

**Published Reviews:**

***Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention.***

[Reviews by Andrew Bennett, Risa Brooks, and Joel Westra](#) (H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable)

[Review by Terrence Chapman](#) (Political Science Quarterly)

[Review by Jason Davidson](#) (European Review of International Studies)

[Review by Peter Feaver](#) (Journal of Strategic Studies)

[Review by David Fitzgerald](#) (International Affairs)

[Review by David Forsythe](#) (Choice magazine)

[Review by Harvey Sapolsky](#) (Perspectives on Politics)

[Review by Marybeth Ulrich](#) (Parameters)

# H-Diplo | ISSF

Roundtable, Volume IX, No. 8 (2016)



A production of H-Diplo with the journals *Security Studies*, *International Security*, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, and the International Studies Association's Security Studies Section (ISSS).

[issforum.org](http://issforum.org)

H-Diplo/ISSF Editors: **James McAllister and Diane Labrosse**

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable and Web/Production Editor: **George Fujii**

Commissioned by **James McAllister**

---

**Stefano Recchia. *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention*.** Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-8014-5291-8 (hardcover, \$39.95).

Published on **21 December 2016**

Shortlink: [tiny.cc/ISSF-Roundtable-9-8](http://tiny.cc/ISSF-Roundtable-9-8)

Permalink: <http://issforum.org/roundtables/9-8-reluctant>

PDF URL: <http://issforum.org/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-9-8.pdf>

## Contents

---

Introduction by Michael Beckley, Tufts University .....	2
Review by Andrew Bennett, Georgetown University .....	4
Review by Risa Brooks, Marquette University .....	7
Review by Joel H. Westra, Calvin College .....	12
Author's Response by Stefano Recchia, University of Cambridge .....	16

### Introduction by Michael Beckley, Tufts University

---

**W**hy does the United States, a superpower with the world's strongest military, go to great lengths to secure multilateral approval from bodies such as the United Nations and NATO for its military interventions? And how might the answer to this question hinge on civil-military relations in Washington—notably, on the U.S. military's known reluctance to become embroiled in lengthy 'wars of choice' launched in the absence of imminent threats to U.S. national security?

These are the questions Stefano Recchia answers in his expertly researched book, *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention*. They have been at the center of intense debates for at least a quarter century – not just among academics but also among pundits, policymakers, and the public – and Recchia, a scholar educated in both Europe and the United States and former fellow at the Brookings Institution, is well placed to address them.

Drawing on recently declassified documents and more than 100 interviews with top American policymakers, Recchia breaks down the U.S. decision-making process leading up to the U.S. interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq. In addition, the book contains shorter analyses of U.S. decisions to intervene in Liberia in 2003 and Libya in 2011.

His findings, as the three reviews below note, are profound and for the most part persuasive: especially when it comes to humanitarian interventions and other non-vital missions, the U.S. military is frequently among the staunchest advocates of multilateralism and often pressures civilian leaders to seek approval from the United Nations, or at least NATO, before U.S. combat forces are deployed. American generals value multilateral authorization mainly so that allies and partners can be enticed to bear some of the burden of the operations and thereby reduce the risks and costs to the U.S. armed forces.

One provocative implication of Recchia's argument is that U.S. military leaders, as "reluctant warriors," have often restrained interventionist civilian policymakers from plunging the United States into quagmires without partners to share some of the load. The key exception to this trend, he argues, was the 2003 Iraq War: Recchia's careful analysis of this case shows what can go wrong when top U.S. military leaders are sidelined or fail to speak up during the decision-making process.

The quality and topical nature of Recchia's book is reflected in the quality of reviewers it has attracted. Risa Brooks is a leading expert on civil-military relations, Andrew Bennett is both a prominent scholar and former practitioner of U.S. foreign policy, and Joel Westra is an expert on international law and his work serves as one of the main foils of Recchia's argument.

All three reviewers find much to praise in Recchia's book, but also point out some problematic aspects and raise questions to be addressed in future research. Collectively, the reviews and Recchia's response make for an enlightening and engaging discussion of the role that civil-military relations and international organizations play in recent and contemporary U.S. foreign policy.

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

### Participants:

**Stéfano Recchia** is lecturer (assistant professor) in international relations at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of Clare Hall. He holds a PhD in political science from Columbia University, awarded with distinction, and has been a fellow in the foreign policy program at the Brookings Institution. His principal research interests are in military intervention decision making, US foreign policy, multilateralism, and just war. Recchia has published three books; furthermore, his research has appeared in a variety of peer-reviewed journals, including *Security Studies*, the *Review of International Studies*, *Political Science Quarterly*, and *Ethics & International Affairs*.

**Michael Beckley** is a Professor of Political Science at Tufts University specializing in international security and U.S. and Chinese foreign policy. His research has been featured in a variety of academic journals and popular media including *National Public Radio*, *The Washington Post*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Financial Times*, *The National Interest*, *International Security*, *The Harvard Business Review*, *The Weekly Standard*, *Congressional Quarterly*, *The Yale Journal of International Affairs*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Monkey Cage*, *The Interpreter*, *The Week*, *The Dish*, *War on the Rocks*, and *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, which awarded him the Amos Perlmutter Prize for best article of the year.

**Andrew Bennett** is Professor of Government at Georgetown University. He is the author, together with Alexander L. George, of *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (MIT Press, 2005), and his most recent book, edited with Jeffrey Checkel, is *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

**Risa Brooks**'s research focuses on issues related to civil-military relations, military effectiveness, and militant and terrorist organizations; she also has a regional interest in the Middle East. Professor Brooks is the author of *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton University Press, 2008) and editor (with Elizabeth Stanley) of *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness* (Stanford University Press, 2007), as well as many articles in the field of international security.

**Dr. Joel H. Westra** is Associate Professor of Political Science at Calvin College. His teaching and research interests include international organizations and law, international security, international relations theory, and American foreign policy. His research focuses on multilateral and regional security institutions as instruments of international order, specifically on questions pertaining to institutional design and to mechanisms of legitimation and restraint on the use of armed force within the international system. Previously, Dr. Westra was Visiting Lecturer in the Committee on International Relations at The University of Chicago and Fellow in the John G. Tower Center for Political Studies at Southern Methodist University.

### Review by Andrew Bennett, Georgetown University

---

While the ‘war-hungry General’ is a common trope in movies and no doubt has real historical referents, Stefano Recchia’s *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* argues that in the case of post-Cold War America, it has been civilian leaders rather than military officers who have been eager to undertake unilateral military interventions.

This pattern is not entirely unprecedented. One of Russian President Boris Yeltsin’s advisers, echoing a Tsarist adviser before the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, argued in favor of Yeltsin’s 1994 intervention in Chechnya by stating that “we need a small victorious war to raise the President’s ratings.”<sup>1</sup> Nor has it gone unnoticed that in the American case, at least since the Vietnam war, military officers have often been less eager to use force than their civilian counterparts.<sup>2</sup>

What is more novel about Recchia’s argument is that in the particular case of American post-Cold War military interventions for humanitarian or other purposes that are short of vital security interests, military officers have made the approval of multilateral organizations and the commitment of allied resources preconditions of their support for military intervention. These officers were concerned that without multilateral approval and resources, it would be difficult to maintain the support of the American public over the lengthy period necessary for intervention to succeed. With the partial exception of the 2003 intervention in Iraq, U.S. military officers were successful in playing the two-level game of linked domestic and international negotiations and persuading civilian leaders to undertake difficult and time-consuming negotiations leading to support from international organizations and foreign governments.

Recchia documents his argument with case studies of internal American discussions and international negotiations leading to the interventions in Haiti in 1993-1994, Bosnia in 1992-1995, Kosovo in 1998-1999, and Iraq in 2002-2003. His research, including over 100 interviews with top officials, is thorough and convincing. Indeed, his case studies are well worth reading even for those already very familiar with these interventions. His thesis holds up very well in the first three cases, in which liberal internationalist civilian advisers like National Security Adviser Anthony Lake and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright were willing to use force unilaterally, and military officers successfully pushed for multilateral commitments before embracing the use of force. These case studies serve as reminders that the professional expertise of the uniformed military constitutes a powerful bargaining chip – Presidents can override the professional judgment of the military, but they take considerable political risks in doing so.

The case of Iraq in 2002-2003 is a partial exception to Recchia’s thesis, and he addresses it forthrightly. In this case, he argues, three key military leaders—Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Richard Myers, his deputy General Peter Pace, and Commander of Central Command General Tommy Franks – failed to

---

<sup>1</sup> Carlotta Gall and Thomas De Wall, “A Small Victorious War,” Chapter 8 in *Chechnya: Calamity in the Caucasus* (New York: NYU Press, 1998), 162. Of course, neither war proved successful for Russia, although Vladimir Putin used Russia’s later 1999 intervention in Chechnya to catapult himself into power.

<sup>2</sup> See Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), and Peter D. Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, *Choosing your Battles: American Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

forcefully represent to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and President George W. Bush the concerns of many officers that the planned intervention in Iraq would require far more troops than the plans called for, and that success would be difficult without greater allied support. Thus, most officers expressed the concerns his theory predicts, but they were overridden by civilian leaders in a context in which Bush, Rumsfeld and even Secretary of State Colin Powell argued that vital interests were at stake and the public and Congress, with memories of 9/11 still vivid, believed them. These circumstances place the case at the edges of or even beyond the scope conditions of Recchia's theory, which focuses on less-than-vital interventions.

This is excellent work, and like any good scholarship it raises a number of questions, most of which Recchia addresses in passing, that deserve additional research. I raise five such questions for the purposes of this symposium. First, it is curious that military officers were more attuned to the problem of long-term public support than the civilian leaders, including elected officials in the Congress as well as the executive branch. Why should this be so? Civilian leaders also pay political costs if military engagements are more costly and less successful than they promise. Is it that civilian leaders have different time horizons, focusing on the next election or the next job rather than a long-term institutional career? Is it that their lack of military expertise makes them over-confident about unilateral intervention? Is it that they are playing a two-level game against a military that they view as overly cautious since Vietnam?

Or, my second point, was some of this dynamic partisan? How much should we make of the fact that three of Recchia's cases fall in the Clinton Administration, when civil-military relations were notoriously rocky as the all-volunteer force became increasingly populated by self-described Republicans? And that the one case of unusual deference by the uniformed military arose under a Republican administration? Even if we think partisanship played a role, have the attitudes of military officers toward Democratic and Republican presidents, or toward partisanship itself, changed as a result of the setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan?

Third, how much of the behavior that Recchia uncovers was driven by cyclical learning? Recchia notes the effects of cyclical learning at several points (for example, 63-64, 120, 132, and 165). He also notes the particular reluctance to use force after the failure of U.S. intervention in Somalia in 1993, which reinforced the cautionary "lessons" that Powell and some others drew from the Vietnam war. Brief bursts of optimism also had effects after successes in Iraq in 1991 and Kosovo in 1998. Most important, one reason the uniformed military did not push back harder against over-optimistic plans for Iraq in 2003 was that, after weeks of criticism by the military and others in the initial phases of the intervention in Afghanistan, Rumsfeld's 'light footprint' approach had shifted almost overnight in the fall of 2001 from slow progress to a sudden victory in expelling the Taliban. Rumsfeld felt vindicated, and the military was intimidated from challenging him over Iraq. Recchia gives a brief quote from General Charles Wald along these lines (189) but it deserves greater emphasis.

Fourth, and related to my first and third points, is the danger of a 'cry wolf' problem in U.S. civil-military relations. This problem has waxed and waned since the Vietnam war: military officers often view civilians as overly-optimistic on how much can be achieved with short interventions with limited forces, and they worry about mission creep. Civilians, in turn, often view military officers as exaggerating how many troops and resources are needed for success, in order to leave themselves a huge margin of error that results in sure successes but creates higher fiscal costs. Each side has at times felt that the other is gaming the system by inflating or deflating estimates of the military resources needed for success. Rumsfeld clearly felt the military was organizationally biased toward overly pessimistic projections; it is not (just) that he was a "tyrant (214). His successor, Robert Gates, expressed the concerns of military officers in warning in 2011 that an air

campaign in Libya would be risky and costly due to Libya's missile-based air defenses. Yet in the end the air campaign succeeded with zero casualties from these air defenses, which might lead some civilians to once again fear unduly pessimistic estimates from military officers concerning air defenses in Syria and elsewhere. As military officers are 'agents' with key information and expertise, this creates a great problem for civilian 'principals.'

Fifth, while Recchia notes the role of two-level games in negotiations over multilateral approval and burden sharing (176-177), more might be made of this. For example, Recchia points out that other countries often assert that they will not contribute to operations that lack United Nations (UN) approval. Yet it also seems at times that the lack of U.N. approval is a convenient excuse for simple free riding or for foreign leaders to satisfy domestic audiences while minimizing the fallout in relations with the United States. Relatedly, Recchia makes the interesting point that in contrast to the United States, several countries have to some degree enshrined international organizations like the U.N. in their constitutions (19). It should also be noted, however, that international system structure conditions the domestic institutional structures in this particular two-level game: after WWII the U.S. pushed the countries Recchia mentions—Germany, Italy, and Japan, the losers of the war—to put limits in their constitutions on the use of force, and the U.S. then was and still is in a different structural position from other countries as the world's most powerful state.

I raise these issues for further discussion and research. They do not undercut Recchia's argument, and he notes many of them himself. They may qualify his argument, however, as the particular intensity with which civilians and military officers argue their views, and the nuances of those views, may change over time depending on the perceived success or failure of recent military interventions, the president's political party, the proximity of elections, and the degree of military and foreign policy expertise that the president and his or her civilian advisers have.

### Review by Risa Brooks, Marquette University

---

Stefano Recchia has written an important book about the impact of U.S. civil-military relations on the country's propensity to engage in multilateral humanitarian interventions. The question he asks is why the United States in the post-Cold War era sought the endorsement of the United Nations (UN) or NATO for its humanitarian interventions, even when doing so was constraining and contrary to the initial instincts of hawkish officials within the government. His answer is a novel one: officials pursued multilateralism in order to reassure the U.S. military that international burden-sharing would be forthcoming in the interventions. Providing these assurances was necessary to avoid opposition and a potential veto to the operations from the senior military leadership.

Among its many contributions, the book offers an innovative take on the on-going debate among scholars of American civil-military relations about the political activism of the United States military and its senior officers. Much of this contemporary debate dates to the 1990s, when Richard Kohn famously warned of a crisis of civil-military relations during Colin Powell's tenure as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the early 1990s.<sup>1</sup> At that time Powell advocated openly and aggressively against involvement in the Bosnian civil war and allowing gays to serve openly in the military. In so doing, he veered across the red line of politics that has long characterized normative understandings of the appropriate division of labor in American civil-military relations. In the dominant view, military leaders are supposed to leave politics to the politicians and keep their focus on military matters.

In the years since Powell's forays into advocacy on the Bosnian war and personnel policy, a sizable body of research and analysis has explored themes related to the American military's political identity and activities. This scholarship has focused on everything from documenting the growing partisan self-awareness and decided Republican slant of the officer corps to the willingness of its senior leaders to engage in candidate endorsements in political campaigns.<sup>2</sup> A major concern is the "gap" between the military and American

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard Kohn, "A Crisis in Civil-Military Relations," *The National Interest*, Spring 1994. <http://nationalinterest.org/article/out-of-control-the-crisis-in-civil-military-relations-343>.

<sup>2</sup> See Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap in American National Security* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 2001). Jason Dempsey, *Our Army: Soldiers, Politics and Civil-Military Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). Heidi Urben, "Party, Politics and Deciding What is Proper: Army Officers' Attitudes After Two Long Wars," *Orbis* 57:3 (Summer 2013): 351-368; Kori Schake and Jim Mattis, eds., *Warriors & Citizens: American Views of Our Military* (Stanford: Hoover Press, 2016); Jeremy M. Teigen, "Veterans' Party Identification, Candidate Affect, and Vote Choice in the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election," *Armed Forces and Society* 33:3 (April 2007): 414-437; James Golby, "Duty, Honor, Party: Ideology, Institutions and the Use of Force," PhD Dissertation, Stanford University, 2011; Risa Brooks, "The Perils of Politics: Why Staying Apolitical is Good for the U.S. Military and the Country" *Orbis* 57:3 (Summer 2013): 369-379. For a recent discussion of the role of military leaders in elections see Peter Feaver, "We Don't Need Generals to Become Cheerleaders at Political Conventions," *ForeignPolicy.com*, 29 July 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/07/29/we-dont-need-generals-to-become-cheerleaders-at-political-conventions/>; Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, "Military Leaders Do Not Belong at Conventions," *Washington Post* 30 July 2016. <https://www.google.com/?ion=1&espv=2#q=martin%20dempsey%20washington%20post>; Don M. Snider, "The Problem with Generals Backing Candidates at Conventions," *Washington Post*, 4 August 2016, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-problem-with-generals-backing-candidates-at-conventions/2016/08/04/8830be9c-59af-11e6-9aee-8075993d73a2\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.78a5959b4c2d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-problem-with-generals-backing-candidates-at-conventions/2016/08/04/8830be9c-59af-11e6-9aee-8075993d73a2_story.html?utm_term=.78a5959b4c2d)



## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

society and the implications and potential remedies to that gap.<sup>3</sup> Scholars have also explored the impact of the social esteem of the military and its implications for military leaders' ability to influence the citizenry to support or oppose foreign interventions, as well as other themes.<sup>4</sup>

Recchia's book is a welcome and important addition to this scholarship. Indeed, with the book's focus on the senior leaders' impact on international action and commitments, it adds a new dimension to debates about the military's political behavior. The logic of his argument is as follows. The priorities of the United States military reflect its organizational interests, and in particular its desire to fight "real wars" core to its self-defined mission, as well as the imperative of protecting the prestige and wellbeing of the organization. Faced with the prospect of intervening for humanitarian purposes or for "wars of choice" (by which Recchia means the Iraq 2003 war), the military is a "reluctant warrior" (2). Consequently, military leaders seek to neutralize the potential costs and challenges of engaging in these interventions by demanding a promise from civilians that the American military will not have to unilaterally bear those costs. Under threat of a military veto, civilian leaders, many of whom are reluctant to pursue multilateral intervention, do so nonetheless to assuage the concerns of its leaders. In effect, what Recchia describes is a mechanism whereby approval by multilateral organizations provides a means by which civilians can commit to assure the military burden-sharing in humanitarian interventions.

Recchia's book thus contributes to the argument that there is considerable slippage between the fiction and reality of apolitical norms of civil-military relations in the United States. Even more provocative are the implications of his analysis, which suggest that the outcome of the military's political behavior is not necessarily negative. After all, according to Recchia, it is because of military pressure that civilian leaders solicit international support and assure burden sharing in costly humanitarian interventions. In that vein, the book offers a significant challenge to scholars who would rather not engage the fact that, however adverse for norms of civil-military relations, political activity by the U.S. military may not always be bad for the country.

Beyond this important contribution, there are many things to like about the book. Recchia covers a nice array of empirical cases, for which he has undertaken dozens of interviews with high-level officials. The book makes a concerted and in many instances compelling case for his general thesis that military apprehensions about costs are a contributing cause to multilateral humanitarian intervention and reason for seeking NATO and UN approval. The argument is creative and ambitious and will attract much interest among scholars of civil-military relations.

---

<sup>3</sup> See James Fallows, "The Tragedy of the American Military," *Atlantic*, January/February 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/01/the-tragedy-of-the-american-military/383516/>. Feaver and Kohn eds., *Soldiers and Civilians*; Schake and Mattis, *Warriors and Civilians*. Early concerns about the gap were voiced by Tom Ricks in "The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society," *Atlantic* July 1997, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1997/07/the-widening-gap-between-military-and-society/306158/>.

<sup>4</sup> Jim Golby, Kyle Dropp, and Peter Feaver's research for the Center for a New American Security. "Military Campaigns: Veterans' Endorsements and Presidential Campaigns, Center for a New American Security," October 2013; "Listening to the Generals: How Military Advice Affects Public Support for the Use of Force," April 2013, <http://www.cnas.org/master-taxonomy-list/dr-james-golby>; Risa Brooks, "Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies," in *American Civil-Military Relations*, Suzanne Nielson and Don Snider (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

Strengths aside, there are, nonetheless, as in nearly all ambitious books of this kind, some analytical and empirical issues that might have been dealt with more effectively. For one, the implicit model of civil-military relations on which Recchia's argument is built is rather stark: the mechanism of a military veto, which is the lever through which the military extracts promises to attain multilateral support, is not especially well-developed.<sup>5</sup> Scholars of civil-military relations have spent a great deal of time trying to understand the subtleties of military influence. It is challenging to explain theoretically, and then evaluate empirically, when the military exercises "undue" influence on strategy and shifts policy away from civilian preferences. Consequently, some may doubt whether the proposed mechanism of a military veto on foreign interventions is as direct and unmitigated as Recchia seems to characterize it. The book, for example, left me wondering how Recchia conceives of this veto and whether he is using the term metaphorically, or has some more specific policy process in mind.

It does not help, moreover, that the threat of a military veto is often inferred rather than established in the empirical case studies. Recchia shows that civilian leaders do seem to be consistently concerned about securing military complicity in the interventions. And civilians do seem to pursue multilateralism to provide some assurance to worried military leaders. The interviews speak well to both issues, and the argument is well crafted in this regard. But in some instances the important evidence that it was fear of a military veto of the intervention that forced civilian hawks' hands is absent. Rather, the evidence might also be used to support a more benign interpretation: civilian leaders recognize that success in these operations requires buy-in by the principal actor in charge of executing them (i.e., military). That story may be wrong, but it is unclear that the evidence is always there to fully dismiss its plausibility. To his credit, Recchia acknowledges these evidentiary challenges.<sup>6</sup> But the fact that these may be insurmountable in some cases means that questions linger about exactly how much civilians are driven by fear of a military veto versus more practical concerns about ensuring that the intervention is a success.

A second issue relates to the book's characterization of military preferences. These are attributed to a mix of conservatism in U.S. military culture and old-fashioned organizational self-interest. Evidence supporting the analysis can be found in surveys of officers by Ole Holsti and the Triangle Institute for Security Studies,<sup>7</sup> which were completed in the late 1990s.<sup>8</sup> The TISS findings show that military leaders are dismissive of operations beyond conventional wars to protect core national interests, and especially those deemed to be

---

<sup>5</sup> For discussion of the "veto" see 35, 49-52.

<sup>6</sup> His sensitivity to the issue is apparent in "Soldiers, Civilians and Multilateral Humanitarian Intervention," *Security Studies* 24:2 (2015): 251-283.

<sup>7</sup> Ole Holsti, "Of Chasms and Convergences: Attitudes and Beliefs of Civilians and Military Elites at the Start of a New Millennium," in Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap in American National Security* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> Although the TISS surveys have not been replicated, there has been some more recent research on aspects of military attitudes. See, for example, Feaver and Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians*. Jason Dempsey, *Our Army: Soldiers, Politics and Civil-Military Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). Heidi Urban, "Party, Politics and Deciding What is Proper: Army Officers' Attitudes After Two Long Wars," *Orbis* 57:3 (Summer 2013): 351-368. Schake and Mattis, *Warriors and Civilians*.

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

humanitarian in nature.<sup>9</sup> Also referenced by Recchia are findings that in the area of military operations and strategy, significant numbers of officers surveyed felt it was warranted that they “insist” that civilians follow their advice (p. 47). His argument about the “reluctant warriors” builds on these findings.

Given that most of the book is about post-Cold War 1990s humanitarian interventions (Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo), these assumptions seem fitting.<sup>10</sup> This was a time when many in the military certainly appeared to be reluctant to engage in humanitarian interventions.<sup>11</sup> Yet, the 1990s was a long time ago, not just in years, but in world events. Consequently, can we assume that military preferences remained the same and the subsequent debate has the same post-Cold War “reluctant warrior” tenor and terms?<sup>12</sup> As Recchia observes, for example, the 9/11 attacks may have played an important role in stifling dissent within the military in the lead-up to the Iraq 2003 war (189, 215). The ensuing Afghanistan and Iraq wars, and now the Islamic State/Daesh challenge and Syrian civil-war, may also have altered those terms such that they no longer coincide with the 1990s framing—that is, that there are legitimate conventional wars to fight, and the rest is a diversion from what should be military priorities. In other words, has the view of the threats facing the United States and way that humanitarian issues intersect them evolved in the post 9/11 era?<sup>13</sup> And, if military leaders’ underlying preferences have become more nuanced, are they as likely to condition their support for a war in the future on attaining UN or NATO approval? In short, might it be appropriate to add “in the post-Cold War era” after the phrase, “U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Interventions” in the book’s subtitle?

One final point is warranted about the Iraq war case, which illustrates many of these points. Recchia argues that the military failed in the Iraq case to exert the necessary pressure to assure appropriate burden sharing. The military’s top-level generals remained silent, as he frames it (209). He attributes this silence to military chiefs’ excessive deference to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. But the empirical record is a bit more complex. Then chairman of the Joint Chiefs Richard Myers, an Air Force General, professed to have a self-described mind-meld with Rumsfeld (i.e., he adopted to Rumsfeld’s way of thinking in order to work with

---

<sup>9</sup> See the extensive analysis using the TISS surveys in Peter Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles: American Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), especially chapter two.

<sup>10</sup> Recchia makes a good case for the post-Cold War focus on plagues, 12-13.

<sup>11</sup> Deborah Avant, “Are the Reluctant Warriors Out of Control,” *Security Studies* 2:2 (1996): 51-90; Feaver and Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles*, 25.

<sup>12</sup> Schake and Mattis’s YouGov survey does show some continuity in civilian veteran elites attitudes toward the use of force, but importantly, that survey does not include data from active duty military officers. In Jim Golby, Lindsay P. Cohn, and Peter D. Feaver, “Thanks for Your Service: Civilian and Veteran Attitudes after Fifteen Years of War,” in Schake and Mattis, *Warriors & Citizens*, 110-113. On the methodology used for the survey see Kori Schake and Jim Mattis “A Great Divergence,” in Schake and Mattis, *Warriors & Citizens*, 12-15.

<sup>13</sup> Pew surveys suggest that there may be some greater complexity in the views of veterans. Although support for nation-building activities remain limited, six in ten post 9/11 veterans surveyed by Pew in 2011 supported the “non-combat” nation-building role. See Pew Survey, “War and Sacrifice in the Post 9/11 era” Pew Research Center, 5 October 2011. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/10/05/war-and-sacrifice-in-the-post-911-era/>

him, which suggests a dynamic more complicated than deference).<sup>14</sup> In Recchia's account, General Tommy Franks, the head of Central Command, the unified combatant command in charge of running the war, also deferred to Rumsfeld. It is worth noting, however, that Franks nonetheless engaged in an active and iterative discussion with the Secretary about the number of troops required for the combat phase of the war.<sup>15</sup> Admittedly, not much appears to have been said in those conversations about the war's final stabilization phase, when international support would have been especially useful in keeping costs down. It was not, however, deference that resulted in Franks's ignoring the post combat phase—he was simply not especially engaged with Phase IV planning. There were, however, individuals in the services—notably Chief of Staff of the Army Eric Shinseki—who did raise concerns about the post-combat phase, but were shut-out of the process, as Recchia also notes.

So, here is a case—if ever there was one—that the military should have been motivated to press civilians to pursue cost savings through international burden-sharing. As Recchia recounts, however, the “impassioned plea to the president for seeking UN approval” came from the Secretary of State, Colin Powell (207) and not the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, or other senior military leaders. Yet, even had military leaders made their support for the war contingent on attaining UN approval, it is unclear that they would have been able to exercise a veto over the Bush administration's decision to go to war without it. While Recchia therefore makes an intriguing and compelling case about military influence on multilateralism in the 1990s, how far the case travels into the present is perhaps less well established. Regardless, Recchia's book raises major questions about the impact of military pressures on multilateral interventions. He has given us much to consider in our future scholarship.

---

<sup>14</sup> Bob Woodward, *State of Denial, Bush at War Part III*, Simon & Schuster, 2007. Also see “Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs Chair Hold Briefing,” CNN.com/Transcripts 4 March 2002 <http://www.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0203/04/se.01.html>

<sup>15</sup> Risa A. Brooks. *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment*, Princeton University Press, 2008, 229.

### Review by Joel H. Westra, Calvin College

---

Post-Cold War U.S. military intervention generally has entailed some form of post-conflict stabilization, either as the intended purpose of such intervention or as an anticipated consequence thereof. This has changed the nature of U.S. military intervention, not only at the operational and tactical levels, but also at the strategic level, as policy-makers frequently have sought multilateral support for military intervention. Multilateral support is beneficial insofar as it facilitates sharing of the long-term burden of post-conflict stabilization; however, it also incurs bargaining and transaction costs and constrains military decision-making. Disagreement among policy-makers regarding these costs and benefits produces variation in their efforts to obtain multilateral support.

In seeking to explain variation in policy outcomes, Stefano Recchia uses a bureaucratic politics approach that is informed by insights from both cognitive psychology and U.S. civil–military relations. According to Recchia, decisions regarding whether or not to seek multilateral support for post-Cold War U.S. military intervention are outcomes of a bargaining process between civilian ‘interventionist hawks’ and more dovish policy-makers, with top-ranking military leaders playing a central role in the outcome of such bargaining by serving as informal veto players. Recchia argues that ‘interventionist hawks’ generally focus on the reasons for which military intervention should occur, tending therefore to treat the feasibility of such intervention secondarily and to make overly optimistic assumptions, while military leaders generally focus on the manner in which military intervention would occur, tending therefore to consider the feasibility of such intervention more carefully. Because of parochial concerns regarding the strength and prestige of the military organizations in which they have spent their entire careers and because of lessons they learned through their prior combat experience, military leaders often worry that the Congress will not support lengthy, post-conflict stabilization missions and therefore tend towards skepticism regarding U.S. military intervention. Recchia argues that these leaders can exercise an informal veto over policy-making by using their expertise to portray military intervention as infeasible and by using their influence and esteem to speak out publically (or threaten to do so) against military intervention. Thus, to gain leverage in policy debates, Recchia suggests that ‘interventionist hawks’ seek out institutionalized, multilateral support to ensure long-term burden sharing by other states, thereby *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* by assuaging their concerns regarding Congressional support for sustained military action. By contrast, when military leaders are not involved in decision-making, the United States is less likely to seek multilateral support and may be burdened by the costs of post-conflict stabilization.

*Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* is carefully argued and well written. Recchia specifies the causal logic clearly and provides supporting evidence gathered from numerous interviews with both civilian policy-makers and military leaders as well as from primary-source documents. The hypotheses are clearly specified and accompanied by observable implications that provide a basis for careful process tracing within the cases examined, with the need for such process tracing clearly articulated. The logic of Recchia’s argument, however, contains a contradiction that the book only partially addresses.

Recchia argues that U.S. policy-makers seeking multilateral support for post-Cold War military intervention were motivated by concerns regarding “burden sharing and congressional support” (31) and believed that “institutions-based multilateralism” (10) would facilitate international burden sharing and hence ensure congressional support. According to Recchia, “institutions-based multilateralism” helps “to lock in international support and commit allies and partners to sustained burden sharing” due to “the reputational implications of public pledges of support” (28). In particular, “[o]nce member states are ... committed to

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

supporting U.S. policy, subsequent resistance by them ... would expose them to accusations of flip-flopping, harming their reputation[s] as reliable international partners” (28).

Recchia dismisses this logic, however, in his rejection of negative-issue linkage as a concern for U.S. policy-makers in deciding whether to seek multilateral support for military intervention. According to Recchia, liberal institutionalism suggests that “if the United States acquires a reputation for noncompliance with the norms, rules, and procedures embedded in the UN Charter regime, other states might reciprocate through costly retaliation” (21). Recchia concludes, however, that U.S. policy-makers “were [not] motivated by concerns about issue linkage” (22–23), thereby dismissing the reputational logic that he embraces elsewhere as a key part of his causal logic.

Recchia is aware of this potential contradiction and addresses it by suggesting that asymmetry of capabilities produces asymmetry of reputational concern. According to Recchia, “one reason why American leaders in the post-Cold War period have generally been little concerned about costly international resistance in the form of issue linkage is that under unipolarity, ... [i]f weaker states were to reduce their cooperation with the United States ... , they would primarily harm themselves” (23). This argument, however, downplays the importance of contiguous territory and airspace for undertaking military intervention and narrows the scope of Recchia’s analysis to include only US military intervention undertaken since the end of the Cold War.

Recchia argues that “it is unlikely that the United States, as the world’s military superpower, values IO [international organization] approval ... primarily for the purpose of capability aggregation during major combat,” because “American combat operations are increasingly technology-intensive endeavors” and “only a few major allies ... possess the ability to substantially contribute to U.S.-led combat operations” (25–26). This logic, however, downplays the importance of basing, transit, and overflight rights, which can give less powerful states significant leverage over an intervening state, even under unipolarity.<sup>1</sup> Although Recchia notes that side payments to other states may be necessary in some instances to secure IO approval (2, 11, 54), he does not otherwise consider the leverage that other states might exert over an intervening state by withholding or threatening to withhold basing, transit, and overflight rights and/or other assistance.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the evidence Recchia provides to support his conclusion that policy-makers “were [not] motivated by concerns about issue linkage” (22–23) is only partially convincing.

Consider, for example, Recchia’s discussion of side payments used to secure IO support for U.S. military intervention in Haiti in 1994, which involved the exertion of “significant diplomatic pressure” on Brazil to ensure UNSC approval of the proposed military action (103). As Recchia admits, U.S. policy-makers were concerned about reputational consequences and negative issue linkage (77) but concluded, nevertheless, that “securing a UN [United Nations] mandate for the use of force would have little impact on ... opposition within the hemisphere,” insofar as the United States already had acquired a reputation among Latin American states for noncompliance with U.N. Charter rules, and that opposition from these states “would be of little practical consequence” due to power asymmetries (100-102). Although concerns regarding reputational

---

<sup>1</sup> Erik Voeten, “The Political Origins of the UN Security Council’s Ability to Legitimize the Use of Force,” *International Organization* 59:3 (2005): 540-550; Joel H. Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force: The UN Charter and the Major Powers* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 43.

<sup>2</sup> See Steven R. David, “Why the Third World Matters,” *International Security* 14:1 (1989): 50-85.



## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

consequences and negative issue linkage were not determinative in this instance, such concerns were part of the policy-making process, and as such, the policy outcome might have been more a consequence of particular circumstances (i.e. policy-makers' confidence regarding the feasibility of projecting US military power into Haiti without help from other states) than Recchia admits in his effort to find a generalizable causal relationship.

Consider also U.S. intervention in Iraq almost a decade later. Recchia's important insight here is that "[t]he lack of vigorous civil–military debate ... yielded a flawed U.S. strategic assessment," such that US policy-makers "didn't really focus much on diplomacy with the other Security Council members" (220, 226). Recchia convincingly demonstrates the limits of U.S. efforts in securing U.N. Security Council (UNSC) support for military intervention in Iraq, especially as France's diplomatic position hardened.<sup>3</sup> However, Recchia does not consider that, having given up hope of achieving a second UNSC resolution authorizing military intervention in Iraq, U.S. and British policy-makers still held out hope for achieving nine votes in the Security Council, despite likelihood of veto by one or more of the other permanent members.<sup>4</sup> Such a vote, without achieving UNSC authorization "to lock in international support and commit allies and partners to sustained burden sharing" (28), is inconsistent with Recchia's argument and suggests that other concerns must also have been in play, at least in this case.

Further, although Recchia reports that U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell "was [not] concerned about issue linkage" and that U.S. National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley did not "remember anyone making the argument that we needed international sanction on Iraq to keep people cooperation with the U.S. in other areas," Woodward reports Powell expressing concern to US policy-makers in August 2002 that "[w]ithout the attempt" to secure UNSC approval, "nobody would be with them – no Brits, no bases, no access or overflight agreements" and that failure to seek UNSC support would "suck the oxygen out of just about everything else the United States was doing, not only in the war on terrorism, but all other diplomatic, defense and intelligence relationships."<sup>5</sup> Likewise, a leaked memorandum from a January 2003 meeting between U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair notes agreement between them regarding the need for nine votes in the UN Security Council to give "international cover, especially with the Arabs,"<sup>6</sup> picking up on a previous memorandum that noted the need for "bases either in Jordan or in Saudi Arabia"

---

<sup>3</sup> See also Stefano Recchia, "Did Chirac Say 'Non'? Revisiting UN Diplomacy on Iraq, 2002-03" *Political Science Quarterly* 130:4 (2015): 625-654.

<sup>4</sup> Doyle McManus, "Bush Decides a Majority Is Worth the Wait," *Los Angeles Times* (14 March 2003); David E. Sanger, "Canvassing the Votes To Gain Legitimacy" *New York Times* (13 March 2003); Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force*, 145.

<sup>5</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002): 332-334; *Plan of Attack: The Definitive Account of the Decision To Invade Iraq* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004): 157.

<sup>6</sup> Don Van Natta, Jr., "Bush Was Set on Path to War, British Memo Says," *New York Times* (27 March 2006).

and discussed the need for such support in the context of legal justifications to be presented to the UN Security Council.<sup>7</sup>

These observations by no means undermine Recchia's excellent analysis, but they do suggest that concerns regarding long-term burden sharing and congressional support existed alongside concerns regarding negative issue linkage, and hence that some of the cases Recchia examines might be overdetermined, as Recchia admits in discussing the generalizability of his arguments (244–245). Indeed, Recchia is careful to bound the scope of his analysis to post-Cold War U.S. interventions, in which the latter concerns tend to be weaker, and to consider the possibility that “negative issue linkage, while not a major concern at present, might further constrain U.S. policymaking in the future” (249). However, it is necessary to consider more carefully how much of a role the latter concerns played in these cases as a means of assessing generalizability.

The most original and important contribution that this book makes to theory and to policy is its consideration of military leaders as bureaucratic veto players in policy debates regarding military intervention. Recchia provides a clear and compelling analysis regarding the role of U.S. military leaders in post-Cold War policy debates, noting both the post-Vietnam culture of caution among such leaders (42) and the policy consequences when such leaders are sidelined during the policy-making process (209–227). It will be interesting to see whether there also emerges an enduring, post-Iraq culture of caution among the general public, which will make it more difficult for “interventionist hawks ... to carry great weight in U.S. administration debates about national security” (39), even if military leaders do not play a significant role in such debates. Recchia's book helps us to observe such debates in new light and to consider the importance of military leaders in them. It is a welcome addition to the existing literature on multilateralism and US civil–military relations.

---

<sup>7</sup> *Memorandum from Overseas and Defence Secretariat Cabinet Office Outlining Military Options for Implementing Regime Change* (8 March 2002). Available online from [downingstreetmemo.com/iraqoptions.html](http://downingstreetmemo.com/iraqoptions.html).



### Author's Response by Stefano Recchia, University of Cambridge

---

I could hardly have wished for a better qualified group of scholars to review my book, *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention*. The three reviewers complement each other extremely well in terms of their expertise, which includes military intervention decision making and qualitative research methods;<sup>1</sup> civil-military relations;<sup>2</sup> and the influence of multilateral rules and norms on the use of force in international politics.<sup>3</sup> In fact, each of the reviewers focuses on somewhat different aspects of the book's argument, and taken together, the reviews make for a fairly comprehensive, nuanced, and highly insightful analysis. I will not spend much time summarizing the book's argument here, as all three reviewers have already provided excellent summaries. I am grateful to the reviewers for their laudatory comments. I also very much value the questions they have raised and their more critical remarks, which give me the opportunity to further clarify important parts of the argument. After a few general considerations, I address the reviewers' main criticisms below.

#### Context

Over the last decade or so, numerous studies have sought to explain why the United States, as the most militarily powerful country on earth, typically seeks multilateral approval from organizations such as the United Nations (UN) or NATO for major military interventions. Social constructivists suggest that U.S. policymakers may have internalized new norms of appropriate behavior, which make international organization (IO) approval necessary unless an intervention is clearly carried out in self-defense.<sup>4</sup> Others have hypothesized that the United States may seek IO approval in order to facilitate international burden sharing on the intervention at hand<sup>5</sup> and/or to avert broader retaliation from other states in the form of negative issue

---

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Bennett, "Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti: What Went Right, What Went Wrong," in Joseph Lepgold and Thomas Weiss, eds., *Collective Conflict Management and Changing World Politics* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998); Andrew Bennett and Alexander George, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Risa Brooks, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Risa Brooks, "Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies," in Susanne Nielsen and Don Snider, eds., *American Civil-Military Relations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Joel Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force: The UN Charter and the Major Powers* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007); Joel Westra, "Cumulative Legitimation, Prudential Restraint, and the Maintenance of International Order," *International Studies Quarterly* 54:2 (2010): 513-533.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Between a New World Order and None: Explaining the Reemergence of the United Nations in World Politics," in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, eds., *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Christian Reus-Smit, "Liberal Hierarchy and the License to Use Force," *Review of International Studies* 31:S1 (2005): 71-91; Ian Hurd, *After Anarchy: Legitimacy and Power in the United Nations Security Council* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Sarah Kreps, *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions after the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

linkage.<sup>6</sup> Finally, yet another group of scholars suggests that policymakers may seek IO approval in order to increase U.S. public and congressional support for intervention.<sup>7</sup> My book draws on several of these studies in important ways.

Some of the aforementioned hypotheses—notably, those referring to norm internalization and issue linkage—are alternative to my own argument; I test them explicitly and find little empirical support. (I further discuss the issue-linkage hypothesis below, when I address Joel Westra’s questions.) Other hypotheses—those emphasizing concerns about burden sharing and domestic support—are complementary to my argument as developed in the book. My research confirms that a desire for international burden sharing, and related concerns about U.S. domestic support for potentially open-ended commitments, motivate policymakers to seek IO approval before intervening. Previous studies that emphasized these factors, however, suffered from an important limitation: they considered the United States as a unitary actor, while in reality, in almost every case, senior decision makers in Washington disagree among each other—often quite vehemently—about whether the U.S. government should seek multilateral approval to share costly burdens and increase domestic support. Specifically, policymakers tend to disagree about whether in the particular case at hand, the benefits of multilateralism are likely to outweigh related freedom-of-action costs. After all, securing multilateral approval often requires protracted diplomacy, and substantial side-payments and logrolling may be necessary to persuade hesitant member states to offer their affirmative vote.

### *Logic of the argument*

To address the problem of policymakers whose perceptions and cost-benefit analysis vis-à-vis multilateralism may systematically differ, I combine a bureaucratic politics approach with insights from the civil-military relations literature. There is ample evidence that, for parochial organizational and ideological reasons, America’s senior military officers are reluctant to deploy U.S. forces in humanitarian interventions and liberal wars of regime change, especially when there is no clear threat to U.S. national security.<sup>8</sup> As I show in the book, generals and admirals are more likely than civilian leaders to worry that such interventions will result in open-ended commitments without an exit strategy and with dwindling U.S. domestic support. The primary

---

<sup>6</sup> Erik Voeten, “The Political Origins of the UN Security Council’s Ability to Legitimize the Use of Force,” *International Organization* 59:3 (2005): 527-557; Alexander Thompson, *Channels of Power: The UN Security Council and U.S. Statecraft in Iraq* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2009); Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force*.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth Schultz, “Tying Hands and Washing Hands: The U.S. Congress and Multilateral Humanitarian Intervention,” in Daniel Drezner, ed., *Locating the Proper Authorities: The Interaction of International and Domestic Institutions* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003); Atsushi Tago, “Determinants of Multilateralism in US Use of Force,” *Journal of Peace Research* 42:5 (2005): 585-604; Terrence L. Chapman, *Securing Approval: Domestic Politics and Multilateral Authorization for War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Joseph Grieco, Christopher Gelpi, Jason Reifler, and Peter D. Feaver, “Let’s Get a Second Opinion: International Institutions and American Public Support for War,” *International Studies Quarterly* 55:2 (2011): 563-583.

<sup>8</sup> Peter D. Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles: American Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Jim Golby, Lindsay Cohn, and Peter Feaver, “Thanks for Your Service: Civilian and Veteran Attitudes after Fifteen Years of War,” in Kori Schake and James Mattis, eds., *Warriors and Citizens: American Views of Our Military* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2016).

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

reason why senior military officers pay greater attention to the long-term costs of armed intervention and related issues of public support than many (especially pro-intervention) civilian leaders—to answer one of Andrew Bennett’s questions—seems to be that the military’s operational planning naturally leads them to focus on issues of feasibility and implementation.<sup>9</sup>

The senior officers’ acknowledged professional expertise, their control of military planning, and their high standing in American society allow them to exert significant influence over military-intervention decision making. I argue that when top-ranking generals (especially the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) express strong concerns about the risks and likely operational costs of a particular intervention, and, crucially, when civilian policymakers are divided over the merits of intervention,<sup>10</sup> the military may be able to steer U.S. policy toward nonintervention—the reason being that American presidents are reluctant to overrule the top military brass.<sup>11</sup> This is what I mean when I write that military leaders can sometimes “veto” armed intervention (49, and 49-58 more generally).

The military veto should be understood metaphorically: I certainly do not mean to suggest that the military can directly block armed interventions that it opposes. American presidents, as commanders-in-chief, can of course overrule the military if and when they choose, but as Bennett notes in his review, “Presidents can override the professional judgment of the military, but they take considerable political risks in doing so.” When top uniformed leaders express strong concerns about the costs and complexity of prospective military interventions, this is likely to reduce support for those interventions in Congress and among the American public.<sup>12</sup> Top-ranking generals can also directly convince influential civilian policymakers—the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Adviser, and even the President—that the military intervention plans pushed by other, more hawkish civilian administration members would likely result in unacceptably high costs for the United States. As I write in the book, “senior officers can form bureaucratic alliances with more dovish civilian officials and resort to [other expedients, such as leaking their reservations to the media and leveraging their contacts with sympathetic members of Congress (49-51)] in order to derail the interventionists’ agenda.” In many cases, I further emphasize, “the military’s bargaining power stays latent and shapes the debate as a powerful background force” (53).

In her review, Risa Brooks seems to interpret the threat of a military veto quite literally, and argues that the absence of direct evidence that civilian authorities feared such a military veto constitutes a flaw in my argument. As I conceive it, again, the “military veto” is a metaphor that encapsulates the military leadership’s

---

<sup>9</sup> In the book I also refer to findings from research in cognitive psychology that help us better understand the longer time horizons of military officers (43-44).

<sup>10</sup> As emphasized repeatedly in the book, on viii, 6, 35, and 48-50.

<sup>11</sup> For similar arguments, see also Deborah D. Avant, “Are the Reluctant Warriors Out of Control? Why the U.S. Military is Averse to Responding to Post-Cold War Low-Level Threats,” *Security Studies* 2:2 (1996): 51-90; Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 29-33; and Richard H. Kohn, “The Erosion of Civilian Control of the Military,” *Naval War College Review* 55:3 (2002): 8-59.

<sup>12</sup> On how military opposition can reduce public support for intervention, see Jim Golby, Kyle Dropp, and Peter Feaver, “Listening to the Generals: How Military Advice Affects Public Support for the Use of Force,” Center for a New American Security, 2013.

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

ability to put up significant obstacles in the way of interventionist civilian policymakers. The veto threat, because it is often latent, may be unobservable and needs to be inferred from other factors. If key civilian policymakers who were initially willing to bypass relevant IOs to maximize U.S. freedom of action acknowledge in interviews that they needed to secure UN or NATO approval and further commitments of allied burden sharing, in order to address the military's concerns, "reassure the reluctant warriors," and ultimately persuade the president to authorize armed intervention, that provides strong corroboration for my argument. I provide numerous quotations from on-the-record interviews that I conducted with high-level civilian policymakers, which demonstrate that for interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo, these policymakers came to view multilateral support as essential, precisely in order to address the military's concerns and form a winning bureaucratic coalition in favor of intervention. Additional, less direct evidence is provided through process tracing: I show that in all three cases, top-level civilian leaders were initially willing to bypass relevant multilateral bodies, but these same civilian leaders were unable to form a winning intra-administration coalition in favor of intervention and obtain the president's go-ahead, *until* they effectively addressed the military's concerns about burden sharing and exit strategies by securing IO approval and other commitments of international support.

### *Scope of the argument*

Both Bennett and Brooks further ask important questions about the scope and temporal reach of the book's argument. Which cases can my theory explain? And does the theory apply to U.S. policymaking beyond the 1990s?

My argument is not that top-level uniformed officers are always decisive in steering U.S. intervention policy toward IOs (see 7-8 and 54-57). Civilian policymakers clearly may have other, independent reasons for seeking IO approval. However, the United States usually finds it difficult to secure IO approval for coercive humanitarian missions and liberal wars of regime change, because such interventions are *prima facie* incompatible with the principle of noninterference in states' domestic affairs as enshrined in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. Consequently, hawkish U.S. policymakers contemplating such interventions, if left to their own devices, may be tempted to bypass relevant IOs in order to maximize U.S. freedom of action. The military's reluctance, for its own set of reasons, to deploy American forces in this type of intervention is then likely to play a key role in steering *these particular interventions* toward multilateralism. Put differently, the military's role in steering U.S. intervention policy toward multilateralism is likely to be most salient, and hence identifiable, for coercive humanitarian interventions and other liberal wars of regime change launched in the absence of clear threats to U.S. national security.<sup>13</sup>

For this reason, as Bennett rightly notes, the 2003 Iraq War lies "at the edges or even beyond the scope conditions of [my] theory." As I write in the book, in the Iraq case, top military officers—JCS Chairman Richard Myers; his Deputy, Peter Pace; and CENTCOM Commander Tommy Franks—were not simply deferential to bellicose civilian officials such as Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, although this was certainly the case.<sup>14</sup> The George W. Bush administration's successful framing of Saddam Hussein's Iraq as a

---

<sup>13</sup> See also Stefano Recchia, "Soldiers, Civilians, and Multilateral Humanitarian Intervention," *Security Studies* 24:2 (2015): 251-283. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2015.1036626>

<sup>14</sup> For assessments that emphasize the deference of these three generals and its detrimental effects, see Michael O'Hanlon, "Iraq Without a Plan," *Policy Review* 128 (January 2005); Christopher P. Gibson, *Securing the State*

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

major threat for U.S. national security, and the relentless insistence by hardliners such as Rumsfeld and Vice President Richard Cheney that the goal of regime change in Iraq was a central component of the administration's "war on terror," also made it extremely difficult for other senior military officers, who worried about the lack of international support, to make their voices heard. As I note repeatedly, in the post-9/11 climate, senior officers on the Joint Staff and in the services could not "speak out and articulate an alternative narrative without appearing disloyal, unpatriotic, or dangerously naïve" (215, see also 15, 189). Furthermore, I entirely agree with Brooks in her assessment that "even had military leaders made their support for the [Iraq] war contingent on attaining UN approval, it is unclear that they would have been able to exercise a veto over the Bush administration's decision to go to war without it." The reason is that the Bush administration's civilian leaders were united in supporting the war (even Secretary of State Colin Powell never spoke out against it), which in any case would have left the military bereft of heavyweight civilian allies.

A related point raised by the reviewers is that three of my four case studies (Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo) are from the 1990s. One might thus wonder whether my argument still applies today. I selected these three cases, as well as the 2003 Iraq case, for two reasons. First, in each of these cases, it was clear from an early stage that securing IO approval would be difficult, and consequently high-ranking U.S. policymakers argued that the United States should bypass relevant IOs and intervene only with improvised "coalitions of the willing." That makes U.S. efforts to nevertheless seek IO approval especially puzzling. Second, these cases occurred long enough ago that key individuals involved in policymaking at the time are now willing to be interviewed on the record and speak candidly about their motivations and concerns. Relevant documents are also being declassified (hundreds of pages of previously secret U.S. national security files have been released pursuant to Mandatory Declassification Reviews that I requested). This allows us to reconstruct the U.S. decision making process for those cases with a high degree of accuracy.

The military's preferences as they pertain to my analysis, however, have not fundamentally changed over the last decade; indeed, there are strong grounds to believe that the main pattern of civil-military relations identified in the book continues to apply. I nowhere argue, as Brooks writes, that the military has a desire to fight only conventional wars, or "real wars' core to its self-defined mission," and is reluctant to become involved in modern-day counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations. I explicitly note that "the armed services now devote greater resources to training and capabilities development for counterinsurgency and stabilization missions overseas," and I acknowledge that "a majority of veterans now recognize that nation building is an appropriate role for the military" (46).<sup>15</sup> Absent in Brooks' discussion is a recognition of the fact that the experience of protracted deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq appears if anything to have further convinced senior U.S. military officers that the United States cannot bear long-term stabilization burdens all by itself. This is especially the case for humanitarian interventions and other regime change operations that may be launched in the absence of clear threats to U.S. national security. Senior military officers remain extremely reluctant to deploy U.S. forces in liberal wars aimed at internal political change—as illustrated by

---

(Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 50-64; and Dale R. Herspring, *Rumsfeld's Wars: The Arrogance of Power* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 65-125.

<sup>15</sup> I base this latter conclusion on the same 2011 Pew survey that Brooks cites, oddly, as a challenge to my argument.

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

the military's well-documented reservations about humanitarian intervention in Darfur, Libya, and Syria over the last decade.<sup>16</sup>

*Burden sharing on the intervention or negative issue linkage?*

Finally, in his thoughtful review, Joel Westra challenges my argument that negative issue linkage does not feature prominently among U.S. policymakers' concerns when they seek multilateral approval. Together with Alexander Thompson and Erik Voeten, Westra has been among the principal proponents of the issue-linkage hypothesis that I view as problematic.<sup>17</sup>

First, according to Westra, my argument that "the United States, as the world's military superpower, values IO approval and the resulting legitimacy primarily... as a catalyst for sustained military and financial burden sharing *after major combat*" (25-6) underestimates the importance of IO approval to obtain basing, transit, and overflight rights during combat. My focus is admittedly on long-term burden sharing, going into the post-combat phase, but I nowhere argue that concerns about operational and logistical support during combat are not also important.<sup>18</sup>

Second, Westra views anecdotal evidence that U.S. policymakers value IO approval to secure basing and overflight rights as supporting the hypothesis that concerns about issue linkage indeed motivate these policymakers. To do so, however, Westra stretches the concept of "negative issue linkage" to a point where it ceases to be analytically helpful. If other states react to U.S. interventions launched without multilateral approval by declining to offer logistical and operational support for the intervention at hand, there is no issue linkage (since the issue-area is the same), but simply lack of burden sharing.

Negative issue linkage, as conventionally understood in the institutionalist literature, occurs when noncompliance with international rules on a particular issue results in reduced cooperation with the rule violator *in other issue-areas*. Thus, if the United States intervened militarily in violation of international rules and norms requiring multilateral approval, other countries would have to reduce their cooperation with the United States in other areas, such as finance and trade, nuclear proliferation, or counterterrorism.<sup>19</sup> I argue

---

<sup>16</sup> I discuss the Libya case on 234-239 in the book. On the U.S. military's opposition to humanitarian intervention in Darfur and Syria, see, respectively, Rebecca Hamilton, *Fighting for Darfur: Public Action and the Struggle to Stop Genocide* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), Ch. 6; and David Fitzgerald and David Ryan, *Obama, U.S. Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), Ch. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force*. See also Voeten, "The Political Origins of the UN Security Council's Ability to Legitimize the Use of Force;" and Thompson, "Coercion through IOs."

<sup>18</sup> I explicitly recognize that U.S. policymakers who support efforts to secure IO approval frequently view such approval as useful "to maximize support from international allies and partners *for both combat and postcombat stabilization*" (207, emphasis added).

<sup>19</sup> Thompson writes that rule violation in the context of military intervention might result in the imposition of international costs on the coercer "through negative issue linkage: the coercer finds its relations with other states suffering in other issue areas. [Consequently,] the coercer may find... the achievement of other foreign policy goals more difficult in the future," (*Channels of Power*, 19). On issue-linkage, see also Ernst B. Haas, "Why Collaborate? Issue-Linkage and



## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

that under unipolarity, this is unlikely; indeed, top-level policymakers whom I interviewed, such as Brent Scowcroft, Anthony Lake, Colin Powell, and Stephen Hadley, informed me that when the administrations they served in sought UN approval for prospective military interventions, this had little to do with concerns about reduced cooperation with the United States in other issue-areas.<sup>20</sup> (I do recognize, however, that such concerns might become more prominent in the future, as America's relative power declines [23, 249]).

Westra claims that I nevertheless obliquely acknowledge the importance of concerns about issue linkage in the 1994 Haiti case, when I write that U.S. policymakers feared a failed effort to secure UN approval might harm America's international reputation (77). But states might value a reputation for compliance with international rules for a number of reasons – concerns about issue linkage being only one of them. In 1994, the only countries that were seriously concerned about the possibility of a U.S. intervention in Haiti were other countries from the region. Yet, if there is one region where the United States over the last twenty-five years has not had to worry about costly retaliation in the form of issue linkage, it is precisely Latin America and the Caribbean. As I write, at the time of the Haiti intervention, most countries in the region “were deeply enmeshed in mutually beneficial bilateral relations with the United States, [and they] had the most to lose from a deterioration of bilateral relationships with the United States.” Consequently, I conclude, drawing on interviews with senior officials involved in U.S. policymaking on Haiti, “there was never much doubt [in Washington] that hemispheric opposition would remain confined to the level of rhetoric” (101-102).

Westra also reminds us that in the 2003 Iraq case, the United States and Britain still held out hope for achieving a majority of votes in the UN Security Council, even after other permanent members indicated that they might veto the use-of-force resolution on the table—which, he believes, is “inconsistent with [my] argument.” But the main reason why Washington and London continued for a few days in early March 2003 to seek a UNSC majority for their preferred resolution, even after France threatened a veto, was that British officials felt they needed whatever legitimacy they could get out of the UN process in order to temper UK domestic opposition to their country's participation in the war and be able to share in the burden of intervention.<sup>21</sup> This appears entirely consistent with my argument.

In conclusion, I would like to once again thank the reviewers for their generous, incisive, and insightful comments. I have addressed only their main criticisms in this reply. I apologize to Andrew Bennett, in particular, for failing to answer some of his excellent questions; but he acknowledges that these can simply be viewed as an encouragement for further research. While Americans are currently hesitant to support new large-scale military commitments overseas to change the domestic politics of foreign countries, this may well change over the next few years, especially under the proactive leadership of a new administration. Whenever the President's principal policy advisers seriously discuss the possibility of such interventions, the military is

---

International Regimes,' *World Politics* 32:3 (1980): 357-405; and Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 103-104.

<sup>20</sup> See also Stefano Recchia, “Why seek international organisation approval under unipolarity? Averting issue linkage vs. appeasing Congress,” *International Relations* 30:1 (2016): 78-101. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117815593137>

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion, see Stefano Recchia, “Did Chirac Say ‘Non’? Revisiting UN Diplomacy on Iraq, 2002-03,” *Political Science Quarterly* 130:4 (2015): 625-654. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.12397>

## H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

likely to offer a voice of caution, raising awareness about the risks and likely operational costs of such endeavors, and thus about the importance of multilateral support, burden sharing, and clear exit strategies. Scholars of U.S. foreign policy have not usually thought of the military as an important driver of U.S. multilateralism. My book and the evidence presented therein are an invitation to think again.



social psychologist Irving Janis, arguing (as he often did) that group dysfunction is *not* inevitable, and the book reminds us that group dysfunction can be minimized through the use of various leadership techniques (see especially pp. 32–34).

Of course, as with any short book, there are things that might have been added. For instance, it might have been nice to see the 2011 decision to strike Osama bin Laden’s Abbottabad, Pakistan, compound using a helicopter raid examined through this lens. The Bill Clinton administration—often paralyzed by too much information and complexity and too little decisiveness on the part of its leadership—also seems like a prime candidate for deeper analysis from the authors’ polythink perspective. Any analysis of these kinds of dynamics is vulnerable as well to the accusation that the symptoms, causes, and consequences of any group phenomenon are hard to disentangle in retrospect without any “fly on the wall” presence (see in particular pp. 11–34). Nevertheless, the authors’ analysis of the decision making during the run-up to September 11, 2001 is especially strong, and it provides for the first time a convincing attempt to put the 9/11 Commission Report into the kind of theoretical categories that a scholar of foreign policy analysis would understand and appreciate (pp. 35–65). The analysis also rightly concedes that there were elements of groupthink at the outset of the Iraq war, while arguing that polythink became evident several years later on. Overall, the authors convincingly trace the fault lines present within U.S. government, and provide an indispensable primer on polythink that is likely to be utilized in an array of courses on foreign policy analysis and international relations in general.

DAVID PATRICK HOUGHTON

*King’s College London/U.S. Naval War College*

**Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention** by Stefano Recchia. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2015. 296 pp. \$39.95.

What is the role of civil-military relations in the pursuit of multilateralism? *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* wades into a large body of literature on multilateralism, arguing that a central reason countries such as the United States value multilateral approval for military operations is that it affords comfort to military leaders who want to avoid open-ended and costly unilateral uses of force. Civilian leaders are often forced to seek multilateral approval in order to assuage their generals, necessary partners in achieving their foreign policy goals.

The book provides an excellent synthesis of ideas from the study of bureaucratic decision making, organizational behavior, intra-agency politics, and foreign policy decision making, creating a coherent theory of the benefits of multilateral approval. Building on classic work on the military,

Stefano Recchia argues that military leaders are by nature relatively conservative about the use of force, and this pragmatism sometimes constrains more intervention-oriented civilian leaders. Civilian “interventionist hawks,” as Recchia labels them, are often motivated by the promulgation of liberal democratic ideals but are not intrinsically driven to seek multilateral approval. In fact, for reasons of autonomy and expediency, they would often rather bypass multilateral channels. However, multilateralism appeals to military leaders who desire low-cost commitments and enduring burden sharing. Multilateral coalition building helps achieve this by garnering the cooperation of foreign partners and by helping convince Congress to support the military and the mission.

Recchia develops a number of auxiliary, conditional hypotheses that outline the circumstances under which military leaders’ preferences are likely to be most influential and important. These include the claim that the military, while perhaps not playing an agenda-setting foreign policy role, can often exercise veto power over applications of force, particularly when civilian politicians are divided and in cases in which the national interest is not directly threatened. In such cases, multilateral approval becomes nearly essential in order to limit the military’s “liability” (p. 54).

Although the book’s argument builds on theories from multiple traditions, Recchia is perhaps guilty of overreach when it comes to distinguishing his approach from alternative theories. Specifically, Chapter 1 compares Recchia’s civil-military centric approach to other explanations of the value of multilateralism, including work that claims that multilateralism is primarily a means of rallying domestic support, assuaging foreign allies, or overcoming legislative opposition. These alternatives are dismissed for a variety of reasons. However, none appears to be mutually exclusive relative to the civil-military approach. Indeed, many are more complementary than depicted here. Juxtaposing one’s argument with existing explanations is perhaps a useful strategy for justifying one’s contribution, but here the jettisoning of related arguments appears hasty and artificial. This critique is largely stylistic, though, and should not detract from the overall theoretical contribution of Chapters 1–2.

Chapters 3–5 examine the civil-military case for multilateralism through a series of “structured, focused” case comparisons (p. 63). Chapter 3 analyzes decision making surrounding the 1994 U.S. intervention in Haiti—a case that, while not activating a sense of threat to national security, gave pause to military leaders who feared an open-ended engagement. In response, civilian leaders sought United Nations (UN) Security Council approval in order to create a postintervention peacekeeping force that would limit the exposure of the U.S. military. Chapter 4 focuses on intervention in Bosnia from

1992 to 1995, likewise detailing how U.S. military leaders expressed reservations about military involvement, effectively “vetoing” unilateral intervention and forcing civilian leaders to see UN and NATO cooperation (p. 108). Chapter 5 further illustrates the military’s role in pushing for multilateral cooperation, even at “significant cost to the United States” in terms of delay and loss of operational autonomy (p. 147). These chapters are excellent examples of how to leverage primary and secondary sources against theoretical expectations in order to create compelling and well-researched case narratives; they represent a tremendous amount of research and attention to detail.

Chapter 6 provides a nice counterpoint to the previous cases in that it documents why the U.S. military failed to prevent more unilateral action during the 2003 Iraq War. Recchia points to the organizational culture of the U.S. Department of Defense under Donald Rumsfeld, as well as the larger context of the post-September 11 security environment, to explain the deference to hawking political leaders in this case. Perhaps more importantly, Recchia shows that many senior military officials shared the general preference for multilateralism prior to the Iraq war, even if their concerns did not ultimately result in the George W. Bush administration operating with a formal UN Security Council mandate. This chapter thus helps establish the limits of military preferences in the foreign policy process without undermining the broader thesis of the book.

*Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* is a nice addition to the literature on the political motivations for multilateralism, and it will be of significant interest to students of civil-military relations, U.S. foreign policy, and humanitarian intervention.

TERRENCE L. CHAPMAN  
*University of Texas at Austin*

**Family Values and the Rise of the Christian Right** by Seth Dowland. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. 280 pp. \$45.00.

Moving beyond party politics, Seth Dowland articulates the recurring importance of family politics in the American political arena. While many who study the Christian right start with its more obvious rise in the 1970s, Dowland looks back to the history of values in American politics and the ownership of family values rhetoric by the Christian right starting in the 1960s. The main premise of the book is that while individual issues come and go from the political arena, family values have become (p. 9) and remain (p. 228) an important component of American politics.

## **Stefano Recchia, *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* – U.S. Civil Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention**

(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), pp. 281, ISBN 9780801452918

*Reviewed by Jason W. Davidson*  
University of Mary Washington, VA

It is far too often the case that International Relations monographs that offer novel and provocative theoretical arguments are lacking in empirical support for their claims. Exceptions to the rule are usually historical works, where a record of published or archival documents awaits the scholar willing to dedicate the time to exploring it. Contemporary International Relations, by leaving less of an available documentary record, often leaves the writer short of evidence and the reader desirous of more detail.

Stefano Recchia's *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* provides a provocative theoretical argument and rich empirical detail to evaluate it on an issue of great contemporary relevance: why the United States has pursued a multilateral route to military intervention in the post-Cold War era. The roughly one hundred interviews Recchia conducted provide the heart of the book's empirical contribution. These interviews alone would be worth the price of the book and they make its rendering of the decision-making process superior to similar works.

Recchia begins the book by noting that it is somewhat counterintuitive that the US would pursue a multilateral route to intervention given that the US is capable of intervening alone and that multilateralism is costly in terms of time and side payments, and pursuing it often undercuts the effectiveness of statecraft. He defines multilateralism qualitatively as attaining United Nations Security Council (UNSC) or regional security organisations' (e.g., NATO) authorisation for intervention.

The book argues that the US pursues International Organisation (IO) approval for interventions as a means to increase the likelihood that other countries will share the economic and military burdens of war and – crucially – post-war peace operations. Domestic and bureaucratic politics are central, however, to how and why administrations choose multilateralism.

Because interventions are wars of choice, hawks and doves often face off over whether to intervene. The top American officers – especially the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) – can play a critical role in the debate. The Generals and Admirals are reluctant to embrace intervention as they are concerned about the costs of intervention to the US military and fear that American troops will ultimately be stuck in a quagmire. They also worry that the US Congress will not support intervention if it goes awry or lasts too long. As such, they favour IO

authorisation because it increases the likelihood of burden-sharing and, in so doing, makes long term Congressional support more likely as well. Hawkish policymakers pursue IO approval to get the military to support (or at least not oppose) intervention.

Recchia's argument about the US military is rooted in the bureaucratic politics literature as it argues that American Generals and Admirals' policy preferences are driven by what they believe is in the best interests of the bureaucracies they head.

Recchia also outlines two alternative arguments that are prominent in the literature. Some scholars argue that states have internalised an international norm that states should gain IO authorisation prior to intervention. Other scholars argue that authorisation from IOs can put rising competitors of the US at ease and thus help Washington avoid 'soft' balancing (i.e., coordinated political opposition).

Recchia uses qualitative structured, focused comparison and process tracing methods to assess his novel analytical framework. He rightly focuses on cases of military intervention where attaining IO authorisation was difficult – Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the 2003 Iraq War.

The book's first case is the 1994 US decision to send twenty-thousand troops to restore order and reinstate Jean-Bertrand Aristide as president of Haiti. Recchia draws on declassified documents to show that getting IO approval was costly: the Clinton administration offered foreign assistance in the attempt to get OAS approval and the haggling over UNSC and OAS resolutions seem to have led the Haitian government to perceive a lack of resolve.

National Security Adviser (NSA) Anthony Lake led those advocating military intervention in Haiti but the Clinton administration was divided in that Secretary of State Christopher was initially quite sceptical of intervention and the civilian Pentagon leadership were firmly opposed. JCS Chair Colin Powell led the early military opposition to intervention based on concerns that the US military would be stuck policing Haiti indefinitely. In gaining UNSC resolution 940, Clinton officials assuaged the military's concerns. The resolution authorised the US intervention and committed to establishing a subsequent peace mission. As JCS Vice Chair Admiral Owens told Recchia (p. 84) "[w]e felt strongly that without that kind of commitment from the United Nations, one could not envision an American occupying force going in."

Recchia's second case is the Clinton administration's decision to intervene in the Bosnian conflict. While the most hard line intervention advocates, such as the US Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright, advocated unilateral air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs in 1993, others in the Clinton administration such as Secretaries of Defense Aspin and Perry and Secretary of State Christopher urged President Clinton to seek approval from the UNSC and NATO. The book demonstrates again that multilateralism was suboptimal in that the conflict raged on while negotiations took place and getting NATO authorisation of the air campaign led to divisions within the Atlantic alliance.

Leading Generals and Admirals were concerned that air strikes alone could not achieve US objectives and that by initiating an unsuccessful air war, the US would become embroiled in a costly ground campaign. The military pushed the Clinton administration to run the air campaign (Operation Deliberate Force) through NATO as a means to ensure that NATO allies would play a significant role in the post-war peace operations, which they did. The US contributed only thirty percent of the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) for Bosnia.

The Clinton administration chose to run the 1999 Kosovo air campaign through NATO's integrated command. The US did so even though this slowed the process considerably, made it unwieldy, and encouraged Serb leader Slobodon Milosevic to question NATO's resolve. Albright, who had become Secretary of State, again advocated for unilateral intervention, whereas NSA Berger served as the voice of caution.

The military, represented most forcefully by Secretary of Defense Cohen, were sceptical that air strikes could achieve US objectives and concerned with being bogged down in peace operations in Kosovo. The book demonstrates that Albright's State Department came to realise that the only way to get the Pentagon on board with the air war was to run it through NATO, thus ensuring that allies would be obligated to own the post-war phase. As Undersecretary Talbott said (p. 172) the goal was to attain "as much participation in the war as possible from allies and ad hoc partners *in order to* ensure their participation in the reconstruction." Ultimately, the US was committed to provide roughly fifteen percent of the KFOR stabilisation force.

Recchia's final case is the 2003 Iraq War. He notes that those most in favour of war, like Vice President Cheney and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, were also least likely to favour attempting to attain IO authorisation because they felt threats to the US had to be addressed quickly and decisively. Senior US officers were sceptical that Iraq was a threat to the US and were concerned about the challenges of the war and, especially, post-war stability operations. The book shows that Secretary of State Powell, who was also sceptical of the case for war and concerned about the post-war period, encouraged President Bush to pursue what became UNSC resolution 1441. UNSCR 1441 did not authorise the US war, however, and the Bush administration was unwilling to pay the costs necessary to attain a follow-on authorisation resolution (pp. 221–24).

The Iraq case differed from the other cases in that the most important generals – JCS chair Myers, vice chair Pace, and CENTCOM commander Franks – did not communicate their concerns and preferences for IO approval to President Bush or the NSC. To explain the Generals' silence Recchia cites Rumsfeld's "authoritarian management style" (p. 209) and argues that in the wake of the 9/11 attacks the military was unwilling to question anything the administration framed as part of its global war on terror.

Throughout the cases Recchia provides evidence that the US government almost never sought IO approval because of concerns about the potential negative reactions of other states. He also shows that in almost every case the policymakers most in favour of intervention (Tony Lake in Haiti, Madeleine Albright in Kosovo) were also the least likely to want to pursue IO authorisation.

*Reassuring The Reluctant Warriors* is a welcome addition to the literature. It is clear, well written and it presents the evidence in a way that makes it easy for the reader to evaluate the author's framework relative to the alternatives. The book is also theoretically provocative. It reintroduces bureaucratic politics into the scholarly discussion of decisions on the use of force and does so in a way that is thorough and logical. Recchia makes the case that top Generals and Admirals are particularly prone to bureaucratic politics because they spend their professional careers in the organisations they represent. Recchia's argument is also compelling because it runs counter to the view that multilateralism leads to inefficiencies that a mission-

focused war fighter would do best to avoid.<sup>1</sup> Recchia demonstrates that the military's top Generals and Admirals realise that the benefits of partners outweigh the costs entailed in working with them.

As mentioned at the outset, one of the book's strongest aspects is its empirical foundation. Scholars often promise they will trace the decision-making process linking cause and effect but Recchia delivers. Recchia does an excellent job of weaving together the hundred interviews he conducted with a rich array of additional sources. He worked with the Clinton Presidential Library to attain the declassification of a number of documents, which he draws on to great effect. He also has thoroughly mined the secondary source literature, memoirs, and news accounts of the cases to provide detail and insight that he adds to the interviews and documentary record.

While the book has these important strengths, it also suffers from some flaws. First, the book's analytical framework does not explain the 2003 Iraq War case and the reader finishes the chapter with more questions than answers. Recchia provides evidence to support the claim that Rumsfeld's management style was a significant factor in the Iraq case. Unfortunately, this argument or caveat to the analytical framework appears nowhere in the book prior to the case, though he does address it in the conclusion (p. 229). Moreover, Recchia presents Rumsfeld's style along with the post 9/11 environment as dual causes without a sense of which is more important. The threat environment argument at least resonates with his earlier caveat (p. 61) that "after a direct attack on the American homeland" intervention may occur without military caution. The book should have presented both caveats in the theoretical discussion and then evaluated their relative importance in the case.

Furthermore, the reader is left wondering about Recchia's stipulation earlier in the book (e.g., p. 51) that a lack of consensus within an administration is a critical prerequisite for the military to adopt the critical role of veto player. Recchia shows that the administration was divided, at least initially, with Colin Powell expressing scepticism about war. We know that Powell kept his scepticism private and eventually came publicly to support the war. It would have been useful for Recchia to consider a counterfactual wherein Powell had been vocal in his scepticism about the post-war phase. In that context, might one or more of the Generals have broken the silence and expressed their concerns to the President? Exploring such a counterfactual through interviews might have shed light on the relative importance of the factors driving the case.

How significant is the Iraq example for the book? In the book's conclusion Recchia makes the case that (p. 230) instances of military deference like Iraq "are relatively rare and likely to be short-lived." Recchia is certainly not the first scholar to argue that the Iraq War is a special and aberrant case.<sup>2</sup> It is problematic from a bureaucratic politics perspective, however, that top Generals did not intervene to maximise burden-sharing on what ended up being by far the most costly post-war stabilisation operations in the post-Cold War era.

Second, I would have liked to see Recchia more directly confront a recent work with a very similar research question. Sarah Kreps's *Coalitions of Convenience* seeks to explain US decisions to pursue multilateralism (through IO approval or coalitions)

1 John E. Peters et al., *European Contributions to Operation Allied Force* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001).

2 See, for example, Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, 'Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment,' *International Security* 37, No. 3 (Winter 2012/13), 31.

or unilateralism in the post-Cold War era.<sup>3</sup> Kreps argues that the US has been likely to pursue multilateralism when it has the time to do so (i.e., it does not face urgent threats) and perceives that there will be a need for operational support in the war or post-war phase. Recchia cites Kreps's book but does not confront it as directly as he might have.

Recchia's book is more empirically rich than Kreps' work. He also provides a much more thoroughly thought out and supported explanation of why and how the US decides to pursue multilateralism when it does. Kreps' book, however, offers a plausible and elegant explanation of varying outcomes. *Coalitions of Convenience* provides a theory that explains why the US sometimes chooses multilateralism and other times chooses unilateralism. *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* makes the case that multilateralism is the norm and focuses its theoretical and empirical firepower on explaining that outcome. One final note: Recchia's empirical detail on the 2003 Iraq War casts doubt on Kreps' analysis of that case in that Rumsfeld's management style is nowhere in her argument or analysis. As such, neither work can fully explain that case given what we know. This is yet another reason why a more direct confrontation between the two books would have been fruitful.

In conclusion, Stefano Recchia has written a book that all those interested in military interventions should read. The monograph's flaws leave the reader with questions but there are worse things to be left with. The theoretical argument is provocative and the level of research is staggering. Recchia's research has set a standard that it will be hard for future works to match.

---

3 Sarah E. Kreps, *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions After the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).



REVIEW ESSAY

## Civil–Military Relations and Policy: A Sampling of a New Wave of Scholarship

Peter Feaver

Department of Political Science, Duke University, Durham, NC, USA

Zoltan Barany, **The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012. Pp.472. \$32.95/£24.95, PB. ISBN 978-0-6911-3769-8.

Stefano Recchia, **Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention**. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015. Pp.296. \$39.95, HB. ISBN 978-0-8014-5291-8.

Caitlin Talmadge, **The Dictator’s Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes**. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015, Pp.320. \$26.95, PB. ISBN 978-0-8014-5347-2.

Thoughtful commentary on the politics of civil–military relations is as ancient as the Greek and Roman Republics and as contemporary as the latest headlines. As a subfield of political science, the study of civil–military relations came of age during the 1950s and has experienced several waves of theoretical and empirical flourishing since that time. Currently, the field is enjoying another renaissance of engaging scholars – call them ‘Young Turks’ – pressing the boundaries through innovative and well-executed projects. The three books reviewed here are but a small sample drawn from a much larger corpus of new work. These three exhibit well the many strengths – and a few limitations – that the best new scholarship exhibits.

These three works are also a useful snapshot of the state of the field in one particular respect: the progress the field has made intellectually since the landmark works of Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz from the early Cold War. The picture is mixed but mostly positive. Some of the arguments rely more on Huntington than I think is healthy or warranted, but there is much more here that goes well beyond the established civil–military frameworks.

Each of the studies shows that it is possible to offer fresh insights on an issue as enduring as the civil–military problematique: how to make the military an effective defender of the state without also making the military a capable threat to the state. And each opens the door to further work that promises to magnify the impact and reach of the Young Turks.

## How transitional governments bring the military under democratic control

I begin with Zoltan Barany's *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas* (Princeton 2012). As the title suggests, this study builds the most directly on Huntington's work – both his seminal *Soldier and the State* (Harvard University Press, 1957) and his *Political Order and Changing Society* (Yale University Press, 1968). It is also by far the most ambitious of the three – indeed, so different in scope and approach that it almost warrants a separate review. It asks how states build militaries that support democracy – i.e. support civilian control – and it considers this across multiple state-building contexts (post-war, post-colonial independence, post-regime change) and across the globe (Australia and Oceania, and, of course, Antarctica, are the only geographic regions uncovered in the case selection).

Despite such a sweeping purview, or perhaps because of it, Barany adopts the frame of mid-range theory, almost thick description. There are a few core deductive hypotheses that travel across the regions, but for the most part, Barany is just describing what he sees in the 27 cases he examines.

To be sure, Barany opens with a literature review and theory chapter that is as wide-ranging as is his empirical ambit. What results is not a theory *per se* – indeed, he takes pains to emphasize that he is not doing grand theorizing – but along the way he makes numerous claims about what does and does not constitute good civil–military relations in theory or practice. Some of these claims are well-grounded in the literature, but others seem more *ad hoc*. For instance, he claims that the military must never run for political office (p. 32); while I agree with him that this is problematic, Barany does not spell out the basis for making this an unqualified requirement. Similarly, he says the military have a right to expect 'clear and sound guidance from the state' (p. 33); again a desirable feature, but hardly a right or, if it is a right, it is one that is violated more often than it is observed. The occasional contradiction and demonstrably dubious claim add to the sense of it being an off-the-cuff listing. Thus, he claims that ordinary people do not want the military to reflect their values (p. 38) but then claims that since societal attitudes towards gender and sexual identity vary across democracies, 'popular will' determines what different military policies will be in each case – in other words, the public requires that the military reflect

their values. Similarly, he claims that the 1973 War Powers Resolution (p. 31) 'settled' the issue of US presidential authority to deploy forces without explicit legislative warrant – a claim that is hard to square with the fact that every President since has refused to recognize the constitutionality of the War Powers Act and the courts have similarly given it wide berth.

Notwithstanding these minor distractions, the literature review culminates with the right question: why, given their potential power, would the military ever eschew seizing political power? Barany notes that there is no single answer that holds across all cases, but suggests that a mix of four complementary answers apply in different measure, depending on the circumstances: (i) an internalized norm of commitment to civilian rule; (ii) civilian leaders have developed mechanisms to keep the military subordinate; (iii) military leaders have seized power before and are chastened by their failure at governing; (iv) military leaders have seized power and are satisfied with what they accomplished and believe they do not need the distraction anymore.

These questions form a backdrop, occasionally explicit but more often implicit, to the rich narrative of how the democratization of the armed forces transpired in 27 specific historical cases. These cases are clustered into nine chapters according to their common dominant contextual feature – whether it was after major defeat, after a civil-war, after a coup, etc. For the most part, the cases draw on the secondary literature, which Barany occasionally augments with interviews and other direct engagement with area specialists. The familiar cases – Germany, Japan, Spain, Russia, Pakistan – do not necessarily break new ground, but even subject matter experts are likely to learn new details. Some of the other cases – Yemen, Slovenia, Bangladesh – are rarely considered outside of narrow area studies reports and so a particularly distinctive contribution here.

The breadth of coverage is truly impressive. While it is common for large-n studies to have specific references to cases as varied as these, and while some edited volumes approximate Barany's in coverage, I am hard-pressed to come up with a sole-authored work that goes into as much historical detail into so many cases. Each chapter ends with a table summarizing the key descriptive judgments made – e.g., how influential are civilian independent experts, or how extensive is the degree of military interference in politics, etc. – that generalists like me will rely upon for quite some time. Barany shows what can be accomplished by medium-n-sized studies, and he has persuaded me that we should continue to value such contributions.

Given such a broad scope, it is perhaps unfair to flag a case he does not study and should have. But since Barany hooks his argument on the controversies surrounding the collapse of Saddam Hussein's army and the decidedly mixed success the Allies had in rebuilding Iraq's security forces in the aftermath of the war, it is ironic how little the book offers in the way

of direct insight into that particular case. It is not one of Barany's 27 cases, and by the time Barany returns to the matter at the end of the concluding chapter, his policy recommendations on how the Iraq effort could have been better managed are pretty thin gruel. First, he writes, the United States should only have purged the unacceptable members of Saddam's army. Second, it should have built the new security forces around the remaining acceptable ones. And finally, once the new army was built, it should have conducted a massive purge, if that was still desired. This potted history of the Iraq experience rather begs the question, however. According to Paul Bremer and Walt Slocombe, the US officials responsible for the actions Barany (and others) criticize, the CPA did not disband a functioning military – rather, the CPA announcement regarding the Iraqi security forces simply acknowledged what had already happened, namely that Saddam's army had simply dissolved.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, as Stephen Biddle, Ryan Baker, and Julia Macdonald argue,<sup>2</sup> US efforts to build what Barany would consider to be a democratic military were repeatedly undermined by Iraqi's own civilian democratic leaders. It is not clear the Barany approach is any more realistic than what was actually done.

Because the case selection criteria primarily turn on intrinsic importance and interest (owing to important case-specific distinctive characteristics), the research design is better suited to theory-building than theory-testing. In this sense, the argument is Huntingtonian in design as well as in substance. Barany identifies a series of plausible inductions that are sensible inferences from the impressively broad material he has gathered. The result is a new reigning set of hypotheses, but one that must await further testing or further theoretical refinement to be viewed as a new complete theory of civil–military relations under conditions of democratization. In the meantime, Barany's basic insights are as sound a launching pad for further particularized study as anything Huntington has offered.

For example, Barany concludes that a democratic army, meaning a military that is supportive of democracy and civilian control, is a necessary condition for successful democratization. Identifying necessary conditions can be an important theoretical contribution, but only if the framework avoids the tautology: the defining feature of democracy and civilian control is a military subordinate to civilian rule, so the same factor cannot be both a defining feature and a necessary prerequisite thereto. Barany is on surer theoretical ground when he can identify features of the military that are conducive to fostering a democratic army. Barany identifies some – the quality of leaders, the transparency of institutional frameworks, the

---

<sup>1</sup>Paul Bremer, 'How I Didn't Dismantle Iraq's Army', *New York Times*, 6 Sept. 2007.

<sup>2</sup>Biddle, Stephen, Ryan Baker, and Julia Macdonald, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance', unpublished manuscript, 14 Feb. 2016.

incrementalism of reform efforts, the growth of civilian branches of government and civilian sectors of society, the quality of professional military education, the orientation of the military to new missions, and the circumscribed role for retired military – but they are in the realm of probabilistic associations, not necessary conditions.

Barany concludes with a set of partial generalizations (pp. 343–5) that are mostly sound – though I was struck by the fact that the generalization that it is better to have a sweeping, crushing defeat evidently did not hold in the book's motivating case, Iraq. Barany reached this inference for the obvious and mostly sound reason that the two greatest successes among his 27 cases – Germany and Japan – fit that pattern, and it is easy to see how the post-defeat dominance/occupation gave the Allied powers maximum leverage to impose lingering reforms and gave the target countries maximum incentive to make the reforms stick. Of course, reasoning on those same lines is why members of the Bush Administration thought they had good reason to be optimistic about what Iraq might one day become. With hindsight we can see that there are several omitted variables that may trump the context variable Barany focuses on: first, the degree of politically relevant cleavages within the society and second, the staying power of the US commitment. Germany and Japan were crushingly defeated countries that also happened to be relatively homogenous and that enjoyed a seven decade US security guarantee backed up by tens of thousands of US forces; by contrast, Iraq was a crushingly defeated country that happened to have a deep sectarian split and that was effectively abandoned by the United States barely a decade after the war (only within a year or two of achieving something resembling a cessation of hostilities). With that one exception, I did not find any partial generalizations that I would object to. They are very sensible rules-of-thumb.

But they are sensible rules-of-thumb that invite further testing. For instance, Barany also finds other patterns of success and failure across the cases he has studied. The other cases where states were able to build democratic armies more readily were the cases after military rule in Europe (Spain, Portugal, and Greece), and after communist rule in Europe (Slovenia, Russia, and Romania). But these are contingent patterns, since he could have easily picked cases of failed democratization after communist rule and, of course, there are many cases in Asia and Latin America where military rule beget more military rule. Barany's arguments are well-positioned for further testing against the universe of cases.

Indeed, *The Soldier and the Changing State* makes a great set up for a future large-n study designed to test the applicability and generalizability of Barany's inferences. Notwithstanding the limitations of the Iraq arguments, it also is a handy resource for those looking for historical examples to shed light on current policy challenges. The policy question animating Barany's

study – identifying the conditions that foster the development of democratic armed forces – is a high priority for policymakers today. Barany shows that this is a daunting assignment, but not an impossible one.

### How civil–military bargaining affects use of force decisions

Stefano Recchia's study of post-Cold War decision-making, *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention* (Cornell 2015), has a far narrower scope and offers a clearer, potentially more rebuttable argument. Recchia posits an enduring post-Cold War American civil–military divide on the use of force: the reluctant military consistently pushes for multilateral endorsements as a way of sharing the military burden with allies whereas civilians are more inclined to intervene unilaterally in order to have greater freedom of action. Of course, some civilian leaders also embrace the multilateralism option from the outset, but enough do not to create persistent civil–military conflict in case after case of post-Cold War interventions. Crucially, sometimes military reluctance is strong enough to compel even unilateralist-inclined civilians to pursue multilateral endorsements as a way of buying military acquiescence.

This study builds on the empirical foundation of Richard Betts' *Soldiers, Civilians, and Cold War Crises* (Columbia University Press, 1991), and the theoretical foundations of the civil–military bargaining framework of Agency Theory (my own *Armed Servants*, Harvard University Press, 2003). Recchia also draws heavily from other studies evaluating post-Cold War civil–military conflict in the United States, as well as the related civil–military gap literature. He combines these to form a compelling narrative in which generals, skilled in the dark arts of bureaucratic politics, use those skills to push civilian leaders to seek UN or other multilateral endorsement even when civilian leaders believe such multilateralism is neither needed nor wise. In particular, military leaders use their quasi-veto power – if military leaders object publicly to a military operation then it is hard for civilian leaders to build the requisite political support to launch it – to set conditions for their support. If civilian leaders get UN authorization, military leaders will not object to this intervention but if civilians do not, the military will publicly object. An interesting problem with this argument is why the military would consistently insist on something – UN endorsement – that yields at best dodgy burden-sharing, and at worst the kind of convoluted command arrangements that hamstrung the Somalia operation. Recchia side-steps the issue.

Recchia draws some distinctions that are not obvious and I wonder if they are even necessary. For instance, he counts as 'multilateral' only those operations that are *qualitatively* multilateral, i.e. blessed by an explicit authorization from a standing International Organization; he rejects

operations that are merely *quantitatively* multilateral, in the sense of having sizable force contributions from more than one country. This allows him to code the 2003 Iraq war as 'not-multilateral,' despite the substantial contributions of British and Australian troops, let alone the meaningful contributions from other NATO allies, not to mention the rest of the coalition of the willing. This is a familiar convention in the partisan debates around the Iraq war, but it is an odd choice for a theory that purports to have as its causal mechanism the military's desire for burden sharing. By Recchia's rules, British forces did not do any burden sharing in the Iraq 2003 war.

This points to an important uncertainty left unresolved by Recchia's argument and evidence. Are American generals asking for multilateral endorsement because they genuinely want and expect burden sharing? If so, then Recchia should not care about *qualitative* multilateralism; *quantitative* multilateralism will suffice. But if generals are insisting on *qualitative* multilateralism, then why are they doing so? Perhaps generals have internalized the legitimation argument; a theoretical possibility, but like Recchia, I find this implausible enough to dismiss, especially since there is scant evidence to support it. But there is another argument that Recchia does not consider that does seem plausible: perhaps generals are insisting on the higher bar of *qualitative* multilateralism because they are grabbing for any roadblock to throw in front of the policymaking train to slow down hawkish civilians. This explanation, which would liken generals to obstructionist trial lawyers, would have the added virtue of accounting for the earlier puzzle: why do generals insist on something that does not yield much tangible benefit?

The tight empirical focus raises some scope issues. On the one hand, Recchia explicitly examines only the post-Cold War era – i.e. the era when the Security Council was a semi-responsible actor and not deadlocked by superpowers wielding a Cold War veto. Of course, the rise of Russian aggression under Vladimir Putin and Chinese adventurism under Xi Jinping raise the question of whether the argument has already lost (or shortly will lose) a good deal of its traction. On the other hand, the underlying causal mechanism that Recchia posits – namely a desire by generals to get others to join them in the fight – should have operated during the Cold War (and in the future as well). Why, then, weren't generals able to demand similar burden-sharing devices from their hawkish civilians in those earlier settings?

In terms of argument and evidence, the Recchia book is not as persuasive as it could be. Recchia relies too much on labels the precision of which has been lost because of overuse in partisan debates. For instance, Recchia talks about 'wars of choice' as if that were both synonymous with humanitarian missions and the antonym of 'wars of necessity.' In fact, all wars, regardless of the mission category, are wars of choice – there is even a debate among

certain circles whether US involvement in World War II was ‘necessary’<sup>3</sup> – and beyond its use as a rhetorical brick to throw at partisan enemies, it is not clear how it adds much of scholarly value. Or consider his use of the ‘neoconservative’ label, which Recchia uses liberally to denote Iraq War supporters such as Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who in fact argued against some of the aspects of the war most precisely associated with neoconservatism, namely the promotion of democracy. Recchia stretches the term to encompass Rumsfeld’s preference for light footprint operations, which had little to do with neoconservatism *per se*. More problematically, Recchia attributes motivations and then ‘proves’ them with quotes not to the individuals themselves but to critics of the individuals. Thus, Recchia supports the claim that Rumsfeld wanted a light footprint in Iraq as a way of killing off the Powell Doctrine with a quote not to Rumsfeld or one of his close advisors but to Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman, a sharp Rumsfeld critic (p. 202).

Part of this may be due to a noticeable skew in the slate of civilian leaders and military officers he interviewed. While it is possible that the few interviewees who remain anonymous provide more balance, it is striking that he interviewed none of the senior military officers responsible for Iraq war planning and policymaking – Generals Richard Myers, Peter Pace, and Tommy Franks – but repeatedly characterized their views through the eyes of two more junior officers who gained fame participating in the later partisan debate over the war known as the ‘revolt of the retired generals’: Maj. Gen. John Batiste and LTG Greg Newbold. Similarly, he interviewed very few advocates of the Iraq War (civilian or military) on the Bush team: not Douglas Feith, Scooter Libby (or anyone on Vice-President Cheney’s staff), Donald Rumsfeld, or Paul Wolfowitz, to name just the most prominent. He did interview Stephen Hadley, then Deputy National Security Advisor, but relies on that interview primarily to dispose of rival explanations. While the potential skew is more evident in the Iraq case, there are some noteworthy omissions from the Clinton years: Madeleine Albright, Rand Beers, Sandy Berger, General Wesley Clark, Richard Clarke, General Hugh Shelton, and others.

To be fair, this critique itself needs to be heavily caveated. Recchia’s interview list is impressive and a considerable empirical base on which to mount an argument. I am not suggesting he did not try to reach these other interview subjects and it would be wrong to fault a scholar for failing to interview former policymakers who refuse to be interviewed. But in these cases, scholars need to be especially attuned to their own biases and filters and the way that the empirical record they have access to might itself be

---

<sup>3</sup>Eric Nordlinger, *Isolationism Reconfigured* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995).



biased and skewed and then take steps to balance against that. It is not clear how hard Recchia leaned to balance against this skew.

The net result is that the Iraq case study has the somewhat imbalanced feel of a just so story. Advocates of the use of force are painted as incautious and insensitive to the costs of action. Opponents of the use of force are painted as carefully weighing all the pros and cons. None of this morality tale is essential to make the core causal argument Recchia is seeking to make. For instance, the basic model (and most of Recchia's hard evidence) would just as easily support the opposite 'just so' narrative that has overly cautious/timorous generals who have inadequately weighed the costs of doing nothing using their veto power to create the obstacle of insisting on an International Organization-sanctioned burden-sharing arrangement before supporting a military intervention advocated by civilian leaders who have carefully weighed the costs of action against the costs of inaction. It is telling that the charges of recklessness and over-optimism are levied only against the Iraq hawks and not the Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo hawks. And, of course, it is quite telling that in Recchia's account the doves are never called out as wrong.

More concerning still is the fact that Recchia's model captures only part of the prevailing military mindset on the use of force. While there are always prominent outliers that might play an outsized role in a given case, Recchia is on solid ground to rely on the findings of existing research that documents some general patterns in the way the military approach the use of force. Recchia is right that military officers tend to be cautious about initiating the use of force, particularly on missions that can be characterized as primarily humanitarian in objective. Similarly, he is right that the officers usually ask for 'exit strategies,' and almost always prize the 'clear objectives' those strategies seem to offer while fearing the 'mission creep' they believe the absence of an exit strategy invites. Moreover, he is right that the US military would prefer to hand off any post-war stabilization mission to some other force, say a blue-helmeted US peacekeeping force staffed by non-Americans. All of these push in the direction captured by Recchia's model: a preference for qualitative multilateralism.

However, the same body of empirical work has also shown that the military prefer two other desiderata that would seem, in theory, to cut against qualitative multilateralism: the military tend to prefer as much operational autonomy as possible in the actual execution of the military mission, and the military tend to prefer larger, more decisive force if the decision to use force has been made. Adding a formal UN dimension to the operation would complicate both of those operational goals, as shown in a variety of post-Cold War missions, particularly the Somalia and Kosovo operations. Perhaps including these omitted preferences will not change the overall argument. Perhaps the military weighs them all and nets out a

grudging preference for qualitative multilateralism as the one most likely to maximize burden sharing, net-net. But it seems also possible that factoring in these other known desiderata would yield a somewhat different account: that reluctant generals demand hard-to-get qualitative multilateralism on a subset of cases even though it would compromise their desire for autonomy and decisive force not because they harbor optimistic hopes it will yield burden sharing (which painful historical experience has convinced them is unlikely anyway), but because it offers them their best shot at thwarting the mission at the outset, without resorting to overt political insubordination. I do not know whether this alternative explanation is more right than Recchia's, but I do know that he has not adequately rebutted it.

The unevenness of the argument in the empirical chapters may help explain why Recchia's concluding chapter, where he lays out some normative and policy prescriptive implications, is not as compelling as it might be. Based entirely on his reading of the decision to intervene in Iraq – and ignoring other crucial decisions with significant civil–military overtones, such as the Surge of troops in 2007 – Recchia comes down siding with the 'revisionists' who advocate that the military should aggressively push back against civilians who fail to heed their advice (p. 241). Similarly, since in Recchia's telling apparently only hawks experience cognitive pathologies of over-optimism, he does not address how wishful thinking led to repeated failures to act decisively to forestall the catastrophic civil war in Syria. For instance, it is plausible that President Obama issued his now-infamous 'Assad must go' red-line while simultaneously refusing to authorize significant support for the rebels seeking to accomplish that red-line because he was overly optimistic it would happen within a short window even without US material support.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the warnings of hawks about how letting the civil war in Syria drag on would have multiple deleterious second and third order effects on US national interests seem prescient 5 years later as we struggle to deal with the rise of the Islamic State, the crisis in the EU caused by massive migration from the Middle East, and the erosion of US credibility across multiple regions. The picture of Obama decision-making on Syria is still murky, pending a Recchia-style empirical analysis, and I can not rule out the possibility that Recchia's bottom-line model will hold up well enough with this new case. But I do not think that is likely. Enough is known about cases Recchia did not examine to warrant a more caveated approach to policy prescriptions.

The foregoing has dwelt perhaps overlong on quibbles with the book. There is, in fact, much to like. Overall this is a worthy contribution to the new stream of mid-range civil–military relations theorizing. Recchia's

---

<sup>4</sup>Steve Mufson, "Assad Must Go": Those Three Little Words are Huge Obstacle for Obama in Syria', *Washington Post*, 19 Oct. 2015.

analysis of how bureaucratic politics plays out in the civil–military context (pp. 34–62) is as good as anything written on the topic since Richard Betts' classic study. Moreover, his interviews clearly unearthed evidence that demonstrated the functioning of sub-components of his argument – for instance, how objections from senior officers essentially vetoed military options in Sudan during the Bush years – and one wishes he had the space and the research design to include more of that evidence, thus maximizing his already considerable contribution to the growing literature on how civil–military relations shape strategy.

The case on Haiti is an impressive interweaving of secondary and primary sources, including a broad range of original interviews. It is the best researched case and, not coincidentally, the case that best fits Recchia's argument. Indeed, it might even be the motivating case, since it is the one optimally situated to test the dynamics: the intervention with the least plausible threat/interest-based rationale, the intervention soonest after a military disaster (the ill-starred Ranger raid in Mogadishu) that empowered the military vis-à-vis their civilian counterparts, the intervention where a formal UN endorsement, while difficult to get, would not be impossible to get, and the intervention where the alternative explanations were inherently the weakest.

The Haiti case is as close to a slam-dunk for Recchia's argument as the empirical record is likely to offer up, and he slams it home impressively. The Bosnia case is also quite strong. The Kosovo case does not work quite as well. Oddly for a book about civil–military relations, General Clark's travails and bureaucratic political skullduggery is only cursorily addressed. And while *qualitative* multilateralism was achieved, it produced somewhat uneven burden sharing since the United States shouldered the Kosovo combat load at roughly comparable levels to what they carried later in Iraq – though, crucially for Recchia's argument, NATO shouldered much more of the Kosovo stabilization burden than they did in Iraq. Finally, for the three non-Iraq cases, Recchia quite convincingly shows that his preferred explanation is more plausible than two prominent alternatives – norm internalization and preventing negative issue linkage – and for Haiti he also convincingly rebuts a third alternative explanation, namely the possibility that the administration pursued multilateralism as a way of increasing public support.

While it is certainly the case that the Bush administration pursued more formal multilateralism prior to the invasion of Iraq than Recchia credits, he rightly observes that Bush did not make securing additional UNSC authority a prerequisite for action. Thus Iraq becomes a contrary case that Recchia has to explain, which he does primarily by blaming the silent generals – Myers, Pace, and Franks – who were in Recchia's view derelict in not forcing the multilateralism issue. Curiously, Recchia omits one crucial fact about the pre-

war planning for the Iraq invasion: that the Rumsfeld-Franks plan called for a rapid withdrawal coupled with and facilitated by a hand-off of the operation to the United Nations. There is no question that the Bush administration severely underestimated the costs and difficulty of the post-conflict stabilization mission, as Recchia (and everyone else who writes on the issue) duly observes. There is also no question that the Bush administration was overly optimistic about the role that Iraq's own security forces would play in the mission, as Recchia (but too few of the other critics) duly observes. But Plan A for Iraq *did* involve a substantial UN mission and this raises the obvious question – since they expected the UN to step up, why didn't the Administration lock that in before the conflict? Recchia offers one tantalizing quote from Kori Schake who suggests that the administration simply 'didn't have an extended stabilization period in mind' (p. 201). And this may explain it.

But there is an alternative explanation, one that is more parsimonious because it also explains other aspects of Iraq war policymaking: the Bush administration over-learned lessons of Afghanistan. The Administration had just successfully toppled the Taliban, using a jury-rigged light-footprint war plan, as contrary to the off-the-shelf existing war plan as was the eventual Iraq invasion plan, and in defiance of critics who had claimed the plan would fail.<sup>5</sup> And then, even though the Administration launched the war without first securing formal UN authorization and while eschewing NATO offers of assistance, once the Taliban was toppled the Administration was able to secure the necessary UN authorization to convert this to a formal multi-lateral peacekeeping operation, precisely the kind of qualitative multilateralism that is Recchia's focus. In other words, perhaps the generals understood all along that the plan was to rapidly turn over the operation to multilateral forces, as they understood was happening in Afghanistan, and they, along with Bush administration hawks, were over-optimistic about the success of that plan because it had worked better than expected in Afghanistan – defying the predictions of the same critics who were predicting problems in Iraq. Recchia hints at such an explanation in a brief paragraph in the concluding chapter (p. 246) but fails to explore it carefully or to see how it might provide an alternative explanation for the Iraq case.

The several critiques mentioned in the foregoing evaluation underscore a positive aspect of Recchia's project, and thus a fitting place to close out this section. At every turn, Recchia is making strong claims that are interesting and, at times, even provocative. They invite critical scrutiny and suggest fruitful lines of follow-up testing or exploration. The fact that I find fault with some of them should not obscure the deeper fact that Recchia has made an

---

<sup>5</sup>John Mearsheimer, 'Guns Won't Win the Afghan War', *New York Times*, 4 Nov. 2001.

important contribution to knowledge and, in particular, a vital addition to the current renaissance in civil–military relations.

### How patterns of civilian control in authoritarian regimes affect military effectiveness

Caitlin Talmadge's *The Dictator's Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes* (Cornell 2015), is the tightest and most compelling of the three books chosen for review. It is at the same time both classic and innovative. Classically, it is squarely in the tradition of civil–military relations that examines the civil–military problematique of how to have a military that is strong enough to provide protection from external threats without itself becoming a threat to civilian rule. Talmadge hearkens back to one of the central claims of classical civil–military relations scholarship – that patterns of civil–military relations matter not just for what they mean for health of democratic political practices but also for effective policy. Innovatively, it answers an all-too-often-unheeded call to make patterns of civil–military relations the explanatory variable and other concepts of interest the dependent variable – and it does so looking not at democracies but at dictatorships, too often viewed narrowly through the lens of coups.

Talmadge advances an argument that lies at the cross-section of work from two other important scholars from an earlier wave – Stephen Biddle and Risa Brooks. Biddle argues that different patterns of military practice yield different levels of combat effectiveness.<sup>6</sup> Brooks argues that different patterns of civil–military relations yield different quality strategic assessments.<sup>7</sup> Talmadge brings these two arguments together to forge her own: different patterns of civil–military relations yield different levels of combat effectiveness.

Specifically, following Biddle, Talmadge says there is a generally accepted set of best practices to produce a military optimized for combat effectiveness in conventional war. This requires promotions based on merit; training that is rigorous, realistic and frequent; command that is decentralized, unified and clear; and information sharing that is active on both horizontal and vertical dimensions. The problem is that such a military could pose a threat to a leader, if that leader's hold on power was itself tenuous because it was based on personalistic authoritarianism. A regime that does not fear coups but does face external conventional threats will invest in such a military. But a regime that has reason to fear coups will have a strong incentive to make contrary choices: to select commanders on personal

---

<sup>6</sup>Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2004).

<sup>7</sup>Risa Brooks, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

loyalty not merit; to restrict training; to have a centralized and convoluted command; and to restrict information sharing and to hobble the military with widespread counter-intelligence efforts within the ranks. Talmadge argues that these different practices yield different degrees of two critical components/determinants of combat effectiveness: tactical proficiency (the capacity to use weapons accurately) and competence in complex operations (the capacity to aggregate effectively from individual, to small-unit, to combined arms operations). She brackets off a third feature that is often considered essential: unit cohesion.

Talmadge is not the absolute first to make an argument of this sort. Biddle and Zirkle have made a similar argument and, of course, the downsides of coup-proofing techniques have long been a staple of civil–military relations.<sup>8</sup> But she is the first to subject the argument to a carefully designed and rigorously applied empirical test based on a close examination of the Vietnam War and the Iran–Iraq War.

She has proven to my satisfaction and probably to most others, that the deficiencies in combat performance by the South Vietnamese, as compared with the North Vietnamese, owes a great deal to the steps successive South Vietnamese leaders took to try (unsuccessfully, as it turned out) to ensure that their large and well-armed military would not pose a coup threat. The North Vietnamese, who did not need to worry as much about coup-proofing, could direct their military to optimize for the waging of a conventional war. Similarly, Iran’s poor battlefield performance owes, at least in substantial part, to the deleterious effects of coup-proofing steps the regime took. Iraq’s military similarly suffered early in the war until Saddam Hussein realized that he might have more to fear from military defeat and so allowed a portion of his force – the Republican Guard – to develop more conventionally optimal practices and thus develop greater battlefield effectiveness.

Of necessity, the case studies are just that – cases – rather than exhaustive analyses of combat effectiveness in the two wars. It might have been preferable for Talmadge to be more explicit about the research design that led to the selection of these battles for close examination (she does have a convincing research design explaining why she chose these wars).

The case studies are masterful examples of how to use military history effectively to inform deeper political science debates. Talmadge demonstrates a command of the battles and an even-handedness in dealing with ambiguous evidence. I am sure military historians will quibble with

---

<sup>8</sup>Stephen Biddle and Robert Zirkle, ‘Technology, Civil-Military Relations, and Warfare in the Developing World’, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 19/2 (June 1996) 171–212. On coup proofing more generally, see: James T. Quinlivan, ‘Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East’, *International Security* 24/2 (1999) 131–65; Ulrich Pilster and Tobias Bohmelt, ‘Coup-Proofing and Military Effectiveness in Interstate Wars, 1967–99’, *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28/4 (September 2011) 331–50; and Jonathan Powell, *Coups and Conflict: The Paradox of Coup-Proofing*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 2012.

interpretations of this or that phase of any given battle, but then she offers effective quibbles of her own for why certain battle accounts have missed key aspects (see, for example, her critique of US Marine-centric accounts of the Hue battle during the Tet Offensive, pp. 94–6).

Several nuances in Talmadge's argument deserve to be emphasized. First, she is at pains to emphasize that her DV is combat effectiveness not war outcomes. Combat effectiveness is a potentially important contributor to war outcomes, but war outcomes might be heavily determined by other factors that are not part of the causal mechanism on which she is focusing. She is right about this, but it has profound implications for her research design. Her argument is harder to scale to the large-*n* analysis that other civil–military-related theories lend themselves to until we get better databases of combat effectiveness. Databases on war outcomes are well-established but databases of combat effectiveness are still very much works in progress.

Second, she carefully distinguishes between her focus on the *type* of civilian control and what other scholars have focused on, the *degree* of civilian control, specifically degree of civilian micro-management. She notes that you can have very different types of civilian control with the same extent of civilian micro-management: both Hitler and Hussein micro-managed and interfered in military operations to a roughly equivalent extent, but Hussein's was far more corrosive of battlefield combat effectiveness because he disposed of generals without regard to battlefield performance and greatly limited realistic training.

Third, she carefully considers alternative explanations and shows where they fall short or, more importantly, where they are better considered as complementary rather than alternative explanations. It is rare that we political scientists advance arguments in which we are right and everyone else is wrong. It is enough to do what Talmadge has done, show how even if other people are partly right she is still also making a useful contribution to the debate.

Where Talmadge is most vulnerable is likely on questions of scope. An ungenerous way of summarizing her argument is that Talmadge shows that efforts to inoculate their regimes against coups hurt the battlefield effectiveness of many ground units in South Vietnam (1960s), Iraq (1980s), and Iran (1980s). She does not prove that this problem afflicts other militaries at other times, nor that it would affect air and naval units or wars where air and naval forces played a more critical role. Nor does she prove whether this same factor explains the collapse of Iraqi forces in 1991 and 2003 (though she suggests it likely did) let alone in 2014 (though again she suggests it did). Nor does she weigh in one way or the other on whether the Iranian military today is still as ineffective as she judged it to be 30 years ago. As empirical findings go, that is not nothing, but clearly Talmadge aims to make a bigger contribution.

How big is open to debate. As her book title implies, her argument extends most readily to other dictatorships but perhaps not to advanced industrialized democracies. For instance, how much do civil–military factors explain variations in combat effectiveness in American units? And if such variation can be traced back to civil–military factors, are they through causal processes Talmadge identifies or others? Put another way, is the critique that is so popular among current generations of American military officers – namely, that battlefield effectiveness varies inversely with civilian micromanagement – correct and, if so, is that support for or against the Talmadge theory?

Nevertheless, I believe she has succeeded in that bigger contribution, namely demonstrating how one can deduce mid-range civil–military relations theory and then empirically test it where there is an abundant secondary sources literature. This shifts the civil–military lens far from the ‘civilian control’ focus and, hopefully, is a model and harbinger of more to come.

## Conclusion

None of these books upends a major argument in the civil–military relations field, but collectively they, along with a flock of other projects, attest to the liveliness of the field. While each advances original theoretical arguments in greater or lesser measure, all of them are well-grounded in the empirical wing of the sub-field. But even more, all are grounded in the small-to-medium-n empirical wing of rich qualitative methods approaches.

None of the scholars took the next step, but two, and perhaps all three, of the arguments invite it: testing the insights against larger-n databases. Barany’s approach to democratization is, I would argue, ready now for such testing. Talmadge’s arguments will be as databases of combat effectiveness – vice, combat outcomes – are refined. Some observable implications of Recchia’s work could be tested in this fashion if a case could be made that some version of the dynamics he has identified should have operated, in theory, during the Cold War. Of course, quantitative testing is not an end to itself, but, given the parallel renaissance in the quantitative study of civil–military relations, this might be a fruitful area of mutual leverage.

Importantly, all of the books speak to the community that most cares about civil–military relations: the policy community for whom the civil–military problematique is not an academic exercise but a daily practical challenge. At a time when the field laments the gap between the labors of academics and of policymakers, it is refreshing to read cutting edge scholarship operating comfortably at the intersection. Graduate students looking for research questions that will both utilize the hard-won tools of



political science analysis and contribute to real-world concerns, should find all the inspiration they need in the current renaissance within the subfield of civil–military relations.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

## Notes on contributor

*Peter Feaver* (Ph.D., Harvard, 1990) is a professor of political science and public policy at Duke University. He is Director of the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) and also Director of the Duke Program in American Grand Strategy (AGS). From June 2005 to July 2007, Feaver served as Special Advisor for Strategic Planning and Institutional Reform on the National Security Council Staff at the White House, where his responsibilities included the national security strategy, regional strategy reviews, and other political–military issues. Feaver is the author of *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Harvard Press, 2003) and *Guarding the Guardians: Civilian Control of Nuclear Weapons in the United States* (Cornell University Press, 1992). He is co-author, with Christopher Gelpi, of *Choosing Your Battles: American Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force* (Princeton University Press, 2004); and co-editor, with Richard H. Kohn, of *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (MIT Press, 2001).

## Bibliography

- Biddle, Stephen and Robert Zirkle, 'Technology, Civil-Military Relations, and Warfare in the Developing World', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 19/2 (June 1996) 171–212. [10.1080/01402399608437634](https://doi.org/10.1080/01402399608437634)
- Biddle, Stephen, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2004).
- Biddle, Stephen, Ryan Baker, and Julia Macdonald, 'Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Effectiveness of Security Force Assistance', unpublished manuscript, 14 February 2016.
- Bremer, Paul, 'How I Didn't Dismantle Iraq's Army', *New York Times*, 6 September 2007.
- Brooks, Risa, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2008).
- Mearsheimer, John, 'Guns Won't Win the Afghan War', *New York Times*, 4 November 2001.
- Nordlinger, Eric, *Isolationism Reconfigured* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995).
- Pilster, Ulrich, and Tobias Bohmelt, 'Coup-Proofing and Military Effectiveness in Interstate Wars, 1967–99', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28/4 (September 2011) 331–50. doi:[10.1177/0738894211413062](https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894211413062)
- Powell, Jonathan, 'Coups and Conflict: The Paradox of Coup-Proofing', Ph. D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 2012.

Quinlivan, James T., 'Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East', *International Security* 24/2 (1999) 131–65 doi:[10.1162/016228899560202](https://doi.org/10.1162/016228899560202)  
Steve Mufson, 'Assad Must Go': Those Three Little Words are Huge Obstacle for Obama in Syria', *Washington Post*, 19 October 2015.

## North America\*

**Reassuring the reluctant warriors: US civil–military relations and multilateral intervention.** By Stefano Recchia. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 2015. 296pp. £19.00. ISBN 978 0 80145 291 8. Available as e-book.

Stefano Recchia has made a fascinating contribution to the literature on the bureaucratic politics of military interventions. Recchia argues that America's senior generals play a vital role in pushing administrations to adopt a multilateral approach towards humanitarian interventions and that, contrary to what we might expect, liberal interventionists are far more sceptical about having international bodies such as the United Nations Security Council or the North Atlantic Council sanction such initiatives.

Using over 80 interviews with senior US officials, as well as declassified material from the Clinton White House, Recchia demonstrates that it is those in uniform who frequently push for a mandate from the UN or NATO. The idea that US generals are 'reluctant warriors' is nothing new: much of the literature on post-Vietnam intervention makes a similar point. What is innovative, however, is Recchia's argument that generals are likely to insist on a multilateral approach to intervention precisely when multilateral support is most difficult to get: in situations where they fear the US will be left with an unduly large share of the burden of intervention and where exit strategies are unclear. Conversely, liberal hawks see bodies such as the UN and NATO as obstacles to effective intervention, and tend to regard questions of humanitarian intervention as too urgent to be left to the deliberation of international bodies. Recchia makes the vital point that interventionists tend to focus on *why* the US should intervene, whereas military officials tend to think of *how* intervention might occur, which makes them acutely aware of the potential costs of such interventions.

Recchia uses four case-studies—the US interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq in 2003—to provide a detailed analysis of just how the 'pulling and hauling' on questions of intervention plays out. In a largely convincing fashion, he shows that administrations are willing to incur relatively high costs—in terms both of the efficacy of the intervention and the political cost of building international support—to secure international organization approval for intervention when the generals express a reluctance to intervene. In Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo, intervention was essentially impossible until the Clinton administration managed to find a way to placate the military by gaining international approval, as a way of sharing the burden of intervention and ensuring some sort of viable exit strategy.

Much as Recchia builds a strong case for the influence of 'reluctant warriors', his case-study selection does mean there are some limitations to his approach. Of the four cases he examines, three are from the Clinton era, and the fourth, the invasion of Iraq in 2003, doesn't really conform to the model, as there the generals were silent rather than vocal in their dissent. Recchia provides good reasons for this—the senior military leadership of the time were hardly profiles in courage—but it is at least possible that his conclusion that powerful military actors push reluctant interventionists towards a multilateral approach is in part due to the particular politics of civil–military relations in the Clinton era.

First, Recchia slightly overstates his case at times. In an effort to construct a usable theory, he can be too dismissive of other relevant factors. For instance, in Kosovo, revitalizing NATO surely played a role in the Clinton administration's use of the alliance in the intervention, even if it is also true that generals were reluctant to intervene without multi-

\* See also Bruce Jones and David Steven, *The risk pivot*, pp. 472–3.

lateral support. Similarly, the presence of civilian doves means that we should be careful about assigning too much veto power to the generals; other actors within the Clinton administration were often equally reluctant about the merits of intervention. For instance, Secretary of State Warren Christopher often played a restraining role, and during the Bush administration's intervention in Liberia Vice-President Dick Cheney and the Secretary of Defense were chary of any US humanitarian intervention.

These quibbles aside, this is a fine book. Recchia's extensive interviews with senior national security officials alone make the book worth reading. For scholars interested in military intervention, this interview material provides a wealth of insight and Recchia certainly makes a compelling case that senior military officials are often multilateralists, however cynical their reasons for embracing multilateralism, and—surprisingly—that liberal interventionists can be strikingly unilateral in their approach, whatever their public rhetoric suggests. Recchia's argument may be counter-intuitive but the evidence is largely persuasive.

*David Fitzgerald, University College Cork, Ireland*

**Ballots, bullets, and bargains: American foreign policy and presidential elections.** By Michael H. Armacost. New York: Columbia University Press. 2015. 288pp. Index. £19.50. ISBN 978 0 23116 992 9. Available as e-book.

For readers looking for one book to explain the possible effects of the 2016 US presidential election on America's foreign policy, *Ballots, bullets, and bargains* is a fantastic starting point. It provides a great read for newcomers and aficionados of US politics alike.

Michael H. Armacost served for decades at some of the highest levels of the US foreign service, including as ambassador to the Philippines and Japan, and more recently as president of the Brookings Institution until 2002. Armacost demonstrates both authoritative and encyclopaedic knowledge of the American system, while simultaneously peppering the book with fascinating personal insights. The subject of Armacost's enquiry is both vast and—surprisingly—rarely assessed comprehensively in one book. Indeed, given the vulnerability of American foreign policy to the political winds around presidential elections, Armacost notes that it is fortunate no adversary has taken advantage of the regular paralysis it causes to strategic policy-making.

Armacost uses history to illuminate the more obscure issues which have had a huge impact on policy. For example, he charts the inauspicious history of the handovers between presidents who did not see eye to eye. He explains how the US system regularly produces presidents with scant experience of foreign policy—and vice-presidents who are even more ignorant of it. But the book isn't all doom and gloom: the author highlights the strengths of the American system and how it regularly produces vital course corrections. At times, the issue at hand is sometimes presented in a way that obscures the importance of domestic policy. While this is not the focus of the book, there are many places in the analysis where more in-depth discussion of the domestic context would improve the argument.

While the book's core strengths are its effective utilization of history and its well-presented case-studies, they also lead to one of the problems with *Ballots, bullets, and bargains*: Armacost occasionally spends too much time retelling the past. Many case-studies are repeatedly made use of to support several different points and are retold in different sections of the book. On occasion, well-worn history, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, is given a long explanation, where more analysis would have been preferable. This is not to say that any of Armacost's history is questionable, in fact the opposite. Some of his most



an excellent introduction to the inherent difficulties of peace negotiations in the Middle East. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. All readership levels.—*P. Rowe, Trinity Western University*

**53-2842** JZ6368 2015-7847 CIP  
Recchia, Stefano. **Reassuring the reluctant warriors: U.S. civil-military relations and multilateral intervention.** Cornell, 2015. 281p bibl index afp ISBN 9780801452918 cloth, \$39.95

Recchia (Cambridge Univ.) addresses US policy making in recent uses of force abroad. He argues that uniformed military leaders are usually reluctant warriors where threats to US security are not clear and evident. He then argues that civilian leaders in favor of humanitarian or other limited intervention can utilize collective approval via international organizations like the UN and NATO to reassure these military leaders about burden sharing, as well as to increase domestic support from a skeptical Congress. Using interviews with policy makers as well as extensive reading, he covers nine cases (Northern Iraq 1991, Somalia 1992, Haiti 1994, Bosnia 1995, Kosovo 1999, Iraq 2003, Liberia 2003, Haiti 2004, and Libya 2011). An important conclusion is that the relative silence of top military leaders in the run-up to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 contributed to later difficulties there. He faults military leadership for not questioning optimistic projections by civilian interventionists and holds them partially responsible for the resulting quagmire without extensive burden sharing. Originally a dissertation at Columbia University, this is a valuable study in the practical aspects of obtaining legitimacy through multilateral endorsement. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*D. P. Forsythe, University of Nebraska*

**CC 53-2843** DS33 2015-14723 CIP  
Sutter, Robert G. **The United States and Asia: regional dynamics and twenty-first-century relations.** Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. 327p bibl index afp ISBN 9781442226326 cloth, \$95.00; ISBN 9781442226333 pbk, \$32.00; ISBN 9781442226340 ebook, \$31.99

Sutter (George Washington Univ.) gives readers another of his periodic and always excellent comprehensive assessments of US foreign policy in Asia. The book takes a broad view, examining US policy from Central to East Asia. Sutter makes it clear that he is a realist but not an alarmist. Of course, the most important issue is the US-China relationship. China's growing economic and political power makes the country a dilemma for the US but not yet a peer competitor. US policy toward China should still be based on engagement, and the Obama rebalancing policy is a solid starting point. From this perspective, Sutter examines US policy in Asia in the context of the three key paradigms in international relations scholarship—realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Each, he contends, is a useful tool for analyzing the current shape and future of US policy in Asia. He identifies the five key factors that will determine the future of Asia: changing relations among the great powers, growing economic globalization, rising tension levels in regional conflicts and WMD proliferation, rising Asian multilateralism, and the level of US involvement using them as a framework for analysis. **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. All readership levels.—*W. W. Neumann, Virginia Commonwealth University*

**53-2844** JV6271 2014-38930 CIP  
Wong, Tom K. **Rights, deportation, and detention in the age of immigration control.** Stanford, 2015. 236p bibl index afp ISBN 9780804793063 cloth, \$65.00; ISBN 9780804794572 ebook, \$65.00

What is immigration control and what explains its practice and impact? Before Wong's examination of rights, deportation, and detention, these questions had not been addressed systematically or in relation to one another. Wong (Univ. of California, San Diego) argues that immigration control is not triggered simply by state sovereignty concerns but that differing policies regarding the types of rights granted to immigrants, how aggressively deportation is pursued, and how extensively immigrants are detained reflect a mix of political, economic, and societal factors. This guides his analysis of deportation and detention practices across 25 Western immigrant-receiving democracies from 2000–2009. Wong's statistical analysis uncovers that right-wing party strength is a strong predictor, making deportation more prevalent and detention less widely used, perhaps because quicker deportations leave fewer remaining migrants to detain. In terms of impact, deportation has little impact on immigrant inflows, with the exception of reducing the number of asylum claims with low chances of approval. The book's broad theoretical reach, extensive quantitative analysis, qualitative examples, and overall accessibility make it an important empirical and conceptual advancement in migration studies. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*A. A. Caviedes, State University of New York at Fredonia*

## Political Theory

**53-2845** JC143 2015-14379 MARC  
Bárceñas, Alejandro. **Machiavelli's art of politics.** Brill/Rodopi, 2015. 167p bibl index afp (Value inquiry book series, 280) ISBN 9789004298002 pbk, \$58.00

*Machiavelli's Art of Politics* is a very thin volume composed of an interpretation of Machiavelli's thought and reprints of selections of two early-20th-century translations of *The Prince* and *The Discourses*. The interpretation of Machiavelli incorporates an impressive array of secondary scholarship, historiography, and Machiavelli's original sources. The results are mixed. For example, the author goes to great lengths to establish Machiavelli's historical context in order to recover the meaning of the text as originally intended, but when convenient the author also points to the irrelevance of historical context when past events are identical to "similar circumstances" (see pages 3 and 25). In a similar way, the interpretation is very candid about Machiavelli's famous advice for dealing with the realities of political life but assumes some "implicit" definition of justice that Machiavelli adheres to. There are several grammatical errors in English as well as Italian (e.g., *umomini grandi*). **Summing Up:** Not recommended.—*R. M. Major, University of North Texas*

**53-2846** KF3760 2015-5769 CIP  
Denbow, Jennifer M. **Governed through choice: autonomy, technology, and the politics of reproduction.** New York University, 2015. 231p bibl index afp ISBN 9781479828838 cloth, \$89.00; ISBN 9781479843916 pbk, \$28.00

Denbow (California Polytechnic State Univ.) provides a legal and philosophical analysis of reproductive politics in the US. She develops the concept of women's reproductive autonomy, drawing from classic definitions of autonomy by Rousseau and Kant. Feminist theorists, particularly Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Donna Haraway, provide a framework for Denbow's research, as she argues that current legal and regulatory systems limit women's reproductive autonomy. Her analysis first focuses on modern abortion regulation and the government's move to

membership of TCSOs. In response to TCSO pressure, the World Bank increased participatory decision-making, engaged its critics, and cultivated allies among TCSOs (p. 66). In that sense, TCSO activism confirmed the growing influence of TCSOs on global governance institutions. At the same time, the dynamics of TCSO relations within TCS and its engagement with the World Bank and state governments demonstrated significant imbalances in power between donor and borrower nations, inequalities in North-South interactions, and some features of political elitism whereby certain civil society actors used their connections to advance the interests of some stakeholders over those of others (p. 67). What is perhaps even more concerning is the impact of TCSO actions on the populations and governments of developing countries, which under particular circumstances can lead to the marginalization of governments in a developing country, thereby undermining the democratic legitimacy of TCSOs. Overall, given the complexity of the problem, the author concludes his discussion by highlighting the importance of a context-based analysis of TCSOs activities, especially when evaluating their impact on the domestic policies of developing countries (pp. 126–128).

Chapter 7 continues the analysis by examining the two additional cases of the Arun III anti-dam campaign and the World Bank adoption of country systems for procurement. The chapter confirms the earlier findings that although TCS does help improve citizen control over the World Bank, it also continues to manifest significant problems with democratic inputs, demonstrating continuing elitist trends and power imbalances. Chapter 8 summarizes the research findings and addresses the following question: Under what conditions or constraints can TCS become an effective force for the democratization of the World Bank?

The study enriches extant literature on TCS and highlights the current limitations of TCS impact on global governance. While the data collected makes it clear that transnational civil society has global reach and membership, as well as the potential to diversify and democratize global policymaking, the author also demonstrates that this potential has yet to be fully realized. More than commonly acknowledged, TSCOs are atomized and divided by disparities in power and resources between SCOs, whereas the goals, interests, and engagement strategies of CSOs are heavily influenced by the pre-existing beliefs of professional activists, the financial incentives created by their donors, their position in the structure of global governance, and their capacity to exploit state power in advancing their policy agendas.

Transnational civil society has abundant influence on the World Bank, and some changes, like improved transparency and accountability, have facilitated improved stakeholder influence over the institution. However, the most effective channels of influence,

including partnerships with the World Bank's powerful donor states, remain accessible primarily to elite organizations based in the Global North. A strong commitment to pre-existing missions, coupled with financial constraints, inhibit dialogue among organizations and make it difficult for TCSOs to respond to the concerns of local stakeholders. These problems with democratic inputs have adverse consequences for the democratic outputs of TCSOs, often resulting in situations in which the actions of TCSOs do not reflect the interests of affected populations. The book therefore reaches the fundamental conclusion that TCS has not only failed to democratize policymaking at the World Bank, but may have actually worsened some stakeholders' marginalization, especially if they hail from developing countries. At the same time, the author remains positive and proposes four policy initiatives that could fix the existing problems and strengthen TCS's impact on global governance: increasing formal dialogues between the Bank and civil society; limiting state power in Bank decisions; holding individual TCSOs accountable; and making TCS more representative of those populations on whose behalf TCSOs actually speak (pp. 162–164).

Pallas's book makes a valuable contribution to the literature on TCS and its role in global governance. It provides insights into the various factors that undermine TCS's democratic credentials and weaken the autonomy and sovereignty of governments in developing countries. I highly recommend this volume to anyone committed to understanding the ambiguous impact of TCSOs on global governance and pondering the question of what changes are required in the current operation of TCS to finally realize the ultimate goal of establishing a more democratic international order.

**Reassuring The Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Interventions.** By Stefano

Recchia. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015. 296p. \$39.95.  
doi:10.1017/S1537592716001031

— Harvey M. Sapolsky, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

It is always reassuring to be told that soldiers are reluctant warriors. The popular image, too often cultivated by academics with big agendas and little military experience, is that of senior military leaders advocating yet another war. In Stefano Recchia's careful study of American military interventions in the post-Cold War years, it is the civilian politicians and senior political appointees who are the ones pressing for war and the military leaders looking for reasons to avoid a fight.

Recchia seeks to understand why the United States, the world's dominant power, endures the political costs of bargaining with problematic friends and difficult foes to gain the approval of international organizations like the United Nations, or even alliances like NATO, for its interventions when the substantive assistance these

organizations provide is usually quite limited. It is, he argues, because of the reluctant warriors, America's military leaders who see interventions as tar pits, absorbing resources and tying down troops in forever occupations. The endorsements of international organizations are their light at the end of the tunnel, the promise of burden sharing.

Some might hope that the scramble for formal international approval as American political leaders consider armed interventions is the internalization of an evolving international norm. The United States might have the military muscle to intervene, but the international community has the necessary legitimacy to dispense. Others might see a concerted effort to get friends and foes to offer their approval for America's next military action as the attempt to mitigate possible negative issue linkages, such as trade or arms control, that might result from the adventure. Not so according to Recchia. Norms are not being followed and linkages seldom matter much to American political leaders. Rather, it is domestic political support that is being sought, and that comes mostly by reassuring the American military that international partners will take their place, letting them escape yet another foreign hell hole that the politicians have found for them.

Recchia tests his argument in four detailed cases studies of American intervention—Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq. The missions to Haiti and Bosnia had UN Security Council backing, Kosovo gained NATO Council support, and Iraq was a “coalition of the willing” enterprise without the endorsement of any major international body and thus without many non-American military participants. The promoters of the missions were civilians drawn from different ends of the political spectrum. During the 1990s it was the liberal internationalists embedded deep in the Bill Clinton administration who sought the use of American forces in coup burdened Haiti and in the ethnically torn former Yugoslavia. For Iraq it was the civilian neo-cons in the George W. Bush administration who advocated the invasion of Iraq.

The case studies are rich in candid insight, supported as they are by interviews with most of the key officials, both civilian and military. The pattern is clear. During the Clinton years, the military was foot dragging, undermining the administration's humanitarian interventionist leanings both by stirring up doubts in the Congress and the public and by emphasizing the risks in administration councils. According to Recchia, the Bush administration invasion advocates had much less vocal military opposition in part because the Bush administration had come into office determined to tame the political intransigence of senior military officers, appointing more malleable officers to such positions as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and head of Central Command. The fact that the United States was directly attacked by forces from the Middle East likely also

tempered the military's reaction to their civilian masters' plans. Recchia admits that serious threats to security make reluctant warriors much less reluctant. These are all wars of choice, but sometimes war is a more obvious and acceptable choice.

There are three problems with Recchia's reluctant warrior argument. First, he under examines the partisan role in the debates over America's military interventions. The Republican Party's political advantage in security affairs, acquired in the domestic turmoil over the Vietnam War, dissipated in importance with the end of the Cold War, allowing for Bill Clinton's election as president. Republicans sought to make security salient again by encouraging senior military officers to complain publically about Clinton administration plans and programs. The interventionist inclinations of the administration were easy targets as were its support for gay and women's rights in the military. The return of a Republican to the presidency ended their party's tolerance for senior officer public dissent.

Second, we do not learn enough about why the warriors were so reluctant to accept the Clinton interventions. Stepping into the middle of an ethnic/religious fight, if only to separate the sides and bring humanitarian relief, is a dangerous and thankless task. Moreover, it was obvious from the British experience in Northern Ireland, the Greek and Turkish conflict in Cyprus, and America's own experience in separating Arabs and Israelis in Lebanon, that these efforts have a never-ending quality to them. The American military already had its sights on next big thing after the end of the Cold War, the Chinese challenge. Being a constabulary force was for other, lesser militaries. And given the failure of the Europeans to act effectively in Bosnia and its own bad day in Somalia, it is not surprising that the American military did not want to be in the Balkans.

Third, there is a time problem in the argument. The reluctant warriors of the 1990s became the enthusiastic warriors of the 2000s. Counter-insurgency became doctrinally popular in the American military, topping off in the Iraq and Afghan surges. President Obama's national security team felt sandbagged into growing the “nation building/all-of-government” effort being pushed by the generals. Only the implosions of Generals McChrystal and Petraeus for personal failures saved Obama from making bigger, longer-term commitments in both Iraq and Afghanistan. In the meantime, parts of the military, most especially in the Special Operations Command, have found their life's work in doing the missions that the military found so distasteful in the 1990s. Reluctant warriors are not necessarily reluctant forever.

Recchia's basic point stands. The search for approval from international organizations for American interventions is not driven by internalization of norms of international behavior or the desire to protect side interests,



but rather by the desire to convince the American military and the American people that the burdens of hanging around in unpleasant places will be shared with other nations. But burden sharing has its own problems as the American military discovered in air war against Serbia that was part of the Kosovo mission. Coalition participants are governed by their own domestic politics, often limiting their willingness to consent to attacking key targets and the ability of the coalition to implement effective military strategies.

The real reluctant warriors may be the citizens of the United States. American war fighting has been continually modified to reflect their reluctance. The use of the atomic bomb against Japan was justified in part by the great unhappiness of the troops who had fought Germany at the prospect of being transferred to the Pacific to be involved in the amphibious assaults against the Japanese home islands. The war had to end soon or else there would likely have been domestic political consequences. The American military gave up conscription after Vietnam. Reliance on an all-volunteer force rules out long wars with high casualties like Vietnam. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were paid for by borrowing, not by taxes; in fact, taxes were cut during these wars, a first, but surely a happy precedent for the next. Now drones drop the bombs to avoid risking the lives of American pilots. The most frequent war cry these days is “no boots on the ground,” hardly the call of a warrior nation. It is not surprising then that American politicians, anxious for a fight abroad, wistfully claim that a broad-based international coalition can be formed to take up cause. Good luck with that.

**Creating Kosovo. International Oversight and the Making of Ethical Institutions.** By Elton Skendaj. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014. 248p. \$49.95.  
doi:10.1017/S1537592716001043

— Soeren Keil, *Canterbury Christ Church University*

Elton Skendaj's *Creating Kosovo* focuses on international state-building and democratization. The author's main argument is that democratization and state-building are different processes in post-war societies, hence international actors should utilize different strategies to pursue them. In the words of the author, “while effective bureaucracies are most likely to materialize when international organizations insulate public administrators from political and societal influences, democracy is enhanced through international support of public participation and contestation” (p. 3). In other words, he argues that in order to build functional state institutions, it is important that international actors remain the main drivers for a meritocratic recruitment and promotion process, and ensure an ethical work ethos. However, in order to promote democracy, international actors need to promote civil

society and media as control organs, support public engagement with political issues, and strengthen a multi-party system by ensuring free and fair competition rules between political elites.

The argument is presented in six chapters. The first chapter provides the reader with an introduction to the study, a definition of the main terms used, and a literature review on the current debates in state-building and democratization. In the second chapter, titled “Contested Statehood,” the author provides an overview of Kosovo's political development since the late 1980s and highlights how the country's very recent statehood and democratization, as a result of international intervention in the late 1990s, make it an interesting case for the assessment of international state-building and democratization strategies.

The following chapter “Deadly Cocktail” assesses the development of Kosovo's public administration and judicial sector. Skendaj argues that both institutions were seen as very important in the process of building a functional state and ensuring responsiveness towards citizen demands, but they are both seen by international actors, domestic elites, and citizens as highly inefficient, corrupt, and strongly undermined by political patronage and clientelism. Skendaj argues that the main reason for the negative development of these two state institutions is the too early focus on local ownership, which has allowed political elites to fill these institutions with people from their family, friends, and wider patronage networks. This in turn has allowed these institutions to become linked to the interests of certain elites, rather than the population as a whole.

In the following chapter, “Without Fear or Favor,” Skendaj examines the development of the Kosovo police force and the customs service and highlights that these two bureaucracies have become examples of good governance, in that they are seen as less corrupt, more efficient, and more strongly driven by a work ethos that is committed to serving Kosovo's citizens. In search for an explanation of the different development of these institutions when compared with the judicial system and the public administration, Skendaj argues that the police and customs service remained longer under the direct control of international actors. These actors ensured that recruitment was based on a meritocratic system rather than on family and patronage links, and they promoted a work ethos that focused on efficiency, commitment, and a stronger sense of serving the state and all of its citizens.

In Chapter five, Skendaj focuses on the role of democratization in post-war Kosovo, and highlights some of the developments in Kosovo and the influence of international actors. He comes to the conclusion that mass mobilization in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as well as international support for democratic oversight after 2001, have strengthened democratization tendencies



Ithaca, NY: Cambria Press,  
2016  
281 pages  
\$39.95

## Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention

By Stefano Recchia

Reviewed by Marybeth P. Ulrich, Professor of Government, Department of National Security and Strategy, US Army War College

In *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors*, Stefano Recchia, a lecturer in international relations at Cambridge University, investigates the role civil-military relations played in US efforts to gain the support of international organizations for the use of force. His central hypothesis is “when there is no clear threat to US national security and policymakers consequently disagree about the merits of intervention, a determined military leadership can veto the use of American force” (51). In short, Recchia argues senior military leaders at the apex of political-military decision-making can effectively veto policy when civilian policymakers are divided and the national interest is less than vital. In such scenarios, the military may demand the government obtain the support of international organizations as a condition of the military’s backing of the intervention.

Recchia argues further the military’s demand for an international organization mandate is also linked to the military’s preference for such resolutions to state explicitly that US intervention forces will hand over control to multinational follow-on forces. The existence of such a provision in the planning phase of the operation will not only facilitate the planning process itself with the inclusion of the assumption of the presence of multinational stabilization forces, but will also fulfill the military’s post Weinberger-Powell Doctrine desire for a clear exit strategy before giving its assent to the use of force. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) would usually be the first choice to endorse the intervention given its unique status as the organization the Charter of the United Nations authorizes to approve the use of force, but the approval of other regional organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the Organization of American States (OAS) may also suffice.

*Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* is remarkable on many levels. First, its four case studies: Haiti (1993–94), Bosnia (1992–95), Kosovo (1998–99), and Iraq (2002–03) are extraordinarily well researched. Recchia conducted over 100 interviews with primary participants in the cases to include US secretaries of state and defense, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, national security advisers, US ambassadors to the UN, NATO, and the European Union, and many more with individuals holding positions a tier or two below the principals. The breadth and depth of the interviews enabled Recchia to include many insights from these key participants’ in the deeply sourced text, some of which directly supported his hypothesis. The case studies alone, which include many of these comments, merit acquiring the book.

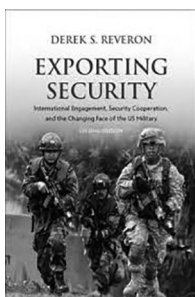
Second, Recchia illustrates (literally—with useful figures) the factors influencing the military’s viewpoint, their methods for exerting policy influence, and specific conditions that will make the military’s “insistence” to acquire international organization approval more or less likely. Third, through the development of his primary and

alternative hypotheses, he provides readers a rich review of the various factors, conditions, and theory that explains why international organization approval is or is not sought as well as methods employed to acquire approval.

If the book falls short in any area, it is in Recchia's neglect to consider whether the behaviors he documents on the part of senior military leaders fall outside the bounds of civil-military norms. First, there is the discussion of the military's "veto" power. While Recchia painstakingly completes the "process tracing" of the impact of the civilian and military actors in each case, he does not note the military is in what Eliot Cohen deemed an "unequal dialogue" with civilian policymakers, meaning a military veto is inconsistent with the principle of civilian control. Consequently, the table detailing "How the generals can influence military intervention decision-making" with its inclusion of "present some options as unfeasible," "selectively leak reservations to the press," and "hint at possible resignation," along with provide "professional expertise" and "alert civilian policymakers to risks and likely operational costs," are included side by side despite the issue the former suggestions include behaviors that effectively undermine civilian control.

The case development at times also includes the political opinions of the military along with the professional expertise civilians expect regarding the operational limits of various options under consideration. In the Haiti case, for example, Recchia wrote, "The top-level generals and admirals disputed that important US national interests were at stake in Haiti. They were skeptical about using force to restore democracy and protect human rights and worried about getting bogged down in an open-ended stabilization mission that the Congress might not support" (81). It is not the role of senior military leaders to determine national interest or to set policy. Manipulating the provision of professional expertise in order to get the institution's way on policy is a serious violation of professional norms related to civilian control. Some recognition of this issue in the text would have strengthened the presentation of the cases.

Overall, *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* is a welcome addition to civil-military relations literature in political science. Recchia wrote his purpose was to build theory in such a way that it acknowledges the direct and underappreciated role senior military leaders at the apex of political-military dialogue play in policy development. The text accomplishes this goal with its outstanding case studies. Future and present military leaders, however, should be careful to approach the book not so much as a "user's manual" for greater influence in the policy process, but as a well-written and well-researched vehicle to analyze the actions of former military leaders, who at times, may have exceeded their designated roles in the "unequal dialogue."



Washington, DC:  
Georgetown University  
Press, 2016  
247 pages  
\$32.95

## Exporting Security: International Engagement, Security Cooperation, and the Changing Face of the US Military – Second Edition

By Derek S. Reveron

Reviewed by Benjamin Jensen, Associate Professor, Marine Corps University, Scholar-in-Residence, American University School of International Service, and author of *Forging the Sword: Doctrinal Change in the US Army* (Stanford University Press, 2016)

*Exporting Security: International Engagement, Security Cooperation, and the Changing Face of the US Military – Second Edition* provides an excellent overview of the concept of theater shaping: how military forces conduct cooperative engagements to advance the interests of the United States. These activities, traditionally associated with Phase 0, provide options for addressing what author Derek Reveron calls security deficits, areas of instability that create persistent challenges for US national security. The book provides the historical background and policy context including PPD-23 and the 2015 National Military Strategy behind the expanding definition of security to include practices traditionally associated with development and diplomacy. According to Reveron: “Presidents of all political persuasions continue to use the military as a preferred tool of national power in noncoercive ways” (48). From this perspective, the military is an engagement as much as it is a coercive instrument, and the United States is “more concerned that Pakistan will fail than it is that Russia will attack Western Europe” (4).

Because of the continued importance of theater shaping and Phase 0 activities, future researchers will need to enter the dialogue and ask important questions based on Reveron’s work. First, a persistent theme in the book is that the US military has undergone dramatic change over the last three decades. There is also an implicit assumption that “security cooperation programs have broadened the mission set for the military beyond major combat” (4). If so, this change should be apparent in major shifts in operational concepts and doctrine in each service and, to a lesser extent, due to political influences, path dependencies, force structure, and resource allocation. But, are they? Does the US military, as measured by the individual service doctrines and Program Objective Memorandum submissions, reflect a prioritization of military engagement?

Second, do Phase 0 activities actually reduce security deficits? Reveron contends that military engagement can “reduce other states’ security deficits created when subnational, transnational, or regional challenges overwhelm a partner’s national security institutions” (43). Yet, research by Dafna Rand and Stephen Tankel presented in *Security Cooperation & Assistance: Rethinking the Return on Investment* (August 2015) suggests the contrary. They found security cooperation and building partner capacity initiatives often fail due to a misalignment of ends, ways, and means as well as the underlying difficulty of measuring progress. For Rand and Tankel “the failure to adequately assess efficacy contributes to the potential overreliance on security assistance and cooperation as a tool of statecraft.” For scholars Gordon Adams