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# MARINE CORPS HISTORY

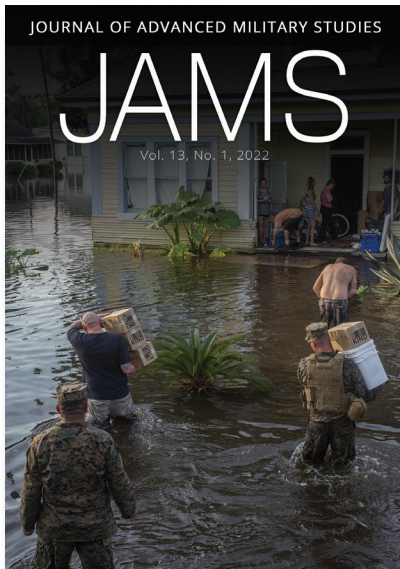
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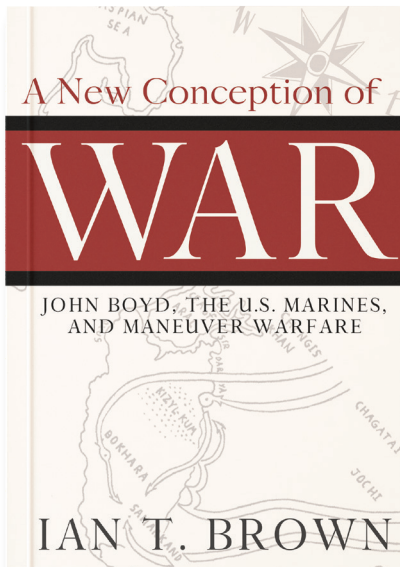
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*Journal of Advanced  
Military Studies (JAMS)*



*A New Conception of War:  
John Boyd, the U.S. Marines,  
and Maneuver Warfare  
by Ian T. Brown*

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### JAMS

The *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* focuses on topics within the international relations, political science, security studies, and political economics spectrum. The Spring 2023 issue of JAMS will focus on the next generation of warfare. Article submissions are due by 1 January 2023. Book reviews, review essays, and historiographical essays also welcome.

Article submissions for all three journals should be between 4,000 and 10,000 words, footnoted, and formatted according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (17th edition). For more information about submission guidelines or to submit an article idea, please visit our website or contact [MCU\\_Press@usmcu.edu](mailto:MCU_Press@usmcu.edu).

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# FROM THE EDITORS

Recently, the editors of Marine Corps University Press (MCU Press) and *Marine Corps History* journal had the pleasure of attending the Society for Military History's 2022 Annual Meeting, held in Fort Worth, Texas. The conference was vibrant and offered a complete program of excellent panels, several of which focused on various aspects of the Marine Corps' history. Traffic at the MCU Press booth in the exhibit hall was steady and conversations with scholarly publishing colleagues were engaging and productive. The editors were delighted to meet and catch up with so many military historians who focus on the Marine Corps, including the up-and-coming young scholars who visited the booth, and we look forward to hearing more about their current and future research. These interactions are critical for keeping abreast of developments in the fields of scholarly publishing and military history and to acquire new content for future issues of *Marine Corps History*.

In this issue, we start with a piece by Dr. Sarah E. Patterson, "Beauty Isn't Prerequisite for Girl Marines': Images of Female Marines during World War II," which explores the ways in which Women Marines' presence both challenged and reinforced the Corps' hypermasculine image and forced it to innovate new visual representations to project and protect that image. Patterson dissects several examples of imagery—created by the Marine Corps and its partners—of Women Marines that emphasized their femininity and adherence to civilian gender norms and shows how appearance and behavior were integral to the Corps' representation of Women Marines and to

maintaining its reputation, image, and ideals of masculinity.

Lieutenant Colonel James R. Compton, USMC (Ret), then gives us "Marines and Mothers: Agency, Activism, and Resistance to the American North China Intervention from 1945–46," which investigates the role of Marines, their families, and other everyday citizens as important actors in efforts to restrain American power and question its mission in North China. Compton argues that the Harry S. Truman presidential administration failed to convince the American public and servicemembers that U.S. intervention in North China was essential and that the political actions of Marines and mothers helped to shape U.S.-China policy and curtail intervention at a critical point in 1945–46.

Major Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret), gives us another photographic essay on his time serving with Combined Action Platoons (CAPs) in the villages of South Vietnam in 1969 and later as a division personal response officer in support of CAP efforts in the villages. His original photographs from his stint with CAP Marines show how closely they lived, trained, and worked with Popular Force units and local civilians. You can read Broman's first photographic essay in the Summer 2020 issue of *Marine Corps History*.

The remainder of the journal rounds out with a selection of book reviews that continues our focus on American military history, led by a review essay on the remembrances of soldiers, medics, and civilians of the Civil War.

The editors invite readers to contribute to the discussion and submit an article for consideration in *Marine Corps History* and are also seeking submissions of historiographical essays examining the extant sources on the Marine Corps' history and the shape of scholarly debate on specific events or actions or on broader general history topics. We look forward to hearing your thoughts on these topics and to your future participation as an author, reviewer, or reader. Junior faculty and advanced graduate students are encouraged to submit articles and book reviews,

as well. Join the conversation and find us online on our LinkedIn page (<https://tinyurl.com/y38oxnp5>), at MC UPress on Facebook, MC\_UPress on Twitter, and MCUPress on Instagram, or contact us via email at [MCU\\_Press@usmcu.edu](mailto:MCU_Press@usmcu.edu) for article submission requirements and issue deadlines.

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# “Beauty Isn’t Prerequisite for Girl Marines”<sup>1</sup>

## IMAGES OF FEMALE MARINES DURING WORLD WAR II

by Sarah E. Patterson, PhD

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**Abstract:** Quite often, representations of the Marine Corps during World War II included gendered elements that reflected the institution’s beliefs about men and women, their place in society, and acceptable gender roles. The U.S. military has long struggled with negotiating gender, and the hypermasculine nature of the military—and the emphasis the Marine Corps, in particular, placed on maintaining ideal masculinity—influenced the relationship between masculinity and femininity for servicemembers, and the images produced by and about the Marine Corps impacted the appearance of gender norms in the military context. Women Marines’ presence both challenged and reinforced the Corps’ hypermasculine reputation and image as warriors by means of the representation of women’s bodies and labor.

**Keywords:** World War II, Women Marines, bodies, Marine Corps image, reputation, gender norms, gender roles, feminine, feminine ideal, femininity, masculine, masculine ideal, masculinity

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### Introduction

In 1943, Miriam Galpin traded correspondence with her sister and her sister’s husband about her plans for the future. She was young, only about 20 years old at the time, and dreamed of joining the Marine Corps to patriotically serve her country during World War II. While Galpin was most interested in entering the Corps’ officer program, she did not allow an initial rejection to stop her ambitions to serve. Instead, Galpin enlisted, explaining in her letters to her family that she hoped with time and effort to earn her way into officer training. While Galpin quickly learned that her previously held romanticized notions

of service in the Corps were less than accurate, she remained excited about the challenges and opportunities the Corps presented. She was assigned to Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington, DC, and worked in the payroll office. For Galpin, this opportunity included the chance to extend her social life and meet new people. In fact, in July 1945, she married a Marine she met while she was in the Service.<sup>2</sup>

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Dr. Sarah E. Patterson is a research historian for a government contractor. Her interests include the history of the Marine Corps, World War II, gender, and twentieth-century conflicts. She is presently working on a book that will expand on the research included in this article and delve further into the intersection of Marine Corps masculinity and femininity from World War I to the Korean War.  
<https://doi.org/10.35318/mch.2022080101>

<sup>1</sup> “Beauty Isn’t Prerequisite for Girl Marines, Chief Says,” *Wisconsin State Journal*, 22 September 1943.

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<sup>2</sup> Miriam Galpin to Herbert and Betty Colker, 25 and 31 May and 9 June 1943, letters, “From Miriam Galpin to Herbert and Betty (Betty’s Sister),” Colker Collection—Herbert and Betty Colker 11.0006, Institute for World War II and the Human Experience, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, hereafter Colker Collection; Miriam Galpin to Herbert Colker, 28 August 1943, letter, “From Miriam Galpin to Herbert 1943,” Colker Collection; Miriam Galpin to Herbert Colker, 15 September 1943, letter, “From Miriam Galpin to Herbert 1943,” Colker Collection; Miriam Galpin to Herbert Colker, 27 October 1943, letter, “From Miriam Galpin to Herbert 1943,” Colker Collection; Miriam Galpin to Herbert Colker, 21 July 1945, letter, “From Miriam Galpin to Herbert (Betty’s Sister),” Colker Collection; and Miriam Galpin to Galpin family, 5 September 1943, letter, “From Miriam Galpin to Galpin Family 1943,” Colker Collection.

In many ways, Miriam Galpin's experience reflected typical images of Women Marines frequently used by the Corps to protect its reputation and encourage the type of individuals it wanted to enroll in the Service. Galpin was young, single, and white. Physically and socially, she fit the image the Corps was trying to project, making her a good fit as a Woman Marine. She also conveyed a feminine yet professional appearance and eventually married a fellow Marine as the war came to an end, retiring from the military and returning to civilian life. A combination of similar traits allowed the Corps to call on women like Galpin without violating the civilian social norms that demanded women remain separated from military service except in extreme circumstances. In its treatment of Women Marines, the Corps both reinforced existing civilian gender norms and created methods of incorporating them into the Marine Corps. The version of femininity found in the Corps would have been generally recognizable to civilians, allowing these women to reintegrate into civilian life when their service was complete. The Corps started with an existing concept of ideal American womanhood and found ways to make it fit both civilian ideas of femininity and the Corps' idea of what an elite Marine should look and act like. Given that these concepts of femininity fit within their existing worldview, most Women Marines likely did not challenge the broad outlines of the Corps' regulations, though questions and resistance surrounding certain aspects of these rules certainly occurred, as reflected in the Marine Corps' near constant commentary on the behavior of both male and female Marines. While not every Marine experienced their service in ways that mirrored common representations of the Corps and the Marines who served, many of these commonly held images and stereotypes included an element of reality.

## Hypermasculinity and Women Marines

Quite often, these representations of the Corps included gendered elements that reflected the institution's beliefs about men and women, their place in society, and acceptable gender roles. The U.S. military has long struggled with negotiating gender within its

confines, in reality and representation, and wrestled with methods of controlling Women Marines' bodies and images of their bodies to shape and protect the Corps' reputation.<sup>3</sup> The hypermasculine nature of the military and the emphasis the Marine Corps, in particular, placed on maintaining ideal masculinity, influenced the relationship between masculinity and femininity for both servicemen and -women, and the images produced by and about the Marine Corps impacted the appearance of gender norms in the military context. Hypermasculinity in the Corps meant excelling in combat, striking an attractive figure, and perpetuating the idea that Marines were the toughest and most elite branch of the U.S. military.<sup>4</sup> Women Marines' presence both challenged and reinforced the Corps' hypermasculine reputation and image as warriors by means of the representation of women's bodies and labor. The contradiction inherent in these women's presence as Marines required that the Corps grapple with how to remain hypermasculine when some of its members were female. Rather than encouraging Women Marines to strive for masculinity, the Corps emphasized their femininity and adherence to civilian gender norms. Women Marines were held to a strict concept of pragmatic femininity that allowed them to serve as Marines without either acting in ways contrary to contemporary civilian gender norms or altering the Corps' internal culture. These women were simultaneously part of the Corps and yet separate from it, and their adherence to feminine ideals served to emphasize their male colleagues' masculinity.

<sup>3</sup> The author is presently working on a book-length manuscript that will consider the intersection and comparison of images of male and female Marines and expands the chronology of this project to include World War I and the Korean War.

<sup>4</sup> Aaron B. O'Connell, *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Cameron M. Craig, *American Samurai: Myth, Imagination, and the Conduct of Battle in the First Marine Division, 1941–1951* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Heather Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874–1918* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2019); Mark Folse, "The Cleanest and Strongest of Our Young Manhood: Marines, Belleau Wood, and the Test of American Manliness," *Marine Corps History* 4, no. 1 (Summer 2018): 6–22; and Zayna Bizri, "Marine Corps Recruiting During World War II: From Making Men to Making Marines," *Marine Corps History* 1, no. 1 (Summer 2015): 23–36.



*Domestic Operations Branch, and Bureau of Special Services, Office of War Information, Office for Emergency Management, U.S. Marine Corps, "Ready. Join U.S. Marines," poster, undated, 1941-45, Series: World War II Posters, 1942-45, RG 44, NARA*

Figure 1. Marine Corps recruiting poster.

Though women entered the Marine Corps during World War I, larger numbers joined the Corps during the Second World War. The increased number of women involved in the Marines meant important changes were happening in the perception of the ideal Marine. If women's bodies were to be accepted as Marine bodies, the masculine ideology underlying the Corps' image had to adapt and find ways of explaining Women Marines.<sup>5</sup> The presence of women's bodies in militarized contexts directly impacted the perception and presentation of men's bodies as well, requiring images showing both men and women Marines work-

ing together, as well as images that highlighted the martial aspects of men's service.<sup>6</sup> These images, such as the recruitment poster in figure 1, reinforced existing gender norms for both men and women even within the context of the Corps by illustrating the embodiment of the Marine Corps ideal.

The Marine in this poster illustrates the masculine image the Corps sought. The man is tall, strong, attractive, and wearing a meticulously cared-for uniform. He stands at parade rest, ready for his next order. Images of Women Marines were created in the context of this type of image and were intended to complement male Marines.<sup>7</sup>

While gendered portrayals of male and female Marines followed broader societal norms in many ways during World War II, certain aspects of the Marine Corps image remained true regardless of gender. The pieces of the Marine uniform varied depending on gender, but the emphasis on attention to detail, neatness, and uniformity remained consistent. Women Marines were not supposed to look the same as male Marines; rather, they needed to appear simultaneously as women and Marines. The Corps concerned itself with maintaining its female members' femininity even as they took on jobs and military-style uniforms generally associated with masculinity. The health and wellness of women's bodies was also a concern. While the Marine Corps concerned itself more closely with the promiscuity of Women Marines and the potential detrimental impact on their reputations, Service and public concerns included the morality and health impact of men's promiscuity as well. The Corps and the American public worried about the health of male and female Marines, who might experience exposure

<sup>6</sup> The author is currently working on the previously mentioned book, delving more deeply into the similarities and differences in the treatment of men and women Marines' images.

<sup>7</sup> Domestic Operations Branch and Bureau of Special Services, Office of War Information, Office for Emergency Management, U.S. Marine Corps, "Ready. Join U.S. Marines," poster, undated, 1941-45, Series: World War II Posters, 1942-45, Record Group (RG) 44, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.

<sup>5</sup> Julietta B. Kahn, "A Challenge to the Apparel Industry: Textile Experts Lack Sufficient Knowledge and Training, Says Quartermaster Office," *Women's Wear Daily*, 25 May 1944, 29.

to venereal diseases that would impact the health of their bodies and the military readiness of the Corps.<sup>8</sup>

In spite of the similarities in the concerns with men's and women's adherence to the Marine Corps' concepts of ideal appearance and behavior, both sexual and otherwise, expectations for women differed from those for their male counterparts in ways that largely mirrored broader American society. Women's status as mothers and potential mothers was emphasized and protected by the Corps' policies. For example, the focus on women's bodies and respectability with regard to sexual behavior sought to ensure retired Women Marines would not have trouble finding husbands and starting families, goals assumed to apply to all women during this era. Respectability played an important part in both the Corps and American society's understanding of gender norms for both male and female Marines. Though respectability appeared somewhat differently for male and female Marines, concepts of good health and hygiene, morality, behavior, and personal appearance shaped expected standards of respectability and image for all Marines. Normative ideas of gendered labor were also protected within the framework of the Corps. Women worked in certain areas, far away from combat, and the expectation remained that women would return to the civilian world, marry, and become mothers as soon as the war ended. In this way, the Marine Corps attempted to protect women's bodies and to use them to reinforce its image and reputation in a rapidly changing world. As previously stated, this reputation

portrayed Women Marines as feminine, competent, young, attractive, and white during this era. The emphasis on whiteness would soon have to be addressed with the inclusion of African American Women Marines starting in 1949.<sup>9</sup>

## Historiography

Aaron Belkin and Christina Jarvis have already produced books explaining the significance of the connection between military bodies and gender considered here, though neither provides much comment on women. Aaron Belkin's *Bring Me Men* explains much of the Marine Corps' preoccupation with bodies, putting gender identity in the military into a more complex and nuanced context, especially focusing on masculinity's centrality to the American military institution. Belkin complicates military masculinity by arguing that it has never been entirely devoid of feminine elements, though the World War II-era Marine Corps and many members of other Service branches would probably have argued otherwise. Aspects of femininity have long been a part of military life, from domestic responsibilities, like cooking and laundry, often associated with women's labor to close same-sex companionship between soldiers. While generally considered less masculine when taken as separate behaviors, these actions did not seem problematic in a military context, assumed to be devoid of women.<sup>10</sup> This leads to the conclusion that the incorporation of women into the military, even the Marine Corps, was not a radical introduction of femininity into a solely masculine environment, but rather a more complex shift in the relationship between gender and occupation. This complex balance between masculinity and femininity existed within the Corps despite its hypermas-

<sup>8</sup> D. L. S. Brewster, Untitled Venereal Disease Statistics for Camp Lejeune, 18 January 1942, memo; Julian C. Smith to Commandant U.S. Marine Corps, "Resolution of Interdepartmental Committee on Venereal Disease, Meeting November 17, 1942," 24 January 1943, memo; William Bryden to James L. Underhill, 4 June 1943, letter; William Bryden to John Sams, 5 June 1943, letter; and Henry L. Larsen to William Bryden, 18 June 1943, letter, all box 797 Office of the Commandant, General Commandant, January 1939–June 1950, 1700-10 Acts-Care-Methods, RG 127, Office of the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, NARA. A number of authors address public concerns about the sexual behavior of military servicemembers, including Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Marilyn E. Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes: The Regulation of Female Sexuality during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2008); and Melissa A. McEuen, *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Home Front, 1941–1945* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Henry I. Shaw Jr. and Ralph W. Donnelly, *Blacks in the Marine Corps* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, reprint 2002), 56. Also from Shaw and Donnelly, while African American men served during World War II, the small number of Women Marines prevented African American women from joining until Women Marines became permanent within the Corps with the passage of the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act due to requirements for segregation.

<sup>10</sup> Aaron Belkin, *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign Façade of American Empire, 1898–2001* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).





Photo by Lt Paul Dorsey, TR-6220, official U.S. Navy photo

Figure 2. Sgt Ruth Yankee and PFC Corah Wykle, USMCR, make weather observations at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, NC.

culine image even before women's introduction to the Service. This helped create a space for the inclusion of women in limited and gendered ways.<sup>11</sup> Belkin makes

<sup>11</sup> Also see, R. W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2d ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); and E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993). Additional works address this shift in gender relations and the resulting tension between military men and women throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: Francine D'Amico and Laurie Weinstein, editors, *Gender Camouflage: Women and the U.S. Military* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); Melissa Ming Foynes, Jillian C. Shipherd, and Ellen F. Harrington, "Race and Gender Discrimination in the Marines," *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 19, no. 1 (2013): 111–19, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030567>; Melissa S. Herbert, *Camouflage Isn't Only for Combat: Gender, Sexuality, and Women in the Military* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Heather J. Höpfel, "Becoming a (Virile) Member: Women and the Military Body," *Body and Society* 9, no. 4 (2003): 13–30, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X0394003>; Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps during World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Sara L. Zeigler and Gregory G. Gunderson, *Moving Beyond GI Jane: Women and the U.S. Military* (New York: University Press of America, 2005); Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire*; Edwin Howard Simmons, *The United States Marines: A History*, 4th ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003); J. Robert Moskin, *The U.S. Marine Corps Story*, 3d rev. ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992); Col Mary V. Stremlow, *A History of the Women Marines, 1946–1977* (Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1986); Col Mary V. Stremlow, *Free a Marine to Fight: Women Marines in World War II* (Washington, DC: Marine Corps Historical Center, 1994); and Pat Meid, *Marine Corps Women's Reserve in World War II* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1968). Concepts of gender used in this article were influenced by the following: Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Connell, *Masculinities*; and Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–75. See also Joanne Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945–1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994).

it clear that feminine space already existed, and evidence suggests that women could be made to fit into those spaces. This meant restructuring ideas about labor to allow women to perform their duty to their country in feminine ways, a goal made easier through the curated use of images of Women Marines.

Christina Jarvis's *The Male Body at War* also illustrates the strong connection between the male body, masculinity, and military service, and she argues that the government consciously used both actual and representations of male bodies to assure the American people of their nation's strength during World War II. Bodies were routinely manipulated, examined, and critiqued for their value—symbolic and physical—to the nation. While Jarvis does not address Women Marines or other military women in her work, service-women's bodies were used and manipulated in ways similar to their male counterparts.<sup>12</sup> The Corps' representation of female bodies assured Americans that the women who served as Marines were up to the challenges required of them, while still being encouraged to perform normative femininity, as contrasted with the assumed masculinity of their male colleagues.

The significance of bodies to the creation and reinforcement of the Marine Corps' image and reputation is well established. Craig M. Cameron's *American Samurai* explores the connection between masculinity, publicity, and the Marine Corps' image. Likewise, Aaron O'Connell's *Underdogs* investigates the intentional ways that Marines presented themselves publicly and highlights the significance of gendered images to the Corps. Finally, Heather Venable's recent work, *How the Few Became the Proud*, considers the origins of the Marine Corps image and the connection to concepts of masculinity that became central to the Corps' identity. This article shows that many of these concepts regarding the Marine Corps' image apply to Women Marines as well. Cameron, O'Connell, Venable, and others place emphasis on the importance of gendered, especially masculine, images to the Corps and how the portrayal of Marine Corps bodies adapted to the in-

<sup>12</sup> Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

creased presence of military women during WWII.<sup>13</sup> The Marine Corps documented its ideas of normative masculine and feminine Marine bodies through pictures, propaganda, and newsletters. The evidence explored here illustrates the complicated and often contradictory relationship between masculinity and femininity that all Marines, male and female, negotiated.

## Marine Corps Images

While the U.S. government did not control the advertising and publication industries directly, a mutually beneficial relationship developed between these industries and the government in an effort to persuade the American people to enthusiastically cooperate with war mobilization and military recruitment efforts. This included images and text in various formats intended to portray the military and military service in very intentional and positive ways, supporting recruitment efforts for the U.S. military.<sup>14</sup> In this way, the Marine Corps worked with advertisers to create

specific images of Marines that appeared in various civilian newspapers and advertisements, as well as Marine Corps publications, in order to attract and retain ideal recruits for its organization. The examples discussed below illustrate an unexpected degree of similarity in the desired traits emphasized for both male and female Marines, a conclusion pursued more elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> Even so, Women Marines were encouraged to live up to civilian feminine social norms whenever possible.

### Montezuma Red

The Elizabeth Arden company took advantage of the uniquely patriotic and feminine image of Women Marines to sell their products, especially a line of makeup marketed to these women called “Montezuma Red,” which included lipstick, rouge, nail polish, and other coordinating products. The advertisement, which appeared in a 1944 issue of *Vogue* and numerous other publications, told readers that the company matched this product line to the red detailing on the Women Marines’ uniform, recognizing its significance to Marines (figure 3). The company combined its efforts to sell cosmetics with encouragement for women to “Free a Marine to Fight!” and join the Women’s Reserve, combining ideas of patriotism and service with the femininity and glamour of the cosmetics industry.<sup>16</sup> In the advertisement, a Woman Marine with perfect hair and makeup stares romantically off into the distance. Her uniform is immaculate, and the advertisement highlights the woman’s red scarf, the braid on her hat, the rank insignia on her sleeve, and her matching red lipstick and nail polish. This woman’s body highlights the expectations articulated by civilian media and the Corps regarding the ideal appearance of Women Marines. She portrays the elite image of a Marine in uniform while also highlighting her feminine desire to wear attractive makeup.

<sup>13</sup> Butler, *Gender Trouble*; Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Analysis”; Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*; O’Connell, *Underdogs*; Craig, *American Samurai*; and Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud*. The following also discuss the significance of the media during World War II: Paul Alkebulan, *The African American Press in World War II: Toward Victory at Home and Abroad* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014); Susan Ohmer, “Female Spectatorship and Women’s Magazines: Hollywood, Good Housekeeping, and World War II,” *Velvet Light Trap*, no. 25 (1990): 53–68; John Bush Jones, *All-Out for Victory!: Magazine Advertising and the World War II Home Front* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2009); Maureen Honey, “Recruiting Women for War Work: OWI and the Magazine Industry During World War II,” *Journal of American Culture* 3, no. 1 (1980): 47–52, [https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-734X.1980.0301\\_47.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-734X.1980.0301_47.x); James Lileks, “The Ad Man Goes to War,” *American Spectator* 47, no. 5 (2014): 26–29; David Welch, *World War II Propaganda: Analyzing the Art of Persuasion during Wartime* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2017); Colin M. Colbourn, “Esprit De Marine Corps: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps through Public Relations, 1898–1945” (PhD diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2018); Mark R. Folse, “The Globe and Anchor Men: U.S. Marines, Manhood, and American Culture, 1914–1924” (PhD diss., University of Alabama, 2018); Mark Folse, “Marine Corps Identity from the Historical Perspective,” *War on the Rocks*, 13 May 2019; and Gary L. Rutledge, “The Rhetoric of United States Marine Corps Enlisted Recruitment: A Historical Study and Analysis of the Persuasive Approach Utilized” (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1974).

<sup>14</sup> Monica Brasted, *Magazine Advertising in Life during World War II: Patriotism through Service, Thrift, and Utility* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018); Robert Griffith, “The Selling of America: The Advertising Council and American Politics, 1942–1960,” *Business History Review* 57, no. 3 (Autumn 1983): 388–412, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3114050>; Venable, *How the Few Became the Proud*; Colbourn, “Esprit De Marine Corps”; Folse, “The Globe and Anchor Men”; and Rutledge, “The Rhetoric of United States Marine Corps Enlisted Recruitment.”

<sup>15</sup> As mentioned, the author is presently working on a book further exploring this issue and expanding to look in more detail at the interconnections between male and female Marines’ images and their link to the Corps’ overall reputation.

<sup>16</sup> “Montezuma Red” Elizabeth Arden advertisement, *Vogue* 103, no. 8 (15 April 1944): 115.





*Montezuma Red*

Elizabeth Arden's newest lipstick color — Montezuma Red  
 . . . inspired by the brave, true red of the hat cord, scarf  
 and chevrons of the Women in the Marines.

A vivid red to wear with black, white, gray,  
 beige, navy and tweeds. A tribute to some of the  
 bravest men and women in the world.

*Complete Montezuma Red Makeup:*  
 Montezuma Red Lipstick, 1.50 (refills .75)  
 Montezuma Red Cream Rouge, 1.25 and 1.75  
 Montezuma Red Nail Polish, .75  
 All Day Foundation, Dark Rachel, 1.00  
 Illusion Powder, Special Mat Fancé, 1.75 and 3.00  
 Cameo Powder, Rose Beige, 1.75 and 3.00  
 Eye Shado, Malachite, 1.25  
 Eyelash Pomade, Dark, 1.00 and 2.00  
 (prices plus taxes)

Free a Marine to  
 Fight! Share the  
 great traditions of the  
 Marines. Join the U. S.  
 Marine Corps Women's Reserve

*Elizabeth Arden*

Copyright 1944, Elizabeth Arden

Vogue 103, no. 8, 15 April 1944, 115

Figure 3. "Montezuma Red" Elizabeth Arden advertisement.

The Elizabeth Arden Company also released a publicity pamphlet advertising its makeup line and encouraging women to enlist in the Corps. The brochure copy reads: "It is Miss Arden's sincere hope that the attention given to her new color harmony, Montezuma Red, will stimulate interest in the Women's Reserve of the Marine Corps and aid in the recruiting drive of this inspiring branch of the women's services." It featured images of attractive women modeling Marine Corps uniforms and completing some of the jobs they might be assigned with the Corps.<sup>17</sup> In this brochure, women were encouraged to carefully craft the appearance of their bodies by using cosmetics, both to aid in maintaining male servicemember's morale by providing a visual reminder of the society these men fought to preserve and by proving their adherence to feminine norms. Military women walked a fine line between proving their usefulness and patriotism and violating societal norms by stepping too far into male-centered spaces. The combination of cosmetics and Marine Corps recruitment illustrated how women could simultaneously contribute to their country's defense by joining the Corps and carefully attending to their makeup.<sup>18</sup>

### Camel

Cosmetics companies were not the only businesses that traded on the image of military women. The advertisement opposite appeared in several publications, including a 1943 issue of *Vogue*, and showed an example for Camel cigarettes (figure 4). Women from each Service branch, including the Corps, are shown in uniform, and the advertisement's text emphasizes

these uniforms in conjunction with popular fashion and connect both to using Camel's product.<sup>19</sup>

These women appear in carefully tended uniforms with meticulously prepared hair and makeup. Regardless of the job they were performing, they wear skirts and low heels, in keeping with civilian norms for women's clothing at the time. They display pleasant smiles at each other or the observer, emphasizing the cheerful femininity expected of military women. Each of these women's bodies was posed to show the ideal military woman. Captions next to each set of service-women encourage female readers to join the military in order to free a man for combat, combining fashionability with patriotism and military service. Camel's advertisement draws attention to similarities in the depiction of women in all Service branches in keeping with civilian gender norms that deserves further consideration but exceeds the scope of this article.

### Text-based Images

Newspapers also perpetuated specific, curated images of Women Marines. An article from Philadelphia's *The Evening Bulletin* in 1943, titled "Join the Marines and see-Romance [sic]; Girls' Director here, Gives O.K.," directly addressed common worries about the connection between women's bodies and femininity with their ability to serve. The reference to these women as "girls" illustrated the nonthreatening nature of their work by emphasizing their youth and harmlessness, regardless of the fact that not all of these women were particularly young. Through most of this period, Women Marines needed to be at least 20 years old to apply for admission. The article's author relayed information received from the director of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve, Major Ruth Cheney Streeter,

<sup>17</sup> "Montezuma Red" Elizabeth Arden brochure, undated, Women Marines-Publications (1 of 3), Archives, Historical Resources Branch, Marine Corps History Division (MCHD), Quantico, VA.

<sup>18</sup> "Montezuma Red" Elizabeth Arden brochure. Page Dougherty Delano argues that a more complex intersection of norms and women's independence occurred in cosmetics during World War II, which presents interesting future avenues of research related to Women Marines. Page Dougherty Delano, "Making Up for War: Sexuality and Citizenship in Wartime Culture," *Feminist Studies* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 33–68, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178592>.

<sup>19</sup> "First in Fashion" Camel advertisement, *Vogue* 102, no. 22 (1 November 1943). Members of the Women Airforce Service Pilots were not considered official members of the military until 1977. "Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)," Women in the Army, U.S. Army. For more on WASPs, see Marianne Verges, *On Silver Wings: The Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991); Molly Merryman, *Clipped Wings: The Rise and Fall of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) of World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 1991); Katherine Sharp Landdeck, *The Women with the Silver Wings: The Inspiring True Story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II* (New York: Crown, 2021); and others.



With women in the Service . . .

# First in Fashion

Khaki, blue, or forest green . . .  
whatever you wear . . . you'll find the cigarette  
for milder smoking pleasure is

# Camel

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

**WAVES** — You get up at "reveille," go to bed at "taps." You call the floor of your quarters "the deck" and the walls "bulkheads." Because, when you're in the WAVES, you're in the Navy. And, if you smoke, you'll quickly learn the Navy favorite is the cigarette with that famous flavor — Camel.

**WACS** — Maybe you learn to chauffeur a jeep; maybe you learn radio and free a radio man to fly; but, whatever you do as a WAC, you'll be doing your "bit" in a big way. And you'll know your Army...from khaki to Camels — the service favorite.

**SPARS** — You may not get to sea, but that job you take over at a desk means another Coast Guardsman free to fight on deck! And, if your smoking tastes run to the full flavor of costlier tobaccos and the extra mildness of slow burning, you'll be smoking Camels — the Coast Guard favorite.

**THE "T-ZONE."** How long since you've smoked a Camel? Give them a try today. Compare them critically for taste...for your throat...for your "T-Zone."

On the basis of the experience of millions of Camel smokers, we believe you will like the extra flavor that only Camel's blend of costlier tobaccos can give. We believe your throat will confirm the findings of other Camel smokers. Try Camels.

**BE A MARINE** — free a Marine to fight" is the motto of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. Their forest green uniform above is by government issue, the cigarette by Camel; and that means the smoking situation is "well in hand."

Actual sales records show the favorite cigarette with smokers in the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard is Camel.

BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

Figure 4. "First in Fashion" Camel Cigarettes advertisement.



that Women Marines would be able to seek romantic connections while serving and that participation in the Corps would not be a hindrance to finding a husband. The article stated, "Major Streeter said that neither uniform nor training makes a woman more masculine. But, she said, both uniform and training have brought out qualities of which a woman's parents and friends may be proud." Streeter wanted to make it clear that women's presence in a masculine military setting did not threaten normative American gender roles and servicewomen's ability to fit into them. These women could still be attractive and marriageable.<sup>20</sup> Miriam Galpin's experiences with dating and marriage reflected these assertions, though the emphasis on women finding future husbands while in the Service directly contradicted rules regulating fraternization between male and female Marines. Women could and were expected to want to marry and have families after their service was completed, and the Corps did not want to stand in the way of Women Marines achieving those goals, even if it raised further questions about antifraternization regulations.

In fact, some sources indicated that these women were perceived as unusually desirable. For example, a newspaper article from 1943 titled "Beauty Isn't Prerequisite for Girl Marines, Chief Says," reported Streeter's view of the public impression that Women Marines were the most attractive of servicewomen. Streeter replied that the Corps was not intentionally selecting attractive women but pointed to recruit training that increased muscle, decreased excess weight, and encouraged good posture as reasons for the perception. The implication seemed to be that joining the Corps made a woman and her body more attractive, even though that was not its main purpose. Though Streeter's com-

ments worked to minimize the supposed impact of women's appearance on their selection for service, women's bodies were clearly considered relevant in both the public eye and to the Marine Corps. The fact that reporters considered asking the director of the Women's Reserve if attractiveness was an enlistment requirement showed assumptions about women's value being placed on their appearance, as well as the fact that Women Marines could be objects of physical appreciation. This exchange also illuminates the Corps' awareness of the significance of the appearance of Marine bodies and the ability of training to transform bodies into more ideal, desirable forms.<sup>21</sup> Neither the article's author nor Streeter explained where this supposedly well-known assumption regarding Women Marines' attractive appearance originated, though it seems likely this image was tied to broader understandings of the elite Marine Corps image.

Even as the Marine Corps negotiated civilian perceptions of World War II-era Marines in newspapers and advertisements, the Corps generated its own images and discussion in an effort to further shape the narrative of its status and history to its benefit. Public relations and publicity departments connected to the Corps released specific information and images that furthered an official version of what a Marine looked like and how he or she behaved. Such documents often originated with the Office of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, announcements within the Corps, or with the popular Marine-led magazine *Leatherneck*.<sup>22</sup> Articles and press releases also often originated with the Corps and attempted to influence what the public read and believed about the Corps. These sources assisted in the Marine Corps' efforts to control the images of the Corps, Marines' bodies, and gender ideals within the Corps that circulated both inside and out-

<sup>20</sup> "Join the Marines and See-Romance; Girls' Director Here, Gives O.K.," *Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia, PA), 9 June 1943. Instructions from Headquarters Marine Corps provide a more restrictive view of relations between male and female Marines. For example, Letter of Instruction No. 702 does not forbid all relationships between Marines, but the letter emphasizes the necessity of navigating such relationships carefully to avoid compromising military hierarchy and order. Alexander A. Vandegrift, "Letter of Instruction No. 702," Women Marines-Wars (1 of 2), MCHD. For information on enlistment requirements for the Marine Corps Women's Reserve, see Meid, *Marine Corps Women's Reserve in World War II*.

<sup>21</sup> "Beauty Isn't Prerequisite for Girl Marines, Chief Says."

<sup>22</sup> Arthur P. Brill Jr., "History: The Marine Corps Association: 100 Years of Service," Marine Corps Association, accessed 13 November 2020. Robert Nelson speaks to the significance of Service newspapers and newsletters in the British, French, and German context, but it seems likely that the importance of these publications extended also to American servicemembers and their publications. Robert L. Nelson, "Soldier Newspapers: A Useful Source in the Social and Cultural History of the First World War and Beyond," *War in History* 17, no. 2 (April 2010): 167–91, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0968344509357127>.



"The Leatherneck Visits Depot of Supplies, Department of the Pacific, San Francisco," *Leatherneck* (January 1944): 76

Figure 5. *Leatherneck* article image.

side the organization by informing a wide audience about expectations for being a Marine.

### *Leatherneck*

*Leatherneck* was a magazine created for Marines by Marines. It started in the late 1910s and discussed many issues that directly impacted members of the Corps, both officers and enlisted. The magazine included advertisements for a variety of products that might interest Marines, notably highlighting uniform sales and tailoring, shoe polish, shaving cream, and toothpaste. Most of these items claimed to improve the appearance of the individuals purchasing them and often showed them as maintaining the high standards of the Corps.<sup>23</sup> The magazine was aimed specifically at Marines, targeting their interests and concerns, including concerns related to the arrival of Women Marines.

In a 1944 *Leatherneck* article discussing Women Marines, the author's tone indicated general acceptance of women in the Corps and quoted a depot's quartermaster as saying, "The gals are doing a bang-up job, even better than the men in some instances."<sup>24</sup> The article went on to list some of the jobs women did at that particular post but pointed out that there were

jobs that women could not do, such as moving heavy oil drums, emphasizing the limits of Women Marines' bodies. The article emphasized the enjoyment that women received from their work while freeing male Marines for combat duty. One of the final images in the article (figure 5), indicated the author's underlying ambivalent feelings toward Women Marines. A photograph published with the article depicted two women working at a drafting table; the caption says that the corporals "seem to know what they are doing" in the drafting department, leaving their competence and expertise uncertain to the reader, in spite of the author's positive tone toward Women Marines in the rest of the text.

The article's author worked to articulate women's place and image in the Corps without openly threatening male Marines by highlighting the importance of the work they did while also pointing out their limitations, especially the physical limits of doing a Marine's job.<sup>25</sup> This kind of article encouraged male Marines to accept their female colleagues' presence by indicating their competence in completing their assignments while implying they lacked essential martial qualities that might allow them to fully replace men. Men's position as "real" Marines was still safe from female incursion, even as their labor became central to the Corps' ability to function. The presence of women in the Corps complicated the performance of masculinity because women took on occupations and official uniforms previously seen as male-centered, and *Leatherneck* assisted readers in making a space for women in the Marines by explaining women's presence and purpose and by showing male Marines that these women would not threaten the reputation of their beloved institution.

S. B. Scidmore's article "Powder Puff Marine" in a 1945 issue of *Leatherneck* further explained Women Marines' importance to male Marines. This story explored the internal conflict some male Marines felt at the addition of women to the Corps. The story's main character, a male Marine named Sergeant O'Hara, was assigned to deliver a message to a Woman Ma-

<sup>23</sup> "Shinola Shoe Polish" advertisement, *Leatherneck* (January 1941): 42.

<sup>24</sup> "The Leatherneck Visits Depot of Supplies, Department of the Pacific, San Francisco," *Leatherneck* (January 1944): 76.

<sup>25</sup> "The Leatherneck Visits Depot of Supplies," 76–77.

rine. O'Hara did not believe that women deserved to wear the uniform because they did not serve in combat roles. However, as O'Hara arrived at the Woman Marine's office, she asked him to get a Coke with her and talk. In spite of his misgivings about women in the Corps, O'Hara agreed. During their conversation, O'Hara learned that this particular Woman Marine took the office position his friend Brady used to hold. Her service allowed Brady to complete combat duty, during which Brady saved O'Hara's life. This information changed how O'Hara perceived Women Marines. They may not serve on the front lines, but they did important work that enabled male Marines to fight and to potentially protect each other.<sup>26</sup> This anecdote illustrated how Women Marines might make a positive impact on the Corps and on the lives of individual male Marines, while clearly showing the boundaries of these women's work: she was in the office while Brady was in combat. This Woman Marine's uniformed body allowed Brady to do the more masculine work of combat and to save O'Hara's life. O'Hara's objections to women's bodies wearing Marine Corps uniforms were overcome by the revelation of the necessity of women's labor. While such stories were clearly intended to try to help male Marines feel better about the presence of women, they did not end concerns about women's place in the Corps and their potential impact on Marines' reputations.

## Marine Corps Correspondence

Official communications also articulated the Corps' position on Women Marines. In Letter of Instruction No. 489 from 1943, Commandant Thomas Holcomb welcomed the Women's Reserve to the Corps and addressed issues of custom and regulation. The letter considered the significance of public opinion and the presentation of the Women Marines' image to the Corps and to the future of their service, saying,

The wide-spread public interest reflected in Congress and through the press strongly indicates that the future existence of this branch of the Marine

Corps depends largely upon the reaction of the American public to the demeanor of its members. It is felt that in this respect the Women's Reserve will continue to hold the position of high esteem which it deserves only if the utmost care is exercised in deportment, manner, and appearance of its individual members.<sup>27</sup>

Holcomb's emphasis on "deportment, manner, and appearance" of Women Marines underscored the significance of these women's bodies and the behavior of those bodies to protecting the Corps' image and reputation. Holcomb also pointed out the need for Women Marines to show the civilian public that they could serve in the military while remaining feminine and respectable. The letter told women about their uniforms, how to respond to and interact with male personnel, rules on smoking and drinking, and counsel on the application of cosmetics while in uniform. For example, the letter instructed women that "lipstick, if worn, shall be the same color as cap cord, winter service, and shall be inconspicuous. Colored nail polish, if worn, shall harmonize with color of winter service cap cord and lipstick. Mascara shall not be worn."<sup>28</sup> Women Marines' behavior and appearance reflected on the Corps' image, and officials quickly moved to provide women advice on how to aid the positive presentation of Marines, contributing to an elite military image in keeping with the traditions of the Corps while simultaneously presenting a feminine version of that ideal, one that frequently centered on the performance of femininity and the presentation of bodies.<sup>29</sup>

Likewise, a memorandum from Director Streeter further instructed Women Marine officers on upholding the Corps' image by controlling the bodies and behavior of their fellow female Marines both in and out of uniform. Streeter stated, "If an officer's own sense

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Holcomb, Letter of Instruction No. 489, 16 July 1943, 2275-45 DB-311-rwg, "Blanchard, Florence L. PC#714, Access #741806, WWII, Photos/Humour," Folder/1A41, Archives, MCHD, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Holcomb, "Letter of Instruction No. 489," 2.

<sup>29</sup> Holcomb, "Letter of Instruction No. 489."

<sup>26</sup> S. B. Scidmore, "Powder Puff Marine," *Leatherneck* (January 1945): 33.



of propriety is not an adequate guide, it becomes the duty of whatever senior Marine Corps Women's Reserve (MCWR) officer is present to admonish her . . . it would apply in such cases as failure to comply with uniform regulations by the use of exaggerated make-up, too long hair, too short skirts; noisy or unladylike behavior; unconventional actions, such as men and women officers visiting in each other's bed-rooms."<sup>30</sup> Streeter encouraged senior officers to police the behavior and bodies of junior officers and enlisted women in as tactful a manner as possible to protect the Women's Reserve's reputation and image.<sup>31</sup>

As previously mentioned, many concerns about image and reputation, and how bodies represented that image and reputation, fed into the American public's worries that wartime conditions led to lower moral standards for both men and women and to an increase in the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Women's movement into new public places and the presentation of their bodies in novel ways, such as wearing military uniforms, led to further worries about the ways that women might use their bodies, both with patriotic purpose and for pleasure. Officials blamed both professional prostitutes and reckless young women for an increase in venereal disease, placing little responsibility on the men involved. While civil and military authorities took some responsibility for preventing prostitution, they exerted little control over other young women. Rather, many people believed that the decrease in parental supervision due to wartime conditions contributed to the misbehavior

of these women.<sup>32</sup> Many sources blamed women for men's contraction of venereal disease and focused on the regulation of both military and civilian women's bodies to decrease infection. Marilyn Hegarty argues that this tendency largely stemmed from contemporary understandings of masculinity and men's sexual needs, and Leisa Meyer points to the ways that this understanding of masculinity extended to members of the Women's Army Corps (WAC), leading to a preoccupation with their sexual behavior and morality.<sup>33</sup> Given the similarities in personal background, training, and the broader nature of military environments, it seems likely that Meyer's observations about WACs largely translated to Women Marines as well. Young women without parental supervision working in a

<sup>32</sup> "Venereal Disease," *New York Times*, 27 January 1945, 10; and Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes*. Hegarty points out that many of these women considered themselves to be in relationships with the men with whom they engaged in sexual intercourse. They generally did not see their behavior as prostitution. An example illustrating this issue can be found in the following: "'Red Light' Areas Declared Ending: Taft Committee Reports on Year of Nation-Wide War on Venereal Disease, Fights the 'Promiscuous', Opening 'Second Front' Against Street-Walkers and Others as Possible 'Mad Dogs,'" *New York Times*, 27 December 1942, 27. Other sources on prostitution, venereal disease, and the American military include the following: Scott Wasserman Stern, "The Long American Plan: The U.S. Government's Campaign Against Venereal Disease and Its Carriers," *Harvard Journal of Law & Gender* 38 (Summer 2015): 373–436; Robert Kramm, *Sanitized Sex: Regulating Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and Intimacy in Occupied Japan, 1945–1952* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017); Elizabeth Alice Clement, *Love For Sale: Courting, Treating, and Prostitution in New York City, 1900–1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Mary Louise Roberts, *What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Mary Louise Roberts, "The Price of Discretion: Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and the American Military in France, 1944–1946," *American Historical Review* 115, no. 4 (2010): 1002–30, <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.115.4.1002>; John Parascandola, "Presidential Address: Quarantining Women: Venereal Disease Rapid Treatment Centers in World War II America," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 83, no. 3 (2009): 431–59, <https://doi.org/10.1353/bhm.0.0267>; William B. Anderson, "The Great War Against Venereal Disease: How the Government Used PR to Wage an Anti-Vice Campaign," *Public Relations Review* 43, no. 3 (2017): 507–16, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2017.03.003>; Meghan K. Winchell, *Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses during World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Claire Strom, "Controlling Venereal Disease in Orlando During World War II," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 91, no. 1 (2012): 86–117; Melissa A. McEuen, *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Home Front, 1941–1945* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011); and Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*. See also "Board Seeks Ban on 'Loose' Tavern: Army-Navy Group Acts to Save Service Men Here from Dangers of Disease, Infection Rise Revealed, Official 'Out-of-Bounds' Order for Bars Where 'Dates' Are Made Is Recommended," *New York Times*, 4 November 1944, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes*; and Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*.

<sup>30</sup> Ruth Cheney Streeter, memo "Marine Corps Women's Reserve, Matters Effecting," 19 May 1944, "Women Marines-Wars (1 of 2)," MCHD, 10.

<sup>31</sup> Streeter, memo "Marine Corps Women's Reserve, Matters Effecting,"

highly masculine environment far from their homes were looked at with suspicion and their respectability was frequently questioned.

To address concerns about women's supposed promiscuity, the Corps emphasized the significance of the issue in training camps and continuing education. During this education, Women Marines attended lectures reminding them of the moral necessity of refraining from extramarital sexual activity. For example, in one lecture, Chaplain H. W. E. Swanson stated,

Venereal disease is a military crime, and a serious one. But do not think that the government, and the Marine Corps is encouraging you to indulge in promiscuity, providing you avoid disease. In setting up prophylactic services, your Marine Corps is only doing its duty to provide for those who do the wrong thing—even as our government must provide for wrongdoers.<sup>34</sup>

Swanson clarified that government-provided prophylactic stations were not intended as approval or acceptance of promiscuous behavior, especially from female Marines. Rather, they were a necessary service provided to save reckless young men and women from their own poor decisionmaking. The expectation was that Marines would safeguard their own bodies. After further emphasizing the need to avoid all sexual activity, even if encouraged by male Marines, Chaplain Swanson went on to say, "You are really the picked and choice women of the nation."<sup>35</sup> The implication was that if these women wanted to remain part of that elite group included in the Marine Corps, they must continue to protect their bodies from venereal disease and bad reputations that might result from promiscuity. Swanson's warning about guarding themselves from persuasion by male Marines also emphasized the difference in expectations for these women's behavior

with regard to their bodies. While the Corps did not encourage male Marines to engage in extramarital sexual activity, it was anticipated that they would fall victim to such temptations on occasion. Without the excuse of masculine needs, women received far less leniency if they were caught demonstrating such behavior.

In a similar talk, Chaplain Roland B. Gittelsohn asked Women Marines to consider three questions before engaging in sexual activity: "What reputation are you helping to give the Women Marines?" "What will the nation say of you when the war is over?", and "What are you going to think of yourself when the war is over?" He pointed out the prevalent rumors about military women's promiscuity and lack of morality and told women that while he was quite certain these rumors were untrue, the "eyes of the country are on you now."<sup>36</sup> Women Marines were charged with protecting the Corps' image through their use of their own bodies, as well as guarding their personal reputations. Gittelsohn recommended that these women aim to have people remember their service instead as, "You brought your feminine youth, charm, brightness, laughter, warmth, color to drab masculine camps And [sic] at the same time, lifted both the morals and morale of men."<sup>37</sup> Swanson and Gittelsohn made it clear that promiscuous female bodies did not fit with the Corps' idea of who it was.

In spite of this training and rhetoric, women who became ill with sexually transmitted diseases usually received medical treatment and returned to duty. However, a memorandum by Director Streeter indicated that word of infection frequently spread to other women in a unit and resulted in resentment and poor treatment by their peers. Streeter's memorandum added that transferring the previously infected woman often resolved the problem. The memorandum reiterated Swanson's comments that relatively liberal policies toward venereal disease infection did not

<sup>34</sup> H. W. E. Swanson, "Brief Outline of Talk on Moral Aspects of Venereal Disease Given to Women's Reserve," 1943, box 797, Office of the Commandant, General Commandant, January 1939–June 1950, 1700-10 Acts-Care-Methods, RG 127, NARA.

<sup>35</sup> Swanson, "Brief Outline of Talk on Moral Aspects of Venereal Disease Given to Women's Reserve."

<sup>36</sup> Roland B. Gittelsohn, "Introduction," 1943, box 797, Office of the Commandant, General Commandant, January 1939–June 1950, 1700-10 Acts-Care-Methods, RG 127, NARA. Leisa Meyer also discusses such assumptions of military women's promiscuity in her book, *Creating GI Jane*.

<sup>37</sup> Gittelsohn, "Introduction."

advocate for promiscuous behavior. In fact, Streeter said that while a single instance might be forgiven by the Corps as a mistake, a habit of such sexual behavior could be grounds for “unsuitable” discharge.<sup>38</sup> The decisions these women made about their bodies and sexual behavior could be seen as a reflection of the Corps’ values and, as such, promiscuous women were removed from service.

Streeter also acknowledged that homosexual behavior and fears about such behavior affected the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve, just as it did other women’s Service branches.<sup>39</sup> While Streeter presented homosexual behavior as unacceptable, she also warned against “witch-hunting” and potentially negatively affecting the lives, careers, and reputations of innocent women. Streeter said that close relationships between women should be expected in the Corps, but those that became too intimate should initially be separated, transferring one of the women to a different command. If headquarters received multiple reports about a particular woman, she could be discharged for “unsuitable” behavior. This memorandum advised seeking a medical opinion regarding individuals accused of homosexual behavior, because the Corps typically perceived homosexual behavior as a medical rather than a disciplinary issue during this time.<sup>40</sup>

This concern with women’s sexual behavior extended to worries about pregnancy as well. While Women Marines were permitted to marry while in the Service, pregnancy resulted in immediate discharge. The Corps believed that the act of having children indicated a woman’s readiness to leave military service to focus on home and family. Serving as a Marine and

being a mother were perceived as mutually exclusive during this time. The Corps also made no distinction between pregnancies resulting from premarital relationships and those from marriage in order to encourage women to report their status, and they gave all pregnant women an honorable discharge unless there were extenuating circumstances beyond their pregnant status.<sup>41</sup> The government also reserved the right to discharge women as “unsuitable” if they sought out a medically induced abortion. Miscarriages and cases of stillborn children occasionally meant women could remain in the Corps if recommended by their commanding officer and found psychologically fit, but officials perceived abortion as indicating psychological disturbance disqualifying women from service. Intentionally ending a pregnancy was perceived as counter to feminine norms encouraged within the Corps as well as broader American society. The choice these women made about their bodies made them unfit for service in the opinion of the Marine Corps, even as pregnancy also disqualified women from service. In the cases of pregnancy, venereal disease, promiscuity, and homosexuality, the Marine Corps heavily regulated women’s bodies and sexual behavior to protect their ideal image and reputation.

## Conclusions

Expectations regarding Women Marines’ feminine appearance and behavior fit with patterns seen for other military women in World War II, as seen in the work of Meyer and others, even as the Corps’ rhetoric presented these women as representing the elite nature of the Corps, as explained in Cameron, O’Connell, Venable, and others. Belkin’s argument regarding the interconnectedness of masculinity and femininity within the military and Jarvis’s emphasis on the significance of bodies are also borne out through the importance of images of bodies to the representation of the Corps. Evidence provided here shows that bodies, both their appearance and their behavior, were integral to the Marine Corps’ representation of Women

<sup>38</sup> Streeter, memo “Marine Corps Women’s Reserve, Matters Effecting.” This memo provided additional information building on earlier instructions from Headquarters Marine Corps from the previous year. Thomas Holcomb, Letter of Instruction No. 499, Women Marines-Wars (1 of 2), Archives, MCHD.

<sup>39</sup> The following historians examine homosexuality in the military, though not specifically the Marine Corps: Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire*; Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes*; Herbert, *Camouflage Isn’t Only for Combat*; and Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*.

<sup>40</sup> Streeter, memo “Marine Corps Women’s Reserve, Matters Effecting”; D’Ann Campbell, *Women at War with America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); and D’Ann Campbell, “Women in Combat: The World War II Experience in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and the Soviet Union,” *Journal of Military History* 57 (April 1993): 301–23.

<sup>41</sup> Alexander A. Vandegrift, “Letter of Instruction No. 858,” 5 October 1944, Women Marines-Wars (1 of 2), MCHD; and Streeter, memo “Marine Corps Women’s Reserve, Matters Effecting.”

Marines in World War II as well as to the maintenance of the Corps' reputation and image.

Americans like Miriam Galpin consumed these images and representations of Marines and chose to fashion their own bodies and images in ways that allowed them to fit into the Corps' ideals. These individuals observed the Marine Corps' reputation for eliteness and patriotic service and decided to enroll in this particular military branch on the basis of those ideas. While common gender norms remained cen-

tral to Americans' understanding of how men and women's service functioned within the Marine Corps, similarity in expectations of Marines' appearance and behavior regardless of gender provided an underlying continuity between these images and representations, while allowing for variability to conform with most civilian concepts of gender roles. These images allowed the Marine Corps to continue controlling the Corps' hypermasculine narrative and reputation even as it incorporated large numbers of women.

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# Marines and Mothers

## AGENCY, ACTIVISM, AND RESISTANCE TO THE AMERICAN NORTH CHINA INTERVENTION, 1945–46

*by Lieutenant Colonel James R. Compton, USMC (Ret)*

**Abstract:** At the culmination of the Second World War, the Marines of the III Amphibious Corps (III AC) were preparing to assault the Japanese homeland. With the abrupt conclusion of hostilities in September 1945, they were ordered instead to war-ravaged North China. The mission in North China was amorphous—protecting infrastructure and key terrain during the reemergent Chinese Civil War. As Marines labored to resist the expansion of their mission, the lifting of wartime censorship protocols enabled them to voice concern to their families and Congress. Mothers and citizen groups also challenged the young Harry S. Truman administration on the merits and morality of the North China intervention. Set at the dawn of the Cold War, this article investigates the role of unlikely political actors—Marines and mothers—in shaping American policy in North China from 1945 to 1946. Combating narratives of inevitable quagmire, the Marines in North China are examined as important agents in the restraint of American power at contingent moments. This piece argues that the Truman administration failed to make an affirmative case for intervention and was, in part, constrained by popular opinion.

**Keywords:** III Amphibious Corps, III AC, North China, Chinese Civil War, citizen activism, Cold War, public opinion, occupation, Mike Mansfield, Keller E. Rockey

In Montana's Bitterroot Valley in 1945, Ethel Wonnacott scoured newspapers for international stories from the Western Pacific. As a devout Mormon, meatpacker, wife, and mother of two, Wonnacott would seem an unlikely candidate for political activism regarding America's foreign affairs.<sup>1</sup> Yet, like millions of other American mothers during World War II, Wonnacott had ample reason to stay informed and involved. Her youngest son, 20-year-old Private First Class Gilbert E. Wonnacott, was fighting across

the Pacific with the U.S. Marine Corps.<sup>2</sup> With the sudden news of the Japanese surrender in mid-August, the Wonnacott family must have felt a profound sense of relief. The much-dreaded invasion of the Japanese mainland would not come to fruition. Wonnacott and the rest of the III Amphibious Corps (III AC), however, did not return immediately to the comfort of their waiting families. Instead, he and 53,000 other Marines deployed from Guam and Okinawa to China's Shandong (Shantung) and Hubei (Hopeh) Provinces.<sup>3</sup> A warm and raucous Chinese crowd welcomed the III

James R. Compton is a retired Marine Corps officer and current history doctoral student at the University of Montana. A 1999 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, he served three tours in Iraq and was stationed in East Asia for six years.

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<sup>1</sup> 1940 United States Federal Census, Ravalli County, MT, Population Schedule, Stevens Township, Enumeration District 41-14, Sheet 3B, Household 57, Ethel Wonnacott, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), 1940, T627, Roll: m-t627-02227.

<sup>2</sup> PFC Gilbert E. Wonnacott, 2d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, muster rolls, July 1945, vol. 9, NARA. Wonnacott served with Company G.

<sup>3</sup> Chinese place names and historical actors appear primarily in the Pinyin form, with the Wade-Giles transliteration in parentheses at first use. For example, Beijing (Peiping), Tianjin (Tientsin), Chongqing (Chungking), Shandong (Shantung), Hubei (Hopeh), Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung), and Zhou Enlai (Chou En-lai). The more well-known form of Chiang Kai-shek is used instead of Jiang Jieshi. The primary source documents and images reflect the Wade-Giles romanization, which was the custom in 1945–46.

AC Marines at Taku in Hubei Province on 30 September during the initial landings.<sup>4</sup> Victory parades in Tianjin (Tientsin) and Beijing (Peiping) underscored the celebratory sentiment prevailing in China in early October 1945.<sup>5</sup> This, however, proved to be short-lived; soon Wonnacott and his fellow Marines found themselves with a front-row seat to a renewed Chinese Civil War. Just six days after arrival, Marines came under fire from Chinese Communist forces and suffered three casualties while guarding the railway 20 miles (32 kilometers) north of Tianjin. Six thousand miles away in Stevensville, Montana, Ethel Wonnacott intently read newspaper stories and letters from her son. Confused and incensed by a U.S. intervention that seemed to make no sense to her, Wonnacott became one of many mothers motivated to engage in political action.

In October 1945, the political, economic, and military situation in North China was dire. Ravaged by war since July 1937, China suffered perhaps as many as 20 million deaths in its resistance to Japanese aggression and an additional 100 million people were displaced.<sup>6</sup> Famine, pestilence, and the Japanese war effort brought North China into a deep depression, and runaway inflation compounded the economic woes.<sup>7</sup> As the internationally recognized National government led by Chiang Kai-shek sought to reestablish sovereignty over the devastated region, it was contested by a resurgent Communist opposition led by Mao Zedong. Given these difficult circumstances, it was unclear just what the U.S. interest in North China was: protecting infrastructure; enabling the Chinese Nationalist regime to reoccupy territory under Japanese control ahead of advancing Chinese Communist forces; or fighting Communist insurgents. Absent a coherent message from political and military lead-

ers in Washington, a sizable portion of the American people recognized the potential for the United States to get stuck in a quagmire.

In a crucial period from late 1945 to late 1946, an unlikely pairing of actors—Marines and mothers—displayed remarkable agency, engaging in various forms of political activism regarding U.S. involvement in the burgeoning civil war in China. Marines deployed in China contributed to shaping American foreign policy discourse with their blunt assessments of conditions on the ground. Simultaneously, as the visible agents of U.S. power in China, Marine Corps officers directing the deployment carefully and deliberately avoided a costly escalation that could have trapped the United States as an active combatant in the Chinese Civil War. The Marines' families—especially their mothers—wrote letters to members of Congress, newspapers, and government officials demanding an end to the mission in North China. While the Truman administration stumbled into the morass of the Chinese Civil War, Marines and mothers sought to galvanize the American public firmly against a de facto American intervention in North China.

## Changing of the Guard and Competing Interests

Operation Beleaguer (1945–49), the code name for the III AC occupation of North China, emerged during a period of tremendous national and geopolitical transition. Franklin D. Roosevelt's promotion of China as "the great Fourth Power in the world" frustrated Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, and U.S. military leadership.<sup>8</sup> Unbeknownst to the public, during the Big Three summit at the Yalta Conference in February 1945, a frail Roosevelt secretly conceded to Stalin's territorial demands in the Far East in exchange for Soviet entry into the war against Japan and tacit support for China's Nationalist government. Roosevelt would not live long enough to serve as the charismatic me-

<sup>4</sup> Henry I. Shaw, *The United States Marines in North China, 1945–1949* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1960), 3–5.

<sup>5</sup> "Parade after Japanese Surrender, 1945," John C. McQueen Collection, Collection 64, Archives, Marine Corps History Division (MCHD), Quantico, VA.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Bernstein, *China 1945: Mao's Revolution and America's Fateful Choice* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 65–69.

<sup>7</sup> James Chieh Hsiung and Steven I. Levine, eds., *China's Bitter Victory: The War with Japan, 1937–1945* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1992), 203–4.

<sup>8</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *Memoirs of the Second World War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959), 753; Odd Arne Westad, *Cold War and Revolution: Soviet-American Rivalry and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War, 1944–1946* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 9; and Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China, 1941–1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 35.

diator in the implementation of the Yalta accords as he envisioned.<sup>9</sup> That role fell instead to a significantly different personality—Harry S. Truman—at the dawn of the Cold War.

It was one thing to rhetorically support Roosevelt's vision of China as a world power, but confronted with an assertive Soviet Union and a sudden end to the war, Truman faced difficult choices and the practical limitations of U.S. strength. By the next meeting of the Big Three at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, Truman suspected that recent Soviet behavior in Eastern Europe foreshadowed Soviet behavior in the Far East. Truman sought to minimize Russian expansion in East Asia by shutting the Soviets out of the military occupation of Japan and by placing U.S. troops on the mainland in China and Korea.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, after 2 September 1945 (Victory over Japan Day), the new president was confronted by strong political pressure to rapidly demobilize America's armed forces and a forthcoming midterm congressional election in 1946.<sup>11</sup> Roosevelt's public speeches had justified American sacrifice of troops and material in a global struggle for freedom, self-determination, and anti-imperialism. In truth, Roosevelt brokered secret agreements with allies that had yet to abandon the imperial order. Roosevelt famously circumvented bureaucrats, but Truman now faced War, Navy, and State departments with differing ideas about how to occupy Japanese territory.<sup>12</sup> As the Pacific War came to a sudden end, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) rushed to issue orders, establish boundaries, and to cope with conflicting priorities.

Operations Blacklist, Campus, and Beleaguer—the occupations of Japan, South Korea, and North China, respectively—all competed for limited resources, especially troops and sealift. After debate among the Services and theater commanders, the JCS

prioritized first Japan, then Korea, and finally China. Until the 11th hour, an American occupation of the key port of Dalian (Dairen) in Manchuria was in play. With the devil in the details, field grade officers at the Pentagon established boundaries that sought to marry political directives with military realities, such as the 38th parallel (latitude 38° north), which would divide the U.S. and Soviet zones of occupation in Korea.<sup>13</sup> On 9 August, the Soviets entered the Pacific War and the second atomic bomb destroyed Nagasaki, Japan. The next day, Japan broadcast its intent to surrender. The race to the mainland and a contest to shape a new order for East Asia was on.

While countering Soviet ambitions drove President Truman to commit forces to mainland Asia and deny Stalin an occupation zone in Hokkaido, supporting the Chinese Nationalist government emerged as an important element of U.S. policy.<sup>14</sup> Keenly aware of the growing tension between the Chinese Nationalists and Communists, U.S. Army general Albert C. Wedemeyer, commanding general of U.S. Forces China and advisor to Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, requested six American divisions to stabilize North and Central China. With insufficient occupation forces to meet demand, the JCS met Truman's intent by seizing key ports and terrain in North China with the Marines of the III AC.<sup>15</sup> Prioritized last for sealift, the III AC deployed in late September 1945. In the lull of August–September and responding to the long-anticipated Soviet invasion of Manchuria, Mao Zedong redeployed his Communist forces to North China and Manchuria.<sup>16</sup> Directed by the JCS, Wedemeyer would make U.S. sea and air lift available for nearly 500,000 Nationalist troops to ports and airfields secured by the III AC.<sup>17</sup> While what turned out to be fruitless high-level negotiations in Chongqing (Chungking) between Chiang and Mao were taking place, the scene for a renewed Chinese Civil War was

<sup>9</sup> Herbert Feis, *China Tangle: The American Effort in China from Pearl Harbor to the Marshall Mission* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953), 248–54.

<sup>10</sup> Marc S. Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia: American East Asian Policy and the Fall of the Japanese Empire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 56–57.

<sup>11</sup> Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia*, 120.

<sup>12</sup> Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia*, 19–37.

<sup>13</sup> Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia*, 75.

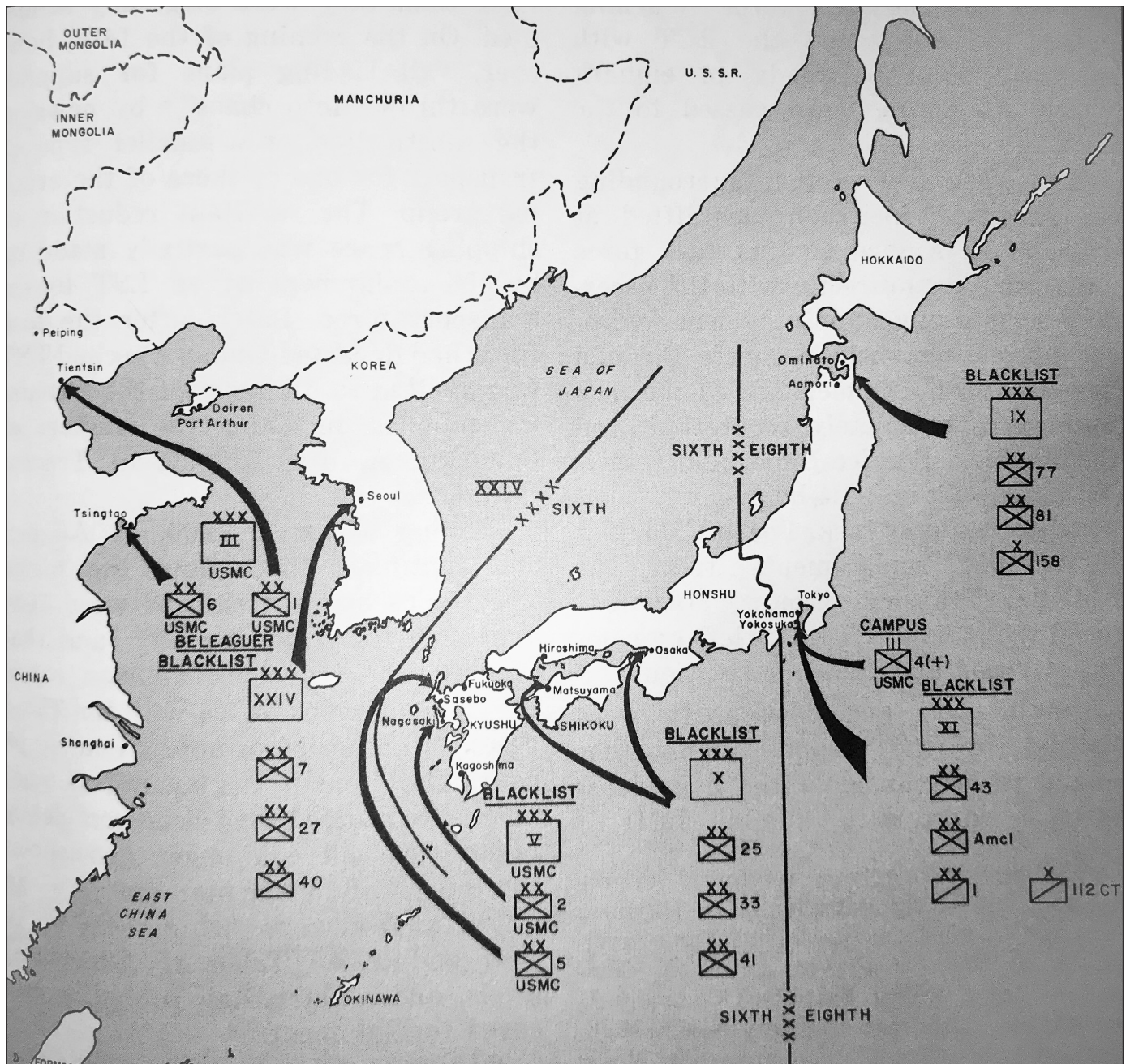
<sup>14</sup> Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, 104–5.

<sup>15</sup> Benis M. Frank and Henry I. Shaw, *Victory and Occupation: History of the U.S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, vol. 5 (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1968), 533.

<sup>16</sup> Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, 78–79.

<sup>17</sup> Gallicchio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia*, 97.





*Courtesy of Archives, Marine Corps History Division*

Occupation plan for Imperial Japanese-held territory, 1945. Operation Beleaguer would be the responsibility of the Marine III Amphibious Corps in China.

being set in the northeast. Behind closed doors, factions within the Truman administration viewed the III AC as an answer to meet different policy aims, ranging from checking Soviet ambition to reasserting Nationalist sovereignty. Publicly, the landing of the III AC in North China came as a surprise. Absent

a formal announcement from the Truman administration, as newspapers reported the Marine landings in October, diplomats, politicians, Marines, and the American public wondered aloud: just exactly what were the Marines doing in North China?

## Montana Congressman Sounds the Alarm

One congressman's clear and credible voice stood out immediately in opposition to U.S. intervention in North China: Michael J. Mansfield of Montana's first congressional district. From October to December 1945, Representative Mansfield carried out a veritable media and policy blitz in the halls of Congress, in the State Department, and in print and broadcast media. A member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Mansfield sensed strategic confusion and bureaucratic dysfunction lurking behind America's China policy.<sup>18</sup> The Montana democrat publicly expressed his frustration on the House floor and in public appearances in early October 1945.<sup>19</sup> In the week following the III AC's landing, Mansfield was one of the first government officials to highlight the dangerous potential for war. Appearing as a panelist for the Foreign Policy Association, Mansfield took a pragmatic stance against an enhanced American empire. Recalling an interventionist era when Marines landed to defend U.S. business interests in China and Latin America, Mansfield emphatically stated that "the policy of imperialism . . . must be a thing of the past."<sup>20</sup> In a speech before the House on 11 October, Mansfield reminded his fellow congressmen—and the newspapers he knew would print his words—of China's domestic volatility.<sup>21</sup> Not surprisingly, the former Marine Corps private intently focused on the anticipated quandary the Marines would face with the probable renewal of a Chinese Civil War. Mansfield noted that "the Shantung and Hopeh provinces. . . contain sizeable Communist elements" and that "in that area we might be unable to maintain a hands-off policy." He noted also that "the landing of the First and Sixth Marine Divi-

sions . . . constitute an unwarranted interference in the affairs of China."<sup>22</sup> Mansfield recommended a rapid withdrawal, fearful of a creeping political role for the leathernecks in the unpredictable Chinese morass.

Mansfield's speech on 11 October was printed in newspapers around the world, but he also set his sights on persuading key policymakers in the Department of State. Visiting the director of the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, John Carter Vincent, on 15 October, Mansfield reiterated his deep concerns about a lengthy Marine presence in North China and emphasized his "fear that the Soviet Union" might postpone withdrawal from Manchuria as a result. Vincent presented Mansfield with an official letter to Representative Emerson Hugh DeLacy (D-WA) stating that "our armed forces are in China not for the purpose of assisting any Chinese faction or group."<sup>23</sup> Vincent noted that after Mansfield read the letter, "the explanation . . . did not satisfy" him.<sup>24</sup> In a memorandum to Acting Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson, Vincent proposed that Acheson prompt the secretaries of war and the U.S. Navy to make public statements that the Marines "would be withdrawn as soon as they [could] be relieved by Chinese Government Forces."<sup>25</sup> In Mansfield, Vincent found an ally who not only agreed with his position but also was a willing partner unencumbered by bureaucratic media protocols. Mansfield would be the public voice that Vincent could not.

The same day Vincent met with Mansfield, Acheson received a cable from Chongqing emphasizing the benefits of the Marine presence for Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government. Despite awareness of heightened Chinese Communist ire toward the Unit-

<sup>18</sup> Mike Mansfield, "Situation in China," *Congressional Record* 91, no. 210 (11 December 1945): 12031–34.

<sup>19</sup> Mr. Mansfield, "American Policy in the Far East," *Congressional Record* 91, no. 210 (11 October 1945): 9629–30; "U.S. Erred in North China, Foreign Policy Body Hears," *Cincinnati (OH) Enquirer*, 10 October 1945; and Don Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield: The Extraordinary Life of a Great American Statesman and Diplomat* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003), 86–87.

<sup>20</sup> "U.S. Erred in North China, Foreign Policy Body Hears."

<sup>21</sup> Speech Notes, October 1945, series 4, box 2, folder 1, Mike Mansfield Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, hereafter Mansfield Papers.

<sup>22</sup> Mansfield, "American Policy in the Far East," 9629–30.

<sup>23</sup> Under Secretary of State (Acheson) to Representative Hugh De Lacy, 9 October 1945, in *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945–The Far East, China*, vol. 7 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1969), 577–78, hereafter FRUS, China.

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Vincent) to the Under Secretary of State (Acheson), in FRUS, China, 580–81.

<sup>25</sup> John Carter Vincent to Dean Acheson, memo, "American Marines in North China," 16 October 1945, Chinese Civil War and U.S.-China Relations: Records of the Office of Chinese Affairs, 1945–1955, Top Secret, 1945 410.003 Naval Activities Affecting China, NARA via GALE Databases.



ed States, the American diplomatic mission in China was nevertheless pleased that Marines were tipping the balance toward the Nationalists. The U.S. military attaché happily reported that “Chinese Communists are no match for Central Govt [sic] troops acting with American assistance.”<sup>26</sup> Mansfield’s State Department meeting and 11 October congressional speech presurized the State Department’s internal deliberations about China policy and bolstered Vincent’s position against the American mission in Chongqing.

The debate about U.S.-China policy entered an important phase in autumn 1945. Mansfield’s speech occurred in the wake of the London Council of Foreign Ministers’ meeting, where significant friction between Secretary of State James F. Byrnes and Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov emerged about the future of democracy in Eastern Europe and the Soviet role in the Far East.<sup>27</sup> Mansfield’s anti-interventionist speech was printed in the Soviet newspaper *Izvestiya* on 16 October, and Ambassador W. Averell Harriman cabled Mansfield’s retranslated speech to the secretary of state and to Chongqing.<sup>28</sup> The state-controlled Soviet press found Mansfield’s position favorable to Soviet interests, which gave American diplomats understandable pause. The Marines in North China were already pawns in a geopolitical Cold War chess game that few Americans in October 1945 even knew about.

While trying to get on the president’s calendar, Mansfield returned to Congress on 30 October and delivered another speech critical of the Truman administration’s deployment of Marines. Mansfield declared to the House that a Chinese “civil war is in progress” and that “marines have already been wounded in the province of Shantung because of fighting between Chinese elements.” Mansfield again called for an unequivocal withdrawal from North China, not just on the basis of projected risk but on hard-earned

credit fighting World War II. “These men,” he said, “have done their job in the Pacific and the best policy for us would be to bring them home to their country and their loved ones.”<sup>29</sup> As Mansfield spoke, Consul Paul W. Meyer in Tianjin cabled to administration officials an alternate view of the important stabilizing role Marines played in the key railroad city. Meyer noted that the “mission of American Marines . . . daily takes on more of a political aspect” and that “this development is natural and unavoidable . . . and presumably was contemplated when the Marines were sent in here.”<sup>30</sup> Meyer’s recommendation stood in stark contrast to Mansfield’s, revealing the complicated risk balance the Truman administration faced. All options presented consequences.

By the first week of November, headlines like “Yank Intervention Charged by Reds” appeared nationwide.<sup>31</sup> After a month of speeches, press events, and State Department meetings, Mansfield took his case directly to Truman and reminded the president about “our fundamental policy of non-interference.” In a letter on 7 November, Mansfield wrote to the president that “the sending in of over 50,000 United States Marines to North China . . . is, in my opinion, potentially explosive . . . our forces are caught in a situation not of their making and one which may involve us unwittingly.” Mansfield raised the specter of public opinion and appealed to Truman’s political sense, noting that “it will cause trouble here at home as the American people have no desire for their boys to become involved in another country’s troubles.” Finally, Mansfield introduced Truman to indications of low troop morale, writing, “I have received hundreds of letters in the past month from servicemen in Asia and the feeling on their part is one of great discontent. These men have done their job and the best policy for us would be to bring them home.”<sup>32</sup> Truman granted

<sup>26</sup> The Chargé in China (Robertson) to the Secretary of State, telegram, 14/15 October 1945, in FRUS, China, 579–80.

<sup>27</sup> First Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, London, 11 September–2 October 1945, in *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, General—Political and Economic Matters*, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1967), 99–559.

<sup>28</sup> Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Harriman) to the Secretary of State, telegram, 17 October 1945, in FRUS, China, 581–82.

<sup>29</sup> Mr. Mansfield, *Congressional Record* 91, no. 210 (30 October 1945): 10204–5.

<sup>30</sup> Consul at Tientsin (Meyer) to the Secretary of State, telegram, 30 October 1945, in FRUS, China, 599–600.

<sup>31</sup> “Yank Intervention Charged by Reds,” *Havre (MT) Daily News*, 5 November 1945.

<sup>32</sup> Mansfield letter to President Truman, 7 November 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.



Mansfield a White House meeting about China policy three weeks later, but his administration moved immediately to calm the growing clamor raised by Mansfield and a skeptical public. In early November, Secretary of State Byrnes held a press conference and announced that “the United States is planning to withdraw its Marines from hot spots in China.”<sup>33</sup> Byrnes’s statement may have bought some time for Truman’s plans to mature, but the deteriorating conditions in North China prevented a hasty withdrawal. The burden of pursuing a more nuanced U.S. policy in the Far East would fall on the shoulders of the III AC.

### Marines, Morale, and Mission: Military Voices (1945–46)

Deployed to North China in October 1945, the Marines of III AC implemented a more limited American policy by resisting the expansion of their mission and restraining the use of force. They also wrote home in exasperated frustration. Operation Beleaguer tasked the III AC with seizing key ports, railheads, airfields, and cities in North China to accept the “local surrender of Japanese forces” and “to cooperate with Chinese Central Government Forces,” while “avoiding collaboration” with “forces opposing the Central government.”<sup>34</sup> The III AC, commanded by Major General Keller E. Rockey, primarily comprised the 1st and 6th Marine Divisions as well as the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. All told, the veteran 53,000-man III AC brought a formidable, full-spectrum combat force of tanks, fighter aircraft, artillery, and infantry to North China. Despite the Marines’ advantages in firepower and equipment, they were heavily outnumbered in North China by Japanese soldiers (326,000), Chinese “puppet” troops under Japanese control (480,000), and at least 170,000 Communist Chinese forces.<sup>35</sup> Exactly how these disparate elements would interact was unclear. Only time would tell whether

the Americans would be welcomed as liberators or shunned as invaders by the millions of liberated and war-weary Chinese. As confused as the mission and environment seemed to Marine senior officers like General Rockey, the young enlisted Marines were even more in the dark. The American troops’ morale, peaked by America’s and its allies’ sudden victory in August, quickly evaporated by late 1945, and they sounded off in letters home and in protest meetings throughout the Pacific declaring that “we have won the victory . . . we want to go home now!”<sup>36</sup> The “citizen army,” which came to view itself as “exiled citizens,” turned to political activism.<sup>37</sup> Some Marines were simply eager to return to their prewar lives and perceived their open-ended stay in China as fundamentally unfair—especially as compared with their Army counterparts in Europe. A group of Marines wondered “if Uncle Sam [knew] there is such a thing as the Marine Corps and especially the 1st Marine Division?”<sup>38</sup> Other Marines, however, wrote letters to Congress pointedly skeptical of U.S. aims in postwar China. One noted that while this was “primarily a political question,” he had earned “the right to ask questions,” including “why are we in China,” after the hard-fought battle of Okinawa.<sup>39</sup> Armed with pens and newly freed from wartime censorship, citizen soldiers participated in the democracy they had fought to defend.

<sup>36</sup> Letter to Mansfield from the Enlisted Men of the 3220th E.F.S.P.D., Nagoya, Japan, 12 January 1946, series 5, box 111, folder 3, Mansfield Papers. This letter included the signatures of 36 enlisted. Letter to Mansfield from the Forgotten Men of the Pacific, from Guam, 14 January 1946, series 5, box 111, folder 3, Mansfield Papers. The numerous letters in the Mansfield Papers from Army, Marine, and Army Air Corps units in Manila, Korea, Japan, Burma, India, and China, suggest a widespread and vocal opposition to the maintenance of a large-standing overseas occupation force.

<sup>37</sup> Letter to the American People copied to Mansfield from Your Affectionate Sons, from the South Pacific, January 1946, series 5, box 111, folder 3, Mansfield Papers.

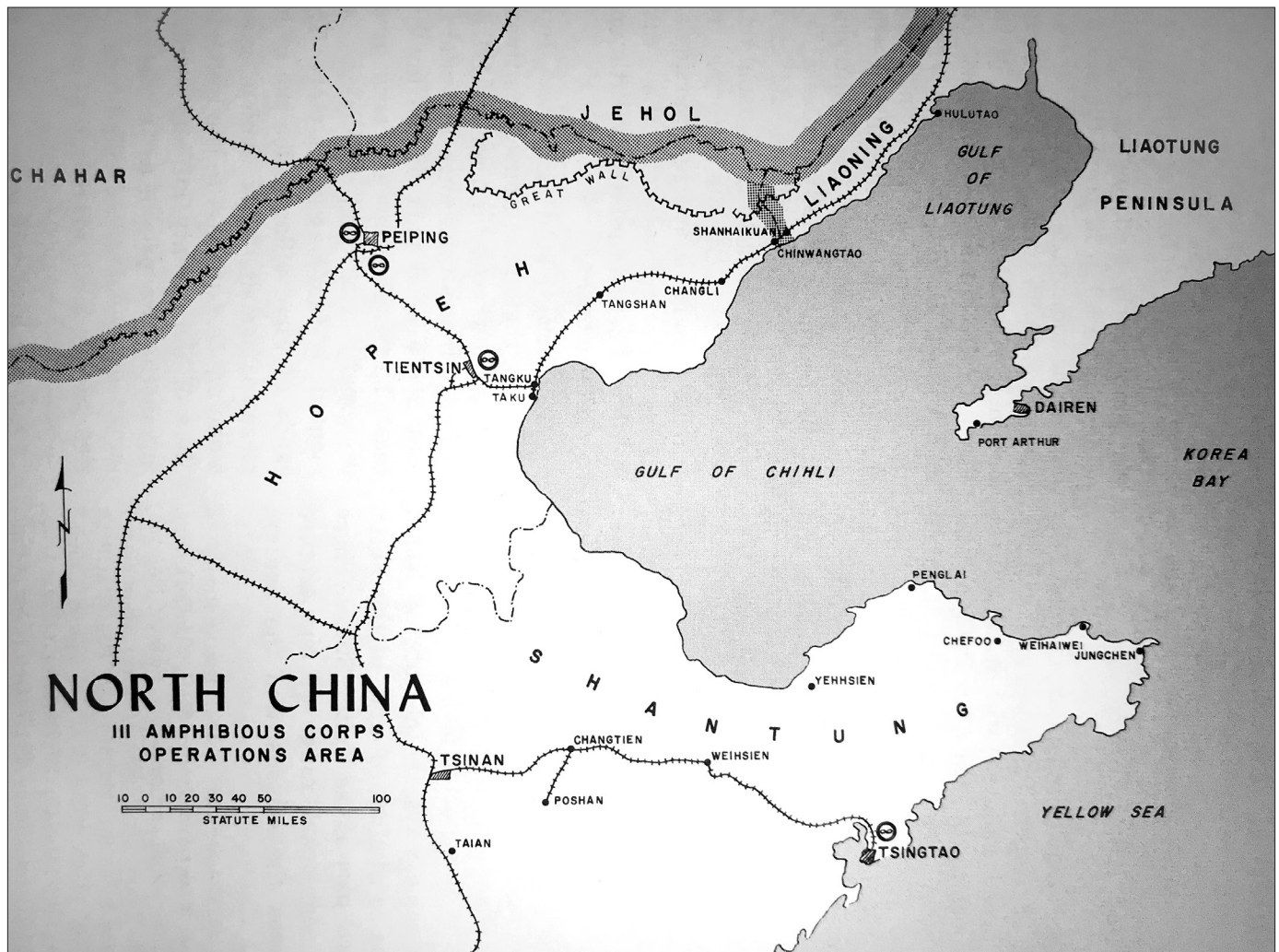
<sup>38</sup> Letter to Mansfield from the Men of the Detachment Stationed in Ching Wang Tao, China, part of the 1st Marine Division, 16 October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>39</sup> Letter to Mansfield from Warren Peterson, 6 December 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 4, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>33</sup> “US Marines Soon to Be Withdrawn,” *Montana Standard* (Butte), 8 November 1945.

<sup>34</sup> “6th Mar Div Op Ord Annex A,” 18 September 1945, Papers, WWII, China, box 1, folder 2/1, Archives, MCHD.

<sup>35</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 533–42. “Puppet” troops were local Chinese troops serving under the authority of the Japanese government.



*Courtesy of Archives, Marine Corps History Division*

III Amphibious Corps operations area of Shandong and Hubei Provinces. The Marines would secure key ports, cities, and railways. The Soviet Far East Army occupied neighboring Manchuria (Jehol and Liaoning Provinces), 1945.

In North China, senior leaders and staff of the III AC sought to minimize expansion of their mission beyond simply disarming and repatriating the Japanese. The temptation to serve as facilitators for the Chinese Nationalist forces persisted throughout the Marines' time in North China. While the Marine leaders accepted the Truman administration's preference for a "strong, peaceful, united, and democratic China" under Chiang Kai-shek, they also recognized that American policy would hinge largely upon the Communist response.<sup>40</sup> Shaped by experienced leaders, the Marines established and maintained a baseline policy

of noninvolvement and risk mitigation through skillful negotiation and strict rules of engagement.

General Rockey and his senior officers immediately recognized that the Communists desired to maintain their positional advantage and would resist the deployment of Nationalist forces. Fortunately, the Marine leadership was experienced not only in recent combat, but also in occupation duty before the war. Of the eight generals in the III AC, only Rockey had never been stationed in China, although he had served with distinction in the occupations of both Nicaragua and Haiti.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps the most experienced

<sup>40</sup> President Truman to Gen Marshall, U.S. Policy Towards China, 15 December 1945, FRUS, China, 770-73.

<sup>41</sup> "Lieutenant General Keller E. Rockey, USMC (DECEASED)," Marine Corps History Division, accessed 6 May 2022.

was Brigadier General William A. Worton, Rockey's chief of staff. A Chinese speaker with more than 12 years of China experience, Worton coordinated the advanced party and identified the key locations where the Marines would deploy and billet.<sup>42</sup> In late September, Worton was contacted by "the people opposed to Chiang Kai-shek." Zhou Enlai (Chou En-lai) arrived for a tense negotiation and informed Worton that the Communist troops would fight the Marines if they attempted to occupy Beijing. Unfazed, Worton coolly informed Zhou that the highly trained III AC would sweep aside any force the Communists could muster. Noting the Marines' superior firepower, maneuverability, and airpower, Worton concluded the tense meeting by informing Zhou exactly how the Marines could easily occupy Beijing. Zhou replied that "he would get the Marines' orders changed." This was possible as Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek were negotiating in Chongqing.<sup>43</sup> At this pivotal moment in North China, Zhou and Mao chose not to resist the Marines' advance in force.<sup>44</sup> Mao opted instead for a strategy of information warfare "designed to arouse public opinion" in the United States and China against American support for Chiang.<sup>45</sup>

Marine and Navy senior leaders also sought to avoid direct confrontation with Communists by carefully selecting operating areas and by establishing strict rules of engagement. The governing order stated that the mission "is one of assisting a friendly nation in the discharge of a large and complex task. In accomplishing this task every effort must be made to limit our participation to one of an advisory and liaison nature."<sup>46</sup> This policy was tested at the outset at Chefoo in Shandong Province, where an intended landing site quickly proved a point of friction. When local Communists seized the port before Americans could land, the Navy-Marine Corps leadership faced

a dilemma: put ashore and assert American authority in the name of the Chinese Nationalist government or cede the territory to the Communists. In this context, Seventh Fleet commander Admiral Daniel E. Barbey and General Rockey met aboard the USS *Catoctin* (AGC 5) just offshore Chefoo on 7 October and weighed their options. While General Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr.'s 6th Marine Division could easily have secured the port by force, Rockey decided to avoid the potential conflict and instead to land the division at Qingdao (Tsingtao). Rockey later recalled that Chiang was furious about this decision during a face-to-face meeting in November.<sup>47</sup> Rockey, however, was quite comfortable with his decision for reasons made clear in a 13 October letter to Commandant of the Marine Corps General Alexander A. Vandegrift. "Admiral Barbey and I," Rockey wrote, "both felt that any landing there would be an interference in the internal affairs of China; that it would be bitterly resented by the Communists and that there would probably be serious repercussions."<sup>48</sup> Rockey's caution contrasted with that of his chief of staff, Worton, who had stared down Zhou just days before. Perhaps Rockey was shaped by his personal experience fighting a tough counterinsurgency in Nicaragua in 1928 as a young major, for which he received a second Navy Cross. Rockey was reluctant to place his Marines in a similar position.<sup>49</sup>

One of the principal ways individual Marines resisted participation in the growing Chinese Civil War was through strict rules of engagement. Faced with persistent threats, firefights, casualties, and abductions, Marines sought creative ways to use limited and proportionate force to deescalate perilous confrontations. Nonlethal shows of airpower, smaller tactical maneuver elements, and limited armament were some

<sup>42</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 544.

<sup>43</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 548.

<sup>44</sup> E. R. Hooton, *The Greatest Tumult: The Chinese Civil War, 1936-49* (London, UK: Brassey's, 1991), 18-19.

<sup>45</sup> Commanding General, United States Forces, China Theater (Wedemeyer), to the Chief of Staff, United States Army (Marshall), telegram, 14 November 1945, FRUS, China, 628.

<sup>46</sup> "6th Mar Div Op Ord Annex A," 18 September 1945, Papers, WWII, China, box 1, folder 2/1, Archives, MCHD.

<sup>47</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 559.

<sup>48</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 559.

<sup>49</sup> "Navy Cross Citation, Major Keller E. Rockey, USMC, December 11, 1929," Hall of Valor Project, accessed 2 March 2021.



of the techniques Marines used to avoid larger clashes with the ubiquitous Communists.<sup>50</sup>

The day before General Rockey's conference off the coast of Chefoo, Marines came under fire while attempting to clear roadblocks 22 miles (35.4 km) northwest of Tianjin. Not coincidentally, that same day the 92d Chinese Nationalist Army began to arrive in Beijing via American aircraft. Despite taking three casualties and returning small arms fire, the 1st Marine Regiment avoided the use of supporting artillery and temporarily withdrew in good order. The following day, the Marines incorporated a visible show of force with tanks and fighter aircraft, allowing the road to the ancient capital of Beijing to be cleared without further bloodshed.<sup>51</sup> Marines routinely employed aircraft as a show of force, a nonlethal innovation designed to demonstrate control and improve reconnaissance across the massive operating area.

The mission of these aircraft—like so much of the Marines' recent Chinese experiences—was perplexing to some. One corporal wrote that “for almost three days our airplanes flew in formation back and forth and had there been any trouble they would of [sic] not been able to drop bombs on Chinese people.” This was not a cynical “glory hunt,” as he supposed and described it, but instead a deliberate tactical choice to limit the use of force and avoid escalation. Coincidentally, this Marine belonged to the 29th Marine Regiment, which had disembarked at Qingdao due to the potential Communist threat at Chefoo. The corporal noted that “luckily the trouble between the Chinese was to [sic] hot so we was put here into Tsing-tao . . . now we are doing nothing except stand guard duty over our own camp.”<sup>52</sup> The relative boredom of the Shandong Marines was a good problem to have in late 1945.

<sup>50</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 559–93. Shows of force were designed to showcase superior American mobility, firepower, and technology. The missions drew regular ground fire, contributing to 22 aircraft losses, but the Marines' strict rules of engagement prevented aircraft from routinely shooting back. A mandated minimum elevation of 5,000 feet above ground level minimized the probability of effective ground fire.

<sup>51</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 558.

<sup>52</sup> Cpl Taylor to Mike Mansfield, 30 October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

As the Marines in Hubei Province defended key trestles and junctions of the critical railway, the Communists began to sabotage the tracks and challenge the small, remote Marine units in coordinated attacks with mines and harassing small arms fire. Even generals traveling by train were not immune. Visiting his widely spread-out forces along the Tanggu-Qinhuangdao (Tangku-Chinwangtao) railway, Major General DeWitt Peck, commander of the 1st Marine Division, came under attack on 14 November. After the rail lines were blown in front of the train, rifle fire poured onto Peck and his escort Marines from an adjacent village. Returning fire and maneuvering for cover, Peck worked his way to the radio jeep tied down on a flat car. Radioing for reinforcements, Peck also contacted General Rockey and requested immediate close air support. Interestingly, the aircraft sortied from the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing were to be loaded with “ammunition only” and not equipped with bombs—something the wing commander protested. Communist fire broke off before the aircraft arrived, preventing a potentially difficult decision. In subsequent messages between Rockey and General Albert Wedemeyer, commander of all U.S. forces in China, Rockey “indicated that he was ready to authorize a strafing mission if fire continued from the offending village.” While the considerable restraint shown by Peck and the proportional response of strafing rather than bombing from Rockey was notable, Wedemeyer raised the stakes further. In a message to Rockey, Wedemeyer wrote: “If American lives are endangered . . . it is desired that you inform the military leader or responsible authority in that village in writing that such firing must be stopped. After ensuring that your warning . . . has been received and understood, should firing continue, you are authorized to take appropriate action for their protection.”<sup>53</sup> Such restrictive rules of engagement placed Marines at tremendous risk, but also underlined the extent to which military leaders went to avoid greater involvement in the Chinese Civil War.

<sup>53</sup> Frank and Shaw, *Victory and Occupation*, 585–86.

The restrictive rules of engagement would be tested continuously during the Marines' tenure in North China in numerous small firefights, but none in 1945 gained the attention of the American public like the Anshan incident. On 4 December, suspected Communists shot two Marines in the countryside.<sup>54</sup> One Marine succumbed to his wounds and the second survived by playing dead, despite being shot a second time at point-blank range. The wounded man slowly crawled back to his post and relayed the story to his chain of command. In response, a light infantry force from 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, set out to confront the perpetrators in the small village of Anshan. Approaching the village near nightfall, the patrol established a mortar position, and then sought out the local leadership with an interpreter's help. So far, they precisely followed Wedemeyer's directive. The young officer leading the patrol told the village leaders "to surrender the murderers within a half hour" or the village would be shelled. After the tense 30 minutes expired and no one surrendered, the Marines fired "24 rounds of high explosive and one of white phosphorus" toward the village perimeter. No one was killed by the shelling, and little physical damage occurred. Nevertheless, American journalists reported a salacious version that alleged commission of a war crime.<sup>55</sup>

Articles with titles such as "Marines Shell Village in North China" ran across the country.<sup>56</sup> A particularly harsh editorial in the *Washington Post* elicited a rare letter to the editor in response from Commandant General Vandegrift on 14 December. The *Washington Post* asked, "To what values are the United States Marines forever faithful?" before expressing "shock and shame" at the report of the shelling. The editorial implied that the Marines had committed a war crime on par with those committed by Nazi Germany and that "from the point of view of the Chinese . . . it is per-

haps indistinguishable from the kind of civilization brought to them by the Japanese."<sup>57</sup>

Congressman Mansfield noted the *Washington Post* editorial and asked Vandegrift for a copy of the investigative report. Mansfield viewed the Anshan incident as a prime example of the unintended consequences of deploying Marines in China that could only worsen as the Chinese civil war expanded.<sup>58</sup> Vandegrift completed the inquiry and sent a copy to Mansfield as well as the copy of a four-page rebuttal letter to Eugene Meyer, publisher of the *Washington Post*. Vandegrift noted that only "two windowpanes" were damaged and that the rounds were carefully "placed outside" the village walls. Vandegrift then concluded that "in a delicate and confusing situation [the Marines in China] have performed their tasks with exceptional tact and intelligence."<sup>59</sup> Such a full-throated defense from the Commandant was notable, but it also exhibited how a small-unit tactical decision could have profound impact on the American public via a recently uncensored press.

As wartime censorship laws were lifted in September 1945, enlisted soldiers, airmen, and Marines in occupation duties throughout the Pacific expressed their frustration through letters, telegrams, and organized meetings.<sup>60</sup> The Tokyo-based editor of the military paper *Stars and Stripes* estimated that "more than half" of servicemember's letters for the "Comment and Query" section were complaints about the slow pace and fairness of redeployment. In a clear nod toward political accountability, the stamp "No Boats, No Votes" appeared on thousands of letters mailed from the Pacific in late 1945.<sup>61</sup> The situation in North China pressurized the palpable angst of servicemembers and their families, and they "flooded Congress" with let-

<sup>54</sup> After years of conflict in North China, armed banditry was ubiquitous.

<sup>55</sup> "U.S. Marines Shell Village after Chinese Shoot 2 Yanks," *St. Louis (MO) Post-Dispatch*, 8 December 1945.

<sup>56</sup> "Marines Shell Village in North China," *Great Falls (MT) Tribune*, 9 December 1945.

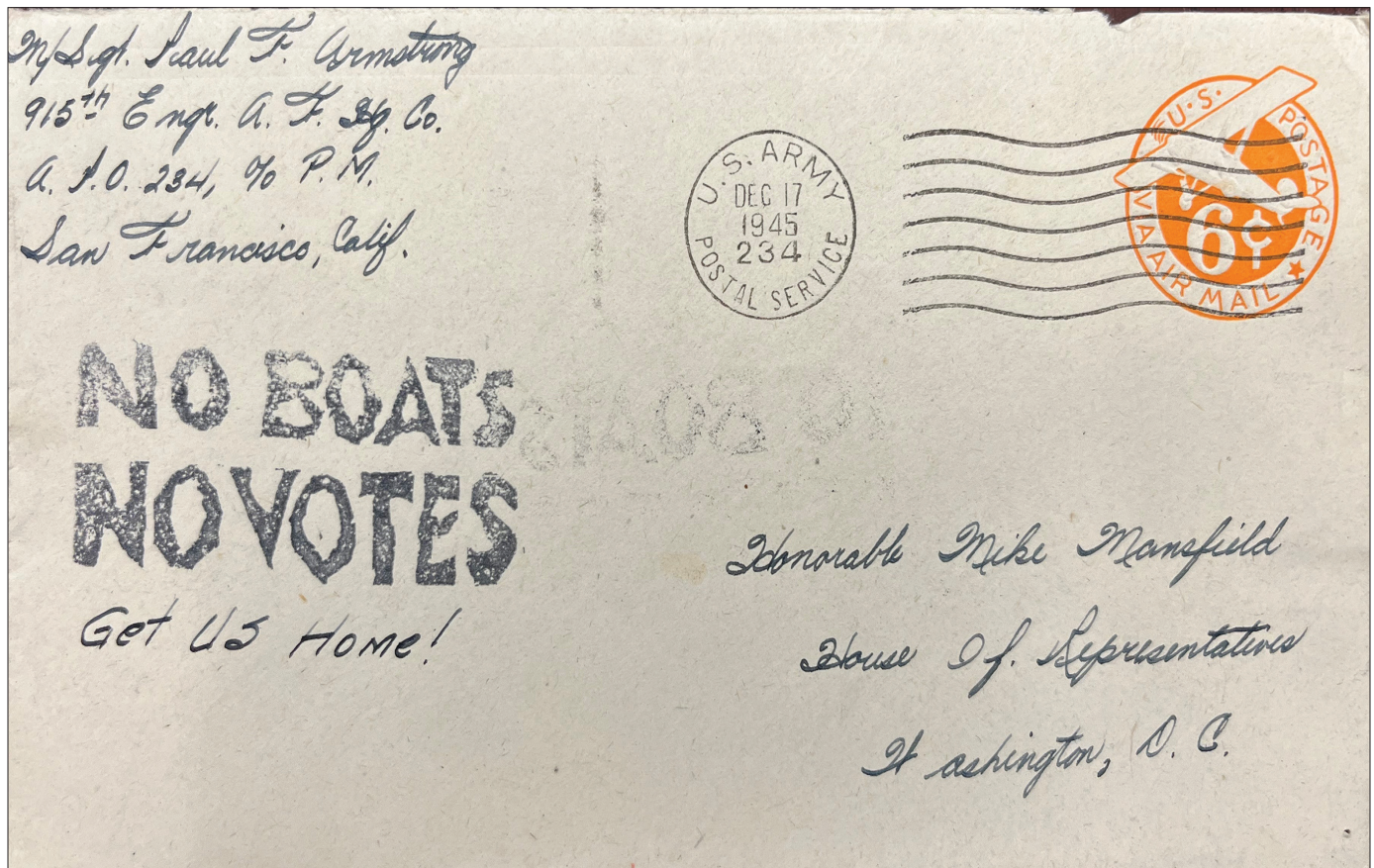
<sup>57</sup> "Semper Fidelis," *Washington Post*, 12 December 1945, 6.

<sup>58</sup> Mansfield letter to Gen A. A. Vandegrift, 31 December 1945, series 4, box 25, folder 4, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>59</sup> A. A. Vandegrift letter to Eugene Meyer, 1 February 1946, series 4, box 26, folder 4, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>60</sup> Letters Presented to the Congressional Record, 13 December 1945, Burton Kendall Wheeler Papers, MC 35, box 21, folder 2, Montana Historical Society Research Center, Archives, Helena, MT; and Demobilization, series 5, box 111, folders 3–6, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>61</sup> "Pacific Veterans Press for Return," *New York Times*, 5 December 1945.



Series 4, box 26, folder 6, Mike Mansfield Papers, Archives and Special Collections, University of Montana

A Guam-based servicemember posted a letter to Congressman Mike Mansfield (D-MT) that urged Congress to take action on demobilization in December 1945. The “No Boats, No Votes” stamp appeared on thousands of letters mailed to the United States from the Pacific.

ters in response.<sup>62</sup> Mansfield was deluged with correspondence from American troops overseas containing blunt assessments and serious reservations about what the future held for them.<sup>63</sup> Private First Class Warren G. Peterson of Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, was a candid and frequent correspondent with Mansfield. Peterson also had another relationship with Mansfield: he had attended Mansfield’s Far East history class at the University of Montana in 1942.<sup>64</sup> Peterson was skeptical of American policy in China from the outset and kept Mansfield updated with articles from overseas papers and feedback from enlisted Marines. Peterson’s unit defended the rail junction at Qinhuangdao, a crucial point in transporting essential

coal from neighboring Soviet-occupied Manchuria to the major cities of Tianjin, Beijing, and Shanghai. The 7th Marines were spread out along a railway line almost 200 miles (322 km) in length in Hubei Province, the very section of line where General Peck came under attack.

Mansfield delivered an anti-interventionist speech in Congress that resonated immediately with Marines in China who desperately wanted to go back home and dreaded the thought of an extended war. “The Men of the Detachment stationed in Ching Wang Tao, China,” wrote to Mansfield: “We who are stationed here appreciate the fact that there is at least one man in Washington who realizes . . . there is absolutely no reason for us to be here.” Cynically recalling the fabled imperial duty of the “China Marines,” the Marines of 1945 clearly no longer felt the same allure of “exotic” duty. The unknown Marine

<sup>62</sup> Gallichio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia*, 120.

<sup>63</sup> Redeployment (CBI), series 4, box 26, folders 5–7, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from Mike Mansfield to C. Peterson, 12 November 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.



dryly wrote, "The 'old' Corps can claim that title with our blessings."<sup>65</sup> Included in the letter was a daily news sheet distributed by Marine leadership that included a synopsis of Mansfield's position on withdrawal and nonintervention in China.<sup>66</sup> This story could easily have been omitted from the short news compilation, but instead was selected by an editor and widely distributed to Marines. Purposefully or not, this story struck a nerve with Marines ready and willing to write to their congressman.

While Peterson was likely involved in the first group letter, he began writing to Mansfield personally on 26 October.

We are in the middle of the most confusing mess of international bluff and power politics that I ever thought of. I'm afraid we may mess around until plenty of us get hurt. . . . Yesterday the general in charge of the Communist Army in this area served notice that he plans to move into Chin Wang Tao and set up a government. We received orders from Division headquarters at Tientsin to stop him. Today we checked ammunition and began setting up machine gun emplacements.<sup>67</sup>

Peterson and his fellow Marines hoped not to need to use their machine guns.

The palpable tension in Qinhuangdao was not just a local phenomenon. Some 300 miles (483 km) south in Shandong, enlisted Marines in the 6th Marine Division also expressed a cautious attitude. Corporal David W. Taylor wrote to Mansfield from Qingdao on

30 October, "I hope that . . . those responsible will get the word and take all troops out of here before somebody [sic] set off the firecracker between these Chinese and have some American boys die. We can see it plenty plain over here."<sup>68</sup>

Peterson's letter to Mansfield on 6 December expressed further frustration about the Marines' convoluted mission. He was openly skeptical of official statements regarding America's aims in China. Peterson thought that the American position was far from neutral and that Marines were openly "aiding the Chinese Nationals."<sup>69</sup> Peterson presented a series of concrete examples of how American policy had aided and abetted the Nationalist military.

American-trained, American-equipped Nationalist troops landed in [Qinghuangdao] from American transports. Apparently the Marines had made a beachhead for the Nationalists. We had taken strategic points without resistance from the Communists. Then the Nationalists landed in large numbers and pushed inland. Meanwhile we guarded their communication and transportation lines.<sup>70</sup>

Peterson, in thinking aligned with Mansfield, extrapolated America's China policy in the emerging Cold War context. Drawing a parallel to the U.S. Army incursion into Russia in 1919, Peterson wrote,

I want to know why the American people are not told what we are doing here . . . is this an Archangel Expedition to save China from Communism? Does our government feel that we must keep China under our influence in order to keep out of Russia's? Is this the testing ground of World War III?<sup>71</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Letter to Mansfield from the Men of the Detachment Stationed in Ching Wang Tao, China. This handwritten letter was clearly penned by a single author but signed as a group letter. 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, augmented by Company F, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, and Company G, 2d Battalion, 11th Marines, was garrisoned near Qinhuangdao when this letter was written. Marines were continuously stationed in North China after the 1900 Boxer Rebellion until 8 December 1941. "China Marines" were veterans of the pre-World War II era and lived well on American salaries in the Chinese economy.

<sup>66</sup> "1st Marine Division Daily Newssheet," 13 October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from Warren Peterson, 26 October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>68</sup> Letter from Cpl David W. Taylor, 30 October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>69</sup> Letter from PFC Warren Peter[son], 6 December 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers, hereafter 6 December Peterson letter.

<sup>70</sup> 6 December Peterson letter.

<sup>71</sup> 6 December Peterson letter.

Mansfield wrote back to Peterson and included a copy of his speech to Congress from 11 December. Mansfield was “wholeheartedly in accord with” Peterson’s sentiments and solicited further supporting data from the ground level that Mansfield could leverage in Congress, including local press clippings and news stories from *Stars and Stripes*.<sup>72</sup>

From October to December 1945, Marines deployed to China resisted open participation in the Chinese Civil War by minimizing their military role, restraining the use of lethal force, and through writing letters to families and congressmen. The numerous contingent moments in the early deployment to North China sought to strike a careful balance between “assistance to a friendly nation,” while avoiding open participation in “fratricidal conflict.”<sup>73</sup> A frustrating and difficult task, this balance required tremendous discipline, shrewd decisionmaking, and strict rules of engagement. While the rules of engagement were extremely rigid, information control and censorship were not. That laxity was what enabled the young enlisted Marines to engage in political activity by writing uncensored letters to their parents and Congress. As with all military operations, the moments of contingency apply to all combatants. Just as Marines deliberately avoided escalation, the Communists also side-stepped massed formations and limited themselves to small, isolated, harassing attacks. The Office of Strategic Services assessed this as part of a deliberate Communist strategy to turn American public opinion against intervention on the side of the Nationalists.<sup>74</sup> The troops wanted to go home promptly, and the galvanizing purpose of winning the war expired with the Japanese surrender. By keeping a low military profile vis-à-vis the U.S. Marine Corps deployment, the Communists would not offer another Pearl Harbor-type moment that cried for revenge.

## Political Agents: Mothers, Wives, and Citizen Groups

The removal of censorship also brought Chinese stories like the Anshan incident onto the front pages of newspapers and into the consciousness of citizens across America. The American people relished the promise of a coming peace and resisted the prospects of a new Asian war in China. At the end of 1945, Americans could proudly reflect on a four-year national effort to defeat fascist dictatorships overseas in Germany, Italy, and Japan. In that herculean task, the United States placed more than 16.1 million personnel in uniform, deployed forces across two oceans, and produced more tanks, aircraft carriers, planes, submarines, vehicles, and weapons than any other world power.<sup>75</sup> The war touched every portion of society and lifted the economy out of depression, but at tremendous cost. More than 405,000 uniformed Americans did not return.<sup>76</sup> As the perplexing occupation duty in North China emerged as a potential lengthy intervention into a civil war, mothers, wives, and citizen groups rose in opposition to a new conflict via letters to Congress, newspapers, and through grassroots organization.

One of the ways citizens sought to influence American policy toward China was by writing their government leaders. Correspondence from parents, spouses, and citizen groups suggest that a de facto consensus existed about the need for American non-interference in China and prompt demobilization of the armed forces.<sup>77</sup> Several letters penned by blue-star wives (women with husbands in service) pleaded for assistance to return a husband to help raise young children, run a family farm, or otherwise provide a living. Above all, wives and mothers wanted their loved ones home safely. They remained all too aware

<sup>72</sup> Letter from Mike Mansfield to Warren Peterson, 31 December 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>73</sup> “Op Order IIIAC,” September 1945, Papers, WWII, China, box 1, Archives, MCHD.

<sup>74</sup> Consul at Tientsin (Meyer) to the Secretary of State, 16 November 1945, FRUS, China, 635.

<sup>75</sup> Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997).

<sup>76</sup> *American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2020), 2, 33.

<sup>77</sup> This assessment is based on detailed archival research in the Mansfield, Murray, and Wheeler papers. A wider view was constrained by lack of archival access during the COVID-19 pandemic. While written to a Montana congressman, numerous letters in these archives also originate from Maryland, New York, Illinois, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Washington, indicating a geographic diversity with a similar viewpoint.

of the gold-star wives and mothers who would never be so fortunate.<sup>78</sup>

Mothers voiced steadfast opposition to the Marine deployment to North China in late 1945. These women did not mince words. Writing from Stevensville in December 1945, Ethel Wonnacott reminded Mansfield that mothers wanted their sons back: "I gave my son proudly to fight for our country but not to fight China's Civil War . . . he has seen enough war and hell." Just in case the blunt meatpacker failed to reach Mansfield on these merits, she reminded the congressman that she was an active voter ready to organize. "I feel the voice of Montana Mothers should be enough to command your attention."<sup>79</sup> Wonnacott penned similar comments to Montana Senator James E. Murray, noting that "the sentiments of all Mothers" were that "China's war" was not worth "one American boys' life."<sup>80</sup> When Wonnacott later penned a letter to the editor of the *Missoulian*, she signed it "A Mother of a Montana Marine, Stevensville," but nevertheless issued a call to arms for the community to "raise a howl" so that "Washington will have to listen . . . and demand that our sons be taken out of China, fast. The danger is great."<sup>81</sup> The *Missoulian* consistently advocated self-determination in the newly liberated territories of the world, including China. In a line that Wonnacott would later celebrate in her letter to the editor, the *Missoulian* opined: "If Chiang Kai-shek cannot win without American soldiers, what should happen seems reasonably obvious. We shouldn't fight anybody's war but our own and this is not ours."<sup>82</sup> The angst of uncertainty without clear national purpose rippled across the nation.

The *Missoulian's* editorial position of nonintervention reflected a national trend of which President Truman was well aware. On Armistice Day, 11 November 1945, Truman hosted British prime minister

Clement Attlee and Canadian prime minister W. L. Mackenzie King in a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>83</sup> At this solemn event, the Army combat veteran undoubtedly reflected on the tremendous sacrifice of two costly world wars. The situation in China, however, was also likely on Truman's mind. The same day, Truman saved a compilation of six geographically dispersed editorials about American policy toward the "Civil War in China."<sup>84</sup> The *Christian Science Monitor* opined that the United States was involved in "a degree of intervention which American opinion will not support even in Latin America and to which it violently objects when followed by others."<sup>85</sup> The *Milwaukee Journal* predicted a long struggle in China and concluded that "it is not an American responsibility to furnish arms . . . or one American life to settle this Civil War."<sup>86</sup> The *Hartford Courant* highlighted the duplicitous appearance of American intervention and that the United States should be "scrupulous in avoiding actions that at least can be interpreted as giving military support to Chiang."<sup>87</sup> Reflecting the lack of clarity in the U.S. position, the *New York Times* offered Truman "a way out" of the "East Asia tinder box" by advocating "a more forthright diplomacy."<sup>88</sup> Earlier that week, on 7 November Secretary of State Byrnes announced that "plans were underway to withdraw the marines," but hedged his statement by noting that "marine participation in China is a military, and not a political matter."<sup>89</sup> Truman likely hoped that this statement would calm American anxieties about America's role in China's internal strife, but throughout the remainder of 1945, wives and mothers continued to keep the pressure on.

<sup>78</sup> Families displayed a blue star for each family member in service. The gold star represented the ultimate sacrifice.

<sup>79</sup> Letter from Mrs. R. M. Wonnacott, 9 December 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 4, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Mrs. R. M. Wonnacott, 9 December 1945, series 1, box 216, folder 4, James E. Murray Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana.

<sup>81</sup> "The U.S. and China," *Missoulian* (MT), 19 December 1945.

<sup>82</sup> Editorial, *Missoulian* (MT), 10 December 1945.

<sup>83</sup> President's Daily Appointment Calendar, 11 November 1945, Harry S. Truman Papers, Truman Library, Independence, MO.

<sup>84</sup> "Civil War in China, Editorial Opinion on Policy," *New York Times Overseas Weekly*, 11 November 1945, Harry S. Truman Papers, President's Secretary Files (HST-PSF), Foreign Affairs File 1940–1953, China 1945, NARA.

<sup>85</sup> "American Policy," *Christian Science Monitor*, as quoted in *New York Times Overseas Weekly*, 11 November 1945.

<sup>86</sup> "For No Participation," *Milwaukee (WI) Journal*, as quoted in *New York Times Overseas Weekly*, 11 November 1945.

<sup>87</sup> "Keep Out of China," *Hartford (CT) Courant*, 5 November 1945.

<sup>88</sup> "The Chinese Tinder Box," *New York Times*, 10 November 1945.

<sup>89</sup> "Exit of Marines from China Is Set," *New York Times*, 8 November 1945.



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## Tension At Chinwangtao Growing

### ● IN WASHINGTON

By DOUGLAS LARSEN  
NEA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON, D. C.—All though the war is over, men are still being placed in concentration camps. The number has dwindled proportionately with the number of men being drafted. But in spite of the chances of a draftee seeing action being practically nil now, men continue to refuse to wear uniforms on religious grounds.

A fight is developing between veterans' organizations and certain religious groups over what to do with conscientious objectors. The church groups have been agitating for immediate release of all conscientious objectors.

Shortly after V-J day, national selective service began making plans to release "COs" on a point system. It would have reduced their number at about the same rate as GI's were being released.

The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars protested immediately and the plan was abandoned. Instead, it was decided to let the men over 25 years of age out and, later, those 25 and over. Regulations on dependency cases were relaxed.

Now it is up to congress to decide what to do with the 15,000 old men in CO camps. May 15, 1946, the selective service act expires and a decision will have to be made by that time.

Although it is known that selective service is anxious to get 75% of the whole "conscientious" administration, it is generally agreed that it was handled very well.

### Stores Will Close On Thanksgiving Day Designated by Ford

The merchants committee of the Havre Chamber of Commerce met last night and decided to observe the Thanksgiving day designated by Gov. Sam C. Ford. As yet no official information has been received from Helena but judging by the action of other governors, the date will probably be Thursday, Nov. 22. On the date set by the governor Havre stores will be closed all day.

The committee also announced that Havre stores will remain open until 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 15 and Saturday, Dec. 22. This will give Christmas shoppers an opportunity to shop after the 6 o'clock regular closing time.

A real holiday atmosphere will be installed in Havre this year when street lighting and decorations will prevail. Barney Abraham, chairman of the street decoration committee said today. Further details will be announced later.

Carrying out the holiday spirit into the residential district will be home decorations. People are being encouraged to reuse outdoor lighting. Once again electrical Christmas will prevail. Those heading the home decoration committee are John Clark and E. A. Hays.

### Yamashita Is Charged With Looting Red Cross Packages

MANILA, Nov. 8, (AP)—An affidavit charged Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita today with looting thousands of American Red Cross food parcels in his luxurious Manila home while American civilians were dying by the scores in nearby Bataan islands and camps.

The sworn statement of Maj. Ralph Scheidter of Cleveland, O., directly linked Yamashita to the systematic starvation of the Bataan inmates and was admitted in evidence at his trial only after the vigorous protests of his counsel.

Other witnesses testified the Japanese tortured and murdered 25,000 civilian men, women and children in Bataan province last Feb. 12. A survivor said the Japanese tied 250 men by five and forced them at bayonet point to leap into a huge well. Only seven emerged alive.

Scheidter's statement was forwarded to Manila from Crite general hospital in Cleveland, where he is under treatment. He said he was detailed to clean Yamashita's "large, many-roomed house" in Manila following the American liberation of the capital.

### "Star Maker" Gus Edwards Passes Away in Hollywood

HOLLYWOOD, Nov. 8, (AP)—Gus Edwards, 66, song writer and stage producer, known as the "star maker" who died here last night of a heart attack, was mourned today by the movie and entertainment celebrities he discovered and encouraged.

Messages of condolence from Edwards' proteges poured in to his widow, Mrs. Lillian Edwards, at the quiet Wilshire boulevard apartment where he died. He had been ill and in retirement for seven years.

Edwards came to America from Germany when he was alone and rose to become one of the celebrated figures of the vaudeville stage. He wrote scores of popular songs, including "School Days," his greatest hit.

During his long stage career as a dancer, singer and producer, he discovered and brought to stardom Eddie Cantor, George Jessel, the L. L. Grockes Bros., Walter Winchell, Groucho Marx, Mel Marner, the Duncan Sisters, Lillian Lawrence, Larry Adler, Ray Bolger, Eleanor Powell, Mervyn Leroy, Bert Wheeler, Eddie Bracken, Earl Carroll, Helen Menken, Hildegarde, Gus Merson, Jack Pearl and others.

Edwards' songs high on the list of old time favorites included "Sunbonnet Sue," "By the Light of the Silvery Moon," "Topsy Turvy," and "The Blue Bird."

### U. S. Marines Position in Civil War of China Remains Awkward

Indonesians, Indian Guard Forces Tangle In Riot at Kramat

BATAVIA, Nov. 8, (AP)—British tanks and troops were rushed to the Kramat area in the south eastern part of Batavia today when an issue rioting broke out between Indonesians and Indian guard forces.

Twenty Indonesians were reported killed and two Indian soldiers wounded in what was described as a "minor brawl" before the situation was brought under control.

Anti-films reported that in Semanggi two British officers were stabbed to death by Indonesians at Brikoolen in the Palenbad area. First reports from Kramat said more than 500 armed Indonesians were concentrated in the area where a large civilian internment camp is located.

The outbreak was believed an identification of skirmishes which started yesterday when the Indonesians attacked the camp and the Tjiljan airfield.

Prime Minister Attlee Will Be Invited To Address Congress

WASHINGTON, Nov. 8, (AP)—

### China's Civil War Gains Momentum

Thousands of Chiang Kai-shek's troops, transported by U. S. Navy, have been sent to the Great Wall boundary separating China, Manchuria.

Report: Troops of Communist government reported at Chien.

100,000 Reds take three big Surveys.

Nationalists make night attack on north bank of Yellow river in opening drive against Reds.

The first battalions of the 29th Marine Regiment under Lt. Col. Leroy Hunt landed to reinforce Lt. Col. John Garofalo's battalion of the seventh regiment. This increased the marine garrison at Chinwangtao, only nine miles south of the communist stronghold of Shashaiwa on the Manchurian border, to nearly 2,500 men.

Map To Be Home

It is no secret that these marines are eager to go home now that they are extremely cautious and unenthusiastic about their role in China.

It also was understood that the

Newspapers.com, Havre (MT) Daily News, 8 November 1945

Even small-town newspapers regularly carried disturbing news of the growing peril in North China, much to the chagrin of awaiting families.

Wives of deployed Marines engaged government officials on the geopolitics of the confusing U.S. policy in North China. If the Truman administration thought it could lay a smokescreen of diplomatic jargon and buy time against a distracted public, Marine wives proved the diplomats and politicians mistaken. Some spouses felt that assisting Chiang Kai-shek was tantamount to fighting for a kind of fascism so many sacrificed to defeat in World War II.<sup>90</sup> Josephine McBroom Junge wrote, "We asked these men to fight, in Tarawa, and in Iwo Jima, and in Okinawa—for democracy. Many are dead. Many are crippled . . . can we ask them now to fight in China—against democracy?"<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> That Americans in 1945 could interpret Mao Zedong as a democrat suggests that Mao's information campaign was initially successful. This was also perpetuated by correspondents Theodore H. White and Edgar Snow to popular audiences in *Thunder Out of China* and *Red Star Over China*, respectively.

<sup>91</sup> Letter to Mansfield from Mrs. Josephine McBroom Junge, 4 November 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

The nuanced logic of America's China policy failed to convince interested life partners. Lucy Bell pointed out the hypocrisy of the Nationalist Chinese forces using armed Japanese troops—that the Marines were in North China ostensibly to disarm—to guard infrastructure from Communist attacks. "Sir, I am not a person who is familiar with the intricacies of diplomacy," Bell wrote with a dash of sarcasm, "but I call our military operations . . . out-and-out intervention on the side of the Chungking government."<sup>92</sup> Mrs. B. P. Pope agreed that her husband had no business tipping the scales for Chiang Kai-shek's forces. "The war is over . . . China should take care of her own internal affairs," she wrote, repeating a line from Mansfield's speech just days earlier. Pope concluded, however,

<sup>92</sup> Letter to Mansfield from Mrs. Lucy Bell, 30 October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.



# IS THIS A JOB FOR AMERICAN TROOPS?

## 1. AMERICANS LAND IN CHINA FOR "POLICE DUTY"

TIENTSIN, China, Sept. 30 (AP).—The American 1st Marine Division entered Tientsin today to assume police duties in northern China's political hot spot, where Chinese Nationalists and Communists are at bayonet points and a Japanese army is yet to surrender and be disarmed.

A.P. New York Herald Tribune, Sept. 30, 1945

## 2. ASSIST ONE POLITICAL PARTY AGAINST ANOTHER

Already the United States has greatly assisted Kuomintang Government against the Communists by such moves as flying Communist government troops in American planes to Nanking, Shanghai and other points and by taking over such places as Tientsin, Peking and Chungking from the Japanese for eventual transfer to Kuomintang armies.

Tillman Durbin, from North China, October 7, 1945, N. Y. Times

## 4. COMMUNISTS, NOT CHIANG'S KUOMINTANG TROOPS FOUGHT JAPS IN NORTH CHINA.

**JAPANESE SAY REDS FIGHT IN SHANTUNG**  
By TILLMAN DURBIN  
By wires to The New York Times  
TSINGTAO, China, Oct. 11.—Japanese troops are having a continuous battle on their hands keeping open railway communications between Tientsin, Peking, and Sumner, chief staff officer of the local Japanese headquarters, said today.

## 5. CONTROL COUNTRY, HAVE POPULAR SUPPORT.

Milton G. Baltzer of Tientsin, American fur exporter who flew out of the Weibahn internment camp in Shantung recently, reported that the Chinese Communists were in almost complete control of Shantung. The Communists and Japanese clash almost daily around Weibahn, he said.

N. Y. Times, Oct. 8, 1945



PM, Oct. 11, 1945

## 3. TOUR OF DUTY UP TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK!

When asked how long the Marines would stay in North China, General Rockey said, "We were invited in by the Generalissimo and will stay until asked to leave."

N. Y. Times, Oct. 6, 1945

## 6. MORE MARINES GO TO CHINA INSTEAD OF HOME

General Rockey said units of the First Marine Air Wing under Maj. Gen. Claude A. Larkin were gathering from many points in the Pacific and would soon be based in North China.

N. Y. Times, Oct. 2, 1945

## 7. NAVY ALSO USED

### KINKAID INDICATES NEW 7TH FLEET JOB

By wires to The New York Times  
TSINGTAO, China, Oct. 11.—With the occupation of Tientsin today by units of the United States Sixth Marine Division—marking the last scheduled landing of Marines in China and one of the last wind-up jobs of the Seventh Fleet—Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, commander, broadcast a message from the U. S. S. Calcutin to the officers and men of the fleet. Indicating another remnant task for the Seventh Fleet, Admiral Kinkaid stated that "incoming weeks forces of the Chinese Army will be redistributed to effect the security of China." "It can be taken to mean American ships may be used to transport Chinese Central Government troops to various ports of the country."

## 8. CHINESE DEMOCRATS OPPOSE LANDING

**U.S. FORCES CAUSE NEW CHINA ISSUES**  
Officer of Democratic League fears Chungking Troops will follow Marines in North.

By HENRY R. LIEBERMAN  
By wires to The New York Times

CHUNGKING, China, Oct. 2.—Dr. Lo Pung-chi, member of the executive committee of the Democratic League, said today that landings of American Marines in north China might complicate the country's internal political problem. The Central Government-Communist negotiations are still trying to settle outstanding differences here, and Dr. Lo said members of his organization feared serious consequences if Kuomintang armies followed the Americans into areas now occupied by Communist troops.

The Democratic League, consisting of six small parties, and a number of non-party men have assumed a new importance in the Kuomintang-Communist negotiations. The League will participate in the formation of a political council to be called to settle issues of "national reconstruction" and in the supervision of a national assembly to adopt a democratic constitution.

N. Y. Times, Oct. 3, 1945

## 9. ADMIRAL BARBEY SETS NON-INTERVENTION PRECEDENT IN AREAS UNDER COMPLETE COMMUNIST CONTROL

American troops would have in effect taken a piece of Chinese territory from the Communists, now in a relationship bordering on civil war with the Kuomintang Government, and transferred the Such an act would have constituted direct intervention in Chinese factional differences.

## 12. UNDER CLOAK OF CENSORSHIP

Residual Chinese censorship, which has been lifted except for dispatches giving details of "military activities" in "recovered" from reporting the full story of Chinese operations. It may be said, however, that United States Marines are now stationed in an area where Communist communiques have claimed continuing clashes and Chinese puppet and Japanese forces.

N. Y. Times, Oct. 10, 1945

## 10. BUT INTERVENTION CONTINUES — U.S. AIR FORCE

**U.S. ADMIRAL BARS LANDING AT CHEFOO**  
Barbey Sees No Reason for Taking Shantung Port That Is Held by Communists

By TILLMAN DURBIN  
By wires to The New York Times

**ABOARD VICE ADMIRAL BARBEY'S FLAGSHIP**, Outside Chefoo, China, Oct. 8.—American forces will not occupy Communist-controlled Chefoo in northern Shantung, at least for the time being, according to Vice Admiral Daniel E. Barbey, commander of the Seventh Amphibious Force, who, with Major Gen. Keller E. Stiles, commander of the United States Marines in northern China, gate conditions at Chefoo. It is now evident that at one time a landing at Chefoo by American Marines had been considered.

In a written statement tonight Admiral Barbey said: "Chefoo is under the control of the Eighth Route Army. The city is well policed and there are no disorders. As there are no Japanese prisoners of war and no military reasons for landing United States troops there at this time, I have no reported and have so recommended the above. General Rockey has been approved."

American troops would have in effect taken a piece of Chinese territory from the Communists, now in a relationship bordering on civil war with the Kuomintang Government, and transferred the Such an act would have constituted direct intervention in Chinese factional differences.

## Our Transports Flying Chiang Men To Yennan Area

By RICHARD A. YAFFE  
Sidney Walker, on his regular newscast over WHN at 5:25 p.m. yesterday, said: "A dispatch from Chungking says the U. S. 10th Air Force will Government armies into Communist-held North China."

American C-46 transports will begin the troop movement today (Wednesday) or tomorrow and will complete the job within a month. United Press carried a similar but more extensive story on its wires yesterday, but ordered it killed, like this:

"Editors: 'Kill lead China (Havre)!' 'UPA Chungking—212209'!"

United Press explained, in a phone conversation, that the story had been ordered killed by UP at Chungking before it arrived at the UP offices in San Francisco, but that it was put on the wires, by mistake.

## Hint of Censorship

The circumstances surrounding the mast-head story kill play certain suggest that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's censorship was at work.

P.M., Oct. 11, 1945

## 11. AND MARINES U. S. Marines At Tsingtao

The United States Marines today landed at Tsingtao, China, (map 4) Adm. Thomas C. Kinkaid, commander of the U. S. Seventh Fleet, said in a pool broadcast carried by NBC.

Series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mike Mansfield Papers, Archives and Special Collections, University of Montana  
Excerpt from the Committee for a Democratic Policy for China, 1945.

with a common sentiment all Marine families shared: "We need him home now—he has done his duty."<sup>93</sup>

While military family members were personally and politically engaged, the pervasive news stories about the Marines and the Chinese Civil War acutely raised public awareness in late 1945. In periodic headlines and front-page stories from October to December 1945, even small-town newspapers delivered the United Press and Associated Press's stories from North China that emphasized the complicated

position the Marines were in.<sup>94</sup> In this bombardment of news stories from China, citizen groups mobilized with letter-writing campaigns, meetings, and advertisements.

Some organized labor groups rallied around an antifascist, anti-imperialist, anticapitalist stance toward postwar Asia. In this criticism, the "Four Freedoms" rationale for World War II contrasted sharply

<sup>93</sup> Letter to Mansfield from Mrs. B. P. Pope, 16 October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>94</sup> "Chinese Angered by U.S. Marines," *Billings (MT) Gazette*, 7 December 1945; "Boxer Troubles Recalled," *Great Falls (MT) Tribune*, 12 October 1945; "News Blackout Follows Reported Seizure of American Seamen," *Helena (MT) Independent Record*, 7 November 1945; "Marines Land in China to Assist Chiang Control Last Jap-Dominated Area," *Daily Interlake* (Kalispell, MT), 8 October 1945; "Marines Angered," *Missoulian* (MT), 17 November 1945; "Fighting Reported in 11 Areas of Disjointed China: American Marines Walking Tightrope to Maintain Order," *Montana Standard* (Butte), 31 October 1945; "Removal of U.S. Troops from China Is Urged," *Baltimore (MD) Sun*, 12 October 1945; "Marines' Clash in China Makes Another Crisis," *Chicago (IL) Daily Tribune*, 10 December 1945; "Peril for Marines Seen in China War," *New York Times*, 31 October 1945; and "Marines in China Rescue Japs from Angry Crowds," *Washington Post*, 15 October 1945.

with the murky aims in North China, leading to speculation that intervention in China benefited only “the interests of big monopoly capital,” which mirrored sentiments from enlisted Marines.<sup>95</sup> One such group, the Cascade County Trades and Labor Assembly, promulgated its resolution for withdrawal of Marines from North China in both the local newspaper and in letters to congressional leaders, writing even to members outside of their respective districts.<sup>96</sup> Farmers in tiny Westby, near the North Dakota border, also demanded not only the precipitous withdrawal of American forces, but a cessation of all forms of U.S. aid to Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist government.<sup>97</sup>

Reflecting the local labor response and anti-imperialist rhetoric, Communist-aligned organizations like the Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy and the National Committee to Win the Peace mobilized for an end to the American support of Chiang’s government and a redeployment of American forces. Like mothers, wives, and siblings, these citizen groups challenged the foreign policy actions of the United States that meddled in the internal affairs of an ally. In a harbinger of Cold War dilemmas to come, Americans stood for freedom and democracy, but such clear outcomes remained aspirational at best in Chiang’s China. Communist-aligned groups made significant hay of this uncomfortable fact. While ostensibly neutral, American forces in North China tipped the scales in favor of a “regime that has denied basic civil rights to the Chinese people.”<sup>98</sup> After fighting a national war against totalitarian fascism and liberating the world, a more nuanced policy fell flat in the court of public opinion, and citizens groups played a key role in galvanizing the opposition.

Both the Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy and the National Committee to Win the

Peace benefited from respected leaders and spokesmen. One colorful individual associated with both far-left activist committees was the decorated Brigadier General Evans F. Carlson. Carlson’s illustrious career included time as an observer with Mao Zedong’s forces in the late 1930s. Carlson admired the fighting spirit and camaraderie exhibited by Mao’s Communist fighters and promoted several organizational and tactical innovations the Marine Corps adopted during World War II. Introducing the Marine Corps to the Chinese phrase *gung-ho*, Carlson led troops at Makin Island, Guadalcanal, and Tarawa, receiving three Navy Crosses and two Purple Hearts for these actions.<sup>99</sup> Suffice it to say, Carlson spoke with universally respected authority about China, combat, and the Corps. Addressing the California Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) convention in December 1945, Carlson praised the labor union’s resolution demanding a rapid return of Marines from China. “It is not compatible with democratic ideals for the United States to intervene in the affairs of any other country,” Carlson opined to the crowd. At key moments in the China policy debate through 1946, Carlson effectively rallied public opinion, Congress, administration officials, and media through a grassroots network of volunteers.<sup>100</sup>

Newspapers, Congress, and the State Department took notice of the strong wave of public opinion crashing down on American China policy in late 1945. Slow to catch on, the Truman administration lost the crucial opportunity to shape the narrative and convince the American people of why U.S. stabilization of North China was essential to the post-war order. Carlson’s mobilization of labor unions and committees resulted in a wave of telegrams and letters to Congress, the State Department, and the White House. Further complicating the public relations crisis, on 27 November, Major General Patrick J. Hurley resigned as ambassador to China and released a bombshell letter that excoriated “the Hydra-headed

<sup>95</sup> “Labor Council Wants Troops Out of China,” *Great Falls (MT) Tribune*, 11 December 1945.

<sup>96</sup> Letter from the Cascade County Trades and Labor Assembly, 4 November 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>97</sup> Letter from the Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union of America, Local 359, 24 November 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>98</sup> “Why Send U.S. Troops to China Now?,” Committee for a Democratic Policy Towards China, October 1945, series 4, box 26, folder 5, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>99</sup> “Brigadier General Evans Fordyce Carlson, USMCR,” Marine Corps History Division, accessed 5 May 2022.

<sup>100</sup> “National Committee to Win the Peace Demanding Action,” *Emporia (KS) Gazette*, 8 April 1946.



direction and confusion of our foreign policy.”<sup>101</sup> Truman, still privately committed to supporting Chiang, reached deep for a game-changing trump card.<sup>102</sup> At a cabinet luncheon, Truman adopted a suggestion that he replace Hurley with the widely admired and non-partisan General George C. Marshall. President Truman called Marshall at his Leesburg, Virginia, home and asked him to serve as his “Special Ambassadorial Envoy to China.” The quintessential five-star public servant made no attempt to extend his one-day-old retirement, replying only with “Yes, Mr. President.”<sup>103</sup> As Marshall arrived in China to try to bring the warring factions together, Dean Acheson, acting secretary of state, painted the mood of the American electorate to Marshall in a classified cable: “Communications are practically unanimous in opposing US participation in the Chinese civil war . . . the CIO and Communist communications are coming in such quantity to suggest an organized drive.” Just in case the left-wing politics of the organizations gave cause for Marshall to dismiss the implications, Acheson’s analysis noted that “other communications are so varied and the geographical spread is so great . . . that the protests represent a strong feeling among people who are acting, for the most part, spontaneously.” Acheson’s conclusion was atypically blunt: “The use of US troops in China is unpopular with the American people.”<sup>104</sup> If Marshall considered leveraging American force to bring the Communists and Nationalists to the bargaining table, the tide of American public opinion effectively constrained military alternatives.

## Conclusion

The United States avoided stumbling into a quagmire in North China because the American people rallied against it strongly at the outset. The dearth of public support ultimately constrained the policy op-

tions for the Truman administration and the president turned to perhaps the most admired man in the country, General Marshall, to calm the political waters. In the wake of the savagery of the Second World War, the American populace—including its hardened Marines—possessed little appetite to extend the war beyond defeating the Axis powers. Wartime censorship laws shielded the public from the true ugliness of blood-stained volcanic beaches, but if Marines questioned why they should die to seize a tiny unknown island, the thoughts were kept close to each Marine. In his epic memoir *With the Old Breed*, Corporal Eugene Sledge reflected about how combat with the 1st Marine Division changed him: “Something in me died at Peleliu . . . I lost faith that politicians in high places who do not have to endure war’s savagery will ever stop blundering and sending others to endure it.”<sup>105</sup> As Marines like Sledge endured the hard slog across the Pacific, they did so with little expectation of survival, but at least each Marine understood the larger purpose of their peril. The sudden end of the war changed that in an instant. Indeed, it transformed the consciousness of the American people as peace at last seemed possible. In a representative democracy, failure to heed popular sentiment would change the government—something President Truman saw firsthand as Prime Minister Winston Churchill went down in a shocking electoral defeat in July 1945.<sup>106</sup> Caught flat-footed at the outset of the Cold War, the Truman administration never delivered the affirmative case for U.S. intervention in China.

Marines were important agents of American policy in North China. The III AC faced a nuanced mission and minimized risk however possible. While the Americans still encountered dangerous firefights with Communist forces, strict rules of engagement and rigid adherence to discipline deescalated tension in contingent moments. Instead of employing their vast firepower advantages of artillery and aircraft, leathernecks flew aircraft in unarmed shows of force and maintained a semblance of frustrating neutrality. The

<sup>101</sup> Ambassador in China (Hurley) to President Truman, 26 November 26, 1945, FRUS, China, 724.

<sup>102</sup> Meeting with President Truman, Personal Memorandum, 27 November 1945, series 19, box 604, folder 16, Mansfield Papers.

<sup>103</sup> Daniel Kurtz-Phelan, *The China Mission: George Marshall’s Unfinished War, 1945–1947* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2019), 10–14.

<sup>104</sup> Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in China, telegram, 20 December 1945, FRUS, China, 786.

<sup>105</sup> E. B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 156.

<sup>106</sup> Churchill, *Memoirs of the Second World War*, 995–97.

leadership, from General Rockey on down, did not advocate the deployment of more troops or seek to expand the role of the mission, although ample opportunities to do so existed. Finally, the removal of wartime censorship protocols permitted Marines to make their voices heard in Congress and to the American people.

Mothers, wives, and citizen groups questioned U.S. policy in China in a manner difficult to ignore. As the national mobilization for World War II ramped down, families anxiously awaited the safe return of their loved ones. Across America, the loss of numerous servicemembers left countless communities scarred. In a national effort against an existential threat, Americans accepted casualties as a solemn patriotic duty, but intervention in China's internal affairs was another matter. A flurry of letters to newspapers and congressmen originated from apprehensive family members, but rather than simply pining for a husband, ordinary women displayed extraordinary agency in challenging the Truman administration's policy on the merits of freedom, antifascism, and democracy. Citizens groups, particularly labor unions like the CIO and the Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy, organized effective opposition on moral grounds. Respected spokesmen like the heroic General Evans Carlson effectively portrayed Chiang Kai-shek's government as nondemocratic and on balance as more like fascist Japan and Germany. Absent a coherent messaging campaign from the Truman administration, these policy punches landed points with an American populace that embraced the role of liberator but not that of meddler.

In the official government retrospective, the public opinion of an informed and active electorate played a key role in China policy. In 1949, with the Cold War firmly entrenched and the Chinese Communist victory all but certain, the Truman administration issued the "China White Paper" in response to a new public fervor over "who lost China."<sup>107</sup> Secretary of State Acheson wrote on the first page that "the inherent strength of our system is the responsiveness of the Government to an informed and critical public opinion." In his narrative description of the 1945–46 period, Acheson opined that "the Communists probably could have been dislodged only by American arms," but it was "obvious that the American people would not have sanctioned such a colossal commitment of our armies in 1945 or later."<sup>108</sup>

At the conclusion of a titanic war that Americans ostensibly fought for freedom and democracy, perhaps it was appropriate that Marines and mothers would organize, debate, and help shape American postwar foreign policy. For Warren Peterson, Ethel and Gilbert Wonnacott, and countless other Marines and family members, intervention in North China was more than a moral, anticommunist, or proto-Cold War position—it was profoundly personal. These unlikely political actors shaped U.S.-China policy at a key moment in 1945–46 when the trap lines of counterinsurgency, nation building, and regional conflict menacingly lurked in the Chinese swamp. Their voices were heard.

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<sup>107</sup> Tsou, *America's Failure in China, 1941–1950*, 507–9.

<sup>108</sup> *United States Relations with China, with Special Reference to the Period 1944–1949* (New York: Greenwood Press) iii, x.

# Marines and Vietnamese Working Together

## A PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY

*by Major Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

One of the unsung stories of the Vietnam War is of the Combined Action Platoon (CAP) program, born of battlefield necessity by the U.S. Marine Corps. It was one of the most effective and least costly initiatives to come of that unhappy war. The CAP program was the brainchild of a Marine battalion commander in 1965 as a way to improve security in villages in the area of tactical responsibility not far from Hue, a former royal capital of central Vietnam. The concept was to combine a 13-person rifle squad of Marines (including a Navy corpsman) with a platoon of South Vietnamese village defense militia, the Popular Forces (PF). These comprised villagers too young (or too old) to be drafted into the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). They were poorly armed and poorly trained and as a result were marginally effective. That changed when they teamed up with the Marines.

Barry Broman dropped out of college in 1962 to work for a year as a photographer for the Associated Press in Bangkok, Thailand, with assignments in South Vietnam and Cambodia. He received a bachelor of arts in political science from the University of Washington, Seattle, in 1967 and at the same time was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps. He went on active duty in 1968 after receiving a master of arts in Southeast Asian studies at the University of Washington. Broman served as a platoon commander and company executive officer with Company H, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, in Vietnam for seven months in 1969. He then served in 1st Marine Division's G-5 (civil affairs) and extended his Vietnam tour by six months. Part of his extension was spent as U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, liaison officer in Thailand. Promoted to captain, he served as the Camp Pendleton, CA, press officer and then commanded Company H, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines. He joined the Clandestine Service of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1971 and served for 25 years. He has written/photographed 15 books and produced nine documentary films. He lives with his wife Betty Jane in Kirkland, WA. His first novel, *The Spy from Place Saint-Sulpice* will be published in 2022. This essay did not undergo peer review.



*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

Marine Civil Affairs officer, 1stLt Barry Broman (right) talking with a CAP Marine sergeant in a village near Da Nang, Republic of Vietnam, in 1969.

While I never served as a CAP Marine, I did work with them when I was a G-5 Civil Affairs officer in 1969 with the 1st Marine Division. Before that, when still in the bush, I was on one operation with PFs when I was the executive officer of Company H, 5th Marine Regiment, on an operation in the Que Son Mountains southwest of Da Nang. Company H helped defend a hilltop manned by a platoon of PFs under the command of an old sergeant who had served in the colonial French Army a generation before. I spoke with him in French. Together, we gave the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) a nasty surprise when they attacked our position and came away with greater respect for





*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

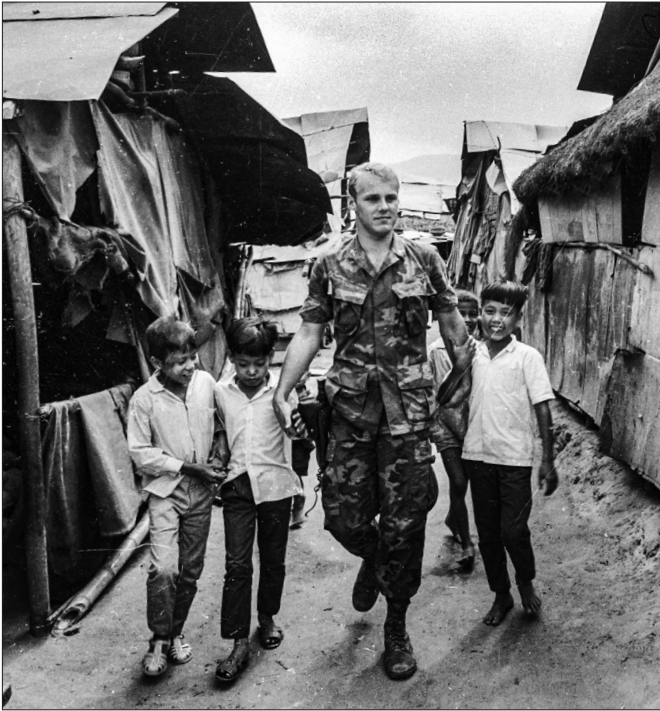
A CAP Marine conducts weapons training with South Vietnamese Popular Forces.



*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

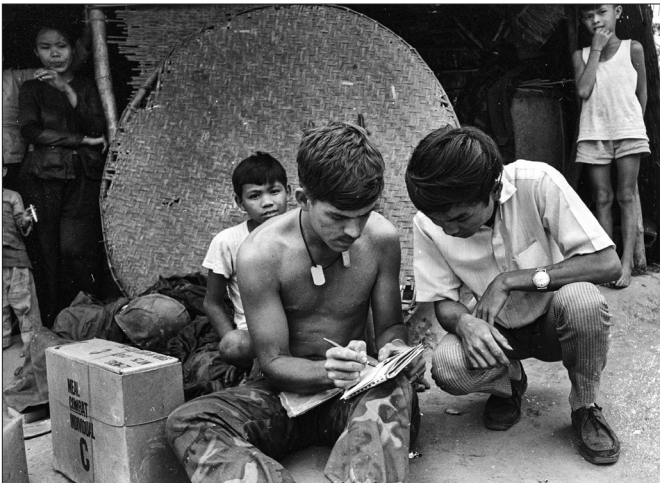
A CAP Marine chats with Popular Forces buddies while off duty.





*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

A CAP Marine with village buddies.

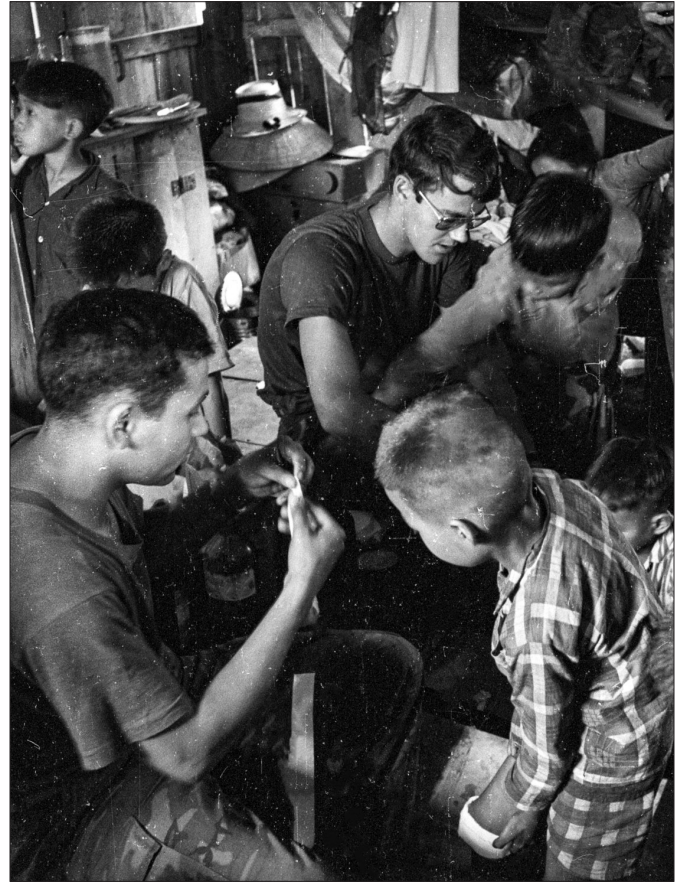


*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

A CAP Marine working with Popular Forces militiaman.

the PFs and the impression that when properly led and armed, they could fight.

Early efforts worked well when Lieutenant Colonel William L. Taylor, commanding officer of the 3d Battalion of the 4th Marine Regiment, assigned Marines to work with PFs in six villages around the airfield at Phu Bai, not far from Hue in central Vietnam. The idea gained traction when it came to the attention of Major General Lewis W. Walt, a veteran of the Banana Wars in the Caribbean, where Marines worked effectively with



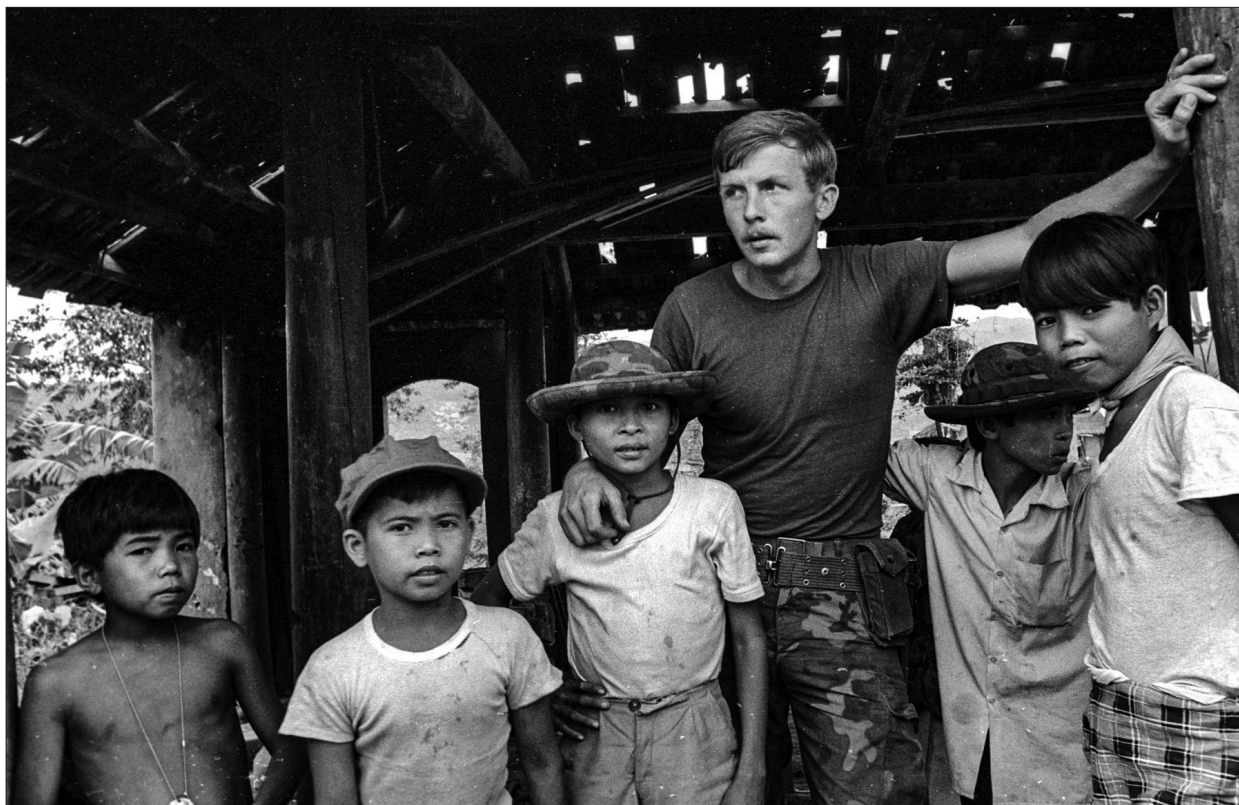
*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

Navy corpsman attached to the CAP unit providing medical attention to village children.

security forces at the lowest levels in Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. That experience in working closely with local populations was unique to the Marine Corps. General Walt immediately saw the value in putting combat Marines together with PFs, and the program grew in size, mission, and success.

After seven months with the 5th Marines, I was assigned to G-5, civil affairs, at 1st Marine Division Headquarters near Da Nang. Among other duties, I was named the division personal response officer. The mission was to get Marines to get along with our South Vietnamese allies and especially the civilians in areas where Marines were operating. The mission of Marines was to kill NVA soldiers and their Viet Cong allies. Most of our casualties came from booby traps, often placed by civilians sympathetic to the Viet Cong or forced to help them. This bred distrust and dislike of the civilians by Marines. At that time, the division was losing one Marine leg a day to booby traps. The





A CAP sergeant and his little friends.

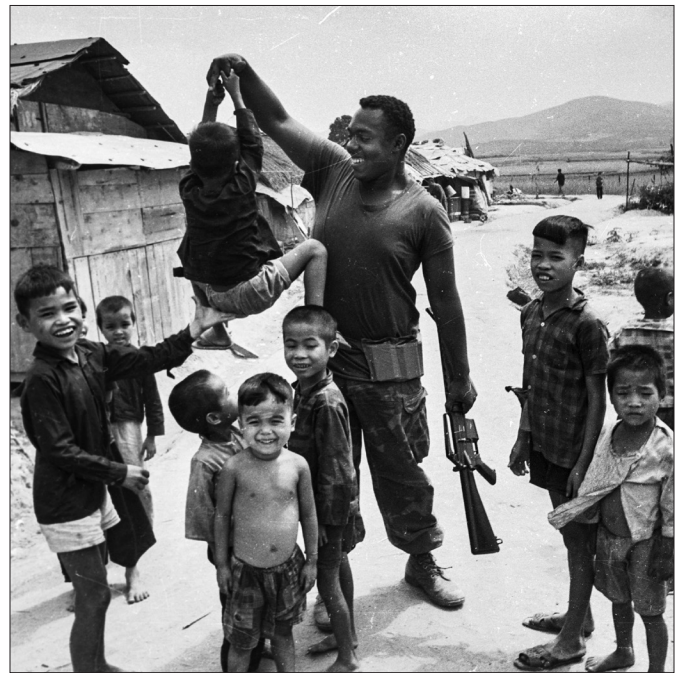
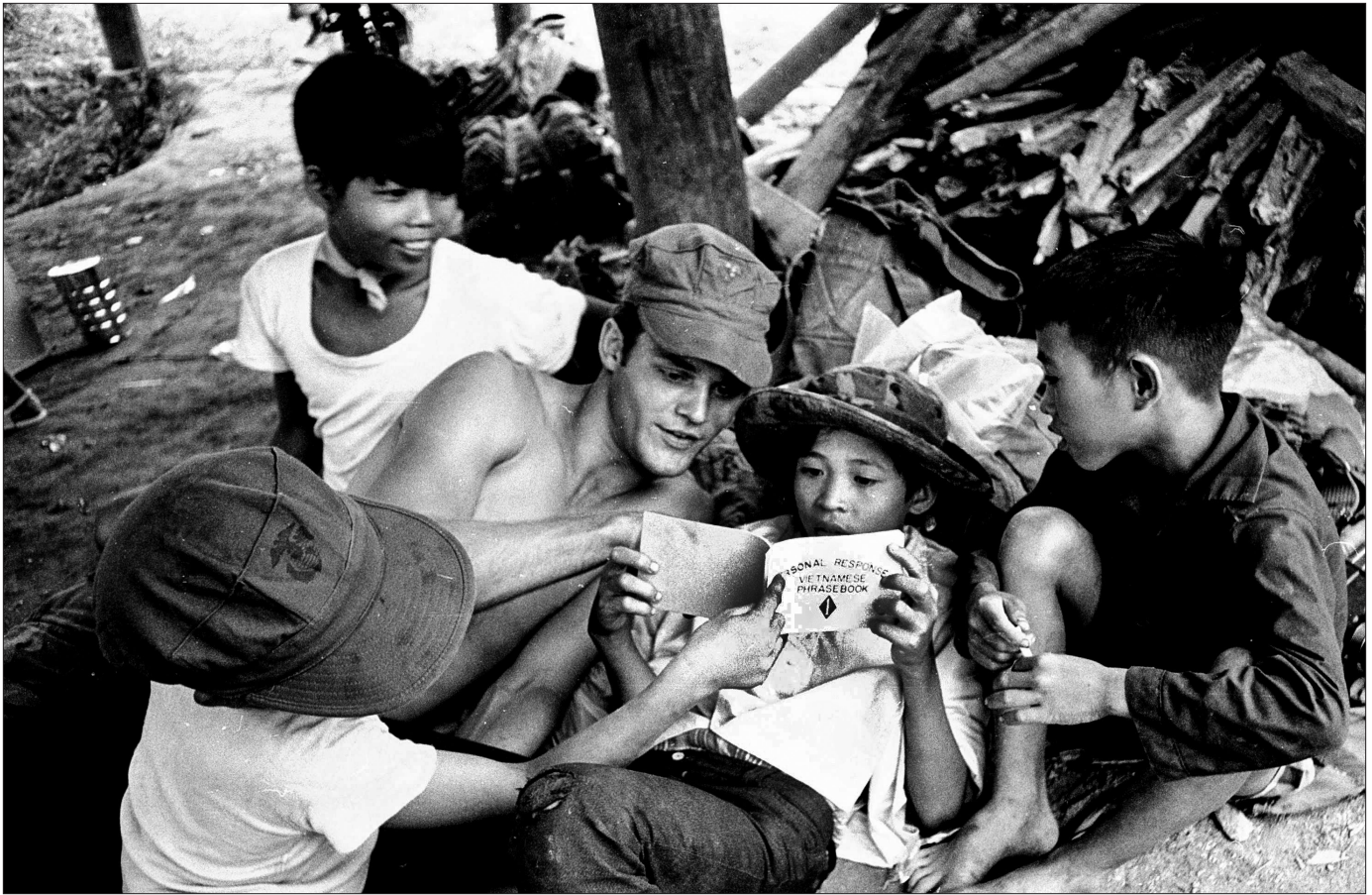
*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*



A CAP Marine with Popular Forces during weapons training.

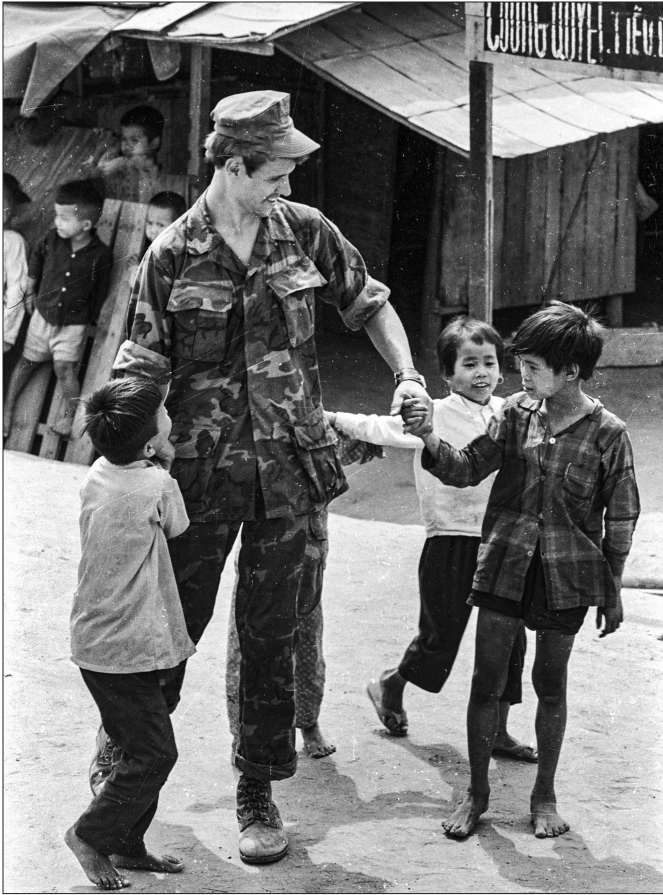
*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*





*Photos by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*  
 Clockwise from top: a CAP Marine reading the 1st Marine Division G-5, Personal Response, Vietnamese-English phrase book with village children; a CAP Marine playing with village kids, his M16 unloaded but ready; corpsman tending village children.





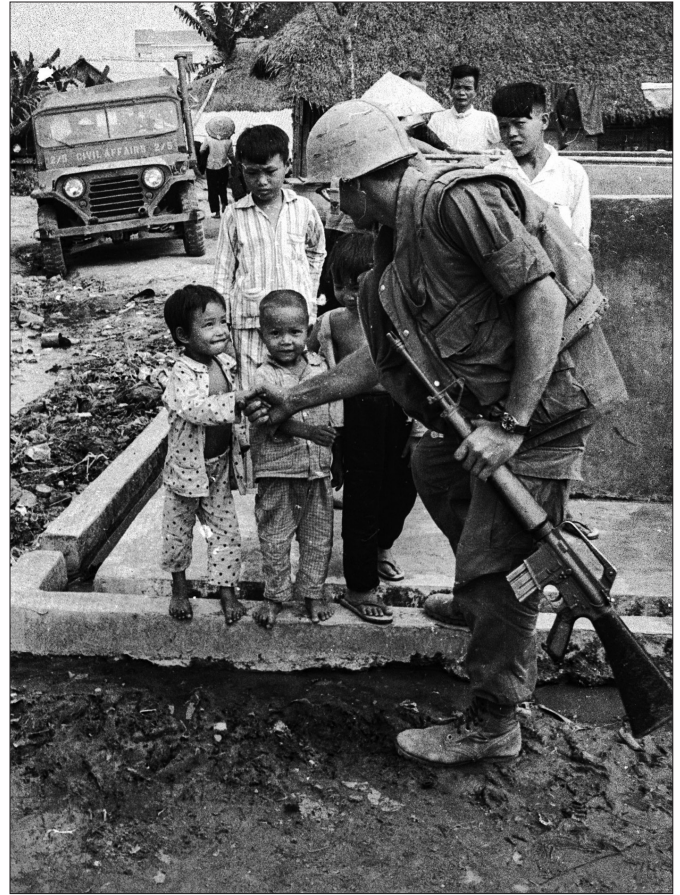
*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

A CAP Marine making friends.

village kid you gave chow to this morning might be setting booby traps tonight.

The one program that put Marines in direct support of villagers was the CAP program, and I worked in support of them as part of my G-5 duties. The CAP Marines were an inspiration and focus of my efforts to change Marine attitudes. I wished that the CAP program was larger and put more Marines in contact with Vietnamese to improve their security while building the mutual trust that is needed for success.

I visited CAP villages along Highway 1, Vietnam's main north-south highway in my jeep with Sergeant Ray Bennett at the wheel. The company was commanded by Captain Gary E. Brown, with whom I had served as his executive officer a few months earlier. Brown, later a brigadier general, gave us a tour of the scattered men under his command in villages along the critical highway. In mid-1969 the area was pretty much secure from large enemy units. We saw Marines



*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

A CAP Marine going on patrol says goodbye to his little buddies.

instructing their young Vietnamese buddies how to care for and operate their small arms weapons. Each CAP had a Navy corpsman (always known as "Doc") who ran medical civic action programs (MEDCAPs) for civilian Vietnamese from their village, often the only medical professional in the area.

I was particularly taken with the performance of the Marine sergeant in charge of a CAP unit south of Da Nang. With only rudimentary Vietnamese, aided by the use of a Vietnamese-English dictionary I produced as one of my civic action duties, the young man was mature beyond his years and was impressive in his understanding and respect for Vietnamese culture and ways. He worked very closely with the elderly village chief in explaining what he was doing and what he needed. They were an effective team.

CAP Marines were not always lucky enough to work in a pacified and friendly area. A friend, former Corporal Cottrell Fox, served as a CAP Marine





*Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*

A CAP sergeant briefing Popular Forces before a patrol.

not far from Hue City. His unit in CAP Company H, 3d Combined Action Group, came under intense attack by a large and heavily armed NVA unit making their way to Hue, the former imperial capital of Vietnam at the onset of the Tet Offensive of 1968. Fox's small unit was in deep trouble from minute one. As he wrote in a letter home from a hospital bed in Cam Ranh Bay on 3 February, "Briefly, 400 NVA attacked us at [0400] from all sides—maybe 100 penetrated the compound—mostly sappers. . . . we had to fall back to the center of the compound around the radio bunker. . . . Finally, we called the deadliest anti-personnel artillery of all on ourselves. . . . Plus 50 rounds of 155mm high explosives around the compound itself."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cpl Cottrel Fox, letter home, 3 February 1968, provided to author by Cottrel Fox from his personal papers collection, hereafter Fox letter, 3 February 1968.

The Marines and PFs fought off the NVA while guarding a key bridge. Fox reported, "My rifle was so hot that I had to take off my shirt and hold the fore stock with it. . . . We kept praying for dawn to break—and it seemed to take forever. . . . I found 25 bodies that we had killed. I knew there were beaucoup dead—everywhere you shot you hit them. . . . When dawn broke we had 2 dead Marines and 3 dead PFs."

The Marine Corps' summary of the action of Company H on the night of 31 January 1968 as stated in the Silver Star recommendation for Fox, has less emotion. It reads, in part, "A multi company of NVA/VC [Viet Cong] opened the assault with a simultaneous mortar and sapper attack. . . . that quickly penetrated the perimeter and led to the hand to hand, life and death struggle of several hours described in this

<sup>2</sup> Fox letter, 3 February 1968.



recommendation of award for Corporal Cottrell Fox and Corporal Charles Brown. . . . More than 40 enemy bodies were found in and around the compound which was badly damaged and subsequently abandoned.”

Years later in 2018, Fox, a retired business executive in St. Louis, Missouri, received the Silver Star Medal for the actions by which he was badly wounded. His buddy, Corporal Charles Brown, received the Navy Cross.

I was interested to learn from Fox that his hard-pressed and hard-hit CAP platoon was saved by the intervention of Company H, 2d battalion, 5th Marines, the unit I served with a year later in Vietnam. The story of Company H in the battle for Hue is told in Stanley Kubrick’s film, *Full Metal Jacket*. I think the story of CAP Marines also merits a film. As Brigadier General Gary E. Brown put it, remembering his time in CAP service, “If the CAP concept had been implemented and fully supported early in the war, the outcome could have been much more positive than the April 1975 TV debacle.”<sup>3</sup>

Over the years, I have heard comments from Marines suggesting that CAP Marines assigned to Vietnamese villages in pacified areas had easy duty and faced little real danger. Some even compared CAP duty with being on an in-country R&R. But CAP Marines faced real danger. Units conducted combat patrols daily and ambushes frequently with their PF counterparts to protect their villages. The relaxed, easy-going Marines seen here working with PF Vietnamese militia and Vietnamese civilians could, at a moment’s notice, be involved in a life-and-death situation, as happened to Fox’s unit on the eve of the Tet Offensive in 1968. The record shows that during their CAP service, approximately 500–525 Marines were killed in action.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> BGen Gary Brown, email to author, 16 August 2021.

<sup>4</sup> William F. Nimmo with Henry Beaudin, “The Creation of the Marine Corps’ Combined Action Platoons: A Study in Marine Corps Ingenuity,” *Marine Corps History* 4, no. 2 (Winter 2018): 43.

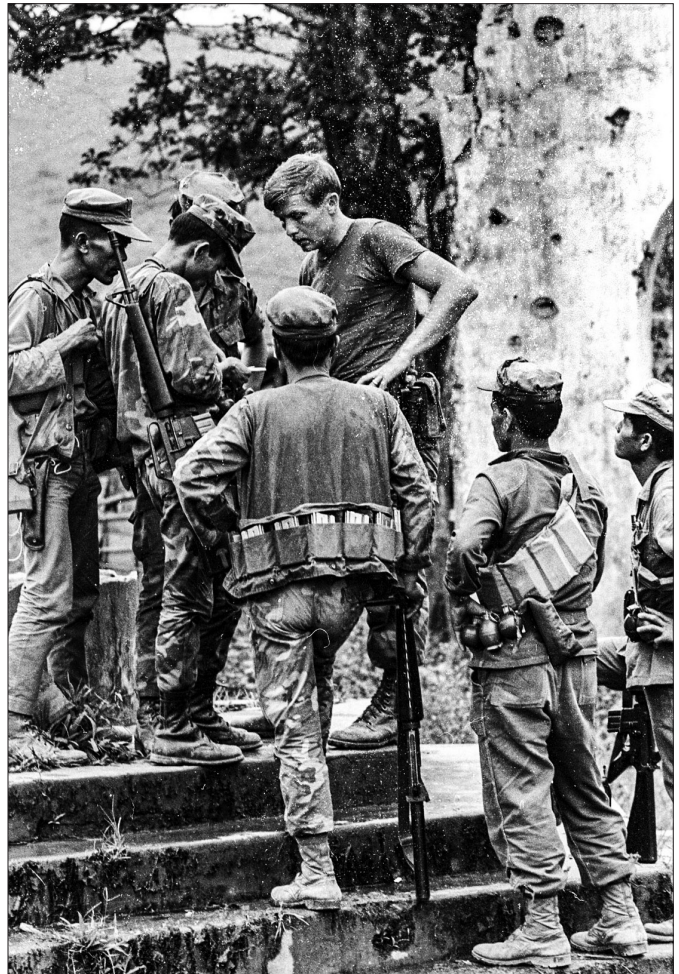
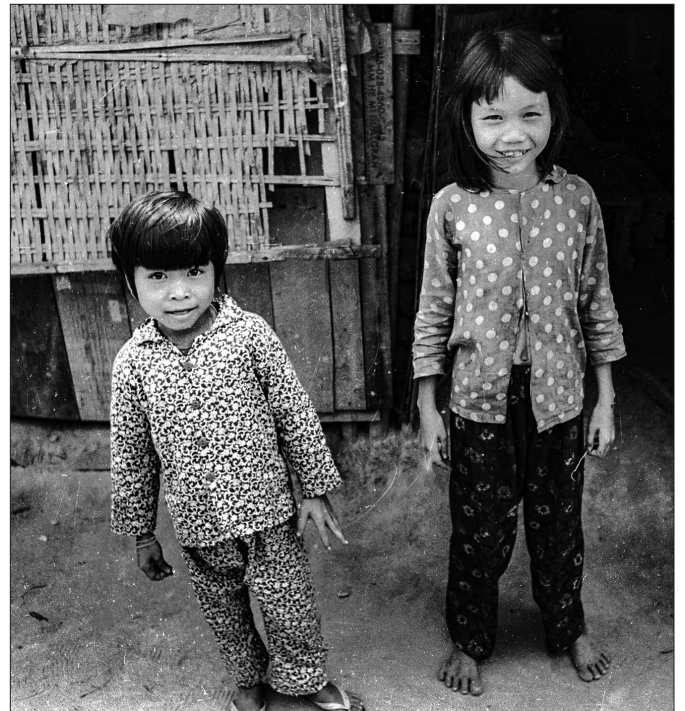
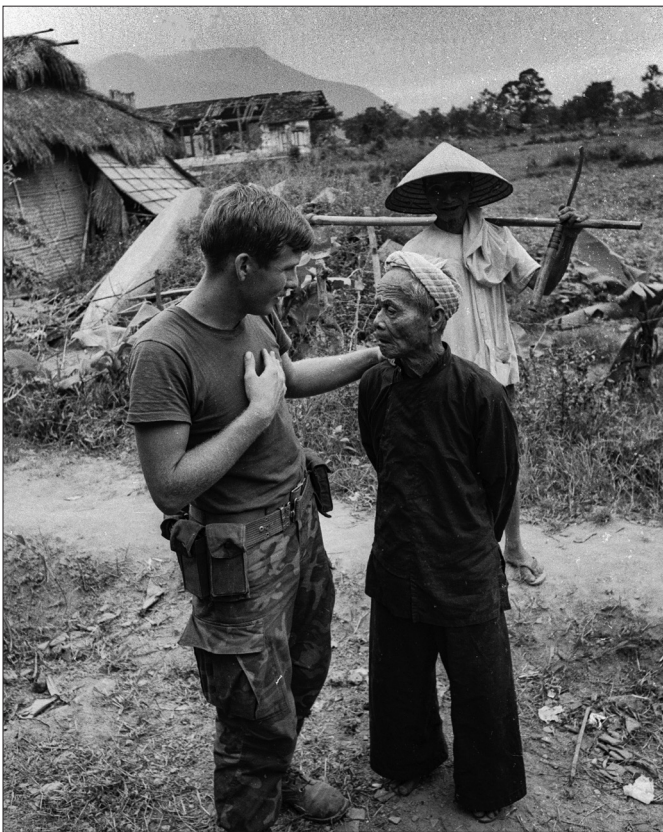


Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)  
Well-armed Popular Forces troops about to conduct a patrol with CAP Marines.



Photo by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)  
Civil Affairs (G-5) Sgt Ray Bennett with Popular Forces.





*Photos by Maj Barry Broman, USMCR (Ret)*  
 Clockwise from top: a CAP sergeant talking to Popular Forces before a patrol; two little girls in the Popular Forces village; a CAP sergeant respectfully talking with village elder.

## REVIEW ESSAY

# Experiencing and Remembering the U.S. Civil War

by Evan C. Rothera, PhD

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- A Family and Nation under Fire: The Civil War Letters and Journals of William and Joseph Medill.* Edited by Georgiann Baldino. (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2018. Pp. 248. \$34.95, cloth; \$29.99, e-book.)
- Recollections of a Civil War Medical Cadet: Burt Green Wilder.* Edited by Richard M. Reid. (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2017. Pp. 160. \$29.95, cloth; \$24.99, e-book.)
- The Diary of a Civil War Bride: Lucy Wood Butler of Virginia.* Edited by Kristen Brill. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2017. Pp. 152. \$34.95, cloth.)
- High Private: The Trans-Mississippi Correspondence of Humorist R. R. Gilbert, 1862–1865.* Edited by Mary M. Cronin. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2018. Pp. 336. \$50.00, cloth.)
- On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War: Correspondence and Reminiscences of the First Oregon Cavalry Regiment.* Edited by James Robbins Jewell. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2018. Pp. 408. \$45.00, cloth and e-book.)
- Bluecoat and Pioneer: The Recollections of John Benton Hart, 1864–1868.* Edited by John Hart. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. Pp. 240. \$32.95, cloth; \$26.95, e-book.)
- The Diaries of Reuben Smith, Kansas Settler and Civil War Soldier.* Edited by Lana Wirt Myers. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2018. Pp. 264. \$55.00, cloth; \$27.95, paperback.)
- William Gregg's Civil War: The Battle to Shape the History of Guerrilla Warfare.* Edited by Joseph M. Beilein Jr. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2019. Pp. 138. \$99.95, cloth; \$26.95, paperback.)
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Many people have very definite ideas about the experiences of soldiers during the U.S. Civil War. They usually think about famous battles such as Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg and envision long lines of soldiers clad in blue facing off against long lines of soldiers clad in gray. While these battles and soldiers were quite important, it would be a mistake to focus

solely on soldiers fighting in well-known battles in the Eastern theater. A staggeringly large number of people participated in the U.S. Civil War, and their experiences help scholars approach the war from oblique angles. This review essay scrutinizes the experiences of the people who created the documents in the volumes listed above and, whenever possible, explores how they remembered their wars.

William Medill enlisted first in Captain Charles W. Barker's Dragoons and then, in August 1861, in the 8th Illinois Cavalry Regiment. He served with the 8th Illinois in the Army of the Potomac until his death

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Dr. Evan C. Rothera is assistant professor of history at the University of Arkansas–Fort Smith. He is author of *Civil Wars and Reconstructions in the Americas: The United States, Mexico, and Argentina, 1860–1880* (2022).



in 1863. Medill's brother Joseph, editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, was a powerful voice in Republican circles. In *A Family and Nation under Fire: The Civil War Letters and Journals of William and Joseph Medill*, editor Georgiann Baldino includes a sample of Joseph's correspondence with President Abraham Lincoln in which the editor often harangued the president. William's letters, although directed to family members rather than to Lincoln, could be equally acerbic. William echoed Joseph's disdain for General George B. McClellan by contending that "McClellan is the worst 'played out' man in the United States and nowhere so completely as in this army" (p. 102). In November 1862, William sarcastically commented, "We don't fight to kill but to conciliate our brethren of the South. Such an exploit would be likely to make our southern friends mad and prevent a reconstruction of the Union on a slavery basis" (pp. 119–20). Joseph received a telegram on 7 July 1863 that William had been seriously wounded. He rushed to his brother's side at a hospital in Frederick City, Maryland, and remained there until William's death on 16 July 1863.

Burt Green Wilder did not serve at the hospital in Frederick City in which William Medill died. However, Wilder worked as a medical cadet at Judiciary Square Hospital in Washington, DC, for about a year. Wilder's account in *Recollections of a Civil War Medical Cadet: Burt Green Wilder* is valuable because he "served in Washington during an important period of medical history that has not been easily categorized" (p. 8). Wilder compiled his manuscript decades after the U.S. Civil War, as did others discussed in this essay. The elder Wilder not only related his experiences but also discussed medical practices. Modern-day practitioners, he noted, will be horrified to learn that sponges were washed but not disinfected. Patients responded to medical staff in different ways. "Most of the men seem to be very grateful to me," Wilder observed, "while they detest Dr. Eddy who pays very little personal attention to them" (p. 63). Washington, DC, one of Wilder's friends observed, "was not only a vast camp; it was also a vast hospital" (p. 98). This profound assessment of the war's human costs reminds readers how the home front often did not escape the realities of war.

Wilder interacted with soldiers, doctors, nurses, and, on occasion, the families of patients. While Wilder never met Lucy Woods Butler of Virginia, he no doubt met other wives like her who desperately hoped their husbands would survive the war. Lucy's husband Waddy enlisted in the 2d Florida Infantry Regiment and served in the Eastern theater until his death at Chancellorsville. As editor of *The Diary of a Civil War Bride: Lucy Wood Butler of Virginia* Kristen Brill observes, "Engagingly intertwining the private with the public, the personal with the political, Lucy Wood Butler fashioned a revealing and poignant diary of her life in Civil War Virginia" (p. 1). Lucy offered extended commentary about the war, noting "we hear every day of the most atrocious acts that our northern friends (who are so earnestly striving for a reunion with their sister states) are committing" (p. 51). Her sarcasm was a counterpoint to William Medill's complaints about limited war. Lucy's bleak reaction to Waddy's death—"I am left alone without hope save in the grave which God be thanked must come some day" (p. 130)—closed the diary.

Medill, Wilder, and Lucy and Waddy Butler experienced the war in the Eastern theater. Other people lived through the war in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and the Pacific Northwest, long considered more remote arenas of the conflict. R. R. Gilbert, who wrote under the pseudonym High Private, sent more than 550 letters to the *Houston Tri-Weekly Telegraph*. The authorial persona of High Private remains largely unknown, although as editor of *High Private: The Trans-Mississippi Correspondence of Humorist R. R. Gilbert, 1862–1865* Mary M. Cronin remarks, contemporaries enjoyed his use of parody and satire to mock "the stuffy, the pretentious, the ultramoralists, the nonconformists, and the idiotic" (p. 3). Gilbert/High Private leveled most of his criticisms against the North, but he also mocked the South. For example, in between denunciations of Lincoln and the North, he asserted, sardonically, that "the 'conscript law' having played out, dealers in walking sticks are 'stuck' with those on hand; and Confederate grey locks will soon be numbered among the things that were" (p. 223). Through a mix of humor and reporting, High Private's

letters help illuminate the lived reality of war in an understudied region.

The Pacific Northwest appears in accounts of the U.S. Civil War even less than the portion of the trans-Mississippi (Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas) region in which Gilbert lived. However, as James Robbins Jewell, editor of *On Duty in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War: Correspondence and Reminiscences of the First Oregon Cavalry Regiment*, explains, Oregon soldiers sent frequent letters to newspapers and became “de facto ‘embedded reporters’” (p. xvii). The accounts of these soldiers enable readers “to understand that despite not gaining any glory in the far West, the First Oregon Volunteer Cavalry Regiment successfully carried out the complex responsibilities assigned them during the war and helped the Union cause by doing so—while expediting the development of the Pacific Northwest” (p. xlix). Oregon soldiers described flora and fauna, discussed indigenous people, spoke of movements and skirmishes, and, on occasion, related humorous anecdotes. One soldier noted that many people, watching a marching column, “thought us miners going north, which made us hostile, of course, as we thought our *soldierly bearing* should have taught them better” (p. 17). Soldier experiences in more remote sectors are no less revelatory than those from other theaters of the war.

Three of the volumes discussed here highlight the war in Kansas and Missouri. John Benton Hart, who enlisted in the 11th Kansas Infantry in 1862, fought at Prairie Grove in 1862 and during Sterling Price’s 1864 invasion of Missouri. Hart recorded his reminiscences in 1918. John Hart, editor of *Bluecoat and Pioneer: The Recollections of John Benton Hart, 1864–1868*, cautions that they “cannot be read as a literal guide to the last days of Price’s raid” (p. 15), but they nonetheless offer much information about the war in Kansas and Missouri.

Reuben Smith, an English immigrant who served in the U.S. Army, recorded both the regular and irregular wars in Kansas and Missouri, published in *The Diaries of Reuben Smith, Kansas Settler and Civil War Soldier*. At times, Smith traveled incognito and proudly revealed that the rebels he encountered “did not have the least idea that I was a federal soldier and an act-

ing spy” (p. 53). Smith discussed the atrocities committed by William C. Quantrill’s men and argued that “no rules of civilized warfare” governed their actions (p. 72). William Gregg, on the other hand, fought as a guerrilla and left his own account, detailed in *William Gregg’s Civil War: The Battle to Shape the History of Guerrilla Warfare*. Editor Joseph M. Beilein Jr. observes that Gregg’s memoir “offers an irreplaceable perspective on the war” (p. 1), although Gregg’s full-throated defense of the guerrillas tended to selectively remember the horrors they perpetuated.

Many collections of primary sources end when the war ends. On the one hand, this is understandable; correspondents might not have been separated by distance any longer. On the other hand, making 1865 the stopping point is problematic because many people’s lives continued for decades or even generations after the war ended. Some recorded their experiences and, in so doing, illustrated how people remembered this profoundly transformative conflict.

William Medill’s war ended with his death on 16 July 1863. Lucy Wood Butler’s war, as depicted in her diary, also ended in the summer of 1863. Butler lived for decades after, and while she did not say much more about the war, “she maintained a correspondence with her extensive family network” (p. 4). Gilbert/High Private’s war seems to have ended in 1865, although Gilbert stayed active in Texas journalism for decades after, writing under his own name. Some officers and enlisted men in the 1st Oregon Volunteer Cavalry Regiment recorded and remembered their experiences. Wilder, at the end of his life, began compiling an account of his service as a medical cadet. The people who documented their experiences of the war and of their lives after the war believed that their stories merited attention by contemporaries and future historians. They were quite correct, and later scholars should be thankful that they took the time to jot down accounts of their lives during the war.

Taken together, Hart’s, Smith’s, and Gregg’s writings illustrate the many ways people can remember similar scenes of conflict. Hart’s reminiscences took a decidedly reconciliationist approach. Describing a cavalry charge, Hart commented, “All the time that

line of Johnnies stood there, they never showed the white feather, they were as good as our boys, and why not? Weren't they born under America's stars? And weren't they our brothers?" (p. 30). Hart also noted that the rebels "were our honorable enemy, and a part of our blood and race; and that is the reason why they were so confounded hard to whip out of Missouri" (p. 42). Like Hart, Smith was proud of his service, but his pride stemmed from ideological reasons. "Barely a citizen of the United States," Smith mused, "yet I thought it was my duty to tender my services and my life in the effort to maintain our republican form of government" (p. 2). Smith, unlike Hart, did not fall into the trap of the romance of reunion. He never forgot who fought for the right and who fought for the wrong and, as we saw above, he deplored the actions of Quantrill and other guerrillas. Gregg also seemed to be proud of his time as a guerrilla and cast his account of a rendering of the unvarnished truth. He lamented the lack of positive accounts about the

guerrillas, criticized writers who only told one side of the story, and proclaimed that "true history can never be recorded and stand the test without recording the facts" (p. 77). However, as Beilein remarks, Gregg "refrained from sharing too many of the gory details of guerrilla warfare in Missouri with his readers" (p. 2). In sum, his reminiscences shared a version of events he found congenial but not the unvarnished truth. Many people followed Hart and embraced Blue/Gray fraternalism. Smith and Gregg dissented and chose to remember the war in very different ways, as did others of their contemporaries.

The volumes analyzed in this review demonstrate the dizzying array of soldier and civilian experiences during the U.S. Civil War. They also illustrate the ways in which people remembered, or chose not to remember, what the war had looked like to them. Anyone interested in the Civil War era will find a great deal of fascinating information within their pages.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

Alex J. Beckstrand

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*How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874–1918.* By Heather Venable. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2019. Pp. 352. \$39.95, cloth; \$29.99, e-book.)

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Attend any modern U.S. Marine Corps function and one is almost certain to hear of the Service's glorified past and heroic battlefield achievements that have set it apart from other U.S. military branches and other nations' forces. Heather Venable, an assistant professor at the Air Command and Staff College in Montgomery, Alabama, aptly shows in *How the Few Became the Proud: Crafting the Marine Corps Mystique, 1874–1918* just how the Marine Corps deliberately and effectively created this narrative through determined marketing campaigns designed to improve the Service's image, attract recruits, and maintain its survival. In doing so, she importantly situates the reality of the Marine Corps' purpose and performance and appropriately questions the self-processed heritage of dominance long passed down in Marine folklore.

Throughout the work, Venable makes effective use of interesting and rarely used sources such as letters and diaries from nineteenth-century Marine figures and articles in magazines such as the *Recruiters' Bulletin* and the *Marine Corps Gazette*. Chapter one discusses the tension between the U.S. Navy and the Marine Corps throughout the first several decades of the nineteenth century, particularly the debates surrounding having Marines stationed on board ships or on land as naval yard guards. The post–Civil War years brought about a discussion of the Marine Corps' image and an identified need to “improve public opinion” (p. 39). Important themes in pursuit of this aim to improve public perception included the adoption of *semper fidelis* as its motto and a focus on the pur-

ported legacy of Marine Corps discipline. Venable also introduces readers to the fact that Marines often referred to themselves as “soldiers” rather than Marines, a point continued throughout her book (p. 33).

The “imperial wars” of the turn of the century are the focus of chapter two, in which the author makes a strong case that the image of a chivalrous Marine was challenged by the nature of Marine Corps conduct during the fighting and pacification of Cuba, the Philippines, and the Boxer Rebellion in China. As Venable notes, by 1901, fully one-third of the Marine Corps was in the Philippines conducting pacification operations (pp. 70–71). The massacre of 10 natives in Samar is but one example used by the author to demonstrate how Marines confronted the challenges of imperial warfare even as actions labeled “heroic” during fighting at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba were used to redefine the perception of the force.

Venable opens the reader to Marine Corps publicity efforts in chapter three, describing how the Corps experimented with various methods to “inform the public not only of its existence but also of its distinctiveness” (p. 82). As the author notes, the Corps often struggled to distinguish itself from the U.S. Army or Navy, but new recruiting methods, such as targeted newspaper advertisements, increased spending, and expanded travel and geographic recruiting helped to not just distinguish the Marines in the public's eye but also in the eyes of Marines themselves. This discussion is continued in chapter four, in which the author looks at Marine Corps “‘branding’ to make Marines easily recognizable” (p. 109) as it established the Recruiting Publicity Bureau. Marines reconstituted the Marine Corps Association in 1913, and its publication of the *Marine Corps Gazette* starting in 1916 served to

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Alex J. Beckstrand is an officer in the Marine Corps Reserve, a PhD candidate in history at the University of Connecticut, and works in the aerospace industry.

promote ideas to advance the Corps' interests. Although this period included leaders such as Theodore Roosevelt—who tried to narrowly define the Corps' purpose as garrison duties and expeditionary forces on land—by 1916, the Service had expanded its public and personal image even as it still was not entirely successful at demonstrating its distinctiveness.

The operations the Marine Corps participated in during this period helped to change its public image, as Venable outlines in chapter five. Marines in the early twentieth century argued that they “provided society’s true fighters” and that the “Navy simply transported the Corps to combat” (p. 120). Venable touches on what she labels “hegemonic masculinity” as reflected through acts of courage and daring by Marines in combat, calling it “the ultimate weapon” (p. 121–22) of publicity significance. The author uses the 1914 Vera Cruz landing as an example of how the Marine Corps selectively manipulated its operational performance to build an image of warfighting, experience, and masculinity. It did not matter that the Navy also sent landing troops ashore during the operation or that Marine casualties may have been lower than the Navy’s due to the resistance encountered in each Service’s sector of control. The author properly notes that historians have fed into the Corps’ narrative of superiority by uplifting the questionable performance of Marines during operations such as Vera Cruz. Venable also uses this chapter to mention that while Marines insisted that the force was more disciplined than other Services, this seemed to apply only to combat discipline and not to moral or ethical standards of behavior concerning alcohol and courts martial.

Chapter six examines the idea of democratization that the Marine Corps attempted in its marketing campaigns. The idea that a Marine can rise from enlisted private to commissioned officer was capitalized as a selling point to the public to increase recruiting. The Corps emphasized that the “hierarchical links between officers and enlisted men had been broken down” (p. 136). Marines of this era were, in many cases, disillusioned when they saw that the Corps had a lively hierarchy and did not reflect the democratic ideals it boasted. This chapter also describes a new medium

of publicity and advertisement: film. The Recruiting Publicity Bureau involved itself in early films such as *The Unbeliever* (ca. 1918), including having some scenes filmed at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. Democratization as a recruiting tool was conducted alongside a semblance of a higher social class. One article read, “Join the Marines if You Would Be a Military Nobleman” (p. 158). Other sayings such as “Once A Marine, Always a Marine” and “Marines For Life” gained traction. One possible effect of all this hype is that, as Marines felt obligated to prove their superiority and manhood, they were subjected to higher casualty rates and costly assaults during World War I in “futile bloodbath[s] of inexperienced Marines” (p. 165). The author importantly touches on this topic, and it may be worth a larger and more detailed examination into legendary Marine battles, such as the June 1918 fighting at Belleau Wood, to better judge what casualties were suffered from heroic determination or combat ineptitude.

The final chapter discusses the admittance of a small but important cadre of women into the Marine Corps during the First World War. While early Women Marines were pioneers who paved the way for future generations of female servicemembers, the significance of female Marines to the Corps “centered on boosting the identity of male Marines rather than ending a purported manpower crisis” (p. 175). While Women Marines covered down on important administrative jobs, male Marines could then do the real fighting overseas. The Marine Corps ensured that female service was only a temporary deviation, and the Marine recruiting apparatus felt it necessary to make this known, even though, as the author notes, “most female Marines simply moved from civilian workplaces to the Corps” (p. 194). Venable uses this chapter to effectively detail how a small, even important, change can be used to reinforce the social dynamics already in force within an organization.

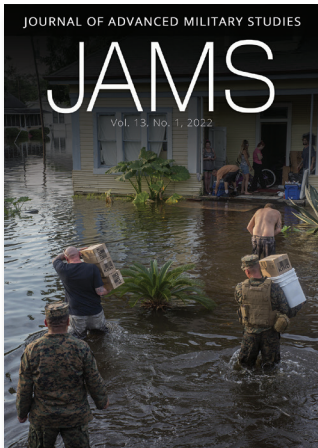
The author concludes in her work that, between 1874 and 1918, “the Corps made it mean something to be a Marine” (p. 196). The changes crafted from the end of the Civil War through World War I assisted the Marine Corps in selling itself to the public, created

a sense of hypermasculinity, and articulated a sense of elite nobility for Marines themselves. This argument is interestingly and clearly laced throughout the book and the various eras covered. Venable does well at the conjunction of military, social, and cultural his-

tory. She should be applauded for helping the reader walk away feeling a need to subject the Marine Corps' personal narrative and its purported unique past to healthy skepticism and greater investigation.

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## Call for Submissions



**Spring 2023, The Next Generation of Warfare.** This issue will address elements discussed in *Force Design 2030*, such as how the United States, in conjunction with its partners and allies, can remain competitive in gray zone conflicts while still maintaining capabilities to counter state and nonstate actors that use hybrid and irregular warfare approaches around the world. Deadline 1 January 2023.

The editors are accepting book reviews, review essays, and historiographical essays for the 2022–23 publishing season. Email to see what titles are available for review or how you can contribute. Email submissions or article proposals to [mcu\\_press@usmcu.edu](mailto:mcu_press@usmcu.edu).

**Calling all military historians:** Are you doing new and unique research into the Marine Corps' history? Do you want your work published in a subject-targeted, peer-reviewed, scholarly journal? Then submit your articles to *Marine Corps History* journal! Junior faculty and advanced graduate students are encouraged to submit.

The editors are currently accepting article and book review submissions for the Summer 2023 and Winter 2023 issues. Deadlines are:

- 1 January 2023 (Summer 2023 issue)
- 1 June 2023 (Winter 2023 issue)

For submission requirements, contact the managing editor: [stephani.miller@usmcu.edu](mailto:stephani.miller@usmcu.edu). Current and past issues may be downloaded at <https://www.usmcu.edu/MCUPress/>



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## Major Peter L. Belmonte, USAF (Ret)

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*Dying to Learn: Wartime Lessons from the Western Front.* By Michael A. Hunzeker. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021. Pp. 245. \$39.95, cloth; \$25.99, e-book.)

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In this book, *Dying to Learn: Wartime Lessons from the Western Front*, Michael A. Hunzeker sets out to “explain why some militaries are better at learning than others” (p. xi). To do this, Hunzeker, an assistant professor in George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government, has developed what he calls the Assessment, Command, and Training (ACT) theory. The theory holds that those armies that have moderately decentralized command practices, robust assessment mechanisms, and highly centralized training structures will learn best. To test the theory, Hunzeker examines the British, French, and German armies on the western front from 1914 to 1918. He chose these armies because they each “started the war with remarkably similar doctrines, weapons, organizational structures, and goals” (p. 171). To determine learning, Hunzeker looks at three general principles that are agreed on by historians as developments that “represented a better way to fight under the conditions of trench warfare”: assault tactics, combined arms, and elastic defense in depth (p. 45). He suggests that the army that learned these three methods is the one that learned best.

In the introduction and first chapter, Hunzeker provides a detailed explanation of his ACT theory and a thorough review of the literature concerning military and organizational structures, culture, and adaptation as well as learning theory and doctrine development. He meticulously defines the terms he uses in his assessments. These chapters provide an academic discussion of military learning framed by Hunzeker’s ACT theory. In addition, Hunzeker clearly spells

out his methodology for testing his ACT theory with regard to the European armies of the western front.

In the next chapter, the author provides a brief history of how the western front became deadlocked. He explains problems encountered by both attackers and defenders. With these clear explanations, it is easy to see the dilemma commanders found themselves in by 1915. Anyone focusing on the supposed stupidity of commanders would do well to consider the problems confronting them. This is not to say that commanders never made errors; rather, it is to suggest that the problems inherent in modern warfare required a great deal of trial and error to overcome.

In the next three chapters, Hunzeker examines the German, British, and French armies. These are “arranged chronologically to reflect the order in which each army mastered assault tactics, combined arms, and elastic defenses in depth” (p. 63). Each chapter is in turn organized topically and chronologically. After giving a brief history of the politics, strategy, and operations of the nation in question, Hunzeker examines the Great War evolution of that country’s offensive doctrine, combined arms doctrine, and defensive doctrine, reflecting the progress of each army in the development of a “better way of fighting.” Next, he examines the wartime evolution of each country’s command practices, assessment mechanisms, and training systems with an eye toward evaluating the efficacy of his ACT theory. Although his determination of the progress of each army with regard to tactics and doctrinal development as well as command, assessment, and training practices, is subjective, Hunzeker supplies ample data to buttress his decisions. In the end, Hunzeker concludes:

[B]y the end of the war, only the German Army developed and imple-

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Maj Peter L. Belmonte, USAF (Ret), holds a master’s degree in history from California State University, Stanislaus, and is the author of several books including *Days of Perfect Hell: The US 26th Infantry Regiment in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, October–November 1918* (2015) and (with Alexander F. Barnes) *Forgotten Soldiers of World War I: America’s Immigrant Doughboys* (2018).

mented a holistic tactical doctrine organized around assault tactics, combined arms, and elastic defenses in depth—a system that, with the benefit of hindsight, we now know represented a better way to fight [on the western front]. (p. 171)

The British Army was a close second, in Hunzeker's rating, with the French coming in third. He also concludes that the German Army was "the first to combine moderately decentralized command practices, an independent assessment mechanism, and a centralized training system" (p. 171), with all three being in place by 1916, thus supporting his ACT theory.

In his final chapter, Hunzeker addresses some potential objections to his conclusions. Generally, he addresses the relevance of his observations, making the case that the ACT theory, while not predictive of victory, does address the learning issue sufficiently. One

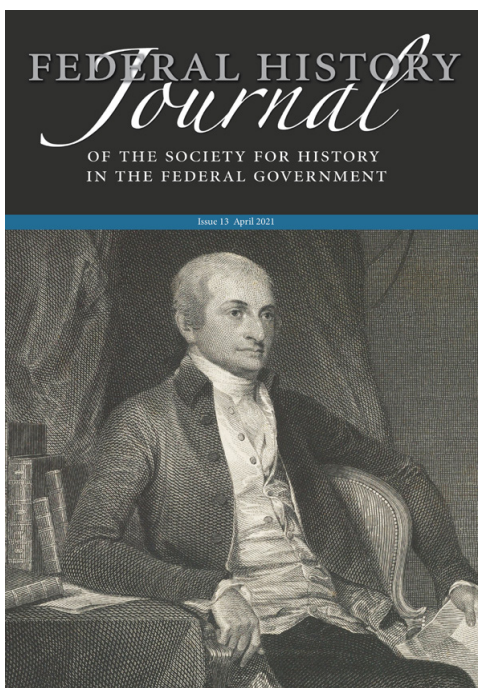
drawback to Hunzeker's fine book is the near absence of airpower, including air observation, which was an important part of the combined arms team and was crucial to artillery support of the infantry. Hunzeker has not included a bibliography, but his sources are well-cited in endnotes that are extensive, helpful, and worthy of careful reading. Aside from a single explanatory chart, there are no photographs, maps, or other illustrations.

This book is really military history combined with organizational and learning theory. It is not for casual readers who simply want to learn about World War I; it will appeal to those who are interested in an in-depth look at how the European armies learned and adapted during the war. This book will serve as an admirable, concise reference for the development and evolution of tactics for each of the armies discussed. It is an important addition to the historiography of the European armies of World War I.

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## FEDERAL HISTORY

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## Robert Dienesch, PhD

*Stuart Tank*, vol. 1: *The M3, M3A1, and M3A3 Versions in World War II*. By David Doyle. (Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 2019. Pp. 112. \$19.99, cloth.)

There is always something fascinating about technology, especially military technology. Humanity's inventions have shaped battles and wars. From the first pointy sticks through the Roman gladius to modern main battle tanks and nuclear weapons, the history of warfare is as much the history of technology as the history of events and people. In the case of modern tank development, certain tanks stand out because of their position in the evolution of that technology. The American M3 Stuart light tank is one of those. It represents a significant step in the evolution of design in the United States and represents one of the first mass-produced tank designs in the American inventory. Sent to England as part of the Lend-Lease Act, the Stuart tank played a significant role in training and as scouting forces for both the British and American forces.

David Doyle, the noted expert in vehicle restoration and well-published author in the field, has turned his considerable knowledge to the discussion of the Stuart tank in this first volume examining the M3, M3A1, and M3A3 models. Over the course of three illustrated chapters, Doyle traces the development and design changes for each variant. The fourth chapter examines the field use of the tank. Concisely written, the text focuses on the specifics of development and the changes in production over time that came to mark the Stuart tank as what it was, an excellent light tank. Many of the design changes were the result of practical necessity, either as stepping stones to improve the design or as crucial developments to im-

prove and speed production. The result was an iconic and excellent light tank.

One of the text's greatest strengths is the incredible number of photographs, each annotated with rich detail, that provide a visual understanding of the tank's design and development. The visual record is astounding and provides more to the reader than a simple text description could ever provide. Many of these images surely have never been seen before. That alone makes the book valuable to the reader.

The text's greatest limitation is its rather thin discussion of technical evolution and development. Very concisely written, the main narrative seems terse for the incredible effort put into the illustrations and commentary related to them. The first chapter, for example, has only two pages of concentrated discussion explaining the differences between turret designs and production development. The remainder of the chapter's 29 pages is dedicated to the illustrations. A better balance and discussion of development within the chapter would have brought out the value of these photographs and in the end produced a far more useful work.

Doyle's book is, nevertheless, beneficial for those trying to understand the development of the Stuart tank certainly, but mainly as a visual reference. This is natural for an author who is a restoration expert; the book will help with such work. However, for historians or those interested in the development of the technology, the book will leave the reader looking for more. Perhaps that is the book's value, though. It introduces the reader to a subject in such a way to entice them into further reading. As such, Doyle's book is a great success.

Dr. Robert Dienesch is an independent researcher and a research affiliate at the Milton F. Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society, University of New Brunswick, Canada. He is the author of *Eyeing the Red Storm: Eisenhower and the First Attempt to Build a Spy Satellite* (2016) and is currently completing a manuscript on American submarine operations in the Pacific.



## R. Blake Dunnavent, PhD

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*Strategy Strikes Back: How Star Wars Explains Modern Military Conflict*. Edited by Max Brooks, John Amble, M L Cavanaugh, and Jaym Gates. (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, 2018. Pp. 272. \$29.95, cloth; \$19.95, paperback and e-book.)

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This edited work and its intriguing topic will surely capture potential readers by the title alone. Since the 1977 premier of *Star Wars: A New Hope*, five generations have been enthralled by a new mystical power that controls the universe and the military engagements that took place “long ago in a galaxy far, far away.” The *Star Wars* universe, according to the editors of this tome, provides a common ground for the layperson to comprehend contemporary military strategic decisionmaking similar to the practitioner of this concept or for the academic that researches, writes, and teaches about the topic. The chapters in *Strategy Strikes Back: How Star Wars Explains Modern Military Conflict*, which address the crux of the work’s main thesis, can be broken down into leadership/strategy, tactics/technology, and “The Jedi.”

The writers typically agreed that strategy/leadership for all the belligerents, from the Clone Wars to the frozen wasteland at the battle and strategic and tactical retreat from Hoth, dictated the beginning and the final outcomes of all the combat engagements in the *Star Wars* universe. For the empire and later the order, which sought to conquer and maintain a grip on all the star systems, leadership was a top-down micromanaged form of directorship, from a superstar destroyer to the emperor. The authors continually illustrated examples of Darth Vader and others killing a fleet commander and then, through intimidation, promising the same treatment for the new leader if

results lacked or led to failure (to the chagrin of the newly promoted skipper, who may never have been briefed by their superior about previous missions or the overall strategy of their latest position). As for both imperial military organizations, the contributors would agree strategy was simple: “refighting the last war.” For clarity, in all the movies and stand-alone box office releases, a new form of Death Star would spread fear and restore order to the galaxy and crush those who opposed the power of a top-down despotic dictatorship. As for the rebellion, or other names for those seeking peace and democracy in the galaxies, their reactionary strategy could be symmetric, asymmetric, or antiaccess/area-denial. Rebel leaders tended to rely on their subordinates to carry out orders, but adjusted to the fluid strategic realities in the battlespace.

Defining tactics/technology for both sides was a direct result of the strategy chosen by the powerful empire/order and, similar to strategy/leadership, the rebels adjusted their choices according to the offensive or defensive nature of the forthcoming engagement(s). For example, the empire chose the Death Star and large combatant fleet ships with hyperdrive speed capabilities, yet their TIE Fighter defenders could not jump into hyperspace and required other vessels to transport them to the battle zone. The rebels’ fighters, bombers, fleet combatant ships, and transports all retained hyperdrive engines, giving a superior advantage to their vastly outnumbered fleet(s). This utilitarian benefit meant the inferior rebel fleet(s) could jump in and out of hyperspace and defeat a numerically inferior foe or escape a superior one.

This reviewer perceived the Jedi and the force as two stories running in parallel, yet not necessarily determining the outcome of a space or ground attack. As

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Dr. R. Blake Dunnavent teaches military history courses at Louisiana State University in Shreveport. He gave a PME staff ride at the Battle of New Orleans Historic Site to the officers and enlisted of 4th Marine Division G-3/5, New Orleans, 2019. He is the author of numerous articles and book chapters and recently published *Combat at Close Quarters (Illustrated): Warfare on the Rivers and Canals of Vietnam* (coauthored with Edward Marolda and Sandy Doyle, 2019).

the authors note, on many occasions, the force and Jedi stories seemed independent of the overall wars waged across the galaxies because their adventures focused on mere individuals and their path to the dark or light side of the force. Aware of this knowledge, included within this coalition of authors and their topics, readers can choose to accept the Jedi/force component as critical to the *Star Wars* universe or merely read it as two stories running parallel, but the latter not significant of certain victory or defeat to either side.

The question remaining for readers of *Strategy Strikes Back* is to ask whether this edited monograph accomplished its daunting task of using a pop-culture science fiction universe to explain the intricacies about current military conflict. Readers will likely find their understanding mixed from the narrative

presenting this novel idea. The contributors maintain high expectations that readers have a broad knowledge of the *Star Wars* sagas. The authors used not just the mainline box office movies for their background, but also comics, cartoon series, and the stand-alone cinematic productions to present their theses. *Strategy Strikes Back* strives to use a very specific science fiction saga to engross the reader to understand complicated military/diplomatic/political concepts with ease. With such a plethora of renowned authors and their impeccable credentials, this treatise would be too advanced for undergraduates to grasp, yet it would be superlative for graduate-level students and those enrolled in courses at the armed forces war colleges and universities.

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## Braden Hall

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*Advance and Destroy: Patton as Commander in the Bulge.* By John Nelson Rickard. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2018. Pp. 528. \$32.00, paperback and cloth.)

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The breadth of knowledge John Nelson Rickard conveys in *Advance and Destroy: Patton as Commander in the Bulge* is astounding. It is no surprise this book was the 2012 winner of the U.S. Army Historical Foundation Distinguished Writing Award for Operational/Battle History. Rickard sets the standard for other operational command historians to meet. He presents his book as a balanced depiction of the role George S. Patton performed during the Battle of the Bulge—framing its core around questions surrounding his command and operational technique. These questions include: How much freedom of decision was he afforded from Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower and Omar N. Bradley? How did Patton formulate his plans, and how much did his staff influence operations? How important were Patton's operations to the ultimate defeat of the German counteroffensive (p. 6)? Careful consideration of these questions throughout the book leaves the reader with an appreciation of Patton's skill as general, as well as an awareness of mistakes he committed during the battle. Whereas this operational history is best understood by those already familiar with Patton and his forces in the Ardennes, Rickard's meticulous chapters and narrative style give enough information for those unfamiliar with the battle to learn as well.

Rickard supports his analysis with extensive appendices, an array of chapter notes, and numerous maps and tables. The appendices contain useful information, such as orders of battle for both armies, a list of Patton's staff, daily air sortie information, weather data, reinforcement information, and casualty averages. These appendices provide key records that give depth to the scope of battle created by the author. Every chapter is well supported with substantial notes

from primary and secondary sources, unit histories, memoirs, and other sources. Maps and tables add important information to understanding the battlefield, as well as the options facing Patton as commander of Third Army. Route information and distances, logistic concerns, and unit placement are some of the vital details enhanced by their inclusion.

Rickard's assessment is anchored in the developments that led to the Ardennes counteroffensive and Patton's grand entrance to the scene. Understanding the development of Germany's attacks and the ensuing Allied resistance is critical for understanding Patton's initial impetus and subsequent command decisions. Many factors flow into Rickard's examination of Patton. The general's intelligence philosophy and his relationships with his superiors and staff are important dynamics Rickard includes. Ultimately, Patton displayed a very balanced command technique. He often accepted recommendations from his subordinates, but he also praised, pushed, and critiqued them where needed to maximize their productivity.

One of Patton's most important relationships was with his G-2, Colonel Oscar W. Koch. Koch provided comprehensive intelligence reports for Patton throughout the offensive. Not only was Patton aware of forces marshaled against his frontlines, he was also cognizant of what was occurring outside his area of operations. In turn, Patton's reliance on Koch's intelligence meant he was more attuned to the benefits of lateral situational awareness. This was especially critical in the opening days of the German offensive and allowed Patton to partially penetrate the initial deception of the attack. This is evident in Rickard's chapter-long discussion of the Verdun conference, where Patton boasted he could reorient his armies in 48 hours. He could make such statements because he had a greater understanding of the battlefield.



Patton's operational technique was strongly modified by his superiors during the Ardennes fighting. Patton was a brilliant, fast attacker but was limited by Eisenhower and Bradley regarding where he could weight his operations. Occasionally, these limitations had negative impacts as Patton was restricted to operate in terrain that worked against his bold, quick style. Rickard states, "Patton could persist in his operational technique because he possessed air superiority, artillery superiority, and more replacements" (p. 317). Ultimately, Patton did not modify his operations to suit the demands of his superiors; however, he still made a substantial contribution to the Allied victory by systematically driving the German divisions out of the Bulge as Eisenhower directed.

These command and operational considerations illustrate the importance of the questions Rickard initially sets out to answer. By following Patton's decision-making process, observing his reliance on his staff and existing intelligence, noting when and how his superiors intervened, and analyzing the results, Rickard comes to a mixed conclusion of Patton as commander in the Bulge. He was a highly effective commander, but he was not exploited to his greatest potential during the Battle of the Bulge. This in no way inhibits the importance of Rickard's work. Although there has already been a great deal of scholarship written about Patton, Rickard successfully creates an exceptional work that is a testament to both Rickard's skill as an author and to Patton's vibrant personality.

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## Frank Kalesnik, PhD

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*Edward M. Almond and the US Army: From the 92nd Infantry Division to the X Corps.* By Michael E. Lynch. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2019. Pp. 408. \$45.00, cloth.)

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Edward M. Almond was an aggressive, abrasive micromanager whom soldiers seemed to either admire or despise, depending on the circumstances of their relationship with him. Born in 1892, he graduated from the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) in 1915. He served in the U.S. Army in two world wars and Korea, where he was both Douglas MacArthur's chief of staff and commander of the X Corps. He led a machine gun battalion in the First World War and the 92d Infantry Division in the Second World War. Between the wars, he attended several Service schools and built a reputation as an effective educator and trainer. His final assignment was as commandant of the Army War College, reestablishing that institution in the postwar period and establishing a curriculum still followed today. General Mathew B. Ridgway, who commanded the Eighth Army in Korea, considered Almond to be his best corps commander, and recommended him for promotion to lieutenant general, at which rank he retired in 1953.

In spite of his success, Almond's career remains controversial. The 92d Division was an African-American formation whose performance in Italy was sketchy (1944–45). Whether this was due to the effects of segregation and racism or Almond's own failings as a leader can be argued, as can his performance as a corps commander in Korea, which included both successes (the Inchon landing and the successful evacuation from Hungnam) and failures (Chinese offensives in November 1950 and February 1951, which caught X Corps off guard). His in many ways commendable

performance as commandant of the Army War College was marred by a scandal over the costly renovation of his official residence, which led to a letter of reprimand and his forced retirement. After retiring from the Army, he remained active in various organizations, to include the VMI Board of Visitors. His publicly expressed disapproval of integration could be considered racist, even by the standards of his time, and his reputation has not improved over the years.

A historian with the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Lynch was both well-qualified and -positioned to write a biography of Almond, since the general's personnel papers reside in the archives there. This rich collection includes documents and letters from both Almond's service and retirement years, and the author made good use of material both at Carlisle and elsewhere (including the Marine Corps' archives in Quantico, Virginia). The book is especially valuable to Marine Corps readers because Lynch makes a nuanced and honest assessment of the personality clash between Almond and 1st Marine Division commander Oliver P. Smith in Korea. The author notes that Almond otherwise praised the performance of the Marines, got along well with Smith's successor, Gerald C. Thomas, and particularly appreciated the support X Corps received from the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. He was not so pleased with the support he got from the Air Force, a matter he readdressed as a doctrinal issue while commandant of Army War College, where he also advocated taking a Joint approach when educating officers for higher-level command and staff positions.

Among the greatest strengths of the book are the maps, which are well-placed throughout the text, greatly facilitating the reader's comprehension of the operations Lynch so ably describes in his narrative.

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Dr. Frank Kalesnik served as chief historian at the Marine Corps History Division. He has taught at several institutions, including the Virginia Military Institute and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. He has also worked as a command historian for both the U.S. Air Force and Marine Corps.

This reviewer, who praised the maps to his colleagues, was delighted to discover in the acknowledgements that they were prepared by the author's daughter, Elizabeth, who is certainly a gifted cartographer. I hope this successful collaboration continues in future works. The photographs used to illustrate the text were well chosen, and the appendix using organizational charts to depict the various task organizations mentioned were also greatly appreciated.

*Edward M. Almond and the US Army* received the 2019 Army Heritage Foundation Distinguished Writing Award for Best Biography, and the accolades are well-deserved. The book is scholarly, thoroughly researched, and engagingly written. Almond in some respects needs to be taken in the context of his time. He was born in the post-Reconstruction South, attended a distinguished southern military college (VMI), taught at another one (the Marion Military In-

stitute in Alabama), married a Southerner, and spent his life serving in a segregated Army. It should also be explained that Almond lost both a son and a son-in-law in World War II. The 92d Division's chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel Louis J. Beasley, sought Almond out to console him after his son's death and also wrote a heartfelt letter to the general's wife, Margaret, describing her husband's reaction. "As with any other father the experience is a most painful one for him, and as is typical of him he gave expression to his emotions and inner pain as is so characteristic of him. However, in the midst of it all, he gathers himself together and prosecutes his task here, relentlessly. Such are the traits of the strong man." Lynch notes: "Almond surely appreciated his attempts to help, and this cemented their relationship. Almond trusted and accepted Beasley, and they would remain in communication for years after the war" (p. 151).

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## Major Brian A. Kerg, USMC

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*Heroes Live Here: A Tribute to Camp Pendleton Marines since 9/11.* By Amy Forsythe. (Fallbrook, CA: Two Palms Media Group, 2021. Pp. 204. \$49.99, cloth; \$39.99, paperback.)

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*Heroes Live Here: A Tribute to Camp Pendleton Marines since 9/11* is a visual journey through Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and the memorials erected there to honor the service of its Marines and sailors in Iraq and Afghanistan. Through 150 full-color images and graphic illustrations, author Amy Forsythe showcases the tributes that stand in memory of those who trained and deployed from Camp Pendleton. But in constructing this arrangement, Forsythe simultaneously presents a history of the installation, the stories of Marines who served there throughout the Global War on Terrorism, and the surrounding communities that share an inseparable bond with the base.

A prior-enlisted military journalist in the U.S. Marine Corps and currently a public affairs officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve, Forsythe plays to her strengths through the compelling display and selection of photographs of her subject matter. *Heroes Live Here* is, first and foremost, a story told through the visual medium, and the author's expertise in this area shines through. The reader gains most from the book by consuming it through an appreciation of the photographs themselves, complemented by explanatory captions. While the reader will not find a traditional narrative, the imagery reveals Camp Pendleton's impact on those who served and lived there as a waypoint by which to navigate through the book.

To properly scope her subject matter, Forsythe begins with the history of Camp Pendleton, including its history as a ranch and the initial purchase of the land by the Marine Corps in 1942. Early photos reveal

the sparse construction and rugged living conditions that characterized the base in its first years and stand in stark contrast to contemporary pictures. While the book's focus is on memorials of the 9/11 era, the historical review includes memorials honoring earlier service. The story of each memorial is historically insightful, such as the *Staff Sergeant Reckless* monument, honoring the packhorse who served with Marines in the Korean War and was twice awarded the Purple Heart.

Forsythe then transitions to the heart of the book, covering many of the memorials that were erected across Camp Pendleton since the start of the Global War on Terrorism. This includes the 1st Marines Memorial Park and Garden, which has as its centerpiece a bronze statue of the now-familiar field cross that is identified with American servicemembers who died in Iraq and Afghanistan. In visual documentation of the Horno Crosses, Forsythe reveals the story of these still-controversial memorials that overlook one part of the base.

The memorials surrounding the Wounded Warrior Battalion-West complex are similarly rich with layers of history that tightly bind episodes of these wars, and Forsythe reveals these interconnections as she shares photos of this area. The complex itself is named after Sergeant Rafael Peralta, who died shielding his fellow Marines from a grenade blast with his body during the Second Battle of Fallujah. Alongside the complex is the *No Man Left Behind* statue, depicting the iconic "Hell House" photograph from Fallujah. The statue represents Lance Corporals Christopher Marquez and Dane Shaffer recovering then-first sergeant Bradley A. Kasal, who was wounded several times in his own efforts to rescue his fellow Marines. The statue was created by artist and Vietnam veter-

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Maj Brian A. Kerg, USMC, is a prior-enlisted mortarman, communications officer, and operational planner. He is a nonresident fellow with the Brute Krulak Center for Innovation and Future Warfare, teaches for the Marine Corps University's Continuing Education Program, and is a member of the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* editorial board.

an John Phelps, whose son, Lance Corporal Chance Phelps, was killed in action. The journey to escort Chance Phelps's body back to his resting place was famously recounted in the HBO film *Taking Chance*. It is in revealing these linkages between the touchpoints of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan where *Heroes Live Here* truly stands out.

Finally, this book examines how the communities that surround Camp Pendleton have set out to honor the service of their Marines and sailors. The cities adjacent to this installation have long had a mutually interdependent relationship with it. The efforts of community leaders to support and fund memorials on Camp Pendleton are interspersed throughout the book, while the final chapter explores key efforts by

the cities of San Clemente, Temecula, and Murrieta to honor their servicemembers.

*Heroes Live Here* is not a traditional history book; the reader will neither find a question the author seeks to answer, as with a scholastic history, nor will the reader find tactical engagements and decisive generalship that dominate popular history. Instead, the reader will find a tribute to those who served, told mostly through the art of photography. As such, the book is as much a memorial as the many monuments it seeks to document and share with the reader. More than anything else, *Heroes Live Here* tells a story of how these communities sought to memorialize the service of their community members.

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## Lieutenant Colonel Robert Kirchubel, USA (Ret), PhD

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*Twilight of the Gods: War in the Western Pacific, 1944–1945.* By Ian W. Toll. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2020. Pp. 944. \$40.00, cloth; \$25.00, paperback.)

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With *Twilight of the Gods: War in the Western Pacific, 1944–1945*, Ian W. Toll has completed his magisterial trilogy on America's World War II campaign in the Pacific theater. This is part of a long-overdue correction, allowing the history of the Pacific theater to stand beside that of the European theater as an equal. More than 10 years in the making and spanning nearly 2,000 pages of text (*Pacific Crucible*, 2011, and *The Conquering Tide*, 2015), Toll's project makes a major contribution in this direction. These works, along with such others as Richard Franks's in-progress Asia-Pacific trilogy and articles such as Paul D. Barclay's "Imperial Japan's Forever War, 1895–1945" are adding greatly to our understanding of World War II's other half.<sup>1</sup>

*Twilight of the Gods* is well researched and wonderfully written. Toll's resources include a balance of primary source documents, contemporary materials, and memoirs or journals, along with the most reputable secondary sources, probably favoring the former. His writing style is an easy-flowing narrative that adeptly combines both primary and secondary categories. Taken together, the book is both informative and insightful, while also a pleasure to read. It begins with a prologue to provide some background and ends with an epilogue that deals with the American occupation and immediate postwar Japan. *Twilight of the Gods* is broken down into 16 chapters, many concentrating on one main theme, others blending three to four major

concepts, with some topics (the Battle of Leyte Gulf) getting a two-chapter treatment. One criticism, however, is the paucity of detailed maps, especially dealing with ground combat; many places in the text cannot be located, so readers may want to have Google Maps within reach.

Toll begins in the summer of 1944 with the Honolulu Conference between President Franklin D. Roosevelt, General Douglas MacArthur, and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. Chapter 1 and chapter 15—in which Harry S. Truman steps into Roosevelt's massive shoes and the Japanese debate (post-atomic bombs) whether to fight on or surrender—are the two main parts of *Twilight of the Gods* that deal with strategy. The book is essentially an operational-level history, and while American and Japanese strategy is lightly sprinkled throughout, that is not Toll's emphasis. Presidents, the emperor, ministers, and general staffs are well represented, but usually as they relate to operational issues. For example, a search of the index reveals the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff mentioned fewer than 30 times in 800 pages of text. The book is also unabashedly the history of America's war against Japan; there are no more than token references to Australian, British, or Chinese allies.

Likewise, Toll's is a "great man" history, mainly about admirals and generals. Sure, regimental commanders, ship captains, and airplane pilots show up. Consistent with his narrative style, lieutenants and sergeants occasionally add their versions of events. But the main characters are the commanders (and staffs) of numbered fleets and task forces, armies and corps, and air forces. Toll periodically breaks up retelling the deliberations in this or that headquarters with a detailed story of a representative Iwo Jima attacker or defender, standing in for thousands like them. It

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LtCol Robert Kirchubel, U.S. Army (Ret), PhD, is operations officer and outreach director of FORCES Strategy, Security, and Social Systems Initiative of Purdue University.

<sup>1</sup> Ian W. Toll, *Pacific Crucible: War at Sea in the Pacific, 1941–1942* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011); Ian W. Toll, *The Conquering Tide: The War in the Pacific Islands, 1942–1944* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015); Richard B. Franks, *Tower of Skulls: A History of the Asia-Pacific War, July 1937–May 1942* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2020); and Paul D. Barclay, "Imperial Japan's Forever War, 1894–1945," *Asia Pacific Journal* 19, iss. 18, no. 4 (15 September 2021).



must also be pointed out forcefully here the privilege that Toll gives logistics; many other military histories mistakenly give this dry and unglamorous topic short shrift. However, a great many more U.S. Navy sailors served on auxiliaries, tankers, shore bases, floating dry docks, etc., than on warships. The logistical effort to keep all other American fighting Services operating in the Pacific was likewise massive.

*Twilight of the Gods* covers the major events at sea, on the many islands, and in the air, from the Honolulu Conference to the Tokyo Bay surrender 14 months later. Toll is equally comfortable in all three milieus, although he seems to favor the sea. Likewise, he balances discussions of leadership, tactics, and technology to create well-rounded narratives, further buttressed with numerous human-interest stories. In this fashion, we get educational and emotionally satisfying perspectives, regardless of whether the person in question is on a kamikaze mission or bringing back the Boeing B-29 Superfortress *Bockscar* (the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki).

Usually, however, the emphasis is on senior leaders, and here Toll pulls few punches, dealing out measured praise or criticism where deserved. His subjects are admittedly complex individuals who defy simple stereotypes. For example, General MacArthur at Honolulu is portrayed as much less antagonistic toward Roosevelt than in other histories, is full of vainglorious puffery during the Philippine campaign, yet is the perfect gentleman in Tokyo Bay and during the occupation. Toll is tougher on Admiral William F. Halsey Jr., whose best days are evidently behind him (i.e., in the two earlier books). As related in *Twilight of the Gods*, Halsey had amassed a positive balance of popu-

lar goodwill earlier in the war, and only this saved him from his numerous examples of poor judgment later in the conflict. Toll is kinder to warhorses like Admiral Marc A. Mitscher and those unfortunate Army commanders who toiled away thanklessly in MacArthur's shadow. The same is true when comparing goings-on at Japan's Imperial Headquarters with forlorn Japanese admirals and generals in hopeless situations.

War is a learning curve, and *Twilight of the Gods* does not disappoint in this regard, either. We see the Japanese Army's island defensive doctrine evolve from suicidal and ineffective banzai attacks to the patient technicians honeycombed in Mount Suribachi and Shuri Castle (also suicidal and ultimately only slightly less inefficient). By the same token, Toll explains how the U.S. Navy developed countermeasures to the kamikaze threat. As with the matter of personalities mentioned immediately above, none of these observations are earth-shattering in their newness, but Toll's insights and nuance make them well worth revisiting.

Increased study of World War II's Pacific theater is certainly in order as the twenty-first century enters its third decade and tensions increase in the South China Sea. Across the globe in eastern Europe, NATO doctrine writers have turned their attention from isolated hilltop firebases in Afghanistan to the new force-on-force Fulda Gap near Kaliningrad, and so are dusting off World War II histories of the European theater. The United States and the Peoples' Republic of China are reprising the classic status-quo-power versus emerging-power scenario in the same areas depicted in much of *Twilight of the Gods*, giving us another great reason to dive into Toll's trilogy.

## Mitchell B. Lerner, PhD

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*George C. Marshall and the Early Cold War: Policy, Politics and Society.* Edited by William A. Taylor. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2020. Pp. 311. \$29.95, paperback/e-book.)

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Three months after Japan's surrender brought World War II to a close, President Harry S. Truman honored the military leader whom many credited for the Allied triumph. "In a war unparalleled in magnitude and horror, millions of Americans gave their country outstanding service. General of the Army George C. Marshall gave it victory," Truman declared. Truman's words were certainly hyperbolic, but they did accurately reflect the critical role that Marshall had played in winning the war. Yet, as the contributors to William Taylor's *George C. Marshall and the Early Cold War: Policy, Politics and Society* demonstrate, Marshall's contribution did not end in 1945. Instead, through his service as presidential envoy to China, secretary of defense, and secretary of state, and through the lasting influence of the many policymakers that he mentored, Marshall would continue to shape the world in critical ways long after the surrender ceremony that had taken place on the deck of the USS *Missouri* (BB 63). Indeed, when Marshall received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953, the committee member presenting the award acknowledged the general's vital role in the war but noted that the prize was being given not for his record on the battlefield but for his "great work for the establishment of peace" afterward (p. 245).

Although scholarly examinations of Marshall's life and career are hardly wanting, most have focused on his World War II years. The postwar period has received comparably less scrutiny, an omission that Taylor and his coauthors aspire to correct. Accordingly, essays from nine different authors (along with an excellent forward by Mark Stoler, editor of the Marshall Papers) examine the general's immediate post-

war efforts and their subsequent legacy for the Cold War years and beyond. Topics range widely, from Marshall's connections, the formation of the Atlantic Alliance, and the integration of the military to the debate about universal military training, American postwar nuclear policy, his role in the Chinese Civil War and the Korean War, and much more. And while the authors' conclusions vary, the connective thread is the influential hand of George Marshall, who emerges from these pages as perhaps the most significant policy-making figure of the era. Authors attribute his influence to many qualities, but a few emerge most clearly: his abilities as a manager and mentor; his honesty, frankness, and devotion to duty; his broad vision and understanding of the international arena and his willingness to think about the long-term implications of policies; and his commitment to selfless public service and to the democratic, civilian-controlled form of government that he championed. These are constant themes of the different chapters. Even those essays that acknowledge his failures, such as Katherine Reist's examination of his postwar effort to negotiate a coalition government in China and Taylor's essay about the practical limitations of his efforts on behalf of universal military training, still find him to be both a critical figure and a man who stands largely above reproach. As Sean Kalic contends in his thoughtful essay about Marshall's role in postwar national security reforms, the general was "a vital architect of the national security policy of the United States that persisted for the duration of the Cold War" (p. 85).

As in any essay collection, of course, there is some unevenness in terms of the individual essays' contributions to the overall literature. Ingo Trauschweizer's study of the formation of NATO offers a wonderful look at how Marshall's vision for how

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Dr. Mitchell B. Lerner is professor of history and the director of the East Asian Studies Center and faculty fellow at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies at The Ohio State University.

NATO transformed from an economic and political alliance to a larger military partnership, largely due to the changing exigencies of the times. This chapter, as do many others in the volume, tells the reader as much about the larger international tensions that defined the era as it does about Marshall himself. Frank Settle Jr.'s piece on nuclear weapons similarly traces the evolution of Marshall's thinking about the dangers and limits of these weapons with depth and skill. Other chapters are somewhat less noteworthy. Jared Dockery's chapter on the Korean War is both extremely thorough and beautifully written, but it offers little that is truly new to those familiar with the war. A few authors also go a bit overboard in their efforts to make Marshall the positive center of the story. Jeremy Maxwell's claim, for example, that Marshall's mentorship of Matthew Ridgway and his larger vision of equitable service and citizenship made him "perhaps the greatest ally African Americans had in the army" (p. 227) seems a bit forced.

Still, this is an exceptional collection of essays overall. Each one offers critical background depth about its subject and provides the broader context necessary for any accurate evaluation. Many of the topics examined here were central not just to the immediate postwar years but to American politics and international relations throughout the Cold War and beyond, and the authors do strong work in pointing to not just Marshall's role but to the larger legacy he created that would last for decades. Taylor's conclusion, in particular, notes the resonance of many of the critical challenges of these years for today's international environment. In the end, then, this book offers insights not only into Marshall's life and career but into the evolution of a critical and formative period in world history overall. The era, concludes Taylor, "was a storm in both its chaos and its consequences, and Marshall was at the center of it all" (p. 2). No one reading *George C. Marshall and the Early Cold War* could possibly disagree.

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## Lawrence Provost

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*Age of Fear: Othering and American Identity during World War I.* By Zachary Smith. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019. Pp. 248. \$59.95, cloth and e-book.)

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*Age of Fear: Othering and American Identity during World War I* is the story of government and private organized prejudice against German Americans in the United States before and during American involvement in the First World War. One may find it amazing that societies so blessed with technological and other advancements will continually give in to such primitive sins as ethnic prejudice. America was not immune to it in World War I toward German Americans and later in World War II toward Japanese Americans. In World War II, Germany fully unleashed racial hatred and sought to extinguish those it labeled “vermin” through the latest media and technology. While the actions committed against the Japanese Americans in the Second World War by the United States government were immoral, what is less well known is the tale told through *Age of Fear* regarding how German Americans suffered in the First World War.

*Age of Fear* shows how government agencies not only reacted to fear and suspicion of German Americans among the citizenry but oftentimes exacerbated and exploited it. This was accomplished primarily through the investigative arms of the government, specifically the 250,000-strong American Protective League. The American Protective League was founded after America’s entry into World War I to supplement the Bureau of Investigation, which later became the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in investigating subversion. Though the government and many citizens suspected a large fifth-column element of German Americans, most of these suspicions were based on false rumors and innuendo. Due to this lack of a Ger-

man fifth column, the American Protective League was disbanded not long after the November 1918 Armistice.

However, it was not just the government that spread hatred and fear of German Americans. The media helped perpetuate false claims about German Americans by publishing rumors and insidious, inflammatory cartoons in newspapers and magazines. Novels, pamphlets, and even the new medium of film helped to further claims that German Americans were tied into radical organizations such as the Industrial Workers of the World. Ultimately these efforts did not translate into lasting hatred toward German Americans, for such prejudicial feelings generally did not survive the end of the First World War. Post-World War I literature such as *The Great Gatsby* even showed a certain attractiveness to German influences. Still, the prejudice toward German Americans in World War I was significant, though it did not approach the level of hatred and prejudice held toward Japanese Americans in World War II. Inversely, the hatred of German Americans during World War I was noticeably larger compared to an almost-nonexistent prejudice during World War II, despite Germany being the undeniable aggressor in that conflict.

The fear of German Americans was widespread enough that private businesses attempted to exploit the situation; promoting the selling of “Home Defense” revolvers was but one example. Even churches were not exempt, as Lutheranism, especially in the American Midwest, became a target of those who feared sabotage. Lutheran churches often conducted services in German to accommodate their large German populations, and an understandably strong pro-German sentiment existed in those churches before American entry into World War I. While there was

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Lawrence Provost, chaplain candidate (2dLt), Virginia Army National Guard, also serves as the outreach officer for the National Cemetery Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Views presented are his own.

some German sabotage in the United States both before and after American entry into the war, such as the Black Tom Island and Kingsland Assembly Plant explosions, such incidents were not widespread, nor were they indicative of the desire of German Americans to integrate into American society.

*Age of Fear* is a warning about the expansion of centralized power over the civil liberties of citizens. The greatest threats to a civilization come during wartime, both on the battlefield and on the home front. The challenge on the battlefield is to prevent the enemy from destroying said civilization by destroying the enemy. It is a simple formula in that regards. However,

the challenge on the home front is harder, namely to root out any sympathy for the enemy while protecting the civil liberties of the people. This is a delicate balance and one that nations often fail to achieve.

*Age of Fear* is extensively researched, as evidenced by a thorough bibliography that relies on books of the period, diaries, magazines, letters, newspapers, and records of both the American and German governments. The text is valuable for those interested in World War I, especially regarding the home front. *Age of Fear* will also be of interest to those interested in civil liberties, the history of German Americans, and the role of propaganda in wartime.

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## *Lieutenant Colonel Michael Taint, USAF (Ret)*

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*Beyond Blue Skies: The Rocket Plane Programs that Led to the Space Age.* By Chris Petty. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020. Pp. 408. \$36.95, cloth and e-book.)

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Given the current interest in hypersonics and space tourism via Virgin Galactic's SpaceShipOne, many readers may be surprised to learn the underlying technologies behind these innovations date as far back as the years immediately following World War II. *In Beyond Blue Skies: The Rocket Plane Programs that Led to the Space Age*, author Chris Petty provides a highly readable account of how mating rocket propulsion to aircraft through a series of experimental "X" programs not only conquered the sound barrier but also paved the way for America's manned space program. This book will be of interest to anyone in the research, development, and acquisition communities (space- or aviation-related, or not), particularly those in test and evaluation.

Though Petty's bibliography includes a comprehensive listing of previously published books and periodicals, his extensive use of oral histories and personal correspondence provides a fresh new perspective on this history, which could have easily deteriorated into a dry dissertation on various technical problems in materials science, aerodynamics, etc. Personalities, not technologies, dominate this book. This is not to say the author ignores the very real technical problems that were the *raison d'être* for these programs; quite to the contrary, Petty has a talent for presenting complex technical issues in a way that gets the point across without leaving the non-subject matter expert befuddled. This is an especially good thing, as Murphy's Law (named after a test engineer at Edwards Air Force Base during this time) makes an appearance on many pages.

The book begins with a brief introduction to the problems of supersonic flight and a quick review of aircraft developments after World War I, including the discovery of the so-called sound barrier. At the height of World War II, chief of the U.S. Army Air Forces Henry H. Arnold was already looking ahead to aircraft capable of high-speed/supersonic flight, so a partnership with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA, eventually NASA) was formed, spearheaded by John Stack, chief advocate of a high-speed research aircraft program and the founding father of the whole experimental rocket plane effort. From this partnership came two experimental programs, one funded by the U.S. Navy (Douglas as a prime contractor), the other the Army Air Forces (Bell as the prime contractor), with NACA acting as a technical advisor and coordinator on both.

Without the distraction of a large wartime production program, Bell immediately set to work on what would eventually become the XS-1, with an astonishing schedule of one year for completion. Working from an initial simple set of functional requirements (acquisition managers take note of p. 19) the first aircraft began flight testing per plan. There was only one major change: the experimental aircraft would be air launched, allowing a major weight reduction. Operating at Muroc Air Field (now Edwards Air Force Base, California), the XS-1 program famously culminated in Chuck Yeager's first supersonic flight after surmounting a series of minor and major technical challenges. Just as important as the first supersonic flight were the working relationships between the competing government agencies and their private contractors. As the author notes, "Working relationships (however uneasy) had been established between military, industrial and government partners, build-

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LtCol Michael Taint, USAF (Ret), served in several military space assignments and is a retired defense industry program manager.



ing the foundation on which future programs would be built” (p. 51). Indeed, the author does an exceptional job showing how various bureaucratic imperatives and business interests behind the scenes had to be continually managed for these complex systems to be built (acquisition managers should again take note). The remaining chapters in part one (“Breaking Barriers”) discuss how various versions of the X-1 and X-2 aircraft evolved—with considerably difficulty, particularly the X-2—allowing the program to break the Mach 2 barrier and shifting research interests from supersonic to hypersonic, and eventually space.

Part two (“America’s First Spaceship”) documents in detail the X-15 program throughout its 13-year history. Developed under the auspices of an Air Force program office and built by prime contractors North American and operated by NACA/NASA, the X-15 marked the real beginning of America’s space program. An essential role in this complex project was played by NACA engineer and test pilot Scott Crossfield, who elected to leave government service in 1955 with the award of the X-15 contract and work for North American (a move that would probably be prohibited today under revolving door rules). Crossfield became, in his own words, “the X-15’s chief son-of-a-bitch. Anyone who wanted Charlie Felz [head of the design team] to capriciously change anything or add anything in the cockpit, or the whole X-15 for that matter, would first have to fight Crossfield” (p. 172). Crossfield’s role as requirements gatekeeper and

as a living repository of lessons learned became a key ingredient in the X-15’s success. Though almost completely overshadowed by the publicity garnered on Project Mercury, the X-15’s contributions to the space program were considerable, including prototyping space suits, reaction control systems (normal aerodynamic controls being ineffective outside the atmosphere), and addressing human factors issues in high G-force environments among others. Moreover, future astronauts such as Neil Armstrong and Joe Engle first experienced space in the X-15, experiences that could only have been helpful in their later Apollo missions.

In part three (“The Lifting Bodies”), Petty discusses wingless lifting bodies, the least-known of the experimental rocket planes. After an initial “home brew” lifting body prototype—taken aloft behind a 1963 Pontiac sedan—NACA commissioned light- and heavyweight versions of the M-2, which eventually led to the X-24, a proof-of-concept vehicle that verified that lifting bodies could successfully be piloted and landed unpowered, a key technical challenge for the space shuttle program. The X-24 also led directly to the current X-37 Orbital Test Vehicle operated by U.S. Space Force.

In summary, readers of *Beyond Blue Skies* will gain a better understanding of technologies highly relevant in this hypersonic age, and the one thing that never changes: the importance of men and women with the knowledge, leadership, and courage to build complex systems and push the boundaries of air and space.

## William A. Taylor, PhD

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*The War for Muddy Waters: Pirates, Terrorists, Traffickers, and Maritime Insecurity.* By Joshua Tallis. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2019. Pp. 280. \$18.47, cloth.)

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In *The War for Muddy Waters: Pirates, Terrorists, Traffickers, and Maritime Insecurity*, Joshua Tallis, an analyst at the Center for Naval Analyses, examines the linkages between maritime strategy and community policing, presenting a unique and multidisciplinary approach to addressing a critical problem: maritime insecurity in the littorals and the myriad transnational threats emanating from them. In doing so, the author combines his considerable experience as a naval analyst, both afloat and ashore, examining a range of maritime issues with his extensive research into the littorals to contribute a noteworthy and important book. Students, scholars, analysts, and policymakers concerned about maritime security, transnational threats, and human security will find this work most thought provoking.

The author's purpose is to transcend the traditional routine of separately assessing individual challenges and instead to consider the entire environment of the littorals to craft a maritime strategy to overcome the vast insecurity of this pivotal domain. To do so, Tallis argues that hazards in the littorals often resemble crime. He explains, "That is, that maritime security has a lot to learn from the world of crime" (p. 7). Two key themes emerge from the author's insightful application of criminology theory to maritime security: context and multidimensionality. The first concept stresses the influence of local dynamics and thereby calls for solutions grounded in community settings. The second notion highlights the broad spectrum of perils in the littorals and contends that

addressing smaller cases—those residing below interstate conflict—can produce compounding results and thereby mitigate graver concerns. Tallis concludes, "The twenty-first century presents a threat forecast replete with risks that do not conform to convention. . . . The tides are shifting, and the littorals are reemerging. Conceptualizing muddy waters and the opaque world of crime and war they harbor is paramount" (p. 214). Indeed.

Methodologically, the author pursues his objective through two innovative paths. First, he illustrates that maritime strategy to engage the littorals must be multidimensional to be successful. The various challenges arising in this environment do not exist in isolation, but rather occur in concert. Second, Tallis reinforces the essential role of context. He persuasively shows that maritime strategy must also account for local dynamics to be effective. The author applies this two-part framework to three intriguing case studies: the Caribbean Basin, the Gulf of Guinea, and the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. A particular strength of Tallis's approach is his multidisciplinary emphasis. Throughout his book, he solidly supports his assessments with wide-ranging sources, including strategic documents from the United Nations, NATO, European Union, and African Union; reports by nongovernmental organizations; and U.S. government records, among others. Tallis situates these primary sources within the prevailing literature, including such naval strategy classics as the works of Alfred Thayer Mahan, Julian S. Corbett, and Dudley W. Knox; more recent books on counterinsurgency from John A. Nagl and David Kilcullen; the maritime work of Geoffrey Till, Christian Bueger, and Basil Germond; and contributions on policing by James Wilson and George L. Kelling, especially their broken windows theory.

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Dr. William A. Taylor is a professor of global security studies and holds the Lee Drain Endowed University Professorship, Kay Bailey Hutchison Center for Security Studies, at Angelo State University, San Angelo, TX.

Tallis organizes his work into three major parts, each one comprised of either two or three individual chapters. In part one, "Shaping Strategy," the author explains the undergirding theory and ultimate direction of his book. In part two, "Cocaine and Context in the Caribbean," he applies these concepts to the maritime domain and demonstrates the vast criminality present in the littorals, including drugs, weapons, and human trafficking throughout the Caribbean. In part three, "Integrating Piracy," Tallis shifts his focus from the Caribbean Basin to the Gulf of Guinea and the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, illustrating the myriad contextual factors related to piracy and crafting conclusions and recommendations on how to address these formidable problems moving forward.

*The War for Muddy Waters* is a well-written, deeply researched, and astute survey of the critical sig-

nificance of the littorals and a powerful call for the nuanced maritime strategy necessary to combat the many transnational threats emanating from this crucial environment. Overall, Tallis has produced an innovative study that presciently reminds readers that while military power is still necessary for maritime security, the transnational threats stemming from the littorals are often infused with criminality. As a result, positively addressing them requires a refined style that employs military assets in conjunction with community policing methods. In the end, Tallis brings valuable insights on human security to the maritime domain and encourages a paradigm shift in how to envision security within it. Readers interested in maritime strategy, human security, and the vital relationship between the two will greatly profit from reading it.

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## Robert F. Williams

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*War Flower: My Life after Iraq.* By Brook King. (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, 2019. Pp. 280. \$28.95, cloth and e-book; \$21.95, paperback.)

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Rarely does an Iraq war memoir combine the sort of literary genius, realism, and post-war healing found in Brook King's *War Flower: My Life after Iraq*. "Nothing good survives war" (p. 126), or so the author asserts, but if this memoir serves as anything, it is a story of survival, perseverance, and an example that something good and beautiful can eventually come from war. King is living proof of that as she describes her trials and tribulations in combat—and perhaps most poignantly—at home. King is now an adjunct professor of English and creative writing at Saint Leo University in Florida, where she helps teach a master's program in creative writing, including the study of war literature and writing for veterans.

Ultimately this is about the complex reality of life in and after the military for women. She opens by retelling her testimony from the court-martial trial of the father of her unborn twin boys—a U.S. Army captain—for his relationship with King, an enlisted woman. At the risk of perpetuating problematic stereotypes about women and sex in the combat zone, King draws the reader into her personal story with the depth of her emotional honesty. This book hammers home the complex existence of being a woman in such a hypermasculinized space as the military. She describes the world of being a female well, including a veritable checklist of things to do and not to do in a combat zone. In a section of the book called "Memorandum for Record," she describes a list of instructions for incoming women, reminding them to "walk like a man so male soldiers think you're gay" and to

carry a knife everywhere "in your boot and not your belt loop; trust me don't ask" (p. 102).

During her tour in Iraq, she becomes pregnant through her illicit relationship with the aforementioned Army captain, James, (ostensibly outside of her chain of command), an action that results in her succumbing to every terrible stereotype about women in the Service. However, she is happy as this is her ticket home—she must be sent home from a combat environment—though it takes two months, thanks to classic military bureaucracy. Back at Schweinfurt, her post in Germany, she is living with James and experiencing a fundamental dichotomy of emotion—happy to be pregnant and in love with James, angry at how seemingly everyone in her unit treats her. This emotional dichotomy extends into the emotional and psychological processing of her deployment to Iraq. Here, King describes bouts of PTSD, nightmares, panic attacks, knuckles tensing on her drive home, and the like. Nevertheless, she finds herself happy to be home despite finding a Veterans Affairs (VA) system wholly unprepared to handle women veterans. During her first VA appointment, the mental health counselor assumed King's pregnancy was from rape and that King was not a combat veteran—hardly helpful for a woman suffering from severe PTSD.

She likewise brings out the ultimate futility of the war, and in that regard, the war in general at the soldier level. The hubris of Americans in Iraq shines through in her prose. Particularly how U.S. occupation forces viewed and treated Iraqi civilians—the sad reality of a "soldiers' culture" that often left soldiers either unable or unwilling to understand the Iraqi people. "The men, women, and children of Iraq were no longer people," she writes. "They were all terrorists" (p. 27). This passage is also an intriguing insight

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Robert F. Williams is a PhD candidate in military history at The Ohio State University. A veteran of one tour in Iraq and two in Afghanistan, he is currently researching U.S. Army organizational culture and institutional change between World War II and Vietnam.

into how a group of soldiers who only left the wire for specific missions never fully immersed themselves into the day-to-day life of Iraqis.

She also describes recovering destroyed vehicles, still smoking, with disemboweled bodies in the back, a true horror for anyone not prepared for that. She describes a tumultuous deployment to Iraq in 2006, letting readers in on what war is like for women in the post-9/11 world: long periods of boredom punctuated by intense activity (like all who experienced combat), while trying to maintain some shred of femininity.

King writes with great pace and suspense. After the prologue, I had to stop myself from skipping forward to know more about her situation with the father of her twins and was eager to know how everything turned out. The book alternates between first-person narrative and some creative nonfiction wherein she imagines herself in the lives of Iraqi chil-

dren she briefly encountered or even as dog tags. According to an April 2019 *Wrath Bearing Tree* interview with King, this technique is designed to reflect her memory—disjointed, fragmented, and often kaleidoscopic. For King's memoir, the technique works well and helps give the reader a sense of her reality. This book should be required reading for those that wish to understand better being young, female, and at war. In that regard, it stands alongside Kayla Williams's *Love My Rifle More than You* (2004) as definitive works on the enlisted woman's perspective in the Global War on Terrorism. This is not a book for the faint of heart, as King is as honest as they come, describing in gory detail the feeling of grasping the charred, maimed, and destroyed flesh of Americans left forever young in Iraq or the Iraqi teenager she shot with her M2 Browning (Ma Deuce). *War Flower* should be read by all—veteran, civilian, and servicemember alike.

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