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Improving Intelligence Analysis: Bridging the Gap between Scholarship and Practice

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domestic agenda, it explains Johnson's expansion of the Vietnam War in such a different direction from Kennedy.

The well-researched text concludes by looking beyond Vietnam at how well the pattern holds under different circumstances and time periods, to include the Iraq war. Saunders's framework categorizes presidents as belonging to either of two ideal types. While this may hold from a strictly political science view, it falls short of the reality of history. For this reason, the book will appeal more to political scientists or those seeking model-centric explanations of events. This work should also have strong appeal for strategists and people serving on planning or policy staffs. Understanding how senior leaders view the world is often as significant as factual knowledge of a given situation when providing recommended courses of action.

LT. COL. FREDERICK H. BLACK, JR., U.S. ARMY
Naval War College



Marrin, Stephen. *Improving Intelligence Analysis: Bridging the Gap between Scholarship and Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2011. 192pp. \$130

A former CIA analyst turned scholar, Stephen Marrin attempts to bridge the gap between intelligence studies as an academic discipline and intelligence as a bureaucratic function. His analysis grounded in the intelligence literature, Marrin provides readers a good overview of such intelligence-studies classics as those of Sherman Kent, Roger Hilsman, and Richards Heuer, along with more contemporary work by Roger George, James Bruce, Richard Betts, and Amy Zegart. Marrin certainly

displays a penchant for the academic that is informed by his former role as an intelligence analyst. He believes "intelligence scholarship can provide knowledge and insight useful for the analytic practitioner; so useful in fact, that it will help improve the quality of the resulting intelligence analysis."

With such a goal, Marrin offers six ways to improve intelligence analysis, but it is unclear how he derives these. Marrin does not draw his conclusions from known cases of highly publicized intelligence assessments. In the case of Iraq, it would have been useful to illustrate why the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research had a better answer on the status of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program than the Defense Intelligence Agency. Had Marrin tested his advice against known intelligence failures or drawn from assessments of failed analysis, his advice would be more convincing.

With intelligence increasingly public and used to justify or explain foreign-policy decisions, it seems one more piece of advice Marrin could offer is how to incorporate public discussions or open sources into analysis. Fortunately or not, the intelligence community does not have a monopoly on the "facts," so discussing the ways in which analysts can more readily connect with scholars and the private sector would be useful.

To be fair, the book is focused on intelligence analysis, but it seems to ignore how, why, and where facts are collected. In an era when both scholars and private citizens have access to information, it is important that Marrin address the epistemological underpinnings of what is being analyzed. There is a logical and important

relationship between collection and analysis that is in need of further study.

In spite of the book's shortcomings, Marrin offers readers a look at what a junior CIA analyst does and offers a sketch of how to move beyond the "generalized intuition" that often afflicts intelligence analysis. His discussion of improving intelligence analysis through empathy is interesting and has implications for personnel recruiting. In fact, this slim volume should be valued by human-resources departments and senior managers as they prepare for the next reorganizations of their agencies.

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Rickards, James. *Currency Wars: The Making of the Next Global Crisis*. New York: Penguin Group, 2011. 304pp. \$26.95

Is the United States now engaged in a currency war? Are we involved in an international competition of currency devaluation that will impact America in seldom-studied ways that are critical to its defense? James Rickards suggests that we are, and that today's currency war could be as devastating to national security as any kinetic war.

James Rickards is a counselor, investment banker, and risk manager with over thirty years of experience in capital markets. He advises the Department of Defense, the intelligence community, and major hedge funds on global finance. He served as a facilitator for the first-ever financial war games conducted by the Pentagon.

Rickards argues that currency conflicts should and must interest our

military leaders. Such conflicts can and should be prepared for, because the cheap-dollar policies of both the present and immediate past administrations portend a dollar crisis. Rickards argues that policy makers have lost the enormous national-security advantages that dollar hegemony affords, by adopting weak-dollar policies.

In part 1 Rickards discusses Pentagon-sponsored "war" gaming in 2009, using rules of engagement (ROE) in which the only "weapons" allowed were currencies, stocks, bonds, and derivatives. Because the specific ROE were unrealistic, however, the results were inconclusive, although useful for future simulations. Then, in part 2, the author delves into historical accounts of what he calls "Currency War I" (1921–36) and "Currency War II" (1967–87). Rickards argues that we have now entered "Currency War III," the three primary combatants being the United States, China, and Europe. He argues that there are four possible outcomes of Currency War III: a move to multiple reserve currencies, with the dollar playing a much smaller role; an International Monetary Fund–controlled world money, called "Special Drawing Rights"; a return to the gold standard, at a substantially higher gold price (the prospect endorsed by Rickards); and chaos. This last possibility and the associated dollar collapse appears most likely to the author.

It is unfortunate that Rickards did not include any reference to Edward S. Miller's *Bankrupting the Enemy: The U.S. Financial Siege of Japan before Pearl Harbor* (Naval Institute Press, 2007), written by a skilled financial analyst who discusses in great detail how the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration used dollar hegemony to block Japan