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Recent Books

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Recent Books

Ballard, Robert D. with Malcolm McConnell. *Explorations: My Quest for Adventure and Discovery under the Sea*. New York: Hyperion, 1995. 407pp. \$24.95

Most people are probably familiar with at least some of the spectacular underwater photos and video taken in recent years by Robert Ballard and his team of the final resting places of famous lost ships, like the *Titanic* and the *Bismarck*. This book is an account of Ballard's career in undersea exploration. Stories of the searches for the lost ships are included, as are descriptions of undersea life and phenomena, as well as of some of the technical problems involved with deep sea exploration. The book includes dozens of color photographs that may whet some readers' appetites for one or more of Ballard's big picture books. The only slightly detracting aspect is the absence of a table of contents and an index.

Daws, Gavan. *Prisoners of the Japanese: POWs of World War II in the Pacific*. New York: William Morrow, 1994. 462pp. \$15

The harsh treatment of prisoners by the Japanese during World War II has been well documented in the accounts of those who survived, a handful of academic monographs, and popular films. Gavan Daws's work, however, differs from previous examinations of the subject by taking a two-tiered approach; in addition to the experiences of individual Allied prisoners of war, he also analyzes issues by groups, such as the survival rates of British prisoners of war versus their Dutch counterparts, or enlisted men and noncommissioned officers versus officers. In addition to the well known atrocity stories, there are some disturbing revelations regarding the conduct of groups of prisoners while in captivity. For example, Daws argues that the Americans were the only group of prisoners to kill one another, and that with few exceptions the officers of all Allied nations ensured their own privileges while ignoring the welfare of the men under their command. The real tragedy of the prisoners of war, he asserts, was in their treatment, or lack thereof, by their own governments upon their repatriation.

The journalistic style of Daws and the lack of any annotation in the text may lead some readers to discount his conclusions in this work, but the presentation belies almost ten years of research and personal interviews, as well as forty-four pages of notes and information on sources. This is a thought-provoking and insightful book of value to scholars, serving personnel, and casual readers.

Gibbons, William Conrad. *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War, Part IV, July 1965–January 1968*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1995. 969pp. \$24.95

There are numerous policy histories of American involvement in the Vietnam War, beginning with *The Pentagon Papers*. However, no other even remotely approaches the quality of this series in comprehensiveness, source documentation, or ease of use. This is the penultimate volume of the series and covers the period from President Johnson's decision in July 1965 to send large-scale combat forces into Vietnam, until just before the January 1968 Tet Offensive. Previous volumes covered, in turn, 1945–1960, 1961–1964, and January–July 1965. The fifth and final volume will cover from the Tet offensive of 1968 through the “Great Spring Victory” in April 1975.

As in previous volumes, the author describes and analyzes major aspects of U.S. policy from the perspective of the participants, both executive and legislative. He draws on a wide variety of sources, including some recently declassified executive and legislative documents, papers of the participants, oral histories, and 135 interviews that he conducted.

Space does not permit further development here, but each volume in this series is a must for all libraries, as well as for any researcher or serious student of the policy decisions that led us into and eventually out of the Vietnam disaster. William Gibbons, author of all the volumes, is Research Professor at George Mason University. He has bequeathed us a major intellectual legacy.

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Winners of the Hugh G. Nott Prize for 1995

The President of the Naval War College has announced the winners of prizes for the finest articles (less those on historical subjects) appearing in the *Naval War College Review* in 1995:

- First Prize (\$500), Rear Admiral Yedidia Ya'ari, Israel Navy, for "The Littoral Arena: A Word of Caution" (Spring);
- Second Prize (\$300), Captain Bradd C. Hayes, U.S. Navy, for "Institutionalizing Innovation: Objective or Oxymoron?" (Autumn); and,
- Third Prize (\$200), Captain Wayne P. Hughes, Jr., U.S. Navy, for "The Power in Doctrine" (Summer).

This award is given in memory of the late Captain Hugh G. Nott, U.S. Navy, who made major contributions over a period of ten years to the professional life of the Naval War College.

Winners of the Edward S. Miller History Prize for 1995

Through the generosity of the distinguished historian Edward S. Miller, the President of the Naval War College has awarded prizes to authors of the finest articles on historical subjects appearing in the *Naval War College Review* in 1995.

- The winner (\$700) is Major George B. Eaton, U.S. Army, for "General Walter Krueger and Joint War Planning, 1922-1938" (Spring).
- The runner-up (\$300) is Captain Robert C. Rubel, U.S. Navy, for "Gettysburg and Midway: Historical Parallels in Operational Command" (Winter).

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