

2015

The U.S. Naval Institute on Naval Tactics, edited by Wayne P. Hughes

Charles H. Lewis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Lewis, Charles H. (2015) "The U.S. Naval Institute on Naval Tactics, edited by Wayne P. Hughes," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 68 : No. 3 , Article 21.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol68/iss3/21>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

China is, as Haddick agrees, achieving its objectives without risking war. Beijing understands there is a threshold for U.S. military response and will continue to operate below it. An American president would be loath to fire the first shots over the Chinese occupation of an uninhabited island. Haddick therefore argues the United States should develop policies to encourage China to follow the existing international rules in letter and spirit. Unfortunately, he does not detail these policies, leaving his strategy wanting.

Haddick states that strategy is about managing risk. While much of what Haddick proposes seems commonsensical, it is unfinished, and this poses risks. Focusing only on punitive measures against possible Chinese actions runs the risk of ignoring the ways China has played by the rules while furthering a mind-set where every development in the PLA's modernization is perceived as a threat to U.S. regional interests—regardless of Chinese intentions. This book should be read as part of an ongoing and equally unfinished debate on how to handle a rising China.

IAN T. SUNDSTROM



Hughes, Wayne P., ed. *The U.S. Naval Institute on Naval Tactics*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2015. 192pp. \$21.95

The U.S. Naval Institute on Naval Tactics is a collection of thirteen essays assembled by Captain Wayne Hughes, USN (Ret.)—author of several books, most notably *Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat* and *Military Modeling for Decision Making*. Captain Hughes is also an accomplished naval officer, having served as commanding officer of USS

Hummingbird (MSC 192) and USS *Morton* (DD 948). Notable authors appearing in *On Tactics* include Admiral Woodward, RN, who commanded British forces in the Falklands War, and Giuseppe Fioravanzo, Admiral of the Fleet, Italian Navy. *On Tactics* is part of the U.S. Naval Institute's new Wheel Books series, which is a collection of books containing some of the Naval Institute's most well-regarded articles from *Proceedings*—and other sources—on such topics as naval leadership, command, strategy, and cooperation.

On Tactics is well worth the reader's time, and appropriate for both junior and senior officers. It benefits greatly from Hughes's insightful commentary and tactful editing, which boils the combined length of the selected essays down to a manageable 190 pages. Although the topic of tactics is broadly applicable to all naval communities, surface warfare officers will probably have the easiest time relating to the selected essays.

Of the thirteen essays in the volume, a favorite was "Missile Chess: A Parable," written by Hughes himself. "Missile Chess" describes a game created by Hughes in which players sit down to play a traditional game of chess but with a major twist: the players have a fixed number of "missiles" that they must distribute among their pieces as they see fit. The pieces still move according to the rules of regular chess, but each time they capture an opposing piece they expend one "missile." Once a piece's missile inventory is depleted a piece can still move but can no longer capture. After he walks us through several hypothetical scenarios, it is clear that despite its simplicity, missile chess nicely elucidates some of the most vexing operational challenges with which a modern naval commander must contend.

My only criticism of *On Tactics* is that some of the selected essays veer into areas that could more aptly be described as “strategy” or “enterprise management.” For example, “Toward a New Identity” chronicles Admiral Luce’s struggle to keep the Atlantic fleet together long enough to test the tactical doctrines flowing out of the recently founded Naval War College. Although this is a fine essay, it does not provide the reader with any particular insight into *tactics*. Rather, it provides insight into why new tactics can be difficult to develop. Similarly, “Creating ASW Killing Zones,” although an excellent piece on Cold War antisubmarine warfare operations and strategy, does not provide much in the way of *tactical* insights on how to defeat the submarine threat.

The great advantage of this book, and indeed the entire Wheel Books series, is that it makes many excellent articles and essays readily available to the reading public—essays that might otherwise have fallen by the wayside. Overall, this volume is an excellent addition to any personal library. The size of the book and length of the articles make it an excellent work for professional development, wardroom discussion, and thought-provoking conversation.

CHARLES H. LEWIS



Wachman, Alan M. *Why Taiwan? Geostrategic Rationales for China’s Territorial Integrity*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2007. 272pp. \$25.95

Tufts Fletcher School professor Alan Wachman was a giant in the China, East Asian studies, and international relations field who remains sorely missed

following his untimely death in 2012. In what is widely considered one of his major scholarly contributions, through this pithy, well-researched book—rightly considered a classic—Wachman engages in exceptional interdisciplinary analysis to offer provocative coverage of historical episodes that have shaped Taiwan’s status fundamentally. Some events raise penetrating questions about what might have resulted had they ended differently; other factors inspire critical questions about East Asia’s future. Wachman develops a theme of the strategic salience of “imagined geography” as the best explanation for the significant variation over time in the association of Taiwan as part of Chinese sovereign territory in the minds of the leaders, and even the populace, of mainland China. He does so through close examination of key Chinese documents and terminology as well as careful consideration of their relative authority and reliability.

Wachman suggests that Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese Communist Party, Mao Zedong, and even possibly Deng Xiaoping did not initially consider Taiwan to be part of China in the sense that it is understood officially today. This approach raises compelling questions about state formation and national identity that are critical to the understanding of international relations. Indeed, it may be argued that “imagined geography” is a global phenomenon and hardly peculiar to China. It is important to remember that Taiwan was formally incorporated into Qing administration in 1683, nearly a century before the founding of the United States. One may contrast such historical events as the American acquisition and incorporation of Hawaii and Alaska and conclude that the factors Wachman considers do