

Note:

1. Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, 3rd ed. (New York, 1950), 463; Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy: The*

I'm profoundly indebted to these reviewers, who've generously assisted with my primary goal: to initiate an open conversation about matters too often taken for granted. Like U.S. foreign policy, still knee-deep in the tar pit of the 1947 Truman Doctrine commitment to police the world, much scholarship appears stuck on interpretations dating from the 1950s. Four generations after William A. Williams, many still portray the country's behavior as violating every principle its founders articulated. Yet how likely is it that the world's first post-colonial society would actually be, with preternatural consistency, the most imperialistic nation ever to "rule" the world? Is "emperor" a label that genuinely fits George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, Jimmy Carter, or even George W. Bush? Can all of these average-to-bright men be subtler than Machiavelli, or more delusional than Don Quixote?

In medical school, doctors are trained to think "horses," not "zebras," at the sound of hoof beats. Mundane diagnoses are generally more accurate, if less zippy, than exotic ones. Historians are sometimes compared unfavorably with the darlings of the academic world, namely "theorists," whether of the subaltern, deconstructionist, or postmodern variety. But we should take pride in the sturdy world of facts. As in medicine, simple evidence provides the surest guide to trustworthy deductions.

My book argues that the United States has operated as an umpire. Like any role, umpiring can be performed poorly or well. It's a function—not a compliment. What intrigues me, and what gives the term real validity, I believe, is that it is the very word used by the founders. In *The Federalist Papers*, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay all described the need for an "umpire" above states to ward off conflict that might destroy the union.² The word had a metaphorical quality, but it approximated a powerful, supranational entity that would enforce compliance with collectively established norms without colonizing individual states to extract their resources or take their place.

In the United States, "umpire" is thus more historically grounded than "empire"—which has long designated parasitical, authoritarian systems from which subordinates long to break away (and do), as soon as they have the power. The former term suggests, as the Founders apparently intended, a facilitative role that can be delegated in a democracy and is not intended primarily to benefit the entity undertaking it.

Indeed, the benefits of an "umperial" system to American citizens before 1945, and others afterwards, were widespread. Peace largely prevailed, trade barriers came down, labor freely circulated. The United States had the world's largest economy by 1890, and immigrants poured in from every corner of the planet. Economists tell us that far more wealth was created internationally after World War II, and more people entered the global middle class, than at any previous time in human history.³ The number of sovereign states quadrupled between 1945 and 2014, and the United Nations outlawed colonialism in 1960. Violence between countries declined steadily.⁴

These are well-established data. How do we square them with the equally apparent fact that the United States played the starring military and economic role in the world arena during the same period? Did those advances occur despite U.S. policy, or because of it? Or were the two unrelated? If America was largely aggressive and oppressive—in a word, imperialistic—why were so many post-WWII outcomes positive, especially in areas where the

United States was most deeply involved, such as Western Europe and East Asia? In these same regions, American per capita income fell relative to other nations. As Francis Gavin notes, “if these policies were motivated by dreams of empire—explicit, implicit, or by invitation—then we need to add economic idiocy to the charges against their authors.” When the Cold War ended, Russia’s coerced allies broke away; America’s allies did not. Professor Gavin echoes my sentiments when he observes, “The continuing popularity of this view is one of the most baffling and frustrating aspects of historical scholarship on U.S. foreign relations.”

Is it possible that outcomes actually reflected intentions? That U.S. policymakers neither wanted nor created an empire—as they persistently claimed—even though they sometimes made arrogant, damaging, unforgivable mistakes? Indeed, aren’t governmental options usually limited and errors endemic? Barack Obama has observed, “If there were easy choices [in a problematic situation], somebody else would have solved it, and it wouldn’t have come to my desk.”⁵ Instead of clinging to nomenclature that describes a governmental form as thoroughly eradicated as the smallpox virus, it’s worth considering that fundamental change really can occur. When that happens, we must find new terms.

So, for example, agriculture decisively replaced foraging, and the Paleolithic became the Neolithic. Similarly, industrialization marginalized handicrafts, and nation-states superseded empires. Today, countries as different from one another as Albania, Botswana, and Columbia embrace parallel governmental and economic practices because they find them as useful as they do maize and machines. They reject monarchy in favor of republicanism, imperialism in favor of national self-determination, and mercantilism in favor of free trade, not because the United States or anyone else makes them do so, but because they freely choose to. *American Empire* dubs these newer global practices access, arbitration, and transparency.

Some say the United States simply established the sneakiest form of empire yet. But if the above facts are correct, that’s like mistaking horses for zebras.

Fabian Hilfrich calls my assertion that world conditions have gradually improved a “Fukuyama-like ‘end of history moment.’” His concern is understandable. As I emphasize, however, “history always lurks around the corner.”⁶ No human innovation is secure against the future, which makes no promises. Dark ages may return. Enlightened ones are far from perfect. Agriculture, industrialization, and democratic capitalism outperformed earlier practices, but they have not led to paradise. Obesity, pollution, and corruption all prove that no form of “progress” is without significant dangers. It’s simply the case that relatively fewer people now die of famine or foreign war. And more peoples govern themselves—albeit very poorly on occasion—than ever before.

Gavin and Hilfrich suggest this interpretation may be a form of American exceptionalism. To clarify, I do not endorse exceptionalism, lite or regular. All peoples have idiosyncrasies that distinguish them from others, but *American Empire* argues strenuously that the United States is as indebted to the rest of the world as the world is indebted to it. Monroe didn’t pen the Monroe Doctrine; Wilson didn’t invent Wilsonianism. Most American ideals and policies are foreign in origin. The yearning for political and economic opportunity, peaceful negotiation of disputes, and openness in government predates the United States

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by centuries, as I document at length in several chapters. Although the U.S. was the first modern state to embrace these principles constitutionally, and championed them globally after 1945, public demand for access, arbitration, and transparency would continue unabated if America ceased to exist. The rest of the world does not need the U.S. to interpret its interests.

Evanthis Hatzivassiliou notes that the U.S. nonetheless played a “catalytic” role after World War II, when others were paralyzed by fear and indecision. “It proved capable of acting—a hugely important advantage in international politics, and one which we tend to appreciate only after losing it.” His word choice is apt. The security umbrella America placed over Western Europe and Japan allowed them to rebuild at a fragile moment when it would have been easy for devastated countries to give in, as Hatzivassiliou says, “to totalitarianism, panic, or irrationality.” But a catalytic agent has a time-limited function. The modern world system is now largely self-sustaining, especially if others prove “capable of acting” in crises. Countries like Germany and Japan are far more secure than ever before, having found commercial rivalry safer and more profitable than military expansion. (Who knew?) As it turns out, systems that aim for access, arbitration, and transparency get ahead faster. They just do, whether we approve or not.

Which brings me to the crux of my argument. As Susan Brewer discusses, I emphasize that the U.S. has been an imperfect umpire much of the time, and a truly lousy one on many occasions. (I appreciate her attention to the first half of my book, which discusses the consequences of nineteenth-century nationalism for indigenous peoples from the Great Plains to the Peruvian Andes.) To me, what’s of interest is that the U.S. opted to play umpire at all. For most of its history, which I analyze from 1776 to 2012, the American government affected steady indifference to problems outside its borders. What changed? And why did it not become an empire when the world held it in awe in 1945—choosing to advocate democratic organization instead? As much power as America had after the war, it gave much away as well. Why did multiple presidents and the U.S. Congress encourage—even fund—rival centers of power?

The answers lie deep in American history. Hilfrich is right in saying that my book gives short shrift to the past seventy years (three chapters out of ten). I sacrifice comprehensive coverage of more recent events in order to integrate America’s story with world developments since 1648, when nation-states began to elbow out empires. The first half of my book plumbs the consequences of the Reformation, the Peace of Westphalia, the French Revolution, expansionism, and industrialization for the early republic. Doing so enables me to make what I believe is the book’s most original contribution. I hope other scholars will test the validity of the concepts I put forth in studies with smaller scope and correspondingly greater depth.

Hilfrich also says, “for every Suez, there was a Vietnam.” That sounds right, but I’m not sure it’s true. If the U.S. opposed self-determination in the Third World just as often as it supported it, why did the number of new countries quadruple? Which was the exception: Vietnam or Egypt? Prey proliferate when predators decline, and the world becomes safer for the weak. Perhaps we need studies that quantify the number of times the U.S. aided emergent new nations after 1945, and the times it undermined them, in order to chart the larger trend. My hunch is that the former phenomenon dwarfs the later, but this is yet to be rigorously established.

My book shows how the nation's controversial "umperial" role evolved over time in a context that we consider thoroughly domestic today but that once seemed more international. These United States preceded the United States. Thomas Jefferson proposed the concept of "nullification." Abraham Lincoln answered him with the doctrine of federal primacy. The Civil War (trailed by the wars in Vietnam and Iraq) may be the best example of the terrible hazards and blunders that attend umpiring. Documenting world and American history over a period of 300 years, my book posits that the US gravitated towards an international role after World War II that it had long practiced domestically: that of umpire. By contrast, the nation had had little experience being an empire, and it didn't like what it did have.

Of course, choosing to be an umpire does not mean umpiring was easy or especially profitable. By definition, umpires can't win. They are rarely popular and often wrong. Fortunately, while indispensable, they are also replaceable. No one must play the part forever. Thinking of the United States as an umpire rather than empire may give citizens insight into how to share, exit, or redefine the role in the future. As Francis Gavin observes, "Our current debates over grand strategy and the role of the United States in the world would be much richer if they were historically informed and better still if historians were fully engaged with them." But who wants to engage a topic where the script is already written—and the venality of the characters a foregone conclusion? Rethinking the framework of American foreign relations may be useful on multiple levels: not least, it may make our discipline more relevant to the public and more engaging to young historians otherwise tempted to leave "politics" to political scientists.

Some scholars question, what's in a name? Why not just use empire as a handy "analytic?"

Norms change. Colonialism is against international law. Empires have disappeared. Imperialists are hated as vehemently as racists. Is that what we want to tell people around the world we are, if the term is not accurate?

Lastly, Fabian Hilfrich objects that if the U.S. has been an umpire, "would we not expect to see a consistent willingness to submit to an umperial authority beyond the national government"? He's right to say that Americans have long exhibited a unilateralist streak. (See the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 and 1799.) It's a truism that those who are used to giving orders rarely enjoy taking them. Arbiters sometimes balk when they find themselves on the other side of the table. That is to be expected. But it does not obviate the fact that umps exist, and the United States has acted as one for quite a long time.

Scholarship, meanwhile, is also a team sport. I appreciate fellow historians for playing along and throwing some hard balls. Without their insightful and honest responses, conversation can't go forward. This has been a good one.

Notes:

1. Characterizations of the United States as an empire range from mild to extreme, with most defining empire sketchily. Examples are plentiful, but some of the more famous and hyperbolic include the works of William A. Williams (*Empire As A Way of Life*, Oxford, 1980), Chalmers Johnson (*Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, New York, 2000), Andrew Bacevich (*American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*, Cambridge, 2002), Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt (*Empire*, Cambridge, 2000), and so on. A recent update, though it differs little from the others, is Perry Anderson's screed in *New Left Review*, "Imperium and Consilium" (*NLR*, 83, September-October 2013). Anderson calls American presidents "rulers;" Obama "Executioner-in-Chief." Numerous historians of more moderate temperament accept the term as well, as evidenced by the recent spate of books with "Empire" in the title, ranging from histories of the Cold War to works on Manifest Destiny, religion, technology, trade, and tourism.
2. *American Umpire*, p. 44-51.
3. U.N. *Human Development Report: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, 2002; Angus Maddison, *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective* (Paris, 2001), 30, 126; Jonathan Margolis, *A Brief History of Tomorrow: The Future, Past and Present* (London, 2000), 74; Michael Spence, *The Next Convergence: The Future of Economic Growth in a Multi-Speed World* (New York, 2011), 5, 21-22, 26. A Nobel Laureate in Economics, Spence writes that an "Inclusiveness Revolution" began after 1950, allowing 60 percent of the world's population to start catching up with the 15 percent in industrialized regions.
4. Joshua Goldstein, *Winning the War on War* (New York, 2012).
5. Quoted in Jonn Wenner, "Obama in Command: The Rolling Stone Interview," *Rolling Stone*, October 25, 2010; http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/politics/Obama_in_command_The_Rolling_Stone_interview-103938389.html
6. *American Umpire*, p. 5.
7. "Analytic" is a word that has morphed from adjective to noun. George Orwell famously criticized such inexact diction as the means by which "banal statements are given an appearance of profundity [and]. . . scientific impartiality [ascribed] to biased judgments." George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language," 1946: <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/orwell46.htm>.

Some scholars question, what's in a name? Why not just use empire as a handy "analytic?" Norms change. Colonialism is against international law. Empires have disappeared. Imperialists are hated as vehemently as racists. Is that what we want to tell people around the world we are, if the term is not accurate?

Marching Ahead (Forthrightly): The Historiography of Inter-American Relations

Stephen G. Rabe

The title of this article is a gentle play on the title of the Stuart L. Bernath Lecture that I delivered on 8 April 1989 at the Organization of American Historians conference in St. Louis. The lecture and subsequent article in *Diplomatic History* (*DH*) were in response to Charles Maier's jeremiad, "Marking Time: The Historiography of International Relations." Maier's piece is best remembered for the opening observation that the study of international relations could not be counted among the pioneering fields of the historical discipline during the 1970s and that diplomatic history, especially U.S. diplomatic history, had become a "stepchild" among university scholars and the educated public.¹

Maier's assessment sparked an often rancorous debate among members of the Society of Historians of Foreign Relations (SHAFR) that has gone on for more than three decades. In 1985, Warren I. Cohen, the editor of *Diplomatic History* and SHAFR president, answered Maier directly, puckishly characterizing his field of American-East Asian relations as the "cutting edge of the historical profession." Ten years later, Michael J. Hogan, another *DH* editor and SHAFR president, lamented that the scholarship in the field was "not always sophisticated" and called for "exciting new work on the cultural aspects of war and diplomacy." In 2009, Thomas W. Zeiler, *DH* editor and future SHAFR president, concluded that historians had apparently been listening to Hogan. He celebrated "the diplomatic history bandwagon" and observed that historians of U.S. foreign relations had responded to Maier and Hogan by becoming "champions of the intellectual turn as well as vigorous proponents of intellectual and cultural history."²

The first part of this essay will review the historiographical pieces on inter-American relations that have appeared over the past twenty-five years to see what scholars have been saying about the field. The essay will then highlight articles and books that have appeared in the past decade or so that give a sense of the direction and purpose of the study of U.S. relations with Latin America. As is evident from the title of this review, my assessment is that the field is strong and dynamic and populated by vigorous and innovative scholars at all career stages.

In my Bernath lecture, I suggested that Maier had not kept up with developments and innovations in the field of inter-American relations. I first noted that inter-Americanists had cleansed themselves of the chauvinism and mindless patriotism that had characterized interpretations like Samuel Flagg Bemis's *The Latin American Policy of the United States* (1943). I further observed that inter-Americanists were employing foreign language skills and demonstrating an acute knowledge of Latin American thought, society, and culture. They were defining inter-American relations, to use Richard Leopold's words, as "the sum total of all connections—official, private, commercial, and cultural—with other countries and peoples."³ For example, in his pathbreaking book, *The CIA in Guatemala*, Richard H. Immerman interpreted the overthrow of President Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán within the context of Guatemala's political

milieu.⁴ Bruce J. Calder (Dominican Republic), Louis A. Pérez Jr. (Cuba), and Frank D. McCann Jr. (Brazil) did extensive multi-archival, multinational, multilingual research and assessed the impact that U.S. policies had on the countries that they were studying.⁵ McCann, who won the Bernath Book Award in 1975, took an international approach, as did Stanley E. Hilton; they both analyzed Brazil's use of the Axis threat to win concessions from the United States.⁶

Inter-Americanists did not confine themselves to recounting what one diplomat said to another. Lester D. Langley studied the activities of U.S. Marine Corps officers in Central America and the Caribbean, and Emily and Norman Rosenberg and Paul W. Drake revealed the roles of U.S. private bankers and financial advisors in Latin America.⁷ Long before it was trendy to do the cultural turn, William O. Walker published his insightful analyses on drug control in the Americas. Drawing upon the work of anthropologists like Clifford Geertz, Walker showed why U.S. efforts to control the narcotics trade had consistently failed. U.S. policymakers and drug agents failed to grasp that indigenous people of the Andean highlands had long used narcotics as a form of cultural expression and a way of separating themselves from "the presumed national culture."⁸ I also pointed to the work of Deborah Fitzgerald, a historian of science who demonstrated the divisive cultural issues that arose when U.S. reformers attempted to transform Mexico's corn crop, and James Gardner, a legal historian whose book showed what happened when Americans tried to reform Brazil's legal system.⁹

I tempered my optimistic assessment of the field by observing that we needed access to records of U.S. companies like United Fruit and regional studies of mining towns, oil camps, and banana plantations. I further theorized that scholars might reconsider the traditional conception of inter-American relations as the consistent effort by the United States to manage and impose its idea of order and stability upon the region.¹⁰ For example, Fidel Castro's Cuba made the decision to intervene in various regions of Africa in the 1960s and 1970s; presidents from John F. Kennedy to Jimmy Carter could only react. Decisions made in Mexico City on offshore drilling, the value of the peso, or emigration policies drove relations with the United States. Unwittingly, I was anticipating the concept of Latin American "agency" becoming a central component of scholarship on inter-American relations. In any case, as we shall see, scholars began to widen their areas of inquiry.

In 2003, I updated my thinking on the state of the field in Robert D. Schulzinger's valuable volume of historiographical essays, *A Companion to American Foreign Relations*. My assignment was to focus on the period from 1961 to the present, with Mark Gilderhus taking 1898–1941 and Darlene Rivas 1942–1960.¹¹ I noted the continued multi-archival, multinational nature of the scholarship, pointing, for example, to W. Michael Weis's outstanding recounting of the deterioration of the U.S. alliance with Brazil and subsequent U.S. support for the 1964 military takeover of the country. Martha K. Huggins continued the story with her

brave *Political Policing*, an *exposé* of U.S. support for military and police repression in Brazil for which she interviewed security personnel who tortured Brazilian civilians.¹² Cole Blasier, Nicola Miller, and Ilya Prizel took the international history approach, conducting research in Moscow in order to assess the role of the Soviet Union in Latin America. These three authors concluded separately that Soviet policymakers took a cautious approach to the region because they understood the power of the United States, the lack of economic complementarity with Latin America, the daunting physical barriers to communication, and the deep hostility of elites and devout Catholics to communism.¹³

The end of the Cold War and growing inter-American cultural ties prompted scholars to focus on new issues. Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, authors of a popular textbook on modern Latin America, coined the term “intermesic issues” to characterize international questions with substantial domestic implications.¹⁴ These issues included immigration, free trade agreements like NAFTA, narcotics trafficking, and the preservation of rain forests. In a widely read history of Mexico-U.S. relations, W. Dirk Raat and Michael M. Brescia entitled a chapter “Mexamerica,” referring to the two-hundred-mile region north and south of the U.S.-Mexico border. Raat and Brescia and others perceived a distinct way of life emerging on this critical borderland.¹⁵

The post-1965 immigration of Latin Americans—especially Mexicans—to the United States also had a stimulating effect on scholarship. The U.S. Census of 2000 reported that Hispanics or Latinos comprised about 12 percent of the U.S. population. By 2010, this admittedly amorphous group, which encompasses people of different backgrounds and outlooks, had surpassed African-Americans as the largest minority in the country. Demographers have predicted that Latinos will comprise 25 percent of the U.S. population by mid-century. The number of Latinos in colleges and universities is rising, and these students are naturally interested in learning about the land and culture of their parents and grandparents. Enrollments in courses in Latin American history and inter-American relations are growing accordingly. The field was once devoid of suitable textbooks, but instructors have available to them now a plethora of recent general interpretations and textbooks on inter-American relations by accomplished scholars.¹⁶

Mark T. Gilderhus has written intelligently and often on the historiography of inter-American relations. Along with Lester Langley, the able and genial Gilderhus has long served as the dean of the field, and he remains the only inter-Americanist to have served as president of SHAFR. In a 1992 review for *DH*, Gilderhus discerned an “emerging synthesis” in the field. Contemporary scholars rejected the happy talk of a harmony of interests, of Pan Americanism, or a Western Hemisphere Ideal that had characterized the interpretations of Bemis, Dexter Perkins, and Arthur P. Whitaker. Instead, historians writing in the 1970s and 1980s assumed a critical stance toward U.S. policies in the region and focused on “the significance of asymmetries in the distribution of wealth and power” between the United States and Latin America.¹⁷ Scholars now wanted to talk about the thirty-five armed interventions in the circum-Caribbean region in the era of the Roosevelt Corollary.¹⁸ Analyses of covert Cold War destabilization campaigns and the U.S. war against Fidel Castro’s Cuba also attracted the interest of scholars. An especially radical interpretation came from Morris H. Morley in *Imperial State and Revolution: An Analysis of U.S.-Cuban Relations from 1952 to 1986*.¹⁹ Morris scoured the available documents and centered them “within a sophisticated and uncompromising Marxist model.” Such a radical approach indicated, in Gilderhus’s judgment, that the specter of the Vietnam War hung over interpretations of inter-American relations published in the 1970s and 1980s.²⁰

Updating his thinking a decade later in the Schulzinger volume, Gilderhus reiterated that, for the 1898–1941 period,

scholars generally focused on the exercise of U.S. hegemony in the hemisphere by formal and informal means. This approach could be found in Hans Schmidt’s classic history of the U.S. occupation of Haiti.²¹ But Gilderhus now detected “intriguing historiographic tendencies.” Scholars wanted to know not only how U.S. policies impacted Latin America but also how Latin American nations and citizens resisted U.S. power. A new concern for the “weapons of the weak” had arisen.²² Gilderhus pointed to two other studies on Haiti. Brenda Gayle Plummer showed how Haitians exerted their will amidst the interplay among France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States and foreign traders and investors. In *Taking Haiti*, Mary A. Renda imaginatively explored how issues of class, gender, and race both exemplified and tempered the U.S. role in Haiti.²³ In *The Dictator Next Door*, Eric Roorda, through creative multinational research, demonstrated how the odious Rafael Trujillo blunted State Department criticism of his gross violations of human rights by currying favor with U.S. military officials.²⁴ Both Renda and Roorda garnered Bernath prizes for their outstanding scholarly contributions.

In a companion piece in the Schulzinger volume, Darlene Rivas largely agreed with Gilderhus. She too found that scholars believed that the impact of U.S. influence and power had proved negative for Latin Americans. As Rivas put it, “underlying much of the scholarship on the era” (1942–1960) was “the assumption that U.S. policy was not only flawed, but also highly determinative in causing or exacerbating Latin American political instability and economic and social inequality.”²⁵ My own book, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, was based on that assumption.²⁶ Like Gilderhus, Rivas hoped that a new wave of scholarship would explore how Latin Americans responded to, manipulated, and resisted U.S. power, culture, and policy, which was “often characterized by condescension and racism.”²⁷

In 2003, Max Paul Friedman, in an insightful essay for *DH*, highlighted what Gilderhus and Rivas had discerned. Friedman, winner of both the Bernath Article and Lecture Prizes and author of two brilliant books, applauded what he called the “retiring of the puppets”: students of inter-American relations no longer felt comfortable portraying Latin Americans as mere pawns of the United States. Because they more readily consulted Latin American archives, scholars now understood that Latin Americans had the agency to shape their own choices in international relations. Friedman also saw historians successfully blending domestic and international history and cultural and political approaches.²⁸ He recommended works by Roorda, Paul Coe Clark, Kyle Longley, and Stephen R. Niblo and cited essays in *Close Encounters of Empire*.²⁹ He might also have recommended his own *Nazis and Good Neighbors*. In that work, which was the product of exhaustive research in Europe, Latin America, and the United States, Friedman revealed how Latin American elites manipulated the exaggerated U.S. fear about Nazi subversion in the region to their own economic advantage.³⁰

Friedman perhaps exaggerated how novel the dedication to archival research was among inter-Americanists. Experienced historians like Gilderhus, Lester Langley, and Thomas Schoonover had always conducted research in Latin America.³¹ The problem was that many Latin American nations restricted or denied access to twentieth-century records, and sometimes Latin American officials took possession of public papers and created private archives. Scholars like Elizabeth A. Cobbs and Darlene Rivas had to secure permission to consult private archives—Cobbs in Brazil and Rivas in Venezuela—before going on to write their outstanding books.³²

In any case, Friedman did not let his enthusiasm for agency overwhelm his good historical sense. As he noted, “agency and independence are not the same thing.”³³ Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic

spent three decades manipulating and bribing U.S. officials and legislators. But as I outlined in *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, the Kennedy administration inspired the 30 May 1961 assassination of Trujillo. President Kennedy and his close advisors concluded that the old tyrant no longer served U.S. interests.³⁴

Finally, in 2014, Mark Gilderhus, with the help of Michael E. Neagle, again surveyed the literature for the period since 1941. They hailed the continued positive trends in the study of inter-American relations. Scholars gave greater attention to non-state actors, made efforts to assess the impact of U.S. policies, incorporated Latin American views more fully, gave greater weight to cultural factors, and explored “how race, gender, and identity informed the logic and assumptions of historical actors.” Gilderhus and Neagle also found that scholars tended to work in two broad areas: the Cold War and cultural studies.³⁵ That finding had some truth for post-1941 topics. But as we shall see, students of inter-American relations have been casting their scholarly nets widely.

Gilderhus and Neagle listed many exceptional books. In *Latin American Underdevelopment*, James William Park skillfully employed the analytic tools forged by Michael H. Hunt in his influential *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (1987). Park showed that U.S. policymakers and citizens always considered Latin Americans “beneath the United States” and traditionally disparaged Latin American history and life. In the nineteenth century, they looked at Latin Americans through the prisms of religion, colonial heritage, and climate. Latin Americans were doomed to backwardness because they were Roman Catholics, products of an inferior Spanish culture, and supposedly lived in the enervating tropics. In the twentieth century, Latin Americans were condemned for their dark skins and “unmodern” economies.³⁶

Of the many new cultural studies identified by Gilderhus and Neagle, Michel Gobat’s study of nineteenth-century Nicaragua’s encounter with U.S. imperial culture is especially distinctive. Gobat took a regional approach, relying on archives in the province of Granada. He found that local elites took a selective approach toward the “American Dream,” rejecting those cultural attributes that weakened landlord control over the peasantry.³⁷ Gobat also used his study of nineteenth-century Nicaragua to explain the “invention of Latin America.” In a fascinating article in the *American Historical Review*, he demonstrated that Latin American political leaders and intellectuals began to define Latin America as a distinct idea and entity in part out of opposition to U.S. imperialism. A triggering event was the outrageous decision by President Franklin Pierce to grant diplomatic recognition to Nicaragua under the domination of the filibustering William Walker. In writing the article, Gobat displayed impressive multi-lingual skills, consulting sources in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.³⁸

In addition to the invaluable historiographical works described above, there have been many notable articles and monographs written in the past decade or so. Space constraints prevent an analysis or even a citation of every one of them, so the essay will focus here on a few authors and group others by topic. Apologies are extended to authors not mentioned.

If one is looking for agency, international history, and multi-archival, multilingual research, *Conflicting Missions* by the great Piero Gleijeses may be the best choice. In my review of Gleijeses’s study of Cuban intervention in Africa in the 1960s and 1970s, I asserted that “based solely on the extent of his research,” Gleijeses deserved to win major book prizes.³⁹ Happily, someone was listening. SHAFR awarded Gleijeses the Robert Ferrell Prize for the best book by a senior historian. Gleijeses had traveled to Cuba fourteen times, gained access to Cuban archives, and interviewed Cubans who had served in Africa. He supplemented his work in Cuba with archival research in Belgium, East and West Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom. And he systematically

read African newspapers in numerous languages and interviewed officials across the Great Continent. I had never encountered such extraordinary research.

Gleijeses’s efforts led to a startling finding. Prior to the massive intervention in Angola in 1975, over two thousand Cuban troops had served in various parts of Africa. By comparison, only forty Cubans fought in Latin America in the 1960s, and that number included Ernesto “Che” Guevara and the troops he took on his pathetic mission to Bolivia in 1967.⁴⁰ Throughout the 1960s, U.S. officials exaggerated Cuban activities in the Western Hemisphere, even as the United States repeatedly attacked Cuba, destabilized governments in Brazil and British Guiana, and invaded the Dominican Republic. Gleijeses’s willingness to interview historical actors had previously served him well in *Shattered Hope*. Talks with members of the Guatemalan Communist Party and María Vilanova de Arbenz, the widow of the deposed Guatemalan president, persuaded Gleijeses that Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán (1950–54) held Marxist views but did not associate with the international Communist movement.⁴¹

Young scholars are also producing distinguished, innovative studies. In 2011, Jason M. Colby and Tanya Harmer each presented the profession with something special. Colby received an honorable mention from the Bernath Book Prize committee for his *Business of Empire*, and Harmer’s *Allende’s Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* won the Luciano Tomassini Award from the Latin American Studies Association. *Allende’s Chile* is international history at its finest. Harmer detailed how outside actors—the Nixon administration, Castro’s Cuba, the Brazilian military, and Eastern and Western Europeans—jockeyed for power in Salvador Allende’s Chile. Chile became the center of an inter-American struggle over ideas of revolution, socialism, and a new international economic order.

Harmer based her thesis on interviews with Cubans and on archival research in Eastern and Western Europe, Chile, and Brazil.⁴² In the post-Cold War period, many Latin American nations opened the archives of their foreign ministries for research. In 2005, scholars discovered over eighty million pages of documents in the archive of the Guatemalan National Police. The documents gave scholars and Guatemalan citizens a look into the machinery of state terror.⁴³ In the United States, the National Security Archive and its associates, like Thomas Blanton, Kate Doyle, and Peter Kornbluh, have been invaluable in pressing U.S. agencies to release documents on covert anti-Communist campaigns throughout Latin America.⁴⁴ In 1999, President Clinton authorized the declassification of over 20,000 U.S. documents on Chile.⁴⁵

Jason Colby achieved the impossible in research. With the help of a Costa Rican archivist, he located the correspondence of the United Fruit Company’s Costa Rican Division. Historians had long assumed that the records of United Fruit, the creators of the U.S. banana empire in Central America, had been intentionally destroyed on the orders of corporate executives of United Brands, the successor of United Fruit. These records, combined with extensive research in Guatemalan governmental correspondence, enabled Colby to recreate life on the banana plantations and to write “a new social history of the U.S. empire.” Colby especially focused on the racial dynamics on United Fruit’s plantations—a much needed perspective, for between 1850 and 1914 approximately 300,000 West Indians traveled to the Central America to work for foreign enterprises.⁴⁶

Colby’s book fulfilled one of the hopes I expressed in my Bernath lecture for future studies of life in the oil camps and banana plantations. Jana K. Lipman wrote about the Cubans who labored at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, and Julie Greene told the story of the workers, many of them West Indian, who built the Panama Canal.⁴⁷ Miguel Tinker Salas analyzed how U.S. and British-Dutch oil companies shaped the schooling and leisure activities of both

Venezuelan and foreign employees and tried to acculturate all into a structured, corporate way of life. Tinker Salas was actually born and raised in a Venezuelan oil camp.⁴⁸

Greg Grandin also wrote about a U.S. business enterprise in his fascinating *Fordlandia*. Grandin's tale of Henry Ford's grandiose quest in the 1920s to monopolize the rubber industry and build a model city in the Amazon jungle of Brazil was a finalist for a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize.⁴⁹ Grandin has many other civic and scholarly accomplishments. He served on the internationally sponsored Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification, the "truth commission" that investigated the forty years of murders and terrorism that plagued civic life in Guatemala after the *golpe de estado* of 1954. Of the many truth commission reports about the Cold War in individual Latin American countries, the Guatemalan report was distinguished by its grounding of Guatemala's suffering within a historical context.⁵⁰ As a scholar, Grandin added to our understanding of the U.S. political and military role in fomenting wholesale murder in Guatemala with his chilling account, *The Last Colonial Massacre*.⁵¹

Alan McPherson is another scholar of enduring significance. McPherson, who grew up in Canada, put his bilingual education to good use, reading sources in English, Spanish, and French and exploring archives in Central America and Caribbean countries. In *Yankee Nol*, he explored the variable and ambivalent nature of opposition to U.S. influence in the circum-Caribbean for the period from 1959 to 1965.⁵² In his survey of the United States and Latin America since 1945, which began with an account of the opening of the first Sears department store in Mexico in 1947, he argued that historians should not permit Cold War issues to blind them to the reality of growing inter-American economic and cultural interdependence in the postwar period.⁵³ In an impressive article in the *American Historical Review* and a major new monograph, *The Invaded*, McPherson explored the myriad ways Dominicans, Haitians, and Nicaraguans resisted the occupation of their countries by U.S. Marines during the era of the Roosevelt Corollary. The Haitians in particular were ingenious in their use of native courts to undermine U.S. imperial rule.⁵⁴ I trust that *The Invaded* will merit consideration for major book prizes. McPherson also penned an afterword to a new edited collection of essays, *Beyond the Eagle's Shadow*, on the Cold War in Latin America. In it he skillfully probed the strengths and weakness of focusing on Latin American agency in a Cold War context.⁵⁵

Any list of influential scholars in the field of inter-American relations would always include Louis A. Pérez Jr. Pérez has devoted his career to explicating Cuba's tortured relationship with the United States with studies such as *Cuba under the Platt Amendment*, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, and *Cuba in the American Imagination*.⁵⁶ He displayed an admirable ability to combine traditional approaches to diplomatic history with the newer modes of cultural analysis. Undergraduates can learn about history and historical methods from Pérez's *War of 1898*. He eviscerated U.S. historians who willfully ignored Cubans' struggle for Cuba Libre, and his reading of Cuban sources persuaded him that Cuban insurgents would have triumphed, probably in 1899, without U.S. intervention.⁵⁷

Other skilled scholars also addressed U.S. relations with Cuba. Lars Schoultz wrote a monumental history of the relationship. In *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic* (the words of Theodore Roosevelt), he explored how the condescending, patronizing, even racist attitudes of U.S. officials and citizens toward Cubans stood in the way of creating a *modus vivendi* with the Cuban Revolution.⁵⁸ Howard Jones combed through the records of congressional committees that investigated both President Kennedy's assassination and U.S. plots to assassinate foreign leaders. He concluded that the Bay of Pigs invasion plans were linked to efforts to assassinate Fidel Castro. The CIA predicted that mass uprisings by the

Cuban people would ensue once CIA assets "eliminated" Castro, his brother, Raúl Castro, and Che Guevara.⁵⁹

An obsession with Cuba and the spread of communism characterized the U.S. approach to Latin America during the Cold War. In *The Killing Zone*, I wrote about the horrors—ranging from *la guerra sucia* (the dirty war) in Argentina, to the torture regime that was Chile under General Augusto Pinochet, to the reign of right-wing "death squads" in El Salvador—that beset Latin America during the Cold War. It is beyond debate that in the name of anticommunism the United States undermined constitutional systems, overthrew popularly elected governments, rigged elections, and supplied, trained, coddled, and excused barbarians who tortured, kidnapped, murdered, and "disappeared" Latin Americans. Implicitly addressing the interpretive issue of "agency," I concluded that scholars would exhaust themselves parsing the domestic and foreign dimensions of the terror and violence. The Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification reasoned cogently when it found that the anti-Communist philosophies and policies of the United States "fell on fertile ground in Guatemala" and throughout Latin America.⁶⁰ Louis Pérez put it another way when he urged historians to keep "the reality of U.S. hegemony" uppermost in their minds even when they considered such "international" issues as migration.⁶¹ Over five hundred thousand people, 10 percent of the population, fled El Salvador in the 1980s. The \$2 billion in military aid that the United States funneled into the tiny country fueled the civil war that left many with little choice but to emigrate. Mark Danner's "parable" about El Salvador, *The Massacre at El Mozote*, encapsulated the appalling reality that Pérez identified.⁶²

Others approached the Cold War in different ways but reached conclusions similar to those in *The Killing Zone*. Michael Grow analyzed the decisions by Cold War presidents to carry out "regime change" in the Western Hemisphere. He concluded that presidents did not act to protect national security or private economic interests. Instead, they ordered the CIA or the Marine Corps into action in order to enhance their credibility both at home and abroad. Covert and overt interventions were in "symbolic battlefields" and represented "exercises in imagery."⁶³

Gilbert Joseph and Daniela Spenser, editors of *In from the Cold*, may have thought Grow's book was too focused on U.S. policymaking. They and their nine essayists stressed the need for an examination of the national and "grassroots" dimension of the Cold War in Latin America.⁶⁴ For example, in an imaginative article entitled "Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails," Victoria Langland outlined how in 1968 the Brazilian military and police savagely attacked female university students because they equated the growing feminist consciousness and sexual liberation of young white women in Brazil with social disorder and communism.⁶⁵ But such barbarity also had international dimensions, for the United States encouraged the Brazilian generals to seize power in 1964 and thereafter trained Brazilian police in repressive tactics and, as Jeffrey F. Taffet detailed, showered the military government with economic assistance.⁶⁶ As Joseph conceded in the introduction, "a Cold War rationale, generated outside the region," created the context for gross violations of human rights.⁶⁷

To be sure, not everyone indicted the United States for aiding and abetting mass murder and torture in the region. In *Latin America's Cold War*, Hal Brands alleged that the United States played a minor role in the overthrow of President Arbenz in Guatemala. He resurrected the hoary "two demons" theory, suggesting that innocent Latin Americans were caught in the crossfire between the armies of the authoritarian right and revolutionary left. Brands further opined that "the actions of the military regimes were the logical—if exaggerated—response to the leftist radicalism of the period."⁶⁸

Latin Americanists disputed Brands's central findings and largely discredited the two demons theory. Jeffrey L. Gould established that left-wing agitation in countries such as Brazil and Uruguay rose in *response* to right-wing political repression. As Peter Winn emphasized, President Salvador Allende practiced peaceful parliamentary politics, even as his government endured violent attacks from conservative extremists and the conspiratorial machinations of the Nixon administration. The Argentine military executed 30,000 civilians and actually boasted of plans to eliminate 50,000 citizens.⁶⁹ As recounted by William Michael Schmidli in his new book on human rights and U.S. Cold War policy toward Argentina, the U.S. ambassador in Buenos Aires described the Argentine foreign minister as being in "a state of jubilation" in 1976 after receiving Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger's tacit approval for the "dirty war" campaign.⁷⁰

Argentina became a central focus of the burgeoning human rights movement in the United States. In his study, Schmidli emphasized the critical role of non-governmental actors—civil rights activists, feminists, religious progressives, conservative campaigners, and business leaders—who pushed for a human rights agenda.⁷¹ In *We Cannot Remain Silent*, James N. Green related the untold story of how U.S. academics and clerics organized with Brazilian exiles to educate the public about the human rights abuses perpetrated by the Brazilian military in the 1960s and 1970s. Roger Peace wrote with passion and insight in his comprehensive *A Call to Conscience* about how grassroots organizations in the United States organized to oppose Ronald Reagan's mercenary war against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. Peace's history was also international; he examined the links between the anti-Contra war movement in the United States and Nicaraguan citizens and officials.⁷²

Not all non-governmental groups opposed U.S. Cold War policies. Conservative and evangelical Christian groups heaped praise on General Efraín Ríos Montt (1982–83), whose military government murdered over 80,000 people, most of them Mayans. Ríos Montt, who was convicted by a Guatemalan court in 2013 for the crime of genocide, was a born-again Pentecostal with close links to conservative Protestants in the United States. President Reagan also considered Ríos Montt a friend and felt he was misunderstood. In *Terror in the Land of the Holy Spirit*, Virginia Garrard-Burnett thoroughly analyzed Ríos Montt's reign of horror. To read this incredible book is a devastating experience, even though Garrard-Burnett tried to avoid dwelling on what she labeled "the pornography of violence."⁷³

As Mark Gilderhus and Michael Neagle pointed out, inter-Americans also produced new studies on cultural relations in this period. One rich subject of inquiry has been tourism. Dennis Merrill led the way with his challenging study, *Negotiating Paradise*. Merrill interpreted U.S. tourism in Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico as a form of U.S. cultural and economic imperialism and a striking example of the nature of empire and the character of twentieth-century inter-American relations.⁷⁴ Critics congratulated him for his major scholarly contribution, although they also wondered whether "tourism frequently subverted notions of national superiority among U.S. travelers."⁷⁵ Dina Berger, who studied Mexico's development of the tourism industry, took a more benign view of U.S. tourism than did Merrill. Both U.S. and Mexican officials promoted tourism as a way of enhancing good-neighbor feelings, Pan Americanism, and the World War II alliance between the two countries. Officials and promoters perceived tourism as a form of diplomacy that could overcome mutual suspicion and past feelings of injustice.⁷⁶

Cultural relations are at the heart of the seventeen books published between 1991 and 2010 in the United States and the Americas series under the general editorship of Lester Langley. The series, which includes fifteen bilateral

studies (including Canada), a volume on Central America, and an overview by Langley, *America and the Americas*, has been popular, with five of the studies having more than one edition. Langley successfully urged his authors to emphasize the role of private contacts—students, tourists, artists, missionaries, voluntary organizations, foundations, and business enterprises—in hemispheric relations.⁷⁷

The Langley series gave proper attention to inter-American relations in the nineteenth century. A welcome development in the field has been the increasing scholarly attention to the time when the United States did not wield preponderant diplomatic, military, and economic power in the region. In his history of the evolution of the Monroe Doctrine from 1823 to 1904, Jay Sexton revealed how U.S. officials and citizens massaged and manipulated James Monroe's and John Quincy Adams's views into a process of consolidating independence from Great Britain, promoting national consolidation, and stimulating imperial expansion.⁷⁸ Like Sexton, Gretchen Murphy asked how the Monroe Doctrine, an ostensibly anti-colonial declaration, became a sturdy tool of empire building. Murphy's contribution was to examine how the Doctrine became a central feature of "hemispheric imaginings" in literary and journalistic texts.⁷⁹ Exploring the roots of empire building was one of the goals of Aims McGuinness, who wrote a powerful account of the opening in 1855 of the railroad that traversed the Isthmus of Panama. A commercial empire, financed by U.S. citizens, had emerged, followed by the U.S. military occupation of Panama City in 1856.⁸⁰ In a new article, Benjamin A. Coates demonstrated how one lobbyist and bureaucrat, William Eleroy Curtis, made hemispheric dreams of empire a reality. Curtis, who helped organize the first Inter-American Conference in 1889, envisioned the market domination of the hemisphere by the United States. His patronizing, condescending views of Latin Americans led him to move from championing commercial expansion to supporting territorial aggrandizement in the post-1898 era.⁸¹

Recognizing that not all subscribers to *Passport* read Spanish or Portuguese, I have limited this review to works in English. But another development to celebrate is the vital contribution that Latin American scholars have been making to the field. Books by Marial Iglesias Utset and Antonio Pedro Tota have been translated into English. Iglesias, who conducted extensive research in Cuban archives, analyzed how Cubans tried to cope with the U.S. military occupation in the aftermath of the War of 1898. Tota, who worked in both Brazilian and U.S. archives, dissected wartime cultural relations, with an emphasis on the fascinating role of the Brazilian singer/actress, Carmen Miranda, and on the amusing antics of the animated character, Joe Carioca.⁸² In *¡Américas Unidas!*, edited by Gisela Cramer and Ursula Prutsch, the essayists, who are from Europe, Latin America, and the United States, reflected on the efforts of Nelson Rockefeller's Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs to use mass media to shape popular opinion throughout the Western Hemisphere.⁸³ Ricardo D. Salvatore, who teaches in Argentina, explored in *Imágenes de un imperio* how U.S. citizens—philanthropists, advertisers, engineers, archaeologists, ethnographers, and scientists—represented Latin America from 1890 to 1945. Salvatore opined that this constructed "enterprise of knowledge" persuaded U.S. officials that Latin America could be modernized through technology, science, and the consumer culture of the United States.⁸⁴ Leandro Ariel Morgenfeld and Matias Spektor took a traditional approach to inter-American relations. In *Vecinos en conflicto*, Morgenfeld looked for the reasons why Argentina so often opposed the United States at inter-American conclaves. In *Kissinger e o Brasil*, Spektor examined the evolution of Henry Kissinger's goal for the United States to develop a special relationship with the military generals who ruled Brazil.⁸⁵

Finally, a few parting observations about the richness

and vitality of the field of inter-American relations. The field has not been beset by the sense of crisis that enveloped SHAFR and the study of U.S. foreign relations. Scholars in the field are intensely interested in Latin American studies, have immersed themselves in the thought, culture, and society of Latin America, and love all things Latin American. They move easily between SHAFR conferences and conclaves hosted by the Conference on Latin American History (CLAH) or regional organizations like the Rocky Mountain Council on Latin American Studies (RMCLAS), and they write about both Latin America and inter-American relations.⁸⁶ Scholarly conferences on Latin America are welcoming events marked by good cheer, healthy debate, and fun. Many scholars have also taught or lectured in Latin America, and exchanges with Latin American academics and Latin American students inevitably prove to be both refreshing and intellectually stimulating. The demographic changes in the U.S. population and concomitant cultural shifts also impart a sense of optimism and energy to the field.⁸⁷ But whatever the source of our vigor, I am proud to be associated with the outstanding, exciting scholars in the field of inter-American relations.

Notes:

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2015 Conference of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations

Call for Papers

The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) invites proposals for its 2015 Annual Conference, to be held June 25-27 at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View in Arlington, Virginia. Proposals must be submitted via the on-line interface by **December 1, 2014**.

SHAFR is dedicated to the study of the history of the United States in the world, broadly conceived. This includes not only diplomacy, statecraft, and strategy but also other approaches to Americans' relations with the wider world, including (but not limited to) global governance, transnational movements, religion, human rights, race, gender, trade and economics, immigration, borderlands, the environment, and empire. SHAFR welcomes those who study any time period from the colonial era to the present.

2015 Program

The 2015 meeting will include two plenary sessions:

Thursday's plenary, entitled "Immigration and Foreign Relations: 50 Years since the Hart-Cellar Act," will feature Maria Cristina Garcia (Cornell University), Alan Kraut (American University), and Donna Gabaccia (University of Toronto).

Friday's plenary, entitled "New Frontiers: Environmental History and Foreign Relations," will feature W. Jeffrey Bolster (University of New Hampshire), Kate Brown (University of Maryland, Baltimore County), and John McNeil (Georgetown University).

The **keynote address** at the Saturday luncheon will be delivered by Brian DeLay, Associate Professor of History at the University of California at Berkeley and author of the award-winning and widely acclaimed *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War*, who will speak about the history of the international arms trade.

The 2015 program will also host SHAFR's third annual **Job Search Workshop** to help prepare our graduate student members for the job market. Students will have the opportunity to receive individualized feedback on their cover letters and CV's from experienced faculty members. Those submitting proposals for the conference may indicate their interest in the [job search workshop](#) by checking a box on the online submission form. However, students do not have to be a panelist to participate. The Job Workshop is open to all current graduate students and newly minted Ph.D.s. Priority will be given to first-time participants.



Roundtable on James Graham Wilson, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War*

*Jeffrey A. Engel, Chester J. Pach, Michael Cotey Morgan, Vladislav Zubok,
Michael V. Paulauskas, and James Graham Wilson*

Introduction to Roundtable:
James Graham Wilson, *The Triumph of Improvisation*

Jeffrey A. Engel

This is a propitious time to be an historian of the Cold War's end. We stand at the precise moment when scholarship and sources come together. Twenty-five years after the momentous events of 1989 and after, new materials have increasingly made their way out of the classification quagmire, offering opportunity and rewards for researchers willing to wade into the voluminous troves produced by states, organizations, and individuals at the dawn of the digital age. James Graham Wilson is one such scholar, and his thoughtful new work, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War* melds a plethora of new materials with the perspective of time to offer an important peek into the halls of power in both Moscow and Washington as policymakers confronted a situation few anticipated: the collapse of communism and the close of the superpower struggle that divided the world since 1946. More specifically, Wilson takes us into the minds of key Cold War leaders—in particular the Soviet Union's Mikhail Gorbachev, and his American counterparts Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George Shultz. His main argument: that each displayed an impressive, in some cases surprising, ability to alter long-standing beliefs when confronted with unexpected and in some cases unprecedented opportunities to alter fundamentally the Soviet-American relationship. They were, to use his word, improvisers at the Cold War's end.

Wilson's argument matters because, a quarter-century on, we still do not fully know why the Cold War ended the way it did. Structural answers are dissatisfying. It is easy to say communism failed, and was bound to do so, but easy answers belie uncomfortable truths. Such a whiggish reading of history fails to capture the dynamism of the socialist project, at least during the Cold War's early decades. Any argument that begins with the premise that communism was bound to fail disregards the passionate support for a world of equitable distribution—something our own increasingly inequitable world might soon see again—while failing as well to explain why its collapse

was so relatively peaceful, avoiding the great power wars that too often accompanied the demise of past empires. It all seems so obviously pre-determined in retrospect which side would triumph, but we historians know that the obvious appeared uncertain to those who endured the times.

Structuralists don't only focus on the Soviet side. One popular trope, especially in right-leaning political circles, argues that Ronald Reagan won the Cold War by ratcheting up military spending and moral pressure beyond what the Soviet Union could hope to match. This version too carries more than a whiff of inevitability, relying on the premise that nothing in time could match the creativity and productivity of a capitalist free market. It also carries a dangerous whiff of omnipotence, suggesting that Americans have it in their power—and perhaps always did, and perhaps still do—simply to overwhelm any potential foe through a forceful application of military and industrial might. This reading of history is popular and self-assuring for Americans concerned over their future place in the world in a dynamic twenty-first century. It is also poppycock. Soviet leaders commanded millions of men under arms by the mid-1980s and more than 20,000 nuclear weapons based on land, air, and under the sea. They directed an empire that had shown little compunction in the past about using force to suppress dissent, as Chinese leaders would demonstrate to great effect in 1989. The Soviet Union was not overwhelmed by American force, but instead imploded from within due to policies enacted by reformers bent not on destroying their state but saving it. It could have kept going for decades more through force and force of habit. It need not have ended no matter its structural deficiencies, at least, not when it did.

Wilson's book offers a clear and concise rejection of the argument that the Cold War's end was inevitable. It was, he argues, improvised. Moreover, along with the thoughtful contributions to this roundtable, he asks the question that is more important than the simple, why did the Cold War end? He, and they, instead focus on why the Cold War ended as it did. Their collective answer: because of the personalities of the leaders charged with guiding each superpower. Reagan, Gorbachev, Bush, and Shultz mattered, Wilson argues, because the denouement of the Soviet-American relationship was ultimately decided

less by ingrained ideological positions strictly observed, than by leaders willing and able to pivot, turn, learn, and change at crucial moments when faced with unexpected circumstances and possibilities.

Wilson's breadth of research and intelligent reasoning are universally praised by this roundtable's reviewers, each of whom match his erudition in their own critiques. All four recommend *The Triumph of Improvisation* to historians and their students. This rare case of ubiquitous praise is not, however, what makes this collection of essays so notable. It is instead remarkable that each reviewer finds no reason to question or doubt the underlying premise of Wilson's central idea that the individuals at the helm mattered at the Cold War's end. Each implicitly consents to the view that structural answers don't really tell the whole tale. Yes, several quibble with Wilson's regard for this or that historical figure, befitting their own sense of those captains of state. Reasonable people carry reasonable differences of opinion. So too do our reviewers differ on which parts of Wilson's book deserved the most praise or greatest skeptical scrutiny. Yet each independently hews to the central theme that individuals mattered beyond debates over the merits of socialism vs. capitalism, communism vs. democracy, or the cultural distinctions between Soviets and Americans.

Chester Pach, for example, observes that "individuals also mattered because of the effects of their decisions on the strength and appeal of capitalism and communism," and notes Wilson's discussion of this dynamic offered "some of the best sections of this book." In a similar vein, even when pleading for a more synthetic definition of "improvisation," Michael Paulauskas finds the "strongest moments in this book come in places...when Wilson draws on his extensive sources to point out how individual leaders tried to create solutions to problems that they did not quite understand or anticipate." The other contributors offered equivalent observations. Vladislav Zubok concludes that "in writing a complex international history, the concept of improvisation, adaptation, and engagement works well with the analysis of structural factors and longer-term trends." This observation itself dovetails with Michael Morgan's insightful comparison of musical improvisation and grand strategy. "A great strategist must only—can only—provide a broad sketch to follow," he argues. "That sketch can be inspired or it can be foolish. But the details always have to be improvised."

None of these authors balk at Wilson's contention that the Cold War turned out as it did, or more explicitly ended in the manner it did, because of the individuals in charge at the time. This is an important consistency indeed, especially for we who inhabit the ivory tower, as we arrive at the quarter-century mark since the dramatic events detailed in Wilson's book. Unlike previous anniversaries of 1989, we can now say with full confidence that few of our undergraduates were even born when the events detailed in this book occurred. For them—the generation of students we now struggle to separate from their electronic appendages and instantaneous endorphin rushes of email and social media—the Cold War's end seems comically inevitable. Who among us has not faced a bewildered student asking why anyone might have believed in socialism? Who has not struggled to impart to students not only the anxiety of those years, but their contingency? Such views are typically shared by contemporary political elites and the chattering classes, supported all too often by our comrades in political science, who now easily explain without pause or deep reflection that democracy and markets of course trump authoritarian command economies. We may well expect future generations to look back on our own hubristic spouting of such universal truths and shake their heads in wonder at our ignorance, as those in our own day reflexively do when considering the conflict now a quarter-century in the past.

Wilson's book, along with the comments by the reviewers in this roundtable, offers a fresh reminder that we need view the Cold War on its own terms, not ours. Upsets happen, even when the odds seemed stacked in one side's favor. As every sportscaster knows to say whenever David beats Goliath, "that is why they play the game." These roundtable essays are each impressive in their own right, but together they remind us that a remarkably peaceful end to a conflict whose end might appear inevitable in retrospect was anything but assured.

Grand Ambitions, Not Grand Strategy

Chester J. Pach

Four years before he became president, Ronald Reagan declared that U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union should be quite simple: "We win and they lose."¹ Some scholars who credit Reagan with winning the Cold War believe this assertion shows that the fortieth president entered the White House with a clear plan for U.S. victory. In his excellent new book, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War*, James Graham Wilson disagrees. Instead he finds far more revealing an exchange that Reagan had with his long-time political advisor, Stuart Spencer. "Why are you doing this, Ron? Why do you want to be President?" Spencer asked while the two were flying to the Republican National Convention in Detroit, where Reagan would accept his party's presidential nomination in July 1980. "To end the Cold War," Reagan answered quickly. In reply to a follow-up question about how he hoped to achieve this goal, Reagan admitted his uncertainty. "I'm not sure," he told Spencer, "but there has got to be a way" (9).

How Reagan found a way is a central theme of Wilson's study. As the title of this book suggests, Reagan and his Soviet counterpart, Mikhail Gorbachev, discovered rather than designed the route that led to the end of the Cold War. Wilson asserts that Reagan had grand ambitions but no grand strategy for winning the Cold War. The president wanted to eradicate communism, which he considered a "disease" (15) rather than a legitimate ideology. He also hoped to rid the world of the dangers of nuclear weapons. These two long-term objectives were often at odds. "Real arms reduction was possible only if the Soviet leaders trusted Reagan," Wilson observes. "And they could not trust him if it appeared he was out to destroy them" (18). Only by spurning the counsel of hardline advisors and accepting the recommendation of Secretary of State George Shultz for intensified negotiations with Moscow from a position of strength did Reagan align his grand ambitions with diplomatic possibilities.

Although Wilson assigns Reagan lesser importance than Gorbachev in the ending of the Cold War, his analysis, in many ways, is more flattering than the monochromatic portrait of triumphalists, who see the president as the leading figure in a black-and-white story about the termination of the epic Soviet-American struggle. In Wilson's account, Reagan is no visionary but an all-too-human leader trying to reconcile the principles that had shaped his political outlook for decades with a world in flux during the 1980s. The president succeeded remarkably well. According to Wilson, Reagan "established 'the terms for the big debates between Washington and Moscow in the 1980s'" (4), reduced the nuclear danger, and set the stage for the Cold War's termination during the presidency of George H. W. Bush, an ending in which "they lost" but, more important, everybody won.

Wilson believes historians have "mischaracterized"

(2) the end of the Cold War, and he takes aim at those who believe that U.S. officials during the 1980s devised and implemented a consistent strategy for victory over communism. Drawing on documents that have become available in recent years, Wilson persuasively argues that the Reagan administration followed a jagged course in its relations with the Soviets during the president's first years in office. The most influential voices were often those of hardline advisors like Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, whom Wilson derides for believing that the best way to deal with the Soviets was "to take everything, give nothing, and ask for more" (130). Reagan sometimes seemed to agree that there could be no compromise with a nation that posed a mortal threat to international security. At a meeting of the National Security Council (NSC) in July 1981, for example, the president declared that "the Soviets have spoken as plainly as Hitler did in 'Mein Kampf.' They have spoken [of] world domination—at what point do we dig in our heels?"²

On other occasions, Reagan beckoned Leonid Brezhnev and his sickly and superannuated successors, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko, to join in efforts to lower international tensions and reduce nuclear arsenals, only to be rebuffed. Major policy papers often reflected the views of hardliners like Weinberger or NSC Soviet specialist Richard Pipes, as they called for policies that would "reverse the expansion of Soviet control and military presence throughout the world" (31). Yet Wilson finds little that was new in these documents, since victory in the Cold War had been the overriding U.S. goal since the advent of containment during the Truman administration.

The author also maintains that Reagan's "'rhetorical offensive' had little impact on the decisions and events" that ended the Cold War. Reagan did call on Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall, but that barrier toppled "by accident," not because the Soviet leader ordered its destruction (198). Wilson might have added that Reagan did not expect in 1987 that his provocative words would help end the division of Berlin any time soon. As he wrote in his presidential memoir, "I never dreamed that in less than three years the wall would come down and a six-thousand-pound section of it would be sent to me for my presidential library."³

What mattered far more than rhetorical bravado or hardline policy prescriptions was the sage and sober counsel of Shultz, who advocated negotiations with the Soviets on the basis of mutual interests. Succeeding the mercurial Alexander Haig in July 1982, Shultz won Reagan's trust and charted a course of engagement with the Soviets that mitigated Cold War tensions even before the dramatic changes that followed the appointment of Gorbachev as general secretary. In one of the most important chapters of the book, Wilson shows how Shultz outmaneuvered or neutralized hardline, bureaucratic adversaries. Just two days after Reagan approved a National Security Decision Directive in early 1983 that called for intensified stepped-up military and economic pressure against Moscow, Shultz began steering administration policy toward countering Soviet activism with "intensified dialogue" (69).

The tone of Reagan's rhetoric also changed. In January 1984, the president gave a televised address that concluded with an imagined meeting between Jim and Sally, an American couple, and Ivan and Anya, their Soviet counterparts. "Would they...debate the differences between their respective governments?" Reagan asked. "Or would they find themselves comparing notes about their children

and what each other did for a living?" People's "common interests cross all borders," he insisted, and he pledged to work with Soviet leaders to "fulfill the hopes and dreams of those we represent and, indeed, of people everywhere."⁴ Jack Matlock, who had replaced Pipes and worked with Shultz to push the Reagan administration toward greater engagement with the Soviets, had a large role in drafting this speech. While Wilson considers Gorbachev "the most important individual in the story of the end of the Cold War" (3), Shultz was "the critical agent of U.S. foreign policy" (5). "He ought to be regarded as one of the great secretaries of state in American history," Wilson asserts (201).

In some of the best sections of this book, Wilson connects the policies of Western leaders to the revitalization of capitalism and the recovery of Western confidence from the malaise of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Lower taxes, economic deregulation, and trade liberalization accelerated an information revolution that reshaped international business and finance as well as the daily lives of ordinary citizens.

Individuals also mattered because of the effects of their decisions on the strength and appeal of capitalism and communism. In some of the best sections of this book, Wilson connects the policies of Western leaders to the revitalization of capitalism and the recovery of Western confidence from the malaise of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Lower taxes, economic deregulation, and trade liberalization accelerated an information revolution that reshaped international business and finance as well as the daily lives

of ordinary citizens. Such economic and technological vibrancy reinforced Reagan's optimism about the superiority of open markets and democratic governments. By contrast, stagnation characterized the Soviet system in the years before Gorbachev assumed leadership. The decision to invade Afghanistan, the intervention in Poland to shore up the faltering regime and pressure it to impose martial law, and the ongoing effort to plan for a preemptive U.S. nuclear attack, which was the worst nightmare of KGB officials, had pernicious consequences that made Gorbachev's determination to restrict Soviet international commitments and reduce military spending to rejuvenate the failing Soviet economy all the more urgent.

The most important international event in Wilson's analysis of the Cold War's ending is the summit at Reykjavik. At this meeting, for which there was little advance preparation, what mattered most was Reagan's and Gorbachev's willingness to think the unthinkable about arms control. The two leaders came astonishingly close to an agreement to eliminate their entire nuclear arsenals during the coming decade, the deal foundering on Reagan's unwillingness to confine research on the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) during that time to the laboratory. Wilson explains that Reagan considered SDI an insurance policy, like a gas mask that protected a soldier against violations of international conventions outlawing gas warfare. He misses, however, an opportunity to point out the flaws in Reagan's logic. Confining SDI to the laboratory for a decade was not a sacrifice that endangered the United States, since it was only a research project (and not a very advanced one at that) rather than an actual means of protecting against a first strike.

Despite their disappointment and anger, both Reagan and Gorbachev quickly realized that Reykjavik was no failure, but a breakthrough. Both sides understood that they were aiming at arms reduction, not at securing advantage in an arms race. The negotiations at Reykjavik encouraged Gorbachev to make even bolder proposals, which led to the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty a year later and the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in 1991.

Although Reagan left the White House persuaded that the Cold War was essentially over, the dénouement came during the Bush presidency. Wilson gives Bush credit for

more than prudence in questioning during the first months of his administration whether Gorbachev's reforms would produce lasting change in the Soviet Union and whether drastic reductions in nuclear weapons would advance international security. Wilson shows that Bush shifted "the focus of U.S.-Soviet diplomacy from nuclear disarmament to the long-term future of Europe" (155) and established the terms for the Cold War's termination—the peaceful end of the division of Europe. The main elements of Bush's vision of a new world order—new democratic and capitalist governments in Eastern Europe, an open world economy, and the integration of the Soviet Union into the international community—had become realities by the beginning of 1991. By then, according to Wilson, the Cold War, like the Evil Empire, was part of "another time, another era."

Wilson has written a smart, sharp, and subtle history of the Cold War's end. His focus is on four critical actors—Gorbachev, Reagan, Shultz, and Bush—but he deftly places them within the international and domestic environments in which they operated. He emphasizes contingency and adaptation, but he shows how ideology, political culture, and governmental institutions shaped or guided improvisation in Moscow and Washington. Some of his conclusions are familiar. He agrees, for example, with Melvyn P. Leffler that "it was Gorbachev who ended the Cold War."⁵ He echoes the assertion of James Mann that "Reagan didn't win the Cold War; Gorbachev abandoned it."⁶ Wilson brings new understanding, however, to the ways that unconventional thinking and unplanned actions ended longstanding Soviet-American antagonism. In the end, it was Reagan's optimism, Gorbachev's idealism, and their common commitment to nuclear abolition that allowed them to find a way to move beyond the Cold War. As Wilson explains, the president's "unbounded optimism led him to dream of a world without nuclear weapons and without communism" (200). Gorbachev's idealism may have "destroyed the Soviet Union but allowed 1989 to happen" (203). By doing what neither had planned and no one anticipated, these two leaders did indeed show, in the words of Tom Paine that Reagan so frequently quoted, that "we have it in our power to begin the world over again."

Notes:

1. Richard V. Allen, "The Man Who Won the Cold War," *Hoover Digest*, January 30, 2000, <http://www.hoover.org/research/man-who-won-cold-war>.
2. Minutes, NSC Meeting, July 6, 1981, "The Reagan Files," <http://thereaganfiles.com/19810706-nsc-16.pdf>.
3. Ronald Reagan, *An American Life* (New York, 1990), 683.
4. Ronald Reagan, "Address to the Nation and Other Countries on United States-Soviet Relations," January 16, 1984. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=39806>.
5. Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York, 2007), 448.
6. James Mann, *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan: A History of the End of the Cold War* (New York, 2009), 346.

Review of James Graham Wilson, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War*

Michael Cotey Morgan

In the liner notes to Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*, pianist Bill Evans describes how the album's pieces came into being: "Miles conceived these settings only hours before the recording dates and arrived with sketches which indicated to the group what was to be played. Therefore, you will hear something close to pure spontaneity in these performances." When they walked into the studio, Davis's musicians had no idea what they were about to play. Working from his outlines, they filled in the details on the fly, expressing themselves "in such a direct way that deliberation [could not] interfere," as Evans puts it. The result was a masterpiece.

The seamless combination of structure and spontaneity that epitomizes the best jazz also energizes the most effective statecraft. Successful leaders need a broad sense of what they want to achieve and how they plan to achieve it, but the inherently unpredictable nature of international affairs makes precise planning impossible. As they respond to the pressure of events, they too have to fill in the details on the fly, without the benefit of much time for reflection. When Otto von Bismarck became Prussian Chancellor in 1862, for example, he harbored the wild ambition of unifying Germany, but knew that he had to wait for the right moment to push forward. He had to take advantage of opportunities as they arose but could neither create them nor anticipate them. When the right moment came, he improvised, swiftly making decisions in pursuit of his ultimate goal.

During the Cold War, successive American presidents followed this same course as they struggled to contain Soviet power. Containment's broad outline offered a general sense of direction, but they had to choose specific paths on their own, often in response to rapidly changing conditions that no policymaker of the 1940s—even George F. Kennan—could have foreseen. All statesmen must strike a balance between the strategic design, which can be worked out in advance, and the spontaneous response, which can never be. Without the former, statecraft is aimless. Without the latter, it is fruitless.

Examining the end of the Cold War, James Graham Wilson sees no such balance at work. The story of international affairs from the invasion of Afghanistan to the first Gulf War was all spontaneity and no structure, he argues. It testified less to the foresight of advance planning than to the wisdom of rapid decisions whose ultimate aftereffects no one could have predicted. As Wilson says, "no master plan" can account for what happened between 1979 and 1991 (3). The secret to explaining the dramatic end of the superpower confrontation therefore lies in the skilful "adaptation, improvisation, and engagement" of those who occupied the key positions in Washington and Moscow (2). In this respect, Ronald Reagan, George Shultz, George H.W. Bush, and Mikhail Gorbachev resembled accomplished jazz musicians who made it up as they went along, rather than classical virtuosos who carefully followed a score.

To make this case Wilson must grapple with the Reagan revisionists, who have gained ground over the last decade. The emerging revisionist consensus has overturned the view that took hold during the 1980s and endured thereafter, that President Reagan was a simpleton and a warmonger who lacked a firm grasp on international affairs. This is a caricature that bears no resemblance to the

truth, insist the revisionists. He may have been an enigma to those who worked with him, and even to his own family, but he was decidedly not, as once had been widely assumed, the puppet of his advisors.

In the years before he entered the White House, Reagan drafted scores of speeches and radio scripts in which he articulated a clear set of ideas about America's place in the world and its struggle with the USSR. By his inauguration in 1981, he had already worked out the rudiments of the strategy he would implement in office: first rebuild American military strength; then force the Soviets, whose inherently weak economic system would be incapable of bearing their adversary's newfound pressure, to the bargaining table. By these means he aimed ultimately to negotiate an end to the nuclear arms race and to transform the Soviet Union into a freer, more peaceful state. Not only did Reagan devise ideas of his own, according to the revisionists, he developed an ambitious strategy capable of winning the Cold War. His administration fleshed out that strategy in such documents as NSDD-32 and NSDD-75 and implemented it to dramatic effect.

Wilson rejects this portrait of Reagan and presents him neither as a beneficent visionary nor as a sinister naïf. In Wilson's account, Reagan entered office with "two very different long-term goals" (5). On the one hand, he wanted to destroy the communist system. On the other, he wanted to work with the communists to establish lasting peace (15). The first objective would raise tensions with Moscow; the second depended on lowering them. Because Reagan vacillated between two "ambivalent and contradictory" impulses that he could not reconcile and refused to give clear direction to his quarrelsome subordinates, he proved incapable of formulating a coherent policy, let alone anything resembling a grand strategy. Wilson's take on Reagan resembles the common appraisal of Jimmy Carter, who, critics allege, antagonized the Soviets on human rights even as he tried to negotiate with them on arms control, to no good result in either field. In both interpretations, the presidents lacked the mental discipline required to deal with the ambiguities of Cold War politics.

If Reagan, unlike his predecessor, eventually did develop a coherent foreign policy, it was thanks largely to his choice of advisors, Wilson suggests, not his own acumen. The real intellectual dynamo of the Reagan administration was thus not Reagan himself, but George Shultz, whom Wilson describes as "one of the great secretaries of state in American history" (201). When Shultz took office, he had little "traditional foreign policy experience" and no grand strategy for winning the Cold War (64). But in collaboration with Soviet specialist Jack Matlock, Shultz developed a program for engaging with Moscow and, after winning Reagan's support, persuaded the president to implement it over the complaints of the administration's more hawkish officials.

Shultz's program rejected the assumption, common among Washington hardliners, that the Cold War was "a zero-sum game." Rather, Shultz believed that by building trust, standing up for human rights, and spreading capitalist ideas, American foreign policy could reap benefits for both superpowers and set international peace on a firmer foundation while simultaneously transforming the internal character of the Soviet Union (6). By the end of 1983, after Reagan's announcement of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) had surprised both the Kremlin and his own administration, the president threw his weight behind Shultz's program of negotiation and engagement, even as

the massive expansion of the American military continued.

It is doubtful whether Shultz's ascendancy—or Reagan's, for that matter—would have made much difference to the Cold War's overall trajectory had it not been for the man who succeeded Konstantin Chernenko as Soviet leader in 1985. The Politburo's decision to appoint the fifty-four-year-old Mikhail Gorbachev as general secretary broke with the Soviet Union's finest gerontocratic traditions and opened new possibilities that would previously have been unthinkable. If Wilson's story has a hero, it is Gorbachev, a committed communist who abandoned the longstanding conviction that his country's political system demanded antagonism with the Western world. Whereas Stalin and his adherents saw the world as split between "two camps," Gorbachev insisted that communists and capitalists shared fundamental interests and had to reconcile themselves to the realities of interdependence. "We live on one planet," he told the Politburo in 1986. "And we cannot preserve peace without America" (102).

Gorbachev concluded that the USSR could not preserve the status quo, either at home or abroad, and therefore he aimed to reinvigorate the Soviet economy and reduce the burden of foreign commitments. But he launched his program of reform without a clear vision of where it might lead or what consequences it might carry for the long-term viability of communism itself. From Washington's perspective, however, Gorbachev's willingness to reconsider old dogmas and his inclination to work with instead of against the United States made him the right man in the right place at the right time.

The road to cooperation did not run smooth. Drawing on impressive archival research, Wilson emphasizes that the Reagan-Gorbachev summits of 1985 and 1986 yielded no major breakthroughs. "The man does not seem to hear what I am trying to say," Gorbachev said after meeting Reagan in Geneva (100). In Reykjavik in 1986, an impasse over SDI shattered hopes of striking a bargain on nuclear abolition. "An emotional crash ensued," Wilson writes (113). But both sides remained

doggedly committed to disarmament. After overcoming the hawkish critics within their respective governments, Reagan and Gorbachev signed the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987. This radical development—and the developments of the ensuing four years—was possible because Gorbachev, unlike any previous Soviet leader, questioned the premises on which Soviet foreign policy had rested for decades.

In dealing with this period, it is difficult to escape the importance of the individual personalities who occupied the key positions in Washington and Moscow. So much depended on the ways in which they saw the world, their ambitions, and their fears. Even operating in the same circumstances, different leaders might well have made different decisions. The counterfactual possibilities are particularly salient in Gorbachev's case. Had the Politburo chosen someone else in 1985, events would almost certainly have moved in another—possibly violent—direction even if Reagan and Shultz had tried to steer the same course. The possibility of a different outcome raises a thorny question: if the most important developments of the late 1980s were so contingent upon individuals, is it possible to explain them with reference to anything other than personality and chance? Were any deeper factors at work?

In Wilson's analysis, the answer is no. The economic weaknesses and technological backwardness of the Soviet empire had been obvious for years before Gorbachev took charge, but they did not force his hand. Neither these

If Reagan, unlike his predecessor, eventually did develop a coherent foreign policy, it was thanks largely to his choice of advisors, Wilson suggests, not his own acumen. The real intellectual dynamo of the Reagan administration was thus not Reagan himself, but George Shultz, whom Wilson describes as "one of the great secretaries of state in American history."

structural problems nor the contours of American policy determined the choices that he made. He was the decade's great uncaused cause—or, as Wilson puts it, using the language of political science, “the independent variable that distinguished 1989 from 1956 and 1968” (203). Yet even Gorbachev's decisions, in the broadest sense, can be partially understood as a reflection of the difference in generational outlook that divided him from his predecessors. Gorbachev and his advisors were part of a more worldly and better educated cohort that grew to adulthood after the Second World War: too old to be baby boomers, but too young to have experienced the revolutionary fervor and Stalinist terror of the interwar years. In an important respect, Reagan's foreign policy worked on the assumption that, sooner or later, a new class of leaders in the Kremlin would recognize what he had seen long before: that the Soviet status quo was unsustainable. When Gorbachev came to power, Reagan's wager paid off.

Should one agree, then, with Wilson's insistence that “grand strategies did not shape the end of the Cold War” (198)? The answer depends on whether one sees strategy as a computer program or a compass. If strategy is a computer program, it should tell a leader exactly what to do in any given situation and provide an answer for every question. It must set everything out in advance and allow nothing to chance. By this interpretation, one could easily conclude that neither Reagan, nor Shultz, nor Bush, nor Gorbachev had anything resembling a strategy. They had to confront problems they had not foreseen and make decisions whose consequences they could not fully anticipate. But by setting the strategic bar so high, it would be hard to name any other statesman who would qualify, either. If strategy is a compass, however, it only needs to point in the right direction. It cannot offer a roadmap out of a diplomatic dead end, but it is not meant to do so, either. Understood in this way, even the most robust strategies still require leaders to make decisions as they go and still demand sound judgment, that most elusive and essential of qualities. As Miles Davis understood, a great strategist must only—can only—provide a broad sketch to follow. That sketch can be inspired or it can be foolish. But the details always have to be improvised.

**Review of James Graham Wilson,
*The Triumph of Improvisation***

Vladislav Zubok

Years ago I was reading excerpts from Anatoly Chernyaev's diary and was struck by one particular paragraph, which was devoted to the revolutionary events in East Germany. “The total dismantling of socialism as a world phenomenon has been proceeding,” Chernyaev wrote. “This is a reunification of mankind on the basis of common sense. And a common fellow from Stavropol set this process in motion.” The excerpt, now widely known, was dated October 5, 1989, more than a month before the Berlin Wall fell. These were the deepest thoughts of the foreign policy adviser who was closest to the general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Today this euphoria about “a reunification of mankind” has disappeared: the European Union is in crisis; new powers are challenging the U.S.-led international system; and Russia's actions are giving a reality check to Western norms and values. Still, we should keep Chernyaev's words in mind when we try to understand the end of the Cold War. The Cold War ended to a large extent because of a uniquely peaceful “reformation” in Moscow, followed by peaceful democratic changes in Warsaw, Budapest, Dresden, Prague, and other places in Eastern Europe. “Party intellectuals” like Chernyaev were behind this original reformation.¹ And

Mikhail Gorbachev, “a common fellow from Stavropol,” was the primary demiurge of this story.

Of course, many other factors prepared the ground for this remarkably peaceful change. James Wilson reminds us of these factors in his competent and concise book. He writes about the profound systemic crisis of the post-Stalin models of “socialism” that afflicted the Soviet Union and its bloc. He also shows that this crisis became apparent only against the background of powerful changes that transformed the non-communist world: “the scientific-technical revolution,” particularly in the informational sphere; the rise of the human rights movement; and most important, the return of economic globalization. In hindsight, we can see that these years marked the beginning of an ascendant capitalist moment in the world economy that ended in 2008.

Wilson writes that Gorbachev's “new thinking” was an adaptation to these new realities, but it was not the whole story. He disagrees with historical determinists. “Changes in the international economy and technological revolutions did not dictate how Gorbachev would behave,” Wilson writes. “He decided” (141). His is a nuanced historical approach, backed by convincing evidence. Despite its modest size (only two hundred pages), his book covers the Soviet side of the story impressively, and some of its information is fresh, including records from the Gorbachev Foundation. There are inevitable omissions, some of them infelicitous, such as Gorbachev's background (beyond his wartime childhood) and Eduard Shevardnadze's diplomatic contribution to the end of the Cold War.

I would argue that the challenges that these new realities posed for Gorbachev were even more dramatic than the book suggests. He had to react not only to the external environment; after 1986 he also had to adjust to internal processes that his own policies had initiated inside the Soviet Union. In 1989 domestic instability already threatened to undermine his authority. The Soviet leader turned into a Houdini from the Politburo, skillfully liberating himself from many of the inherited shackles of Soviet ideological and political constraints only to discover he was suspended in mid-air, with his power vanishing, and entropy increasing rapidly around him. The book mentions the Soviet Union's descent into turmoil, but it gives priority to external over internal developments. Perhaps this priority should have been reversed, beginning in 1989. Wilson writes about the crackdown in Tiananmen Square in June of that year, but he omits the April “massacre” in Tbilisi. Yet the latter had a much greater impact on the Soviet leadership: it triggered tensions between Shevardnadze and Gorbachev and led Gorbachev to spell out his principled ban on the use of force inside the Soviet Union, as well as outside it.

A rapid and rather unexpected decline in Gorbachev's domestic power could not help but affect his foreign policy, at least in the eyes of his Western partners. Foreign policy begins at home, and Gorbachev's was no exception. Growing political disintegration and a deteriorating economy increased his eagerness to end the Cold War and gain Western assistance for Soviet reforms. But his leverage to achieve these goals continued to diminish, and it became harder for him to make sensitive decisions—to recognize a unified Germany in NATO, for instance, or to concede to Japan the disputed Kurile Islands.

Wilson's account of the American side is more comprehensive and detailed. His main protagonist is Ronald Reagan, and he does well in rescuing this remarkable figure from right-wing mythology. The most revered American conservative leader did not defeat the Soviet Union by bringing down the price of Saudi oil in 1985–86; that development was the unintended result of financial globalization and deregulation (117). The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) did not force Gorbachev “to surrender”; rather, the Soviet leader moved to sign arms reduction treaties with the United States because

he overcame his fears of SDI and American deviousness. Reagan acted on antiquated ultra-conservative ideas, but his pragmatic instincts and his mystical sense of a mission to avert a nuclear Armageddon were more important.

Wilson points out, correctly in my view, that Reagan's political genius did not lie in an ability to adapt to new realities. He hardly understood the new global forces that doomed the Soviet empire, but new global trends and Soviet internal changes worked miraculously in favor of the United States. Reagan, however, understood that the United States had regained a position of strength, and he engaged Gorbachev in trying to fulfill a joint dream of a nuclear-free world. That issue became the engine that began to pull both superpowers out of the marshes of Cold War fears and political inertia. Reagan was also an unusually eager learner: he learned from advisors such as George Shultz, Jack Matlock, and Suzanne Massie that "Russians" and "Soviets" were not identical; that Russian people deserved respect; and that Gorbachev could be trusted.

Particularly interesting and important are chapters 6 and 7: they speak to a historiographical discussion about alternative scenarios of the Cold War's end. On the spectrum between critic and fan of George H.W. Bush's presidency, Wilson leans towards the latter. He writes that "Bush and his advisers acted with clarity of purpose . . . amidst formidable political and economic constraints" (202). The phrase "formidable political constraints" refers to American domestic realities: the Cold War could not be ended only by arms control agreements and pronouncements from Reagan and Gorbachev. There was a vast anti-Soviet legacy in the United States that would not just go away overnight. Many skeptics did not believe Gorbachev's words and trusted only geopolitical realities. Wilson credits Bush with a skillful and careful reconstruction of those realities in favor of the West and the United States. Meanwhile, the manifest lack of triumphalism in the White House in 1989–90 made it easier for Gorbachev to adjust to the rapid decline of Soviet power.

Gorbachev, realists may argue, had no other choice; yet Wilson acknowledges that the Soviet leader, inspired by his own idealism, also pursued an imagined "new world order." This imagined concept was a source of great expectations for Chernyaev and other Soviet reformers. Today it inspires discussion about missed opportunities involving the institutional architecture of Europe and the integration of Eastern Europe and Russia into that architecture.² Wilson does not take part in this discussion explicitly; yet his book speaks to it implicitly. Noteworthy is his exploration of the Western decision against massive economic assistance to Gorbachev. On this issue a bit more about the economic crisis and reform discussions in the Soviet Union would have been helpful, but Wilson prioritizes other factors: the ascendancy of neoliberal economics and financial capital markets; difficult relations between Bush and Congress; and the deficit left by Reagan's profligate spending and tax cuts. He also mentions Soviet "military Keynesianism": Soviet sales of arms to Cuba and other anti-American clients, who paid for them with Soviet aid. Those sales, concludes Wilson, "made it nearly impossible for the Bush administration to ask Congress for direct aid to Gorbachev" (185).

Even if Gorbachev had stopped sending arms to Cuba, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia, neoliberal economics would have precluded a Marshall Plan for the Soviet Union. Economic experts in the Bush administration and the International Monetary Fund told Bush it would be wrong to give massive amount of money to Gorbachev. As a result, the Kremlin "was to learn a harsh lesson of capitalism. In an open world economy, the Soviets had to compete for investment with not only Eastern Europe, but also developing nations around the world" (187). Gorbachev seems to have never grasped this harsh lesson; he

remained puzzled about why Western governments, with the exception of Germany, refused to help his perestroika, while spending billions on the war in Iraq.

The last point I would like to make concerns the linkage between the end of the Cold War and the Soviet internal collapse. On the penultimate page Wilson admits that this linkage exists (203). He does not, however, cite the evidence that some members of the Bush administration, such as Dick Cheney, believed that preserving the Soviet Union was in American and Western interests. President Bush and his national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, saw more dangers than opportunities in a Soviet collapse.³ It is impossible to read Wilson's pages about U.S.-Soviet relations after Saddam Hussein's annexation of Kuwait and not come away with the impression of Soviet desperation and the painful inequality of the Soviet-American "alliance." The United States, not Gorbachev, was defining what a new economic and political world order would be. In contrast to Gorbachev, Bush did not exclude the use of force. The Americans also had a greater interest in bringing post-Tiananmen China into their "global order" rather than the disintegrating Soviet Union.

In conclusion, Wilson's book demonstrates that, in writing a complex international history, the concepts of improvisation, adaptation, and engagement work well with the analysis of structural factors and longer-term trends. This slim volume will be a welcome addition to university courses. I also highly recommend it to those politicians and experts who struggle to adapt their views to the new international realities.

Notes:

1. See Svetlana Savranskaya, Thomas Blanton and Vladislav Zubok (eds.), *Masterpieces of History: The Peaceful End of the Cold War in Europe, 1989* (Budapest, 2010).
2. The most important of these discussions are Mary Sarotte, *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe* (Princeton, 2010); and "Perpetuating U.S. Preeminence: The 1990 Deals to 'Bribe Soviets Out' and Move NATO In," *International Security* 35, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 110–137; Kristina Spohr, "Precluded or Precedent-Setting? The 'NATO Enlargement Question' in the Triangle Bonn-Washington-Moscow Diplomacy of 1990–91," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 14, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 4–54; Vladislav Zubok, "With His Back Against the Wall: Gorbachev, Soviet Demise, and German Unification," *Cold War History*, special issue, November 2014.
3. On this point see Serhii Plokhyy, *The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union* (New York, 2014).

Review of James Graham Wilson, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War*

Michael V. Paulauskas

James Graham Wilson's *The Triumph of Improvisation* represents a new and valuable addition to the literature on the final decade of the Cold War. Wilson focuses on four figures he deems critical to the process of ending the superpower confrontation: President Ronald Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, and President George H.W. Bush. Utilizing significant archival and published sources, he argues that the Cold War's conclusion was not a historical accident, nor was it "won" or "lost" as a result of the strengths or weaknesses of grand strategy. Instead, it ended because of improvised decisions made by these leaders in response to a rapidly changing and unpredictable sequence of historical events.

According to Wilson, Reagan entered office with two

goals that sometimes conflicted with each other. First, as his famously aggressive anti-Soviet rhetoric would indicate, he hoped to destroy communism, which he regarded as a “disease” that enslaved the people living under its control (15). Second, he maintained that SALT II, as completed by the Carter administration, gave the Soviet Union an unfair advantage in nuclear weaponry. Therefore, he decided to build up American strength and accelerate the arms race in the belief that doing so would enable the United States to pursue future negotiations with the USSR from a position of strength. This would result in a renewed state of peaceful coexistence built on equitable arms reductions, with the eventual goal of eliminating nuclear weapons entirely with the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)—a pipe-dream proposal for a space-based missile defense system that would protect the world from nuclear missiles launched by rogue states. While some historians, such as Beth Fisher, have suggested that Reagan shifted from “hawk” to “dove” in 1983–4, Wilson insists that Reagan maintained both of these seemingly contradictory positions throughout his presidency.

Wilson contends that it was Shultz who provided focus for Reagan’s foreign policy goals. With Reagan’s vacillation and his hands-off management style, the president’s foreign policy team was given significant latitude to define the administration’s approach to the Cold War. At first, hawks such as Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and National Security Council member Richard Pipes dominated policy decisions. However, when Shultz replaced Alexander Haig as secretary of state in July 1982, he gradually took the lead in setting foreign policy and shifted toward increased engagement with the USSR. Shultz and Jack Matlock, who replaced Pipes at the NSC, formulated a four-point framework that outlined areas they would focus on in talks with Soviet representatives: bilateral relations, regional matters, arms control, and human rights. Shultz’s execution of this plan kept negotiations moving forward and “helped transcend Reagan’s contradictions and ambivalence” (199).

The central role in this story appropriately belongs to Gorbachev, who Wilson describes as “the indispensable agent of change” (115). When Gorbachev rose to power, the Soviet economy was mired in stagnation, and the information revolution and advances in globalization had produced massive changes in the international economy. Gorbachev attempted to adapt socialism to these conditions through the reform programs of *perestroika*, which introduced some market mechanisms into the Soviet command economy, and *glasnost*, which eased censorship and fought corruption. Simultaneously, he applied “new thinking” to foreign policy. He shared Reagan’s dream of abolishing nuclear weapons, and he hoped to build a “new world order” around common human values, with the divisions between socialist and capitalist states no longer playing a central role in constructing international relationships. When the East European communist states began to reform their governments, Gorbachev stuck to his vision for the new world order, revoking the Brezhnev Doctrine and allowing the satellite states to break free from the Soviet orbit.

Wilson credits George H.W. Bush’s administration with “clarity of purpose, thoughtfulness, and prudence amidst formidable political and economic constraints” (201–2). In particular, he notes, Bush shifted American strategy away from eliminating nuclear weapons and toward providing a specific vision for the new world order imagined by Gorbachev. He encouraged the spread of American-style democracy and capitalism throughout Eastern Europe, expanded NATO, and redefined American interests

during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait around concepts other than anticommunism and containment. In pursuing this new direction he made some decisions that exposed him to criticism from both Democrats and conservative Republicans, such as temporarily discouraging Lithuanian independence in order to avoid alienating Gorbachev and destabilizing the Soviet government. If Gorbachev’s policies triggered the end of communism in Eastern Europe, Bush’s determined how Europe would evolve in the aftermath of the Cold War.

While Wilson praises the ability of these figures to improvise in response to evolving circumstances, his book is not a A-list account of the end of the Cold War, with wise leaders and well-defined strategies. Wilson often portrays Reagan as dim-witted and uninterested in the serious questions of international affairs. At one point, in talks in Washington about the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), Gorbachev “bared his aspirations and anxieties” about the challenges he faced in winding down the Cold War and instituting perestroika. Reagan responded in a “dumbfounding” manner with a joke about the oppressive nature of the Soviet economy that did not elicit laughs. National Security Advisor Colin Powell later described it as “offensive.” When the talks resumed the next day, Reagan cut out the jokes, but it was evident that he did not have a clear understanding of the American negotiating positions (136–7). Wilson notes that in another instance, it was obvious that Reagan did not understand the significance of Deng Xiaoping’s introduction of capitalist elements into the Chinese economy and his shift toward

Bush shifted American strategy away from eliminating nuclear weapons and toward providing a specific vision for the new world order imagined by Gorbachev.

the United States in international affairs. In an NSC meeting on this crucial development, Reagan’s only comment was a sarcastic and racist joke: “You mean our position should be ‘no ticky, no laundry?’” (61). While Wilson emphasizes the importance of taking Reagan’s dreams of nuclear abolitionism and SDI seriously in understanding his approach to the Cold War, he concludes that “Reagan’s proposal was not a grand strategy; it was a fantasy” (199).

Wilson also highlights Gorbachev’s shortcomings as a grand strategist. The Soviet leader’s vision of a new world order was not well defined. “Years later,” Wilson writes, “Gorbachev’s words do not always convey substance. If indeed universal values were a foundation to a new home, the house lacked clear blueprints” (168). As an example, Wilson cites Gorbachev’s assertion at the 1989 Malta summit that perestroika should be brought to the world economy. “It was not at all clear, then or now, what this meant” (172). Gorbachev sometimes seemed at a loss, too, particularly during the Bush administration, as perestroika and glasnost spiraled out of control and ripped the Soviet Empire apart. He failed to understand that other parties did not share his vision for a new world order; and he was unable to formulate a plan for German unification, stop the Persian Gulf War, or secure financial aid from the West to reshape the Soviet economy. In the end, he proved to be the “greatest product” of the Soviet system, and he “sacrificed an empire for something he called a new world order” (169).

Wilson attempts to identify a middle ground in the historiography on the end of the Cold War, and he demonstrates that it was neither a historical accident nor the result of a successful American or Soviet grand strategy. His approach is fruitful, and at times he makes forceful arguments in support of his contention that the individual decisions of key leaders brought about an end to the Cold War. Emphasizing that “Gorbachev always faced choices,” he notes, for example, that the Soviet leader’s decision to create a popularly elected parliament did not come about as a result of massive street protests for popular

representation. “Changes in the international economy and technological revolutions . . . did not dictate how Gorbachev would behave. He decided” (141). The strongest moments in the book occur in places such as this, when Wilson draws on his extensive sources to point out how individual leaders tried to improvise solutions to problems that they did not quite understand or anticipate.

The concept of improvisation requires additional development, however. Wilson provides a general discussion of improvisation to present his broader arguments in the introduction and conclusion, but in the body of the book, where he lays out his narrative, the term appears only three times: twice in the chapter subheadings—“Gorbachev Improvises” (122) and “Bush Improvises” (174)—and once to highlight how the Bush administration’s vision of a new world order evolved in response to rapidly changing conditions on the ground (170). Thus, in the main narrative, it is often left to the reader to decipher how the decisions made by Soviet and American leaders are improvisational.

Moreover, Wilson does not include a specific definition of improvisation. Reading between the lines, we can see that his concept of improvisation seems to involve agency, with decisions determined by individual Soviet and American leaders and not just the circumstances at hand, and contingency, since these decisions were made without the benefit of a coherent grand strategy. The presence of those elements raises a series of critical questions: to what extent are the categories of grand strategy, historical accident, and improvisation mutually exclusive? How do these three elements interact? To what extent did these figures understand that they were improvising, and how did they internalize the decision-making process? How did these figures develop their instincts for improvisation? Wilson discusses the concept of learning as it relates to Gorbachev’s evolving approach to the crises facing the Soviet Union (202), but to what extent did this sort of learning shift the way that Reagan, Shultz, and Bush operated?

The struggle to form accurate perceptions of the opposing side is a persistent theme in the book. Wilson cites instances that range from Reagan speculating on Gorbachev’s religious beliefs (101), to Gorbachev’s confidence that the United States would make massive investments in the Soviet economy during the late phases of perestroika (185), to George Will declaring that the United States lost the Cold War when the INF Treaty was signed in late 1987 (139). Another example that he does not fully explore occurred when Reagan first met privately with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin in the third year of his presidency. Reagan focused this meeting on the question of the seven Soviet Pentecostals living in the basement of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow who were seeking asylum. On the basis of Reagan and Shultz’s memoirs, Wilson describes the meeting as a “smashing success” (70, 85), but Dobrynin’s memoir suggests that it was viewed differently in Moscow: “Reagan’s request looked distinctly odd, even suspicious. After almost three years in office and at his first meeting with the Soviet ambassador, the president actually raised only one concrete issue—the Pentecostals—as if it were the most important issue between us. The request was rather disappointing to us and was not welcomed enthusiastically in Moscow.”¹ Wilson might have done more throughout the book to make explicit the connections between these misperceptions and the problems each side had with developing coherent strategies.

These criticisms aside, *The Triumph of Improvisation* represents a strong example of a top-level account of Soviet-American diplomacy in the 1980s. It packs an impressive array of Soviet and American sources into a clear narrative that delivers a compelling top-down explanation for the end of the Cold War. While he emphasizes individual agency, Wilson is careful to describe the historical context that produced these figures and influenced their decisions.

This book will prove vital for professional scholars and graduate students interested in the end of the Cold War, and Wilson’s polished and engaging writing style makes it appropriate for undergraduate classes as well.

Note:

1. Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow’s Ambassador to America’s Six Cold War Presidents (1962–1986)* (New York, 1995), 521.

Author’s Response

James Graham Wilson

Author’s note: *The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of State or the U.S. Government.*

I thank Michael Cotey Morgan, Chester Pach, Michael Paulauskas, and Vladislav Zubok for their thoughtful consideration and criticism, and Jeffrey Engel for his introduction. I am especially grateful to Andrew Johns for organizing this roundtable.

What does it mean for leaders to improvise triumphantly? “The seamless combination of structure and spontaneity that epitomizes the best jazz also energizes the most effective statecraft,” writes Michael Morgan. I agree with this statement and venture to guess that Morgan and I associate the “best jazz” with collaboration. In the landmark *Kind of Blue*, Miles Davis was the band leader and indispensable figure, yet the music would not sound the way it does without Julian “Cannonball” Adderley, Paul Chambers, Jimmy Cobb, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, and Wynton Kelly.

The members of Davis’s ensemble had only sketches for *Kind of Blue*, but they understood their leader’s artistic trajectory. By the time the album was recorded, Davis was improvising in modes rather than keys (Dorian mode, one of at least seven possible modes, is a scale without sharps or flats starting on D; to improvise in Dorian mode is to employ that sequence of whole and half steps from the starting point of any given note). In so doing, he invented a new language of sound, which only he and Evans and Coltrane and the rest of the musicians could actually speak. If instrumental music is the unvoiced expression of the human condition, improvisation to these innovators was an unrehearsed dialogue in a private and fleeting language.

Improvisation does not always require an ensemble, and the concept is not limited to jazz. Extended passages of Ludwig van Beethoven’s early solo piano music are written-out improvisations within traditional forms. In some instances, such as the first movement cadenzas of the initial four piano concertos, Beethoven left the content to the performer’s discretion. So long as the pianist eventually arrives at the home key’s dominant seventh chord, he or she is free to improvise indefinitely. The orchestra will bring the movement back to the tonic and close out the same way every time. Improvisation, in the context of an ensemble playing Beethoven, is not really collaborative. It is nevertheless important. The best performances of Beethoven recreate the composer’s struggles and sustain the illusion that the outcome is in doubt. The listener experiences the drama of uncertainty yet retains the underlying knowledge that the composer will resolve matters in a cascade of major chords. We rely on Beethoven because no one else provides such tangible assurance of victory.

Cold War participants during the 1980s had no assurance of victory. In 1979, when my book begins, serious people had no reason to think that the following decade would witness the taming of the nuclear arms race, the end

of the division of Germany, and the resolution of the global competition between communism and capitalism. How did these developments occur? I try to make the case for improvisation on the part of individuals in power. I think the reviewers in this roundtable convey the basic argument of my book and identify its potential flaws.

Improvisation in statecraft is probably more Miles Davis than Beethoven. In the last decade of the Cold War, improvisation involved taking swift and unrehearsed actions in response to unforeseen events. "Gorbachev Improvises," a heading in chapter 4, refers to Gorbachev's decision, in the weeks after Reykjavik, to "delink" the package that included the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), the Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (START), and limitations on the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Basically, he reversed the all-or-nothing position he took in Iceland, where he insisted that Reagan accept a comprehensive bargain. Had Gorbachev adhered to a classic Cold War script, he would have waited out the lame-duck president, who was politically weakened by Iran Contra. America's Western European allies, who were apprehensive about giving up Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles and skeptical of Reagan's talk of a nuclear missile shield, would probably have provided Gorbachev cover. Yet the Soviet leader pressed forward. He accepted strategic sufficiency and bypassed the macabre science of nuclear strategy.

The chapter 7 heading, "Bush Improvises," refers to the post-November 1989 period (although it might just as well have described an earlier episode in the summer of 1989, when the president literally tore up his speech in front of an audience in Budapest). After the Berlin Wall came down, Bush and his national security team responded to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe by seeking to retool and refurbish old institutions rather than create new ones. There was a restorative quality to their thinking. "The world before World War I was a very different world than that since," National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft said in January 1990. "And ever since World War I we have been trying to put back together the pieces of the world which was destroyed by that war" (181). Secretary of State James Baker indicated that NATO was to become more than just a military alliance; it would serve as a political bridge to a Europe whole and free. In 1990, the administration aspired to anchor Germany in NATO while simultaneously avoiding, as Baker's counselor Robert Zoellick put it, a "'Congress of Vienna' effort to draw up rigid guidelines for a new European order" (178). The ensemble during this period was large and unwieldy, and some participants were playing off their own scores. The tempo was fast, and it accelerated with the surprise victory of the conservatives in East Germany that March. Collaborating with allies and former adversaries, Bush improvised his way toward what I describe in chapter 7 as a new world order on Washington's terms.

What is the connection between grand strategy, historical accidents, and improvisation? The year 1986 provides some possible guidance. The *Challenger* space shuttle disaster in January led Reagan to ponder the possibility that an intercontinental ballistic missile could malfunction. More portentous was the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown in April, an event that shocked Gorbachev. These accidents led the two men to redouble their efforts toward reaching a bargain on nuclear weapons.

Meeting in Reykjavik that October (the encounter itself was an improvised "non-summit"), they improvised their way to the brink of a blockbuster deal to abolish nuclear weapons. On that occasion, Reagan articulated what one might even consider a grand strategy for getting rid of

nuclear weapons. Washington and Moscow would sign a treaty to reduce nuclear stockpiles. Although Reagan had not known what role the Strategic Defense Initiative would play when he announced it in 1983, its purpose was now clear: the United States would share the system with the Soviet Union so that each side could be sure the other would stick to its commitments to disarm. After both sides had dismantled their nuclear arsenals, they would keep SDI to protect them from an accidental launch or from a madman, such as Libya's Muammar el-Qaddafi, who got his hands on a bomb.

Following this line of thought, one might contend that accidents and improvisation in 1986 informed a Reagan grand strategy to abolish nuclear weapons and that a central tenet of that grand strategy was to share a nuclear shield with the Soviet Union. Ultimately, however I do not think it was a grand strategy. Reagan's vision for eliminating nuclear weapons made him confident that he could both trust Gorbachev and verify that trust; from a strategic standpoint, his ability to spin the nonexistent SDI into an asset on a par with the formidable Soviet fleet of land-based ICBMs could properly be called extraordinary. But at the end of the day, his vision was a fantasy.

Every U.S. president from 1945 to 1991 was a Cold Warrior, and every one of them pursued a grand strategy of containment with victory as the long-term objective. Some were more successful, but not because they articulated the

Every U.S. president from 1945 to 1991 was a Cold Warrior, and every one of them pursued a grand strategy of containment with victory as the long-term objective.

simple objective "we win; they lose." As I try to say in the book, Reagan changed the language of negotiation from arms control to arms reduction—just as Miles Davis changed the language of jazz. George Bush also changed negotiating terms by pursuing parity on the balance of conventional arms in Europe. Cold War logic up to that point had suggested that such a prospect was unachievable. When it came to the INF and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe treaties, Reagan and Bush improvised good negotiating strategies. Was that truly less important than having an overarching *grand* strategy?

Strategy—grand or not—provides leaders with a compass, not a computer. It does not determine the key traits of leaders, among which is self-awareness. I do not believe Reagan considered himself an improviser; I hope that view emerges in my treatment of his early career and his overall ambivalence toward dealing with the Soviets. Scholars both in this roundtable and on occasions where I have presented the book have wished for further elaboration on how Gorbachev, Shultz, and Bush developed the traits that shaped their decision-making in the 1980s and early 1990s, and I think that is an understandable request.

Did the four of them learn over time? Shultz certainly figured out how to maneuver within the administration and cultivate the Reagans. Reagan himself grew to trust Gorbachev and to understand that the Soviet Union had changed under perestroika. His declaration in Red Square in 1988 that the evil empire was of "another time, another era" diminished the Soviet perception of an American threat. I am not entirely certain, however, that growing to trust someone is the same thing as learning. A clearer example of the latter would have been internalizing an understanding of communism's negative trajectory in the Soviet Union and China to ratchet down the fervor to oust Daniel Ortega, who is currently back in power in Nicaragua and hardly posing an existential threat to U.S. hegemony in the Western Hemisphere.

I think that George H.W. Bush learned a great deal from 1981 to 1988 about how to be calm in moments of crisis. He may have been the most experientially qualified president in U.S. history. I do not think there is yet a thorough account of how his vice presidential years shaped his decision-

making as president.

Gorbachev also learned after he became general secretary in 1985; his is one of the classic cases in political science literature on this topic. As Vladislav Zubok points out, I do not always drill down into the specifics of how his political and economic reforms changed over time, and failing to do so leads me to underplay the perestroika stalwarts' alienation from Gorbachev in 1990 (and possibly the role of Shevardnadze as a whole). And perhaps conveniently, I end the book in January 1991, just as Gorbachev was tolerating a violent response toward independence movements in the Baltics. How did the collapse of the outer empire shape Gorbachev's thinking during the collapse of the inner empire? I would recommend to the reader Serhii Plokhy's *The Last Empire*.

To sum up, I am very grateful to Michael Paulauskas for pressing me to elaborate further on the terms I employ in the book, and I really like Michael Morgan's analogy between diplomacy and jazz. Music is an appropriate way

to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall—just as music was the best way to celebrate on December 25, 1989, when Leonard Bernstein went to Berlin to conduct a massive orchestra filled with musicians from the Bavarian Radio Symphony, the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Orchestra of the Kirov Theatre, the London Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and the Orchestre de Paris, in a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with the improvised chorus "Ode to Freedom."

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Tonkin Gulf in Historical Perspective

Edwin E. Moïse

This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the Tonkin Gulf incidents. On the afternoon of August 2, 1964, the U.S. Navy destroyer *Maddox* exchanged fire with three North Vietnamese torpedo boats in the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of North Vietnam. President Lyndon Johnson decided not to treat this as a major event. But on the evening of August 4, in poor weather that restricted visibility, there was a second incident. The destroyers *Maddox* and *Turner Joy* saw what appeared to be torpedo boats on their radar, opened fire, and reported that they were under attack. The following day, the United States bombed North Vietnam in retaliation. On August 7, Congress passed, almost unanimously, what is commonly called the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, which gave the president the authority to use armed force to deal with the situation in Vietnam. The following year, President Johnson used the resolution as authorization for a massive escalation of American involvement in the Vietnam War.

North Vietnam denied having attacked the American destroyers on August 4, but it was several years before any serious public discussion began in the United States about the possibility that North Vietnamese denial might have been truthful. Those who defended the administration's account of the incident claimed that intercepted North Vietnamese Navy communications proved that the attack had indeed occurred.

Finally, in 2005 and 2006, the National Security Agency released both a somewhat sanitized version of its own classified history of the role of signals intelligence (SIGINT) in the Tonkin Gulf incidents and the actual texts of many of the intercepted North Vietnamese radio messages.¹ It was clear from this material that intercepted North Vietnamese communications not only failed to confirm the August 4 attack, they provided very strong evidence that no such attack had occurred. When this information was added to negative information of other sorts,² the case that no attack had occurred on that date became overwhelming.

The imaginary incident of August 4 did not cause the Vietnam War. U.S. forces had already been in combat in South Vietnam for more than two years, though with a pretense that they were there only as advisors. The Johnson administration had been considering the possibility of a major escalation of the American role in the war for months. It had drafted a congressional resolution authorizing such an escalation and was ready to present it to Congress if and when an appropriate incident came along. The supposed attack on August 4 was ideal for the purpose and got the resolution passed almost unanimously; the vote was 88–2 in the Senate and 416–0 in the House of Representatives. But there were three other conspicuous attacks by Communist forces against American facilities in Vietnam during the following months—at Bien Hoa Air Base on November 1, at an American officers' quarters in Saigon on December 24, and at Pleiku on February 7, 1965. Unlike the Tonkin Gulf incidents, all of these actually killed American personnel, and they probably would have been adequate to get the resolution through Congress, if not by such an

overwhelming vote. National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy famously said that incidents were “like streetcars.”³ If you did not climb aboard one, another would come along soon.

It is nonetheless interesting that an imaginary incident played an important role in triggering the escalation of the American role in the war. It is even more interesting if we note that Vietnam was not the only American war in which something like this happened. A belief—based on very little evidence—that the Spanish had blown up the USS *Maine* in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898, was among the main reasons the United States went to war against Spain nine weeks later. A belief that turned out to have been false, that Iraq had large quantities of so-called weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), played a very large role in triggering the American war against Iraq in 2003. Poorly founded beliefs indeed played a larger role in triggering the wars against Spain and Iraq than Tonkin Gulf did in triggering the Vietnam War. The United States apparently has a tendency sometimes to be careless about its facts when going to war.

This happens, of course, only in situations that already involve great tension and hostility. In January 1898, before the destruction of the *Maine*, the United States thought war with Spain likely enough that the Navy instituted what today we would call a “stop-loss” program: fleet commanders were directed not to allow sailors to leave the service when their terms of enlistment were up.⁴ U.S. military personnel had been participating directly in combat in South Vietnam for more than two years before Tonkin Gulf, but with a pretense that they were there only as advisors. And there had been intermittent American air strikes in the “no-fly zones” of Iraq starting late in the Clinton administration, even before the election of George W. Bush.

The Sinking of the *Maine*

The biggest difference among these three cases is that so little information about the sinking of the *Maine* was available in 1898. The United States government had not yet built up any large infrastructure for the gathering of foreign intelligence. Organizations such as the Office of Naval Intelligence existed, but they could not reasonably have been asked to contribute significantly to the investigation and did not do so. Not until 1911 was the United States able to do a thorough investigation of the wreckage of the *Maine*, looking for evidence as to whether the disaster had been caused by detonation of a mine outside the hull of the ship or whether there had simply been an internal explosion, presumably not caused by the Spanish. Not until the Second World War did the U.S. Navy acquire enough experience with the effects of explosions on ships to be well positioned to interpret the findings of the 1911 examination of the wreckage.

The issue is still disputed, but the most convincing analysis, carried out in the 1970s at the behest of Admiral

Hyman Rickover, concluded that the explosion of ammunition in the magazines had probably been caused not by an explosion external to the ship but by a fire in a coal storage compartment adjacent to one of the magazines.⁵

Tonkin Gulf and Iraqi WMDs

The other two cases—the Tonkin Gulf incident and Iraq’s WMD programs—make for a more interesting comparison, since in both instances the United States had much more information than it did in 1898, thanks in part to the existence of large intelligence organizations.

The government of Saddam Hussein had acquired chemical weapons and used them on a considerable scale during the 1980s against Iranian armed forces and to some extent against Kurds within Iraq. It was also clear that Iraq was working to acquire biological and nuclear weapons. These WMD programs suffered severe setbacks in the 1990s, but by 2002, the Bush administration was asserting that Iraq’s WMD programs were being reconstituted on a large scale. These assertions, which later turned out to have been mistaken, were the primary triggers for the United States invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Neither the second Tonkin Gulf incident nor the Iraqi WMDs were matters of simple lies. It seems clear that Lyndon Johnson believed what he was saying when he announced to the world on August 4, 1964, that North Vietnamese vessels had made a second attack on United States ships. It seems equally clear that George W. Bush genuinely believed that Saddam Hussein had a large and active program for the construction of “weapons of mass destruction” and substantial stockpiles of weapons available for use in 2002 and 2003.

There are some similarities in the conduct that led top policymakers to their mistakes in the two cases. The most striking was that people at policymaking levels were basing judgments on intelligence information that had not been adequately analyzed and judged for validity and reliability by intelligence specialists at lower levels. Once, in the distant past, that practice had been the norm. George Washington in the Revolutionary War, and George B. McClellan in the Civil War, had routinely made their own evaluations of raw intelligence data.⁶ Gradually, leaders learned that they would be better off if they had intelligence specialists analyze the data for them. But they still liked sometimes to look at the raw intelligence, even though they were not well qualified to evaluate it. Principals in both the Johnson and the Bush administrations were looking at more raw intelligence than usual when they were dealing with the Tonkin Gulf incidents and the issue of Iraqi WMDs.

Time Frames

The major difference between the Tonkin Gulf and Iraqi WMD situations relates to their vastly different time scales. The issue of Iraqi WMDs festered for many years, and even its final acute phase lasted months. The United States began actively attempting to strip Iraq of its WMD programs in 1991. By the end of 2001, the Bush administration was at least seriously thinking of launching an invasion of Iraq, partly in order to accomplish this goal. By September 2002, it was actively lobbying Congress and the UN Security Council, trying to obtain resolutions authorizing, in reasonably clear language, war against Iraq. Congress complied; on October 10 both houses passed a resolution authorizing the president “to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate” to deal with the problem.⁷ The administration tried to get the UN Security Council to authorize “all necessary measures” to disarm Iraq. This phrase was euphemistic but not ambiguous; everyone understood that it meant the use of armed force. But the Security Council refused to put the

matter in language that clear. Security Council Resolution 1441, passed on November 8, ended only with a reminder that the Security Council “has repeatedly warned Iraq that it will face serious consequences as a result of its continued violations of its obligations.”⁸

The Bush administration then launched a major effort to persuade the world that Iraqi WMD programs posed a serious threat. This effort reached its climax with President Bush’s State of the Union address on January 28, 2003, and Secretary of State Colin Powell’s presentation of evidence to the UN Security Council on February 5. Debate over the issue continued until the United States launched the actual war on March 19.

Compare this with the time frame of the second Tonkin Gulf incident. At 7:15 p.m. local time on August 4, the *Maddox* got word of an intercepted North Vietnamese radio message, which was interpreted as indicating that the North Vietnamese Navy was preparing to attack the two destroyers. The two destroyers soon began to see objects on their radar, interpreted as hostile vessels, and at 9:39 p.m. the *Turner Joy* opened fire. Firing continued intermittently for about two hours. The following day, two U.S. aircraft carriers launched retaliatory air strikes against North Vietnam. The first bombs fell at 12:15 p.m. local time on August 5.

In Washington, where it was 11 hours earlier than in the Gulf of Tonkin, President Johnson got the word at 9:12 a.m. on August 4 that an attack on the destroyers might be about to occur. Planning for retaliatory air strikes, and adaptation of the existing draft congressional resolution to fit the details of this incident, began quickly. Some doubts were raised early in the afternoon as to whether an attack had actually occurred, but these doubts were resolved by late afternoon, and a “strike execute” message went out at 5:19 p.m. The first four planes from the aircraft carrier *Ticonderoga* were on the way to their targets at 11:35 p.m., and when the first bombs fell, it was 1:15 a.m. on August 5 in Washington.⁹

Discussion of the resolution began in Congress on August 6, and it passed, almost unanimously, on August 7. It authorized the president “to take all necessary steps, including the use of armed force, to assist any member or protocol state of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty requesting assistance in defense of its freedom.”¹⁰

The whole process in Washington, from the first indication that an incident might be about to occur up to the passage of the resolution by both houses of Congress, took four days. And the Johnson administration had committed itself beyond any easy turning back during the first seventeen hours, by bombing North Vietnam in retaliation for the imaginary incident and by announcing that Congress would be asked to pass the resolution.

Willingness to Doubt

In the case of Tonkin Gulf the short time frame was crucial to the outcome, since analyses revealing flaws in the evidence were done in multiple places in the government, and many people in the upper levels of government in 1964 seem to have been relatively willing to accept these analyses, at least in private. General Bruce Palmer Jr., who at the time was the U.S. Army’s deputy chief of staff for military operations, said that he realized within twenty-four hours that the reported attack had probably not happened. He added that this conclusion was shared by most of the people in the Joint Staff environment, particularly those at his own level—the deputy chiefs of staff for military operations of the various services.¹¹ Both Ray Cline, deputy director for intelligence at the CIA, and Thomas Hughes, head of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the State Department, quickly developed doubts.

There is no record of when and how the doubts were

first reported to President Johnson, but it is plain that they were reported, probably through at least two channels.¹² Johnson found the doubters convincing, and was willing to say so—in private. He complained to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara that McNamara had told him U.S. ships had been fired upon, but “when we got through with all the firing, we concluded maybe they hadn’t fired at all.”¹³ To Under Secretary of State George Ball, he was more blunt. “Hell, those dumb, stupid sailors were just shooting at flying fish!”¹⁴ The president had not gone to the world with his announcement of the August 4 incident because he was unreceptive to arguments that there had been no incident, but simply because he had been impatient. He was determined to make that announcement on August 4, the day the supposed incident had occurred, and even the delays that forced him to wait until late evening of that day annoyed him. No one had time to get to him with evidence that the attack had been imaginary.

An effort was made to gather evidence that would support the administration’s account of the August 4 incident. On August 6, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a “flash” message to U.S. naval commanders in the Pacific: “An urgent requirement exists for proof and evidence of second attack by DRV naval units against TG 72.1 [the destroyers] on night 4 Aug. . . . Material must be of type which will convince United Nations Organization that the attack did in fact occur.”¹⁵ Some plausible-looking evidence was gathered. But senior officials had no heart for a public presentation of the evidence they had gathered, because a public presentation would be likely to trigger a detailed public discussion. The government did not get around to publishing even a moderately comprehensive and detailed argument for its version of the August 4 incident until long after the Vietnam War had ended.¹⁶

The mindset of the Bush administration, in 2002 and 2003, appears to have been very different. The administration was firmly attached to the idea that Saddam Hussein had large quantities of “weapons of mass destruction,” and it vigorously rejected arguments to the contrary. There is of course the possibility that this apparent confidence was misleading and that Bush and his top officials felt more doubt than they allowed to show in public. The Johnson administration never showed public doubts about the supposed attack on the *Maddox* and *Turner Joy*. But it is reasonable to assume, unless and until evidence to the contrary appears, that the Bush administration believed what it said it believed on the WMD issue.

In the early months of the debate over Iraqi WMDs, the Bush administration’s firm belief in their existence was entirely reasonable. International inspectors, some from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and some from the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM),¹⁷ had gone into Iraq in 1991, after the first U.S.-Iraq War, to preside over the elimination of Saddam Hussein’s WMD programs. Hussein seems at first to have assumed that he would be able to conceal from the inspection teams the numerous and large WMD programs that he had at that time. He quickly found he was mistaken; inspectors repeatedly found evidence of WMD programs or had to be openly blocked from conducting searches when the Iraqis felt they were getting too close.

Hussein then dramatically downsized his WMD programs, seeking to reduce them to a size that could successfully be concealed. There followed years of cat-

and-mouse games, as the inspectors attempted to find what remained of the WMD programs. Periodic blocking of searches continued to occur, and relations—especially between UNSCOM and the Iraqi government—remained very tense, until both the IAEA and UNSCOM withdrew from Iraq late in 1998 so as not to be at risk when the United States launched Tomahawk missile strikes against WMD facilities. Iraq paid a heavy price in economic sanctions for its failure to cooperate with the international inspectors.

Several things seemed obvious after the withdrawal of the international inspectors (although it is important to remember that saying that something seemed obvious does not necessarily mean that it was true). It seemed that Saddam Hussein must still have had significant WMD programs in 1998 and must have valued those programs very highly; why else would he have showed such determination and been willing to pay so high a price to avoid cooperating with the international inspectors? Given how much he valued WMDs, it seemed he surely must have reconstituted his WMD programs to a significant extent once there were no more international inspectors in Iraq.

This logic led U.S. officials to the firm conclusion that Hussein must still have substantial active WMD programs in 2002. They also believed that he had substantial ties to

Al Qaeda. But they wanted concrete evidence with which to convince doubters and grew impatient with the process by which evidence was evaluated and judged for plausibility by intelligence analysts. When the analysts found much of the evidence unconvincing, many officials seem to have suspected that there were defects in the analysts rather than in the data.¹⁸ They wanted to see, and did see, all the juicy pieces of evidence, not just the ones that the intelligence analysts found convincing. Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet intervened at the White House to prevent President Bush from using the story of Iraq trying to obtain uranium from Africa in a speech Bush gave in October 2002, because the story seemed unsubstantiated.¹⁹

Yet the story was still given credence in the White House and was included in the State of the Union address in January.

The Johnson administration had bypassed the intelligence evaluation process in August 1964 for a very different reason—sheer haste. Ray Cline later said that “everybody was demanding the sigint [signals intelligence]; they wanted it quick, they didn’t want anybody to take any time to analyze it.”²⁰ But while the reasons were different, the results were somewhat similar.

The evidentiary situation regarding Iraqi WMDs began to change in November 2002. Under threat of an American invasion, Saddam Hussein allowed international inspectors—some from the IAEA, others from the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission for Iraq (UNMOVIC), the successor to UNSCOM—to resume operations in Iraq. The cooperation the Iraqi government gave them was not perfect, but it was far better than it had been during the 1990s. As the weeks went by, the fact that nothing significant was found did not constitute evidence that Saddam Hussein had no WMD programs, but it did constitute evidence about their scale. The lessons of the UNSCOM inspections of the 1990s had been that Saddam Hussein was aggressive and skilled in his use of concealment but also that concealment programs were not perfect and that large programs were much harder to conceal than small ones. There was a limit to how large

and diversified the WMD programs could have been, in late 2002 and early 2003, without the IAEA and UNMOVIC having been able to find some significant part of them. The longer the inspections continued, the lower that limit was.

By February 2003, it was becoming hard to believe that the WMD programs could be anywhere near as large and as poorly concealed as the Bush administration was saying, without the inspectors having been able to find them. The Americans were claiming to have information not only about the existence and nature of Iraqi WMD facilities, but also about their locations. But checks of those locations found nothing. Hans Blix, head of UNMOVIC, described his frustration. "The sites we had been given were supposedly the best that the various intelligence agencies could give. This shocked me. If this was the best, what was the rest? Well, I could not exclude the possibility that there was solid non-site related intelligence that was not shared with us, and which conclusively showed that Iraq still had weapons of mass destruction. But could there be 100-percent certainty about the existence of weapons of mass destruction but zero-percent knowledge about their location?"²¹ By March it was obvious that the American claims about the WMD programs had been seriously exaggerated.

The Bush administration responded not by reconsidering its claims, but by attacking the credibility of the international inspectors.²² It is hard to tell whether this attack reflected sincere disdain for international inspectors or whether it was a smokescreen for a belief that the details didn't matter. It was obvious by March that Saddam Hussein could not have concealed from the international inspectors weapons programs on the scale that U.S. spokesmen had ascribed to him. But it was not so obvious that Saddam Hussein could not have concealed a program one-third the size of the one that U.S. spokesmen were saying he had. And the Bush administration was convinced that WMD programs one-third the size of the ones the United States ascribed to him would be adequate justification for war. It is impossible to be sure whether senior officials still believed in March that Saddam Hussein had very large WMD programs, or whether they had scaled back their beliefs to something that still might have been possible in light of the weapons inspectors' reports. But all the available evidence indicates they still believed in WMD programs large enough that it would be hard to reconcile them with the international inspectors' non-findings. United States forces still went into Iraq expecting to have chemical weapons used against them on a significant scale.

One reason the Bush administration was much more firmly attached to its views about Iraqi WMDs than the Johnson administration had been to the second Tonkin Gulf incident was that the case against Iraq was too diversified to be subject to overall disproof. When a claim that Iraq had some WMD stockpile or WMD program in some particular location proved untenable—as many had, by March 2003—there were plenty of claims about other locations to replace it. The second Tonkin Gulf incident had been one incident, lasting only a few hours. It either had happened or it had not.

Winning Congressional Approval

The context in which Congress passed resolutions authorizing force was very different in these three cases. In 1898, a majority in Congress favored war against Spain; indeed, Congress was more enthusiastic about war than President William McKinley was. A simple, unambiguous declaration of war passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives, though by only a modest margin, 42 to 35, in the Senate. In the Vietnam and Iraq cases, presidents sent to Congress resolutions stating that force should be used if necessary, but they did not say that force had in fact become

necessary or that they expected it to be necessary.

In August 1964, when President Johnson sent Congress a resolution giving him the authority to use "all necessary means" and take "all necessary steps" to deal with Communist aggression in Vietnam, it was clearly understood that these words would give him the authority to put substantial U.S. forces into combat in Vietnam. But Johnson conveyed a convincing impression that he did not actually expect to do that. There were senators and representatives who did not like the idea of a major American role in the Vietnam War who nonetheless voted for this blank check because they saw little danger it would be cashed. The fact that the Johnson administration had been drawing up plans for months for a major increase in the U.S. role in the war and had been considering the problem of how Congress could be persuaded to pass a resolution authorizing such an escalation was carefully and successfully concealed.

The senators and representatives who voted for the Iraq resolution in October 2002 understood that it was likely to be used as authorization for an actual war. The fact that the United States was drawing up plans for a possible war against Iraq was quite obvious. George W. Bush tried to pretend that he was less firmly committed to carrying out those plans than he actually was, but he did not try to pretend that he was not seriously thinking of carrying them out.

Part of the reason for the difference between these cases was that Congress, remembering Tonkin Gulf, was less naïve in 2002 than it had been in 1964. But the attitudes of the presidents involved were also different. Lyndon Johnson, in 1964, really did not want to get the United States into a serious war in Vietnam. Even if it went well it would divert resources from his "Great Society" programs, and he had no faith that it would go well. Indeed, he was quite pessimistic about it. When he talked about his desire to avoid such a war he sounded sincere because he was sincere. What he was concealing was that he had not managed to think of an acceptable alternative course.

Johnson continued to hope, during the months following the passage of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, that he would somehow find an alternative to a big war. In a remarkable case of wishful thinking, he refrained from expanding the U.S. armed forces in preparation for war, even a little, for as long as he had the slightest hope of finding some way to avoid war. There were actually fewer men in uniform in mid-1965 than there had been when the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was passed in August 1964.

George W. Bush was confident that an American war against Iraq would lead to a quick and glorious victory. He did not, therefore, feel Lyndon Johnson's reluctance to go to war. This attitude was evident to the public and helped to ensure that members of Congress would understand the implications of voting for the resolution that gave him the power to go to war if he chose to do so.

In 1964 Lyndon Johnson concealed the fact that he was seriously considering taking the United States to war in Vietnam. That concealment ended between February and May of 1965, but Johnson continued for a while to hide the scale of the war he was contemplating. That effort significantly interfered with effective planning in some ways. Key officials responsible for management of the economy were not told how expensive the war was likely to become and were thus unable to prepare for its economic effects.²³

George W. Bush did not conceal the fact that he was seriously considering a war or the scale or cost that was contemplated. He did, however, try to maintain for as long as possible the illusion that he had not yet made up his mind actually to go to war.²⁴ His evasiveness interfered with planning not for the war itself (as far as is now known), but for the aftermath of the war. Planning for the postwar

occupation of Iraq was seriously inadequate. One reason for that inadequacy was sheer optimism: officials who did not expect the occupation to face serious problems or to require great effort felt justified in skimping on preparations for it. Andrew Natsios, who as administrator of the Agency for International Development was one of the key officials responsible for the reconstruction, believed that the total U.S. expenditure on the economic reconstruction of Iraq would be \$1.7 billion.²⁵

In addition, however, a visible process of planning for the occupation would have been a strong clue that an occupation was expected, and the Bush administration wished to avoid giving out such clues. Natsios explained that the reason the bidding for contracts in the postwar reconstruction of Iraq had been conducted in secret, with only a few companies like Halliburton and Bechtel invited to submit bids, was that a public bidding process would have been interpreted as an indication that the United States had decided that there was going to be a war and a postwar reconstruction.²⁶ Andrew P. N. Erdmann, who participated in the occupation as a member of General Jay Garner's staff, commented on the difficulties of recruiting personnel for that staff before the war: "How much diplomacy would there have been at the U.N. if people had said, 'The President is pulling people out of the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce to take over the whole Iraqi state'? . . . That's the political logic that works against advance planning."²⁷

Dealing with Distant Lands

The processes by which the United States chose to believe it had a *casus belli* in the sinking of the *Maine*, the Tonkin Gulf attack, and the WMDs in Iraq were rather different from each other. But in all of these cases the United States was considering going to war against enemies with which it was not well acquainted. Most wars in the history of the world have been fought by states that bordered on one another. Contiguity did not guarantee that the governments involved would understand their enemies and understand the events triggering the wars, but it at least improved the odds. The United States has not fought a war of that sort for well over a century.²⁸ It has fought only against distant enemies, often in areas of the world about which few Americans had even a superficial knowledge. Its lack of familiarity with its enemies and with the territory it would be fighting on has increased the likelihood that it would make decisions on the basis of insufficient—or false—information.

Notes:

1. Robert J. Hanyok, "Skunks, Bogies, Silent Hounds, and the Flying Fish: The Gulf of Tonkin Mystery, 2–4 August 1964," *Cryptologic Quarterly*, Winter 2000/Spring 2001, vols. 19, 20; nos. 4, 1: 1–55; and other documents, online at http://www.nsa.gov/public_info/declass/gulf_of_tonkin/.
2. Edwin Moise, *Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 143–207.
3. David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York, 1972), 533.
4. H. G. Rickover, *How the Battleship Maine was Destroyed*, 2d ed. (Annapolis, 1995), 28, 36.
5. Rickover, *Battleship Maine*. This explanation is far more convincing than the counterargument presented in Peggy and Harold Samuels, *Remembering the Maine* (Washington and London, 1995).
6. See Edwin C. Fishel, *The Secret War for the Union* (Boston, 1996), esp. p. 55, for a refutation of the widespread exaggerations of Alan Pinkerton's role as intelligence chief for McClellan.
7. "Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002," *United States Statutes at Large*, 116 STAT. 1498–1502. It had 23 "whereas" paragraphs, of which 10 referred directly to weapons of mass destruction; one other referred to them indirectly by referring to UN Security Council Resolution 687; four referred to Al Qaeda and/or the September 11 attack; five others referred to

terrorism without specifically mentioning Al Qaeda or September 11; four referred to Saddam Husain's abuse of the Iraqi people; and one referred to the desirability of bringing democracy to Iraq.

8. UN Security Council Resolution 1441, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2002/SC7564.doc.htm>.
9. JCS 7720 to CINCPAC, 042119Z Aug 1964, in *Vietnam: National Security Council Histories* (Frederick, MD, 1981), reel 1, frame 250; Moise, *Tonkin Gulf*, 211–17.
10. *Southeast Asia Resolution*, Joint Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, August 6, 1964 (Washington, DC), 1–2.
11. Interview with General Bruce Palmer, Jr., September 21, 1994.
12. This author is reasonably confident that both McGeorge Bundy, the president's special assistant for national security affairs, and Clark Clifford, chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, told President Johnson within a week that there was serious doubt about the August 4 incident. But there is no explicit documentary record. See Moise, *Tonkin Gulf*, 198–9, 243.
13. Conversation between Johnson and McNamara, September 18, 1964, in Michael Beschloss, ed., *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964–1965* (New York, 2001), 39.
14. George W. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern* (New York, 1982), 379.
15. JCS to CINCPAC (copies to *Ticonderoga*, *Maddox*, *Turner Joy*, etc.), 061642Z Aug 1964.
16. Edward J. Marolda and Oscar Fitzgerald, *The United States Navy and the Vietnam Conflict*, vol. II, *From Military Assistance to Combat, 1959–1965* (Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1986), 426–36. The primary author of this volume has since changed his mind; see Edward J. Marolda, "Summary of the Tonkin Gulf Crisis of August 1964," on a U.S. Navy web site at <http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq120-1.htm>.
17. The IAEA investigated the Iraqi nuclear programs. UNSCOM investigated chemical and biological weapons programs and also long-range missiles, which were forbidden to Iraq under the agreement that ended the 1991 war but are not classified as "weapons of mass destruction."
18. Seymour M. Hersh, *Chain of Command* (New York, 2004), 207–36.
19. Hersh, *Chain of Command*, 233.
20. Ted Gittinger, ed., *The Johnson Years: A Vietnam Roundtable* (Austin, 1993), 29.
21. Hans Blix, *Disarming Iraq* (New York, 2004), 156.
22. Blix, *Disarming Iraq*, chap. 10.
23. Jeffrey W. Helsing, *Johnson's War/Johnson's Great Society: The Guns and Butter Trap* (Westport and London, 2000), esp. pp. 121, 151, 224.
24. On January 13, 2003, President Bush told both Secretary of State Colin Powell and Prince Bandar bin Sultan of Saudi Arabia that he had decided on a war. Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York, 2004), 265, 267, 270, 274. It would have been easy for Bush to change his mind after telling Powell, but not as easy after telling Prince Bandar.
25. Andrew Natsios on ABC News "Nightline," April 23, 2003, transcript on LexisNexis.
26. Natsios on ABC News "Nightline."
27. George Packer, "War After the War: What Washington Doesn't See in Iraq," *The New Yorker*, November 24, 2003, 64.
28. Depending on what one decides to accept as a "war," the last case would probably be somewhere between 1865 (the end of the Civil War) and 1890 (the massacre of the Sioux at Wounded Knee).

Minutes
SHAFR Council
June 19, 2013
Mary Todd Lincoln Board Room
Lexington Hyatt

Members present: Tim Borstelmann, Robert Brigham, Carol Chin, Christopher Dietrich, Penny Von Eschen, Kristin Hoganson, Fredrik Logevall (presiding), Alan McPherson, Michael Sherry, Sarah Snyder, Marilyn Young. Others present: Jeffrey Crean, Nick Cullather, Mary Dudziak, Anne Foster, David Hadley, Peter Hahn, Andrew Johns, Lien-Hang Nguyen, Chester Pach, Andrew Preston, Jennifer Walton

Business Items

1) Announcements

Logevall called the meeting to order at 8:10. He welcomed all members and expressed his satisfaction about the great number of participants at the conference and the high percentage of international attendees.

2) Recap of motions passed by e-mail since January meeting

Hahn read into the minutes a summary of the three motions that Council passed by e-mail correspondence since the January 2014 meeting: the approval of the minutes of the January meeting; the approval of an "Open the Government" petition; and the approval of the increase in the subsidy for *Diplomatic History* for summer 2014.

3) Mid-year budget update

Hahn presented oral and written reports on the finances from January 1 to June 21, 2014. He reported that SHAFR's finances are currently at their expected level, taking into account the costs of the SHAFR Conference and SHAFR Summer Institute.

A discussion on SHAFR's income from its publication interests ensued. Hahn expressed satisfaction with the current contract between SHAFR and the Oxford University Press and noted that he would be ready to troubleshoot any OUP service issues if they should appear. Logevall thanked Hahn for the report.

Discussion then turned to the question of donations to SHAFR from SHAFR members. It was noted that there was no system in place for requesting or accepting such donations. It was noted that such a system would probably be welcomed by SHAFR members who might be interested in giving to SHAFR. Logevall suggested that the question of a systematic fundraising program be investigated for January.

Hahn informed Council that PNC Bank, through which SHAFR maintains its checking account, had a protocol providing another member with access to the account. Hahn suggested that Council ought to appoint a second person to have access to the account. Von Eschen moved that the SHAFR Endowment Liaison be given monitoring access to SHAFR's checking account; the motion passed unanimously.

Hahn then reminded Council that in the previous Council meeting, it had been agreed that SHAFR's fiscal year would be shifted to a November 1 to October 31 basis, to facilitate year end reporting.

4) Discussion of mission of *Passport*

Logevall asked Council to discuss *Passport*, its missions, and its relation to *Diplomatic History*. He welcomed *Passport* editor Andrew Johns to report on *Passport*'s current status.

Johns reported that *Passport* is in good health, noting his appreciation of the active participation and submissions of SHAFR members, and even some non-members, to the review. He noted by way of example that *Passport*, in its September issue, would be able to include two roundtables. He also observed that *Passport*'s historiographical essays have been well-received, and expressed a desire to continue to publish such essays.

Johns noted that *Passport*'s connection to the Mershon Center, aided by the efforts of Mitch Lerner, provided valuable support. Johns also expressed appreciation for *Passport*'s editorial staff.

Logevall inquired about *Passport*'s relationship with *Diplomatic History* and H-Diplo. Johns explained that relations with both were productive, and the different strengths of each one allowed a variety of pertinent writing and reviewing to find an audience. It was suggested that *Passport* might benefit, however, from a clearer distinction in its role from those other venues.

Hoganson expressed concern that *Passport*'s offerings, valuable as they were, would not be available in the long-term because they were not available via JSTOR, and that steps should be taken to remedy this situation. General agreement was expressed on this point. Johns agreed that JSTOR access would be helpful and suggested that approaches be made to OUP about making *Passport* available through JSTOR.

Logevall then asked Johns for his views of *Passport*'s future. Johns noted that *Passport* had expanded beyond its original status as newsletter; while *Passport* would continue providing a variety of different types of articles such as guides to archives or suggestions for working through the FOIA process, simple announcements could be made more efficiently on the website. Johns explained that he sees *Passport* as growing into a valuable supplement to *Diplomatic History*.

Council expressed its thanks to Johns for his hard work and his report.

5) SHAFR Guide to the Literature

McPherson withdrew from the meeting. Council discussed SHAFR's *Guide to the Literature*. Hahn noted that, as the *Guide* would no longer be published through its current provider, Council had three options: suspend the initiative, publish the guide online via the SHAFR website, or contract with a new publisher. It was agreed that decisions on these issues should await the appointment of the new editor of the *Guide*, who would be better suited to recommend a course of action.

Discussion then turned to the application of Alan McPherson to be the editor of the Guide. Support for McPherson's candidacy and his proposals for the Guide's future were expressed by the Council. Borstelmann raised the question of compensation for the position of editor. Discussion ensued. Borstelmann moved that McPherson be appointed editor with a stipend of \$6,000 a year for three years beginning July 1, with an option to renew. Borstelmann additionally moved that the compensation for the editor of *Passport* also be increased to an annual rate of \$6,000 effective January 1, with a \$1,000 prorated adjustment to be paid in 2014. The motion was passed unanimously with a note from Snyder that Council ought to regularly review compensation of vital positions in SHAFR. McPherson returned to the meeting.

6) *Diplomatic History* editorial transition

Council welcomed Cullather and Foster to discuss the transition of *Diplomatic History* to Indiana University. Cullather expressed appreciation to the Council for the supplemental funds that had allowed for the hiring of assistants over the summer, and suggested that such support would continue to be valued in the future. Cullather noted that, as Indiana University was also home to the *Journal of American History* and the *American Historical Review*, *Diplomatic History* enjoyed a pool of graduate students experienced in editorial affairs that was quite beneficial.

Logevall inquired whether there were any complications stemming from the fact that *Diplomatic History* was located at a university where two other major historical publications were located. Cullather acknowledged that at times there might be complications, overall it was beneficial for *Diplomatic History*.

Discussion turned to the issue of fee remissions for graduate students working on the editorial staff of *Diplomatic History*. Foster and Cullather agreed that the situation was currently in flux, and would benefit from a later re-appraisal.

Logevall raised the question of copyright in SHAFR publications. Cullather noted that *Diplomatic History* and *Passport* had different standards on authorial copyright, but did not feel that a SHAFR-wide policy needed to be adopted. It was ultimately decided that the current policy of copyright retention by the different publications would be continued.

Council discussed DeepDyve, an initiative to rent journal content. It was noted that the effect of such a system was unpredictable. Discussion followed about whether *Diplomatic History's* pricing for individual articles was affordable for people and institutions worldwide.

Discussion turned to *Diplomatic History's* review publication schedule. Logevall asked whether *Diplomatic History* was faced with a review backlog that would remain for some time. Foster and Cullather explained that the reviews backlog has eased given a temporary halt in requests for reviews that ended in February. They explained that going forward, their goal would be for three or four reviews per issue, some encompassing multiple books.

Discussion on *Diplomatic History* concluded with the note that more information was needed on the journal's move to Indiana University prior to additional supplemental funding being approved. It was agreed that the issue should be addressed at the January 2015 Council meeting.

7) SHAFR archives

Hahn informed the Council that the Texas A&M University library has sent notification that it would no longer store SHAFR's historical documents. In order to determine what might merit preservation, Hahn had employed TAMU graduate student and SHAFR Member Jeffrey Crean to investigate the archive. Crean prepared two reports for the Council, one a breakdown of the items in the archive and a recommendation as to their final disposition, and the second a brief historical essay on the foundations of SHAFR.

Vigorous discussion then ensued as to what items merited preservation, focusing especially on materials pertaining to *Diplomatic History's* article selection process in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Arising during this discussion were concerns over the privacy of those associated with *Diplomatic History*. Also discussed were how the records might stored, either in digital form or in a physical archive. Young moved that the entirety of the material in the TAMU archive be shipped to the Business Office for temporary storage and further review, with a recommendation to be made by January on final disposition of the collection and further consideration of the privacy issue. The motion passed by majority vote.

8) Annual conference issues

Hahn discussed the Global Scholars Grant and the Diversity & International Grant programs, noting overlaps between them. The former was funded at \$10,000 and is up for renewal in 2014, while the latter is funded \$25,000 and scheduled through 2016. Hahn noted that separate reports from Petra Goedde and Snyder indicated that there was some redundancy in the grants that might be eliminated.

Discussion then turned as to whether the two grants ought to be consolidated into one and, if so, where responsibility for awarding grants should lie. Snyder suggested it would be useful to consolidate the grants and give responsibility to the Program Committee, while retaining input from the Membership Committee. Concern was raised whether the consolidation might be perceived as devaluing either international participation or domestic minority participation. Snyder proposed that that two programs be merged into one program, to be named the Global Scholars and Diversity Grant funded at \$35,000 through 2016, under the guidance of the Program Committee with the participation of the Membership Committee in advertising the program and with possible contributions to Program Committee membership. The motion passed unanimously.

Pursuant to the direction of Council at the January meeting, Snyder reported on data about membership rates among conference participants. She expressed concern at the low number of SHAFR members making panel proposals. Discussion then ensued as to whether conference presenters should be required to be SHAFR members. Consensus developed that a SHAFR membership requirement would not be an onerous burden on conference presenters and could benefit the organization by demonstrating what SHAFR has to offer to a wider audience. Young moved that membership be required for accepted presenters at the annual conference; the motion passed unanimously.

9) Discussion of membership dues

Hahn summarized two questions relating to membership raised by members: the first, whether a discounted price for a lifetime membership should be offered to long-standing members, and second, whether regular and student membership rates should be raised.

After discussion, Council declined to take action on either idea. During discussion, a consensus emerged that Council should encourage life memberships at the current rate.

10) FOIA Report by National Coalition for History

Hoganson presented a report she had prepared with Richard Immerman on the FOIA process. She requested feedback on the report, and recommended that efforts to educate SHAFR members of the FOIA process be investigated by a research committee. No changes were suggested for the report. Logevall expressed great appreciation to Hoganson and Immerman for their efforts.

11) Website transition

Dudziak reported on the transition to the new SHAFR website. Dudziak expressed appreciation to Chester Pach who, in his dual role as chair of the Teaching Committee and as a member of the Web Committee, assisted greatly to making the SHAFR website a valuable resource for instructors.

Dudziak noted that she hoped the new website would be a center for communication of matters important to SHAFR members, and that further efforts would be made to utilize it as a resource. She also proposed that SHAFR investigate the creation of a research committee, which could help further exploit the possibilities of the new website. Sherry observed that the SHAFR Teaching Committee would be well-matched by a research committee.

Discussion then ensued as to the benefits and problems of purchasing audio-visual equipment to be used at conferences to generate content for the SHAFR site, such as videotaped panel presentations or author interviews. Consensus emerged that such equipment should not be purchased at this time given difficulties of storing, transporting, and operating it and the difficulties of making web-quality videos.

After Hahn noted that the by-laws authorized the President to appoint ad hoc committees, Logevall noted that he would appoint an ad hoc research committee and encourage Council to consider making it a standing committee in the future.

12) Proposal to designate an official SHAFR representative to the National History Center Board

Logevall presented a proposal from Dane Kennedy, new director of the NHC, to appoint an official SHAFR representative to the NHC program committee that plans Wilson Center seminars. Discussion followed on the benefits and disadvantages of such a connection with the NHC.

Hoganson moved that the president of SHAFR may appoint a member of SHAFR to be a SHAFR representative to serve on the Program Committee of the NHC. The motion passed unanimously.

13) Discussion of policy on photography / video recording of SHAFR conferences

Hahn directed the Council's attention to the question of filming at the SHAFR conference. Discussion ensued over a proposal from Walton that SHAFR adopt AHA language in registration to include a waiver for filming. There would be an opt-out provision for this waiver. Dietrich moved to adopt AHA language for future SHAFR conferences; the motion passed unanimously.

14) Update on restructuring of SHAFR insurance

Hahn reported that his investigation of insurance options, begun after the January Council meeting, continues.

Reports

15) *Diplomatic History*

Logevall turned Council's attention to the written report on *Diplomatic History* from Tom Zeiler and expressed concern at the number of reviews and the amount of time it will take for books to be reviewed after publication. Young proposed that Council express support for the current editors' efforts to reduce the backlog, and ask the editors to consider increased attention to reviews.

16) Teaching Committee

Pach, reporting for the Teaching Committee, emphasized the usefulness of SHAFR's interactive website to the mission of the Teaching Committee. Logevall expressed gratitude for work on Teaching Committee and Pach's dual involvement with that committee and the Web Committee.

17) 2014 SHAFR Conference

Council welcomed Walton, Preston, and Nguyen to discuss the 2014 annual conference. Walton reported on the conference registration data to the Council. Walton noted that attendance has been particularly strong, and will probably set a record for a non-Washington conference year. Additionally, this year's conference was one of the largest, with 98 panels. Walton explained the costs were holding steady. Walton and Preston both expressed deep thanks to Amanda Boczar, a graduate student hired to assist the operation of the conference.

Discussion then turned to improved site selection of non-Washington Conferences. Nguyen suggested that no matter what ultimate decisions were made, Walton should be involved due to her competence in such conference arrangements.

Sherry inquired as to whether any problems arose from the increased number of panels. Walton noted the only issue was space. Preston noted that the expansion to 98 panels from 72 had been a great relief, as those panels that were added were of shared academic value to others selected, but space had been the problem. Logevall suggested that in the future, panels be reduced to 90 minutes from 120 minutes to allow for greater ease of planning.

Walton expressed thanks to Nguyen and George Herring for their hard work for this conference.

18) 2015 SHAFR Conference

Borstelmann reported that plans for the 2015 SHAFR Conference in Arlington, VA are evolving well. He noted that the schedule for the meeting will be adjusted to include 105-minute sessions and to avoid hosting plenary sessions in the evening.

19) 2014 Summer Institute

Reference was made to the cogent written report submitted in advance of the meeting by the co-chairs of the 2014 Summer Institute.

20) Reports on recent prizes (Peter Hahn, 5 minutes)

Hahn relayed a motion from the Ways & Means Committee that the Dissertation Completion Fellowship be increased from \$20,000 to \$25,000 effective on July 1, 2014. The proposal passed by majority vote.

On behalf of the selection committees, Hahn announced the winners of various 2014 fellowships and prizes. The Dissertation Completion Fellowships were awarded to Julia Mansfield and Kyle Burke; the Oxford University Press USA Dissertation Prize was awarded to Tore C. Olsson; the Stuart L. Bernath Article Prize was awarded to Sarah Davenport; the Myrna Bernath Book Prize was awarded to Amy S. Greenberg; the Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize was awarded to Andrew Friedman; the Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize was awarded to Gary J Bass; and the Norman and Norma Graebner Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Robert D. Schulzinger.

21) Concluding remarks

Logevall expressed his thanks to Council for their attendance and hard work

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 PM.

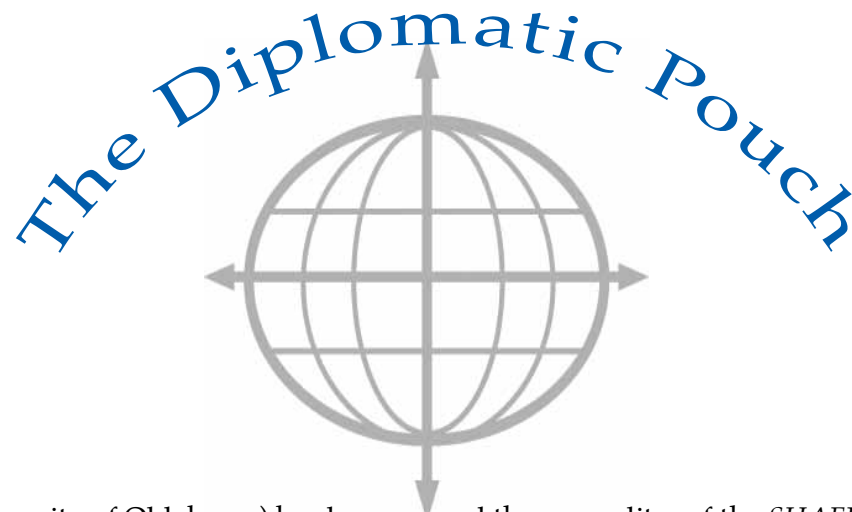
Respectfully submitted,
Peter L. Hahn, Executive Director
PLH/dh

In the January 2015 Issue of *Passport*:

- Roundtable on Francis D. Cogliano's *Emperor of Liberty: Thomas Jefferson's Foreign Policy*
- Andrew Johnstone on the historiography of domestic policies and foreign policy
- 2014 SHAFR election results

and more...





Personals

Alan McPherson (University of Oklahoma) has been named the new editor of the *SHAFR Guide to the Literature*.

Kelly Shannon has accepted an offer to join the Department of History at Florida Atlantic University as an Assistant Professor of History beginning in the fall of 2014. She has also been named an inaugural Faculty Fellow for FAU's Peace, Justice, and Human Rights Initiative for 2014-2016.

Sarah Snyder will join the School of International Service at American University as an Assistant Professor in August 2014.

Ngoei Wenqing (Ph.D. candidate, Northwestern University) won the 2014 Frank Gibney Award from the *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* for his essay, "The Domino Logic of the Darkest Moment: The Fall of Singapore, the Atlantic Echo Chamber, and 'Chinese Penetration' in U.S. Cold War Policy toward Southeast Asia." The award—which includes \$1000 from Brill Publishers and publication in the journal—honors the life of Frank Gibney (1924-2006), an early and enthusiastic support of the journal.

Report of the Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, January 1-December 31, 2013

The Historical Advisory Committee to the Department of State (HAC) embraces two principal responsibilities. First, it oversees the preparation and timely publication of the *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)* series. Second, it monitors the declassification and release of Department of State records.

The Foreign Relations Statute of 1991 (Public Law 102-138 [105 Stat. 647, codified in relevant part at 22 U.S.C. § 4351 *et seq.*]) mandates these responsibilities. It calls for a "thorough, accurate, and reliable" documentary record of United States foreign policy. That statute evolved from the public controversy precipitated by the *FRUS* volumes published in 1983 and 1989 that covered the events surrounding U.S. interventions in Guatemala in 1954 and in Iran in 1953, respectively. The volumes omitted documentation on U.S. covert activities which either was not made available to the Office of the Historian (HO) researchers or that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) did not clear for publication. Scholars rightly criticized both volumes for falling short of the standard of accuracy and thoroughness, thereby severely undermining the series' credibility and stature.

Since the Foreign Relations Statute of 1991 became law, HO has worked conscientiously to compile and publish volumes which are "thorough, reliable, and accurate." The HAC appreciates that meeting this standard is challenging and complex in view of the explosion of vital government documents pertaining to foreign relations produced by a wide spectrum of departments and agencies during the 1960s and later decades, and in view of the parallel requirement that volumes be published no later than 30 years after the events they document. HO has struggled to meet these twin obligations, and the gap between its publication of the *FRUS* volumes and the 30-year target remains substantial. HAC nonetheless is delighted that HO's record over the past year builds on the robust progress it made over the preceding two.

The 1991 Foreign Relations statute also mandates that the HAC monitor and advise on the declassification and opening of the Department of State's records, which in large measure involves the department's implementation of the operative Executive Order governing the classification and declassification of government records. E.O.

13526, issued in December 2009, mandates the declassification of records over 25-years-old—unless valid and compelling reasons can be specified for withholding them. In this area of its responsibility, the HAC is not encouraged by what it observes. Notwithstanding some progress with regard to reviewing records, the pace of their transfer and processing falls far short of the E.O.'s requirement. While the reasons for this shortfall are many, the HAC maintains that the leadership of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has not addressed it with sufficient planning and aggression.

Publications of the *Foreign Relations Series*

The slow rate of declassifying records exacerbates the challenge of meeting the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series' mandated twenty-five year deadline. Still, during 2013 the Office of the Historian published seven volumes. These are:

- 1964–1968, Volume XXIII, *Congo, 1960–1968*
- 1969–1976, Volume XXXIII, *SALT II, 1972–1980*
- 1977–1980, Volume II, *Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs*
- 1977–1980, Volume III, *Foreign Economic Policy*
- 1977–1980, Volume VI, *Soviet Union*
- 1977–1980, Volume VIII, *Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977-August 1978*
- 1977–1980, Volume XIII, *China*

This total is one more volume published than in 2012 and equals the number published in 2011. Further, the volumes published in 2013 complete the *FRUS* series' coverage of the Johnson administration, portend completion of its coverage of the Nixon administration in the near future, and represent a major advance in the coverage of the Carter administration. The publication of the long-delayed *Congo, 1960-1968* volume, moreover, marks a watershed in HO's improved management of the complicated and often frustrating interagency review process. Of equal if not more salience, by the end of 2013 HO had more than 10 volumes successfully declassified. This achievement means that 2013 was the fourth consecutive year in which HO has completed declassification of that many volumes—and unprecedented rate. More important, this success virtually eliminates the backlog of more than 30 volumes which awaited declassification dating back to 2009.

The management skills of the Historian, the General Editor, and others in supervisory positions, coupled with the innovative organizational initiatives which HO undertook under their direction, have generated efficiencies throughout the production chain. In addition, the maturation of the exceptional cadre of compilers and editors has reduced the time required for a volume to progress from conception to publication. The high morale throughout HO, the office's acquisition of a secure access facility which will provide ready access to highly classified information, and its move to new and larger offices scheduled for 2014 augur well for the series' future productivity.

HO should be proud of its progress in accelerating the publication cycle. It should likewise be proud of the advances it has made in digitizing and making the *FRUS* volumes available on the office's website and in a format readable on tablets and smart phones. That website also now hosts a valuable series of essays, "Milestones in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations," and the office has improved its outreach to the public through the effective use of social media. Furthermore, by exploring *FRUS*'s evolution from the Civil War era to the present, the publication of *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable": A History of the Foreign Relations Series of the United States Series*, serves the public and scholarly communities by adding historical perspective to contemporary debates over the appropriate balance between security and transparency.

The Challenge of the 30-Year Requirement

Yet HO remains incapable of meeting the 30-year requirement for either the Nixon or the Carter administrations. It has designed and begun to execute a plan that should enable it to fulfill that requirement for *compiling and reviewing* the volumes in the Reagan administration subseries. Doing so should allow it to improve the timeliness of the publication of the succeeding George H.W. Bush administration subseries, on which it has begun research, and subsequent administrations' subseries. Nevertheless, the HAC doubts that that the office, despite its efforts, will be able to achieve the goal of *publishing* the majority of these subseries' volumes within 30-years of the events which they cover.

This pessimism evolves from the HAC's understanding of the challenges HO confronts. Ironically, the most severe challenge stems from the 1991 legislation itself. That statute mandated and facilitated research in intelligence files and the incorporation of intelligence documentation in the *FRUS* volumes. To implement this mandate, the State

Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Central Intelligence Agency and in the late 1990s it established a State-CIA-NSC committee, the "High-Level Panel" (HLP), to provide guidelines for declassifying and publishing documentation relating to covert actions and other sensitive intelligence activities that had a major impact on U.S. foreign policy. The results of these and concomitant initiatives have been outstanding. In 2013 State and CIA collaborated to verify 8 volumes. The challenging *Congo 1960-1968* volume has now been published, and HO anticipates the publication of the equally challenging *Iran Retrospective* and *Chile 1969-1973* volumes in 2014.

But this commitment to openness comes at a cost. HO estimates that any *FRUS* volume with an HLP issue will spend at least one additional year, and often multiple years, in the declassification pipeline than will a volume which does not contain an intelligence issue requiring consideration, the drafting of declassification guidelines, clearance by that inter-agency panel, and, as is often the case, an appeal. The number of these HLP issues will increase dramatically as compilers work through the Carter presidency and beyond. HO estimates that at least half of the Carter volumes will require resolution of HLP issues. Because the records at the Reagan Presidential Library contain approximately 8.5 million classified pages, the number of volumes in the Reagan administration subseries with HLP issues is likely to be double the number in the Carter subseries. Consequently, while HO will almost certainly improve the timeliness of compilation and review efforts, the declassification process is likely to delay publication.

Exacerbating this problem is that other departments and agencies involved in the declassification process have been less cooperative than the CIA. Chief among these is the Department of Defense (DoD). Not only are its declassification guidelines ambiguous, but it continues to fail to meet the statutory limit of 120 days to review a declassification request from HO; DoD's average response time is 250 days. Despite its strenuous efforts to bring DoD into compliance with the statute, HO was unable to make progress in 2013.

Declassification Issues and the Transfer of Department of State Records to the National Archives

In its 2012 Annual Report, the HAC expressed grave concern over the inability of the National Archives and Records Administration to process, describe, and review electronic and paper records in order to make them accessible to scholars and the public in a timely manner. The committee recognized the challenges generated by underfunding, understaffing, the increased volume of documents, and the increasing number of electronic documents, which pose additional difficulties. Nevertheless, the committee noted that it failed to perceive within NARA's leadership the same sense of urgency to find solutions to these difficult problems that it did within HO's leadership.

In 2013 the HAC continued to review carefully the State Department's classification guidelines and monitor the rate of review, processing, and transfer. What is more, in addition to meeting again with William Mayer, NARA's Executive for Research Services, Sheryl Shenberger, Director of the National Declassification Center (NDC), William Fischer, Chief of the Department of State's Office of Information Programs and Services (IPS) Systematic Review Program (SRP) Division, IPS reviewers, and more than a dozen others from their staffs, HAC received a lengthy briefing from William J. Bosanko, NARA's Chief Operating Officer.

The committee very much appreciates the willingness of Mr. Bosanko and his colleagues to provide their insights and perspectives on the problems NARA confronts. It also notes with pleasure that the NDC exceeded the HAC's expectations by retiring the backlog of more than 350,000,000 pages of documents that were at least 25-years-old and therefore subject to automatic declassification by December 31, 2013, as directed by the December 29, 2009, Presidential Memorandum accompanying Executive Order (E.O.) 13526. These documents had been reviewed previously, but they could not be processed by NARA because of quality assurance problems associated with the initial reviews.

The HAC congratulates the NDC for its achievement, and it fully appreciates the importance of NARA now having in place procedures with the potential to expedite future reviews. But it also recognizes that researchers must await processing in order to access these documents. In particular, the records must still be screened for privacy issues, indexed, and those which have been exempted from automatic declassification, segregated. Moreover, the withholding of some 40% of these 25-or-more-year-old documents from declassification suggests to the urgent need for classifying agencies to revisit their declassification guidelines.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The *FRUS* series and NARA both confront major challenges, but those facing NARA are more serious and require greater remediation. To assist in this effort, HAC asked the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) to collect data on researchers' experience with NARA. SHAFR designed and distributed a survey that,

attesting to the intense interest in the issues, elicited an impressive number of responses. HAC will report the results in spring 2014.

Historical Advisory Committee to the Department of State (HAC) Members:

Richard H. Immerman, Chair

Laura Belmonte

Mary Dudziak

Robert McMahon

James McAllister

Trudy Huskamp Peterson

Susan Perdue

Katherine Sibley

Thomas Zeiler

Recent books of interest:

Abbenhuis, Maartje. *An Age of Neutrals: Great Power Politics, 1815-1914* (Cambridge, 2014).

Adelman, Ken. *Reagan at Reykjavik: Forty-Eight Hours That Ended the Cold War* (Broadside, 2014).

Agyeman, Opoku. *Power, Powerlessness, and Globalization: Contemporary Politics in the Global South* (Lexington, 2014).

Ahmad, Muhammad Idress. *The Road to Iraq: The Making of a Neoconservative War* (Edinburgh, 2014).

Alvandi, Roham. *Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah: The United States and Iran in the Cold War* (Oxford, 2014).

Avina, Alexander. *Specters of Revolution: Peasant Guerrillas in the Cold War Mexican Countryside* (Oxford, 2014).

Balmer, Randall. *Redeemer: The Life of Jimmy Carter* (Basic, 2014).

Barnton, Christopher. *Rivalry and Alliance Politics in Cold War Latin America* (Johns Hopkins, 2014).

Bátora, Jozef and Nik Hynek. *Fringe Players and the Diplomatic Order: The 'New' Heteronomy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Berghahn, Volker R. *American Big Business in Britain and Germany: A Comparative History of Two 'Special Relationships' in the 20th Century* (Princeton, 2014).

Bird, Kai. *The Good Spy: The Life and Death of Robert Ames* (Crown, 2014).

Biswas, Shampa. *Nuclear Desire: Power and the Postcolonial Nuclear Order* (University of Minnesota, 2014).

Blumenau, Bernhard. *The United Nations and Terrorism: Germany, Multilateralism, and Antiterrorism Efforts in the 1970s* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2014).

Bradley, Mark A. *A Very Principled Boy: The Life of Duncan Lee, Red Spy and Cold Warrior* (Basic, 2014).

Bruns, Kai. *A Cornerstone of Modern Diplomacy: Britain and the Negotiation of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations* (Bloomsbury, 2014).

Burton, Fred. *Under Fire: The Untold Story of the Attack in Benghazi* (St. Martin's, 2014).

Carew, Michael G. *The Impact of the First World War on U.S. Policymakers: American Strategic and Foreign Policy Formulation, 1938-1942* (Lexington, 2014).

Clapton, William. *Risk and Hierarchy in International Society: Liberal Interventionism in the Post-Cold War Era* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Coker, Christopher. *The Improbable War: China, the United States and Logic of Great Power Conflict* (Oxford, 2014).

Conradi, Peter. *Hot Dogs and Cocktails: When FDR Met King George VI at Hyde Park on Hudson* (Alma, 2014).

Costigliola, Frank and Michael J. Hogan, eds. *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 2013).

Davis, Thomas. *NGOs: A New History of Transnational Civil Society* (Oxford, 2014).

Dichter, Heather L. and Andrew L. Johns, eds. *Diplomatic Games: Sport, Statecraft, and International Relations since 1945* (Kentucky, 2014).

Donaldson, Gary A. *The Secret Coalition: Ike, LBJ, and the Search for a Middle Way in the 1950s* (Carrel, 2014).

Downey, Arthur T. *The Creole Affair: The Slave Rebellion that Led the U.S. and Great Britain to the Brink of War* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

Dumper, Michael. *Jerusalem Unbound: Geography, History, and the Future of the Holy City* (Columbia, 2014).

Enloe, Cynthia. *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (University of California, 2014).

Field, Thomas C. *From Development to Dictatorship: Bolivia and the Alliance for Progress in the Kennedy Era* (Cornell, 2014).

Frantz, Edward O. *A Companion to the Reconstruction Presidents 1865-1881* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).

Frentzoes, Christos G. and Antonio S. Thompson. *The Routledge Handbook of American and Diplomatic History: The Colonial Period to 1877* (Routledge, 2014).

Friedman, Andrea. *Citizenship in Cold War America: The National Security State and the Possibilities of Dissent* (University of Massachusetts, 2014).

Golan, Galia. *Israeli Peacemaking Since 1967: Factors Behind the Breakthroughs and Failures* (Routledge, 2014).

Gould, Eliga H. *Among the Powers of the Earth: The American Revolution and the Making of a New World Empire* (Harvard, 2014).

Hamilton, Nigel. *The Mantle of Command: FDR at War, 1941-1942* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014).

Helleiner, Eric. *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods: International Development and the Making of the Postwar Order* (Cornell, 2014).

Herken, Gregg. *The Winning Weapon: The Atomic Bomb in the Cold War, 1945-1950* (Princeton, 2014).

Hull, Isabel V. *A Scrap of Paper: Breaking and Making International Law during the Great War* (Cornell, 2014).

Ikenberry, G. John. *Power, Order, and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge, 2014).

Jigzhi, Li and Pu Ping. *Reconstructing China: The Peaceful Development, Economic Growth, and International Role of an Emerging Super Power* (McGraw-Hill, 2014).

Johnson, Gaynor. *Lord Robert Cecil: Politician and Internationalist* (Ashgate, 2014).

Kaplan, Fred. *John Quincy Adams: American Visionary* (Harper, 2014).

Kennedy, Michael and Art Magennis. *Ireland, the United Nations and the Congo: A Military and Diplomatic History, 1960-1* (Four Courts, 2014).

Kirshner, Jonathan. *American Power after the Financial Crisis* (Cornell, 2014).

Kissinger, Henry. *World Order* (Penguin, 2014).

Levy, Jack S. and John A. Vasquez. *The Outbreak of the First World War: Structure, Politics, and Decision-Making* (Cambridge, 2014).

Lucander, David. *Winning the War for Democracy: The March on Washington Movement, 1941-1946* (University of Illinois, 2014).

MacMillan, Margaret. *The War that Ended Peace: The Road to 1914* (Random House, 2014).

McCarthy, Helen. *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat* (Bloomsbury, 2014).

McWilliams, Wayne C. and Harry Piotrowski. *The World Since 1945: A History of International Relations* (Lynne Rienner, 2014).

Mistry, Kaeten. *The United States, Italy and the Origins of the Cold War: Waging Political Warfare 1945-1950* (Cambridge, 2014).

Morris, Sylvia Jukes. *Price of Fame: The Honorable Clare Boothe Luce* (Random House, 2014).

Mulligan, William. *The Great War for Peace* (Yale, 2014).

Mulloy, D.J. *The World of the John Birch Society: Conspiracy, Conservatism, and the Cold War* (Vanderbilt, 2014).

Nester, William R. *The French and Indian War and the Conquest of New France* (Oklahoma, 2014).

Nikovich, Frank. *The Global Republic: America's Inadvertent Rise to World Power* (Chicago, 2014).

Otte, Thomas. *July Crisis: The World's Descent into War, Summer 1914* (Cambridge, 2014).

Pardo, Ramon Pacheco. *North Korea - US Relations under Kim Jong Il: The Quest for Normalization?* (Routledge, 2014).

Posen, Barry R. *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Cornell, 2014).

Rabinowitz, Or. *Bargaining on Nuclear Tests: Washington and its Cold War Deals* (Oxford, 2014).

Reiss, Suzanna. *We Sell Drugs: The Alchemy of US Empire* (University of California, 2014).

Reynolds, David. *The Long Shadow: The Legacies of the Great War in the Twentieth Century* (W.W. Norton, 2014).

Robb, Thomas. *A Strained Partnership?: US-UK Relations in the Era of Détente, 1969-77* (Manchester, 2014).

Ruebner, Josh. *Shattered Hopes: Obama's Failure to Broker Israeli-Palestinian Peace* (Verso, 2014).

- Sebrell, Thomas E. *Persuading John Bull: Union and Confederate Propaganda in Britain, 1860-65* (Lexington, 2014).
- Silverstone, Marc J. *A Companion to John F. Kennedy* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).
- Shicun, Wu and Nong Hong. *Recent Developments in the South China Sea Dispute: The Prospect of a Joint Development Regime* (Routledge, 2014).
- Stahn, Carsten and Henning Melber. *Peace Diplomacy, Global Justice and International Agency: Rethinking Human Security and Ethics in the Spirit of Dag Hammarskjöld* (Cambridge, 2014).
- Thomas, Martin. *Fight of Flight: Britain, France, and the Roads from Empire* (Oxford, 2014).
- Turner, Michael A. *Historical Dictionary of United States Intelligence* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).
- Webb, Alban. *London Calling: Britain, the BBC World Service and the Cold War* (Bloomsbury, 2014).
- Wright, Lawrence. *Thirteen Days in September: Carter, Begin, and Sadat at Camp David* (Knopf, 2014).
- Yarhi-Milo, Keren. *Knowing the Adversary: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations* (Princeton, 2014).
- Young, John W. *David Bruce and Diplomatic Practice: An American Ambassador in London, 1961-9* (Bloomsbury, 2014).



Samuel Flagg Bemis Grant Award Reports

The funds generously awarded by SHAFR through the Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant were fundamental in helping me complete the research I needed to conduct for my dissertation, *Casablanca of the Caribbean: Cuban Refugees, Local Power, and Cold War Policy in Miami, 1959-1995*. These funds were used in conjunction with my savings to help finance the first weeks of a multiple week research trip in the spring of 2013. This trip saw me driving approximately 4370 miles over the course of seven weeks during which I visited eight different archives and collections in four different states, including four presidential libraries.

On February 24th I set off from Lafayette, Indiana for Atlanta, Georgia in order to conduct several days of research at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library. The sources at this library were essential in my portrayal of several key moments in the narrative arc of my dissertation. President Carter was in office during the late 1970s when elements of the Cuban exile community sought to open dialog with Fidel Castro's government. Carter's last year in office also saw the Mariel Boatlift, which served as a turning point for the Cuban community in Miami, for American foreign relations with Cuba, and for my dissertation. The Carter library yielded excellent material both from the Cuban-Haitian Task Force and from the declassified intelligence memoranda on the Cuban community in Miami and the dialog with Castro.

On February 28th I set out for Miami, Florida from Atlanta for a multiple week research stay in the city. During that time I was able to conduct extensive research at the University of Miami, Barry University, and Florida International University. This extended stay also gave me the opportunity to conduct oral history interviews with prominent members of the city's Hispanic community. This was my third research trip to the University of Miami's Cuban Heritage Collection and it yielded valuable research related to the experiences of Cubans in South Florida. I was also able to find a tremendous amount of information in the papers of Representative Dante B. Fascell, former Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, who was a member of congress for almost forty years. Fascell's papers at the University of Miami's Special Collections not only illuminated the concerns of his constituents in Dade County, but also illustrated the foreign policy driven concerns of federal officials when dealing with the Cuban exiles.

Barry University is the site of the Bryan O. Walsh papers. Monsignor Walsh was directly involved in the Cuban refugee crisis of the early 1960s and remained involved with Cuban American issues and politics until his death in 2001. Walsh's papers are particularly important for his involvement in the Cuban Unaccompanied Children's Program, or Operation Pedro Pan. Finally, Florida International University's Special Collections provided further information on the Cuban experience, but also provided invaluable information on Jorge Mas Canosa and the Cuban American National Foundation. Information on this powerful foreign policy lobbying group can be found in the thousands of pages of depositions given by Mas Canosa during his lawsuit against *The New Republic* magazine in the 1990s.

On April 1st I set off on a two day journey from Miami to College Station, Texas where I visited the George Bush Presidential Library. The Bush Library contained information both on the Bush Administration and on the Reagan Administration through his Vice Presidential papers. This provided much needed insight into the Cuban American political landscape and its influence on American policy in the post-Mariel era. The final legs of my trip took me to the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library in Austin and the William Jefferson Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock, Arkansas. While these stops were paid for through other means, the generous aid of the Society for Historians of American Foreign relations made a trip of this scope possible and allowed me to complete my dissertation research.

The sources I was able to find in these different archives provide diverging viewpoints for the execution and creation of foreign policy. By offsetting traditional sources, such as the ones I found in presidential libraries, with the lived experiences of the different groups living in Miami I am now able to provide a fuller picture of how foreign policy is lived by individuals and communities and how these communities can in turn affect foreign policy. Without the funds provided by the Bemis Dissertation Research Grant to supplement my personal savings, I would have never been able to cover the expenses of this rather extensive trip. The money went towards gasoline and car maintenance, hotel stays during the shorter visits and temporary housing during the month spent in Miami, parking at the archives and other research expenses, allowing me to focus on the scholarship instead of the expense. I am attaching an approximate budget indicating how the money was spent in the first few weeks of the trip. I must once again thank the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations and the selection committee for the Bemis Grant for this great opportunity.

Mauricio Castro



I. Narrative & Goals Realized:

I returned from a three-week research trip to Mexico City, Mexico, supported by the Samuel F. Bemis Dissertation Research Grant, just before the news broke of Mexican and United States authorities' capture of the elusive drug cartel leader Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán. Considering the larger goal of my project—to look at Mexico and U.S. drug policy development both separately and in interaction with one another in the three decades preceding U.S. President Richard Nixon's infamous declaration of a "war on drugs" in 1971—the ongoing marijuana legalization debates and capture of El Chapo brought additional energy to my research in Mexican archives and to my discussions with Mexican people on the history and current state of the "war on drugs."

Of particular interest to my work is incorporating popular attitudes about drugs and their prohibition into my research on the development of Mexico-U.S. bilateral antidrug policy. My goal in Mexico City was to examine prison records, legal testimony, and public health files—spaces where experience of ordinary individuals with drugs and government action intersected—between 1945-1975. I planned to spend the first half of my trip working in legal documents at the *Archivo Histórico del Distrito Federal* (City Archive) and the second half researching public health campaign files housed at the *Archivo Histórico de la Secretaría de Salud* (Secretary of Health Archive). I wanted to extract accounts of ordinary Mexicans' experiences with narcotics and the state's endeavors to police them, with my eyes out for cases of Americans coming to Mexico to buy and use narcotics. But also I wanted to investigate what strata of

Mexican society were predominately targeted for the use and sale of drugs? How were these individuals prosecuted? I wanted to map out connections between the evolutions of Mexican drug policies (both within Mexico and with the U.S.) in the mid twentieth-century and how drugs were policed on the ground. I also wanted to investigate how the Mexican government conceptualized drug control in the early twentieth-century. One way was as a public health issue, and thus I spent the last half of my trip researching how the Mexican Secretary of Health implemented drug addiction and eradication programs throughout Mexico.

At the City Archive, I was able to track and map out the types of drug offenses prosecuted by Mexican public officials and draw conclusions about the sectors of the cities targeted for drug use, the class and gender of those charged with drug offenses, and how the state punished those who bought and sold narcotics. I was struck by how many of those implicated for drug offenses were middle-aged women, and some of the larger case files perhaps leave me room in the future to verify some of the drug traffickers with files in the U.S. National Archives. My time in public health files was equally fruitful. I was able to begin mapping the development of Mexico's own antinarcotics regime, which preceded that of the U.S. Some of the documents I found will be useful in producing a chapter in my dissertation focusing on Mexican antidrug cultures in the post-revolutionary period (the period after 1920). Finally, my trip to Mexico provided an opportunity to continue networking with academics and journalists working on drug histories, past and present, in Mexico. As I return to Vanderbilt University to continue to assemble my dissertation and ponder the current state of Mexico-U.S. drug issues, I am able to move forward with a stronger emphasis on Mexican perspectives. I thank SHAFR and the Bemis grant for its support in moving forward with my dissertation project.

II. Note on Travel Budget:

The Bemis Grant's generous support facilitated all of my expenses for the trip, including a plane ticket to Mexico City from Nashville, Tennessee (\$716.25), secure transportation to and from the airport in Mexico City, and approximately 20 days of room (\$400) and board (\$200 for food) in a safe, centrally located guesthouse near the U.S. embassy in Mexico City. It also afforded me extra support for safe and productive research in Mexico City by covering my transportation fees each day to the archives, located in the center of the city, and also trips to the south of the city to visit and speak with scholars at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, one of the largest and most prominent universities in the country.

Aileen Teague
Ph.D. Candidate
Purdue University



Dear Professor Hahn,

I am writing to express my gratitude to SHAFR for awarding me the 2013 Michael J. Hogan Foreign Language Fellowship. This award has been instrumental in boosting my Vietnamese language skills and will assist me greatly in completing my dissertation on "Modernization and Development in South Vietnam, 1968-1975." The dissertation explores South Vietnamese political elites' appropriation, interpretation and application of American theories of development and modernization theory in particular from the 1968 Tet Offensive to the fall of Saigon in 1975. Scholars have suggested that modernization efforts ended with the 1968 Tet Offensive but it is my contention that modernization continued to inform the counter-revolutionary development efforts of the South Vietnamese regime until 1975.

Thanks to the Hogan Fellowship, from July to September 2013 I spent ten weeks studying Vietnamese at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Hanoi. I attended 24 hours of group and private classes per week and in the evenings and on the weekends I organized language exchanges with several Vietnamese students. Such was the generosity of the SHAFR award that I could attend private classes in which I worked on language particularly relevant to my research topic. As such, I greatly improved my Vietnamese speaking and especially reading skills. The experience gave me the confidence to conduct an exploratory visit to National Archives Center II, Ho Chi Minh City for three weeks in September and October. During this short time I collected a good deal of material which will be crucial in shaping my dissertation and has prompted further research questions. I will present my preliminary findings based on some of this material at the 2014 SHAFR conference in Lexington. I also intend to return to Ho Chi Minh City for three months in the summer of 2014 to conduct further research. This would not have been possible without the generosity of SHAFR award, which I am honored to have won and for which I am very grateful.

Sincerely,
Simon Toner
London School of Economics

In Memoriam: John Garry Clifford (1942-2014)

It is not so much 'what' you think, but 'how' you think," Garry Clifford often told his students at the University of Connecticut, where he taught for more than four decades. He meant that whatever you think about your subject, be honest and straightforward, take a critical and reasoned approach, make your case with evidence (especially from archives), be fair-minded toward others who conclude differently, and tell a story. Impressively well-read, Garry often advised that "good writing comes with good reading." His passion for both influenced and inspired everyone around him.

This special person and prize-winning scholar passed away on March 26, 2014, at the age of 72. Garry died



J. Garry Clifford
Photo Courtesy: University of Connecticut

suddenly from cardiac arrest outside the UConn library, his book bag at his side. As colleague, teacher, mentor, historian, and friend, Garry is remembered with warmth and love as generous, caring, approachable, bright, and always willing to help. Garry was my cherished friend, my long-time editor and co-author, my best critic, and my intellectual partner. But he touched so many others' lives that I rely in this tribute on them and on Carol Davidge, his loving widow, for their wonderful remembrances.

John Garry Clifford was born March 22, 1942, in Haverhill, Massachusetts, about 37 miles north of Boston. His father, John Garry Clifford, Sr., came from Irish-English roots and his mother Doris Champagne from French Canadian heritage. Daughter of a farmer, she had trained as a hairdresser in Paris. They moved soon after Garry's birth to the small town of Niskayuna, near Schenectady, New York, where Garry's athletic prowess grew in skiing, gymnastics, golf, and baseball. When he was about 12, his family relocated to Melrose, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston. His father, an ice cream company executive, died when Garry was 14. His mother opened a beauty shop to support Garry and his brother. At Melrose High School, Garry starred on its 1959 state championship golf team.

He also excelled in the classroom, graduating in 1960 as a member of the Honor Society with the rank of fourth in a class of 341. His classmates voted him "most studious," and the yearbook described "Garibauldi" as a "quiet" person who counted roast beef, coin collecting, golf, skiing, and history as his "favorites." With a Francis Ouimet scholarship dedicated to helping students who had worked at a Massachusetts golf course (Garry caddied) and who possessed "a strong work ethic," he entered Williams College. Professor Russell Bostert sparked his interest in diplomatic history. Garry earned his B.A. in 1964 and considered enlisting in the Peace Corps, but instead he

enrolled at Indiana University. He earned his Ph.D. under the guidance of Robert H. Ferrell in 1969. Garry's dissertation on the Plattsburg Training Camp Movement, the pre-World War I voluntary officer training program, became his first book, *The Citizen Soldiers* (1972). This work won the Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Organization of American Historians. In the preface, Garry thanked his Indiana mentor not only for his "excellent criticism" but also for "instilling confidence and enthusiasm when they wane." Garry treated his own students in the same manner. Another admiring portrait of his mentor appears in a book honoring Bob Ferrell that Garry edited with Theodore Wilson: *Presidents, Diplomats, and Other Mortals* (2007).

Garry entered the UConn Department of Political Science in 1969. I had arrived in the History Department two years earlier from the University of California (Berkeley), with all the scary images associated with that identification. Because I criticized the U.S. war against Vietnam, some senior professors in Political Science decided to checkmate me and rescue foreign-relations history by bringing in a presumably conservative Ferrell student. Of course, Garry and I soon became the best of friends, collaborating in teaching and writing and opposing the war. Strangers mixed us up, because at times the supposedly conservative Garry grew long hair and a beard and wore jeans, whereas I, the supposed radical, kept my hair comparatively short and dressed in khakis.

Garry's courses at UConn included the history of U.S. foreign relations, wars, and film and propaganda (especially in the 1930s and 1940s). He served as the department's Director of Graduate Studies for 27 years and was teaching at the time of his death. Garry also joined with me and later with Frank Costigliola to advise doctoral students in the Department of History. Garry conducted independent reading courses in early American diplomacy, directed students to archives (his knowledge of diplomats' and politicians' papers was remarkable), read their dissertations (with prodigious editing—oh, that dreaded passive voice), nudged them to tell a story as well as analyze a problem, and nurtured them and me in countless ways, including joyful "meetings" at the old Bidwell Tavern.

Former students who have become professors, public servants, and political analysts have reported that when they write now they still write as if they were submitting their work to Garry. They and I have experienced the Clifford treatment—a polite "Ugh" scratched on the margin next to an inelegant expression or insupportable statement; a manuscript that looked like a rainbow glowing with red, green, and other ink colors from pens Garry happened to have on hand; and his call for strong verbs and vivid character sketches. Frank Costigliola, in his *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (2013), acknowledges Garry as a "superb editor" who marked up a chapter within a day. More, their drives together to Hyde Park "turned into rolling seminars on Franklin Roosevelt."

Modest with a sense of service and giving, Garry never turned the spotlight on himself. When in the presence of those in the professoriate who deemed themselves important, he would simply share a glance with me or others, roll his eyes up in their sockets, and smile. He never bought into an academic culture of competitiveness. What he cared about most was intellectual community, and he

showed it time and again by freely sharing his discoveries, research notes, encyclopedic knowledge, and ideas with anyone interested in the craft of history. What he instilled in students, moreover, through his example and his “message of humility,” as UConn Ph.D. Deborah Kisatsky explains, was the importance of “kindness.”

Stuart Rothenberg, editor of a biweekly political report and a television commentator today, has reminisced that until he landed in Garry’s foreign-relations history class he wondered why he was in graduate school. Garry spotted talent and encouraged Stu, helping him on the path to his Ph.D. in 1977. When he heard the news of Garry’s death, Stu’s knees buckled. Professor Rekha Datta remembers “coming from a culture [India] in which we addressed male professors as ‘Sir,’ to a culture in which it was common for graduate students to refer to their professors by their first name. I had a difficult time doing that. On the day I defended my dissertation, Professor Clifford shook my hand and said, ‘Congratulations Dr. Datta—and this will be the only time I will call you Dr. Datta,’ and ‘You will call me Garry from now on—we are colleagues.’”

At UConn, Garry helped found and sustain the Foreign Policy Seminar that in more than 100 sessions since November 1985 has brought together New England professors and graduate students for an evening of friendship and discussion, often on topics and approaches that later evolved into books. Arnold Offner, Garry’s longtime friend from graduate school at Indiana, who began the series with a spirited presentation on Truman, “unabashedly declaring that individuals matter in history,” has recalled that Garry was an “incredibly kind and dear person” and “so razor sharp in his thinking, and honest.” Always “supportive,” he “would give you scholarly leeway, but if he thought your ideas could not stand intellectual scrutiny,” he would get that “look in his eyes,” making “clear that you had better rethink your premises and reexamine the evidence.” Like Arnie, Garry emphasized in his work the importance of the human equation.

As a classroom teacher, Garry displayed a seemingly casual yet purposeful style. He was an entertaining speaker who talked with his hands, sometimes raising them above his head—Garry the “helicopter,” as his widow Carol Davidge calls the image. Besides his 45-year tenure at UConn, he taught for short periods at the University of Tennessee and Dartmouth College, and he participated in two National Endowment for the Humanities seminars for high school teachers at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. In recent years Garry took great pleasure in pairing with Mark Stoler at Williams College in Susan Dunn’s classes to explore Franklin D. Roosevelt’s leadership before and during World War II. Garry emphasized the president’s fostering of bureaucratic incoherence and his wily political maneuvering. Susan observed Garry’s “gift”: His ability to “generate excitement” in students, who then felt “relaxed enough to pepper” him with questions. They experienced an “invaluable discussion between two immensely knowledgeable and skilled historians” of differing viewpoints. Mark himself “treasured” teaching with Garry. Susan, author of *1940: FDR, Willkie, Lindbergh, Hitler—The Election Amid the Storm* (2013), also recalls that, for her book, Garry was “astoundingly generous to share with me his amazing, voluminous archives.”

Some years ago, at Cornell University, Garry and I taught a summer seminar in the Telluride Program, reading the best literature in our field with outstanding high-school seniors-to-be from across the country. Each morning we planned, with some cleverness,

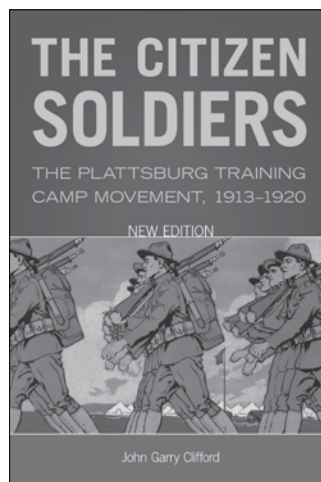
the day’s seminar. We choose different “sides” or opposing interpretations, sometimes ones we did not embrace. Of course, this device led students to ask why Clifford argued “for that view,” given his own writings and his prior statements. But they soon got the point: The key to learning is thinking well and openly, laying out an argument and understanding critiques of it, and respecting a diversity of opinion. That was Garry’s way. We invited Walt LaFeber to the seminar to discuss his book, *The New Empire* (1963). One student challenged a sentence. Walt gamely remarked that the words represented a reasonable conclusion years ago when he first wrote them, but now he “would not live or die by that statement.” Garry really enjoyed that moment.

In October 1986, for a conference on World War II, Garry traveled with other American scholars to the Soviet Union on a cultural exchange sponsored by the nonprofit International Research and Exchange Board. Garry almost didn’t make it into the USSR. Warren Kimball, who headed the U.S. delegation, had asked his colleagues to bring copies of their books as gifts for the Soviet historians. As Warren relates, guards at the Moscow airport examined the books and “nodded sternly their reluctant approval, even for the books that they examined holding them upside down. But your textbook failed to pass muster.” Garry had packed a copy of *American Foreign Relations: A History* (co-authored with me and Ken Hagan). The cover of volume 2 carried an image that included the American flag. The guard fired words at Garry. Neither understood the other, as Garry futilely tried to explain that it was just a textbook. The guard summoned his superior officer. Mark Stoler thought Garry was “finished.” But, during many mutterings, the officer happened to open the book to the page with the 1939 photograph of a smiling Stalin and Ribbentrop. That was enough. The guard gave back Garry’s book and ordered him through the barrier. Soviet airport security personnel had obviously not received Gorbachev’s memoranda on *détente*, *glasnost*, and *perestroika*.

Garry enjoyed telling another book story, this one about Lloyd Gardner, also springing from the 1986 journey. The American scholars took a cultural excursion from Moscow to an historical institute in Minsk. The director handed Lloyd a gift—three huge historical volumes written in Byelorussian. Just before departing the hotel, Lloyd hid the heavy tomes under his bed, an “inconspicuous place,” he has claimed. While waiting in the lobby to depart, “suddenly this maid came running down the stairs,” clutching the books and shouting. The rest of the delegation, Garry included, “tried to keep a straight face” as the hotel staff apologized “for not getting them to me sooner—lest we leave without them.” Lloyd next tried to ditch the

books on the train to Moscow, only to have the sleeper-care attendant chase him down at the last minute. Finally, Lloyd managed to squirrel away the now famous volumes in his last Soviet hotel, but he remained fearful that they would show up at the next destination. Garry heartily laughed every time he recounted Lloyd’s dramas.

Garry thrived on research. He dug deeply into archives everywhere, seeking to discover the personalities that lay behind policies. He devoured memoirs and diaries, published and unpublished. Garry grasped the significance of systemic dimensions and politics, but he especially probed for personal qualities in his narratives. Leonard Wood, Grenville Clark, Robert P. Patterson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt are but a few of the leaders Garry featured in his publications. For example, General Wood, “with a hawk-nosed profile,” stands out in *The Citizen Soldiers* as “a professional soldier



Book cover courtesy of University Press of Kentucky

taking part in politics," working tirelessly to build an army that could fight a large war in the early twentieth century. In December 2014 the University Press of Kentucky will publish a new edition (copyright 2015) of Garry's book. In his new preface, Garry appreciates recent "social and psychological" approaches in foreign-relations history that are relevant to his Plattsburg officers, including gender bias and masculine values. Alert to this new scholarship, "I regret that I did not ask some different questions" when preparing the dissertation/book in the late 1960s, he writes.

The Plattsburg story also figures in *Memoirs of a Man: Grenville Clark* (1975), which Garry co-edited with Norman Cousins. Clark was a Plattsburg promoter, wealthy lawyer, composer of the Selective Training and Service Act (1940), critic of McCarthyism, civil-rights advocate, and author of *World Peace Through World Law* (1958). Next, in 1977, Garry co-authored with me and Ken Hagan the first edition of *American Foreign Policy: A History*. Over several editions this work evolved into two volumes, with *Policy* changing to *Relations*. A year ago he guided Michael Donoghue, Robert Brigham, Ken Hagan, and myself in revising the text for its 8th edition.

In 1986, continuing his interest in the intersection of foreign policy, politics, issues of peace, and military affairs, Garry teamed with Samuel R. Spencer, Jr., to write *The First Peacetime Draft*. William E. Leuchtenburg praised the book as "altogether compelling—and wonderfully detailed, masterfully researched, and graciously and vividly written." Basing their analysis on more than 90 manuscript collections, the authors assessed the 1940 act in the context of America's response to Hitler's onslaught in Europe and FDR's zig-zag road to U.S. entry into the war. Garry highlighted FDR's political gamesmanship and craftiness on serious issues and often quoted British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden's charge that Roosevelt was a "conjurer, skillfully juggling with balls of dynamite, whose nature he failed to understand." Always seeking an apt and eye-opening quotation to make a point, Garry included these words in another book that he and I wrote, *America Ascendant: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1939* (1995).

Garry's editing of *The World War I Memoirs of Robert P. Patterson: A Captain in the Great War* (2012) took him back to the First World War. Patterson penned the document in 1933, and, after a family member asked Garry if the autobiography was worthy of publication, he edited and annotated it. He writes that Patterson, later undersecretary of war (1940-1945) and secretary of war (1945-1947), "tells us much about the personal experience of war," especially "just how raw and unprepared American soldiers were for the titanic battles on the western front in 1918." Garry also identified the essential ingredient in Patterson's ideology: The "democratizing benefits of universal military training" as the sons of immigrants and of American-born elites struggled together in "fog-filled ravines." Garry's volume won the 2013 outstanding book award from the Army Historical Foundation.

For the last few years, Garry has worked on the memoir of Saburo Kuru, Japan's former ambassador to Germany and the envoy Tokyo sent to Washington in November 1941 to explore peace alternatives even as his country's militarists were planning an attack on Pearl Harbor. In the archives of the National Diet Library, Garry's co-editor Masako Okara (a UConn Ph.D.) discovered a typed English version of Kuru's published Japanese memoir (1952) with comments and edits. In their forthcoming book, they probe a fundamental question that has coursed

through Garry's scholarship: Why has diplomacy so often yielded to war? Kuru, to his death in 1954, asserted that he did not know before his mission that his government intended to go to war with the United States and that he was not the treacherous, deceitful diplomat portrayed by U.S. officials. Garry told colleagues that the book's introduction, which chronicles the intricacies of the Washington negotiations, might have the effect of rescuing Kuru's reputation. In fall 2014, the University of Missouri Press will publish *The Desperate Diplomat: Saburo Kuru's Memoir of the Weeks before Pearl Harbor*. With Okara, Garry also recently wrote about a related abortive peace effort in "Side-Door Diplomacy: Herbert Hoover, FDR, and United States-Japanese Negotiations, 1941" (*Peace & Change*, 38, April 2013).

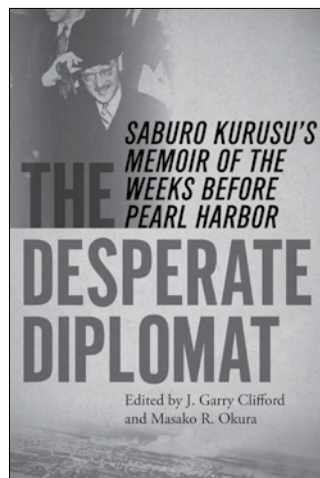
Denying that he was secretly writing a book on presidents and golf, Garry intended next to write his "big" book on FDR and American entry into World War II, about which he had written extensively in articles and for which he had accumulated a massive trove of documents. As Frank Costigliola has remarked, "Garry knew more than anyone" about the topic. What a loss for us as scholars, as instructors, and as readers of fine history that we will never have the opportunity to profit from what would have been hailed as a major work. Let us hope that his documents and other "Clifford Papers" will be deposited in UConn's Dodd Research Center.

Besides his books, Garry wrote articles for the *Journal of American History*, *Diplomatic History*, and many other journals, as well as chapters in books such as Arnold Offner and Theodore Wilson, eds., *Victory in Europe, 1945* (2000). Garry also served on the editorial boards of *Diplomatic History* and the Modern War Series at the University Press of Kansas. The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations profited from his service on committees, especially for the Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize. For all of Garry's projects, his filing system was noteworthy, especially because he handled thousands of research cards, documents, letters, and more. Before he mastered the computer, his office appeared to be an unmanageable jumble, with half-filled cabinets and overstuffed cardboard boxes spilling over with research materials. A gigantic pile of papers of one sort or another occupied the center of his desk. Still, when asked a question, he would thrust fingers into the haystack and pull out the relevant item. In Garry's domain, "disorganization" and "organization" took on new meanings.

Although he never worshiped in the religion of big-time, moneyed college athletics, he cheered for his Huskies.

In 2003, after UConn handily beat Indiana in football, Garry remarked that several players were in his classes. "The room tips when they walk in late. My post-retirement career should be in the athletic advisory center." Then he facetiously added: "Plenty of money there." At UConn he also played summer softball, compiling one of the highest batting averages ever recorded. One of his championship teams bore the tag "Crisis Managers."

In sports, Garry had two passions: The Boston Red Sox and golf. Having lived for many years in New England, within easy reach of hallowed Fenway Park, he could rattle off Red Sox statistics and players' names. He coveted a copy of Ted Williams's autobiography, *My Turn at Bat* (1970), signed "To Garry Clifford, Your Pal." Those 10 days in 1986 in the USSR were trying for Garry not only because of the airport incident, but also because he had no access to newspapers to follow the Red Sox in



Book cover courtesy of University of Missouri Press

the World Series against the New York Mets. Not until he reached Amsterdam did he learn that his beloved Sox lost 8-5 in the seventh game. Ouch!

As for golf, Larry Bowman, Garry's colleague and fairway buddy, has observed: "To say Garry's swing was unorthodox was to give him every benefit of the doubt." He hunched over and gripped the club as if it was a baseball bat, yet his drives flew off the tee for some 300 yards. He had a single-digit handicap. For Garry, golfing was not just sport but a social event, a chance to indulge in rapid-fire repartee with his "linkster" friends. "Captain Hook," they named him—referring to the major left to right trajectory of his shots that sometimes put him "in jail" (out-of-bounds). His induction into the Melrose High Hall of Fame in 2005 reunited him with his former teammates. Learning that Garry had become a professor and author, they called him "Dr. Golf" and asked how many books he had written—about bad putting. Garry shot back: "No academic respect!"

Garry's loving and talented wife Carol Davidge was often at his side for award ceremonies, for research in the archives, for searches of off-the-beaten-path bookstores, for bird watching, for travel, and so much more. Carol was born in Kansas, grew up in Texas, and graduated from the University of Kentucky (1973). During a back roads tour of Europe in 1976, they married in Athens, Greece, and then honeymooned on Crete and Sciathos. At that time, Carol was working in Washington as a senior aide to Senator Gary Hart. Carol and Garry settled in the village of Eastford, Connecticut, in a small, restored colonial house surrounded by old sugar maples. Carol is an award-winning journalist with articles in the *Hartford Courant*, *Yankee*, and *Boston Herald*. She worked on publicity for the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History and UConn's Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts, where she helped organize Arlo



Guthrie's 2009 visit to campus. With Garry, Carol warmly welcomed new graduate students to the university, taking the time to acquaint foreign students with the meanings of American culture, from cheerleading to Thanksgiving. Garry and Carol were both writers with wide-ranging interests, full of life, intelligence, and great caring for others.

Before Garry Clifford's death, UConn honored him for his service by creating a fellowship fund to aid graduate students. To contribute, you can send a check payable to the University of Connecticut Foundation (with "Clifford Fund" on the memo line) to Becky McEnery, UConn Foundation, 2390 Alumni Drive, Unit 3206, Storrs, CT 06269-3206. Donations can also be made via credit card online at <http://clas.uconn.edu/giving/index.php>. How fitting that in this way future students will connect with Garry Clifford and his legacy.

As I was completing this memorial to Garry, in late April 2014, so soon after his death, I was watching with trepidation the 118th running of the Boston Marathon. Garry would have anxiously followed this historic event, too. After the race, we would have talked about a beautiful day in his favorite city, the spirit of the million people who lined the streets, and the remarkable perseverance of the victims of last year's bombings. I find it impossible to grasp that I will never again have such conversations with my great friend and never again witness his welcoming smile, sense of humor, wisdom, guidance, and generosity. The words "enormous loss" fall far short of expressing what I feel about the passing of Garry Clifford.

Thomas G. Paterson
University of Connecticut

In Memoriam: Sandra Carol Taylor (1936-2014)

Sandra Taylor died on May 31, 2014, in Salt Lake City, Utah, where she lived for many years. She was born on July 31, 1936, in Sacramento, California, to Ruel J. Taylor and Carol Clark Taylor. A graduate of Stanford University (1958), she moved to Boulder to complete a master's degree (1962) and a Ph.D. (1966) under the direction of Daniel M. Smith at the University of Colorado.

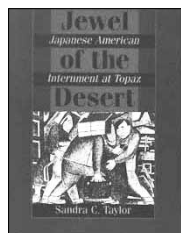


Thereafter she began what became a long and illustrious academic career at the University of Utah. From 1966 to 2001, she moved from assistant to full professor, authoring many articles and books. She had an eclectic and critical edge to her scholarship, which included—among other subjects—American missionaries in Japan, the injustice of Japanese American relocation during the Second World War, and

the role of Vietnamese women fighting for Ho Chi Minh in that conflict.

Sandra Taylor had significant impact on SHAFR and other scholarly organizations. In an era when few women deigned to become historians of American foreign relations, she showed no trepidation in becoming involved with controversial areas involving intersecting themes of ethnicity, race, gender, and economic class. She possessed an indelible moral compass, embracing William Lloyd Garrison's dictum to "afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted." Her work interrogated power on many different levels. Her contribution to the debate on Japanese-American relocation occasioned an international conference at the University of Utah in 1983—an important benchmark on the eventual road to official reparation for the Republic's "greatest wartime mistake." That conference led to publication of *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress* (1986), in which she joined Roger Daniels, Harry H.L. Kitano, and Leonard Arrington in editing a powerful historical documentation of injustice and redemption.

Professor Taylor also wrote a significant monograph, *Jewel of the Desert: Japanese American Internment at Topaz* (1993), which assessed the incarceration at one of the relocation sites—as Daniels noted—"that no one had heard of before and no one heard of again." Any consideration of the



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Second World War as a "good war" must be tempered significantly by her scholarship.

As she wrote books and articles, she also earned the reputation of a superb undergraduate teacher and graduate student mentor. She served as president of the University of Utah Academic Senate, and in 1985 was named a distinguished



university professor. In 1992 she was elected president of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association. She became Professor Emerita at Utah in 2001, and scholars may now consult her papers (rich with material on the aforementioned topics) at the University of Utah Library. One needs also to note that she was a formidable presenter and commentator at myriad conference sessions.

Finally, all was not archival dust for Sandra Taylor. She had a wanderlust as developed as her historical curiosity. Both fed on each other. As her husband put it, "Sandra loved to travel." She was a hiker *par excellence* who loved the multi-colored Escalante River canyons, the Wind River Range of Wyoming, Hawaii, the Arctic and Antarctic, the inclusive Pacific Rim, and all through Europe. And this is the short list. Her final teaching post before retirement was as a Fulbright Professor in Moscow for four months, teaching the history of the Cold War.

In recent years she lived in Teasdale, in south central Utah, the site of many hiking adventures. Sandra had been ill for some time with myelodysplastic syndrome, or MDS, which developed into acute myeloid leukemia this spring. She leaves Russell Wilhelmsen, her husband of thirty-three years, and her brother, Clark Taylor. She also leaves a host of colleagues and friends, from many walks of life, who will miss their insightful and dynamic friend.

Sandra Taylor occupies an important place alongside two other women who became SHAFR pioneers—also now passed to the guild eternal—Betty Unterberger and Anna Nelson. All three will be missed.

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