

## Book Reviews

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## **Book Reviews**

### **Abstract**

The Accidental Guerilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One. By David Kilcullen.

Aviation and Airport Security: Terrorism and Safety Concerns. By Kathleen M. Sweet.

Executive Measures, Terrorism and National Security: Have the Rules of the Game Changed? By David Bonner.

Spycraft: The Secret History of the CIA's Spy techs from Communism to Al-Qaeda. By Robert Wallace and H. Keith Melton, with Henry Robert Schlesinger.

Troublesome Young Men: The Rebels who brought Churchill to Power and Saved England. By Lynne Olson.

## Book Reviews

***The Accidental Guerilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One.* By David Kilcullen. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-19-536834-5. Maps. Photographs. Glossary. Notes. Sources cited. Index. Pp. 346. \$27.95.**

Carl von Clausewitz, Alfred von Schlieffen, Billy Mitchell, Hank Crumpton, David Galula, Sun Tzu and the late Air Force Colonel John Boyd focused not only on how to win engagements militarily but also by outmaneuvering an enemy mentally in order to limit the necessity for actual combat. Rarely is one able to witness the work of a distinctive practitioner and foremost authority on counterintelligence whose ideas may ultimately change the way we engage an enemy. In *Accidental Guerilla*, David Kilcullen examines and analyzes the nature and need for a revolutionary change in our counter-insurgency policy through his first hand experiences in the theaters of Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, East Timor and Indonesia.

Kilcullen emphasizes that our traditional counter-terrorism and classical counter-insurgency models are inadequate for the conflict in which we find ourselves. Thus, we find a distinction between the hard-core jihadist and the local fighter who is therefore referred to as an accidental guerilla—fighting us because we are in his space and due to his traditional folk beliefs. In the author's own words: "This book, like its wars, is a hybrid: part field study, part personal recollection; perhaps too academic to be popular and too populist to be purely academic" (from the Acknowledgements).

David Kilcullen, Ph.D. (born 1967) is a contemporary practitioner and theorist of counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism. A former Australian Army officer, he left that army as a lieutenant colonel in 2005 and began working as a Special Advisor for Counter-insurgency to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. During 2007 he served in Iraq as Senior Counter-insurgency Adviser, Multinational Force-Iraq, a civilian position on the personal staff of U.S. Army General David Petraeus, responsible for planning and executing the 2007–2008 Joint Campaign Plan, which drove the Iraq War troop surge of 2007. Kilcullen is also an advisor on counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency issues to the United States, British and Australian Governments, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and several private sector institutions.

Most readers will enjoy the practical and understandable approach that Kilcullen takes to communicate and articulate his theories and concepts.

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Readers who are not actual practitioners in the field of counter-intelligence will marvel at his ability to express his philosophy succinctly and in straightforward terms. His emphasis on the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars purports a unique perspective.

Quintessential is Kilcullen's emphasis on changing paradigms on all fronts. Traditional notions of warfare, diplomacy, intelligence and terrorism need to be transformed in order to succeed in these modern day conflicts. "Certainly, in complex, multi-sided, hybrid conflicts like Iraq, conventional warfare has failed to produce decisive outcomes. We have instead adapted existing policing, nation building, and counter-insurgency approaches—and developed inter-agency tools 'on the fly' (p. 292). In the intelligence realms, concentrations will have to focus on less traditional approaches due in part to the simple fact that those pieces of intelligence do not tell the entire and necessary story so that proper planning can be conducted.

Again, this goes to *The Accidental Guerilla's* primary premise, "enemy-centric approaches that focus on the enemy, assuming that killing insurgents is the key task, rarely succeed. Population-centric approaches, that center on protecting local people and gaining their support, succeed more often. The accidental guerilla phenomenon does not explain the entirety of the problem, which is so complex that it does not fit neatly into any one model" (xv).

Accordingly, Kilcullen's observations in Iraq led him to conclude that the United States has not pursued the appropriate course of action to combat global terrorism. Policy at the time was to concentrate on al-Qaeda rather than giving equal attention to separate but interlocking struggles that naturally affect the broader struggle and conflict. Yet, he concludes the United States can be successful in combating this threat if it focuses on developing a new lexicon—changing our terminology; ensuring the grand strategy is based on a long-range view as well as a broad viewpoint; remedying the imbalance in government capability by building non-military elements of national power; identifying new strategic services—re-creating the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to create balance and thoroughness; and developing a capacity for strategic information warfare whereby there is an inter-agency message being supported rather than the current fractured state. This fractured state of information plays right into the hand of the enemy who does use the propaganda machine to his benefit and is at the heart of what Kilcullen calls the *takfiri* objective in manipulation of the locals.

The active counterintelligence professional may not learn anything different, yet Kilcullen addresses the necessary principles of counter-insurgency/counter-intelligence in such a fashion that subject matter experts will be propelled to heightened comprehension of the subject.

Newcomers to counter-insurgency will obviously benefit from the wealth of experience and information demonstrated. However, *The Accidental Guerilla* is not a quick two- to three-day read. It should be enjoyed over a good two or maybe even three-week span so that one can fully digest and understand what Kilcullen is advocating.

David Kilcullen's *Accidental Guerilla* is a book that brings the lessons of the past to life just like Ken Burns has done with his Civil War series. The primary difference is that the reader has the benefit of an actual leading expert on guerilla warfare who takes us on a live journey uncovering the face of modern warfare and demonstrating to us the elements needed to ensure a positive change in our outlook of war and what it will take to win now and into the future.

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***Aviation and Airport Security: Terrorism and Safety Concerns.* By Kathleen M. Sweet. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2009. ISBN 978-1-4200-8816-8 (hardcover). Diagrams. Photographs. Index. Notes. Tables. Pp xxiii, 354. \$79.95.**

Aviation security and terrorism have been topics of intense public scrutiny over the past few years, with endless prescriptions for how to shore up the former against the latter. Into a marketplace flooded with myriad books written by self-proclaimed "experts" comes *Aviation and Airport Security: Terrorism and Safety Concerns*, by Kathleen M. Sweet. The author is a retired U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel with impressive credentials as an intelligence officer, an assistant air attaché to the Russian Federation, an instructor at the Air War College, a member of the Judge Advocate General (JAG) cadre, and a military/political affairs officer with a Special Operations Wing. She currently works as a consultant with various firms and as a university instructor teaching courses in intelligence, security, and terrorism. In her introduction, the author states the book "contains the necessary information with which to devise a strategy that college students, military personnel, and police counterterrorist unit [sic] alike can use to educate themselves" (p. xxiii).

Unfortunately, that sentence contains a key to what is to come. I really wanted to like this book and at first blush it seemed a solid tome, written by an expert to address a vital topic. Regrettably, the more I read, the more I found that the book is laden with suppositions, sweeping generalizations, factual errors, grammatical and spelling errors, and intellectual overreach. In short, the book, while ambitious in scope, promises more than it delivers. Dissecting just the sentence quoted above, it may be useful for college students to become familiar on a superficial level with the concepts used in the book, but military personnel and police counter-terrorism units have assiduously labored ever since the catastrophic attacks of September 11, 2001, to educate themselves on aviation security and terrorism. The military and police have led the way to study these issues and have proactively engaged in very aggressive information sharing campaigns to create a common sight picture.

The author does undertake a very methodical and systematic study and correctly identifies the importance of air travel and transport for our economy and way of life. However, the extraordinary depth and breadth of topics are an inch deep and a mile wide. The fifteen chapters have numerous sub-topics included that span only a page or two or three, allowing little room for the topic other than to mention it and give a paragraph or two. Every topic brought up is valid but is given short shrift, resulting in a very unsatisfying treatment. In addition, there are numerous sections copied and pasted from the Internet (appropriately sourced

and noted), throughout the book, which lessens the book's credibility and portrays a curious lack of imagination on the part of the author. Cutting and pasting is a practice common among sluggish and less accomplished intelligence analysts and is out of place in a textbook purportedly intended for college students.

The use of open source information seems to actually take the place of any real analysis or policy recommendations. The book has no real flow and is uneven, as if it were sloppily assembled with disparate elements welded together to form the final product. The chapter on terrorism unevenly tries to cram into a few pages what multi-volume studies on the topic can only allude to. The author tries to wrap in the history of the Near East (a topic in and of itself) along with the history of terrorism (another topic), terrorist group profiles (another separate topic) and then fold in case studies (a still different topic)—all very poorly.

Spelling errors throughout plague the book and factual errors undermine its credibility. A few examples follow since a complete recounting of all errors would be a larger undertaking than this review will allow. The author's spelling of al-Qa'ida or al-Qaeda is rendered as "Al'Qaeda," which is erroneous. The author attributes the June 25, 1996, terrorist attack at Khobar Towers to Usama bin Ladin, when in fact Iranian-backed terrorists carried out the act. The author's citation of seven state sponsors of terror is several years out of date (there are now four). Other data points cited regarding the intelligence community, law enforcement agencies, counter-terror organizations, and the Department of Homeland Security, are outdated by a few years and placed in improper context. The author also uses citations from sources whose agendas are not clearly stated, presenting a perspective devoid of context.

In spite of these glaring issues, *Aviation and Airport Security: Terrorism and Safety Concerns* has value in that it provides a wide-based view of aviation security, and in a wide-ranging sense it is generally correct. However, the process breaks down when the author tries to provide specificity on topics other than those she copied and pasted from the Internet (and even some of those are incorrect). Perhaps the book's merits might be as a reference of topics to pursue. For those seeking counter-threat and counter-terror solutions to better protect the transportation infrastructure, this tome is useful, but not by any stretch of the imagination a definitive guidebook or manual.

*Mark J. Roberts is a transportation security subject matter expert. He has published strategy articles and a book with the National Defense University Press, as well as numerous book reviews in various journals.*

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***Executive Measures, Terrorism and National Security: Have the Rules of the Game Changed?* By David Bonner. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2007. ISBN 978-0-7546-4756-0 (hardcover). Abbreviations. Footnotes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xi, 371. \$124.95.**

History is one of several fundamental elements in our society. It can easily help us picture what happened before, and some of us may use it to refrain from repeating the same mistakes. From the same rationale, some may have different views of the importance of case laws, but I value them from a perspective that reflects current views from various social beliefs, thoughts, and attitudes at a specific time toward certain subjects and events in our lives. Henceforth, knowing how certain decisions were arrived at will be immeasurably important for us in the future. The author presents past and present historical events in order to illustrate how the U.K. Government handled terrorism and other national security affairs, which were supported by examples in using legal mechanisms instead of using existing or newly developed criminal laws or processes. The author describes specific methods that were formulated and executed as national strategic actions: prevention, pursuit, and protection, such as internment, deportation, and restriction on movement during its colonial withdrawal in Cyprus, Kenya, and Malaya, and in dealing with the political violence in Ireland.

Professor David Bonner has taught at the School of Law, University of Leicester, U.K., since 1974 and was a former student of that institute. As a lawyer, Bonner specializes in laws relating to terrorism, among other interests. He has also written a monograph on measures other than criminal prosecution to deal with terrorism and national security issues.

In Chapter 1, the author uses comparisons with early U.K. history to clearly point out that the rules of "games" have not been changed for the U.K. in pursuit of protecting against further terrorist incidents. Furthermore, the author claims that methods and plans for dealing with "sleeper cells or supporters" remain the same compared to previous governmental reactive responses throughout history.

Some will find this book valuable in regard to past history of how some national crises were handled via methods of internment, restriction of movement, exclusion, and deportation of selected individuals. But others may not value this book, particularly those who seek answers to comprehend sensitive current policies in handling both internal and external threats to nations. Some readers may want to skip chapters two through five and read the rest of the chapters if the readers' views and analysis on

government actions and reactions of the September 11, 2001 attack on U.S. soil are the main points of interest.

This book may be ideal for legal scholars or government officials in the U.S. to study current actions or policies on dealing with sleeper cells or supporters before and after the major attacks on both soils, but it is not clear if it will benefit professionals in intelligence, counterintelligence, and protection fields. The author's view of an effective counter-terrorism or counter-insurgency strategy centers on intelligence-led policing. The U.S. Department of Justice suggested the same approach in its 2009 report, *Navigating Your Agency's Path to Intelligence-Led Policing*.

The author suggests that any decision on national security matters must be balanced to ensure that fundamental rights are protected, but I would add that preservation of human life should be the uppermost, indispensable, and indisputable task for anyone who is in any executive position.

This book should be of interest to political scientists, historians, and lawyers, as suggested by the author, but should be only limited to those who have keen interests in executive decisions. When discussing actual events, some information was inaccurate, such as the flight number for one of the planes that crashed on September 11, 2001, and the date of the London bombing in 2005. In addition, the book's binding appears unable to handle the rigors of library use. I would expect to find this book in the law library of larger universities or reference sections in city or state libraries, but most likely not in individual homes.

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***Spycraft: The Secret History of the CIA's Spytechs from Communism to Al-Qaeda.* By Robert Wallace and H. Keith Melton, with Henry Robert Schlesinger. New York: Dutton, 2008. ISBN 978-0-525-94980-0 (hardcover). Sketches. Maps. Photographs. Glossary. Notes. Sources cited. Index. Select Bibliography. \$29.95.**

This is an excellent book that tells both "who done it" and "how it's done." It is primarily a history focused on the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) technical support capabilities resident in the Directorate of Science and Technology. According to the jacket cover, the two primary authors are well qualified by experience and interests. Robert Wallace is a retired career CIA officer and former Director of the Office of Technical Services. H. Keith Melton is the technical tradecraft historian at the Interagency Training Center. Henry Schlesinger is an author and journalist covering intelligence technologies, counter-terrorism, and law enforcement.

The foreword by George J. Tenet, Director, Central Intelligence, 1997–2007, sets the stage well, with a focus on how the technical services have largely been neglected in the literature. He clearly states how important their contributions have been and how they will remain critical. When read in conjunction with *The Master of Disguise* by Antonio J. Mendez, one will have a more well-rounded understanding of intelligence and the interaction of the capabilities that create a valuable national asset.

In the steadily increasing intelligence literature, there are several primary book types ranging from lopsidedly critical to exploitative. But then there is the rarest and most valuable type: a well-written book based on personal knowledge and experience that fills a major gap for the serious reader. This is such a book and should be part of every serious student's and practitioner's personal library, as well as public and institutional libraries. We are once again shown that Intelligence History remains a fascinating and ever-evolving subject.

Educators should read and consider this book for inclusion in any intelligence history and even technology history courses. There are few books that relate technology to real-world applications better; and almost none outside of the aircraft and satellite arenas that relate technology to intelligence operations. David Kahn, of course, being the most distinguished exception.

Clearly the authors intended this to be a basic early history, taking one through the real beginning of American tools and techniques to a point where both technology and operations are best left out. While the Internet

is touched upon, it is useful only to point the way from traditional in-place operations to today's new, "reach out and touch almost everyone and everything remotely" world. Such a speculative discussion would have clearly been unnecessary, out of place, and a real distraction and detracting from the book's significant value. This is an informative and entertaining history, not a sensationalist "future history."

*Spycraft* provides significant insights into one of the lesser known and appreciated critical intelligence components: successfully applying technologies supporting case officer and agent operations. While much more has been written about specific operations, rings, and individuals, precious little has been written about the "little things" that enable successful operations. Here we are carefully and often entertainingly led through the evolution of making things smaller, more reliable, more productive, and above all safer to use. The authors pull back the Hollywood hype and show where the imagination, courage, and derring-do of those not in the literature or popular media's eyes often made a profound difference. In fact, these are the ones who made many critical collection operations even possible. Perhaps this can be well illustrated by modifying a popular quote usually attributed to General Omar Bradley: "Congress makes a man a general, communications makes him a commander," to: "Case officers can recruit an agent, covert communications makes the agent a spy."

A great deal of history is well laid out in several nicely organized sections. Within the sections are well written chapters on technical and operational episodes that carry one seamlessly between organization history, personalities, technologies, operations, and above all the "luck" factor. People are brought to life as select operations and technical developments are explored with an excellent interweaving of scientists, engineers, field officers, and even psychologists (considered by many to be the real "Wizards of Langley") becoming parts of an interesting and very informative history. The illustrations are well done and the equipment, tools, and document photographs are very useful. The non-technical and the technical are made clear for anyone from either camp, and most importantly for the general public.

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Here are just a few of many insights and knowledge to be gained, but not too many, which would spoil the fun: technical ops work at the nexus of two immutable laws; Faraday's Laws of Electrolysis and Murphy's Law; sometimes the simple is as effective as a sophisticated and complex collection device; a smart and courageous spouse can provide an elegant and very effective solution to a problem baffling an entire team; in the field there is no substitute for a smart and knowledgeable improvising techie; Luck remains the most critical factor in all Intelligence operations.

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***Troublesome Young Men: The Rebels who brought Churchill to Power and Saved England.* By Lynne Olson, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2007. ISBN-10: 0-374-53133-1 (paperback). Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. pp. 436. \$15.00.**

To those of the Cold War generation, "appeasement" was an utterly derisive epithet in discourse about international relations. Ms. Olson's book brings into focus whether "appeasement" has not become fashionable again in the guise of discourse, engagement, and diplomacy. Her book is not only a gripping account of the events leading up to the Second World War in British politics; it is another warning that those who fail to remember history are condemned to repeat it. As such, it is a worthwhile re-study of Conservative Party politics in inter-war Britain and bears comparison to the way that the leaders of both major United States parties have dealt with aggressive rogue states in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, particularly on the issue of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in countries such as North Korea, Iran, and Pakistan. This book earns itself a valuable place as a study in international relations or as an important case study in the role of domestic politics and interpersonal dynamics in the formulation of foreign policy.

Ms. Olson is a highly capable and thorough historian and journalist. She is well equipped to set the historical stage in a detailed and thoughtful manner. She is also careful to present our historical heroes in a delightfully human manner, with all their petulancies and peccadilloes.

One of the most dramatic episodes recounted in her book is the moment when the troublesome Tory backbenchers, who chafed against the avowedly appeasement policies of then Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, finally rebelled and walked away from their myopic, sinister, and self-deceitful leader after the German invasion of Poland in 1939.

While Churchill was to be lionized as the great leader against appeasement, Ms. Olson shows that all too often this great man was captive of his class, his friends, and his own political ambitions. Perhaps the most shattering historical moment presented is when Arthur Greenwood, the uncharismatic Deputy Leader of the Labour Party rose to answer Chamberlain's pusillanimous response to the German attack on Britain's treaty ally, Poland, a stiff note demanding that the Nazis withdraw to their borders in September 1939. Greenwood rose and began to speak slowly and tentatively. He said, "With no opportunity to think about what I should say...I speak what is in my heart at the moment." Leo Amery, throwing decorum to the wind, shouted out, "Speak for England, Arthur." With this

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one phrase, Amery and Greenwood, Conservatives and Labour, were able to begin the bitter and bloody job of regaining England's honor. Thus they paved the way for the eventual elevation of Churchill as the wartime leader of Great Britain.

Looking backwards, it is easy to view history's course as inevitable. Ms. Olson portrays quite a different situation. Churchill and the anti-appeasers were by no means an historical inevitability. Left to its own inertia the Tory party might indeed have acquiesced to Hitler's conquest of Poland, as it had of Czechoslovakia and Austria. The Tory back benchers were not a uniform, single minded group and dissipated much of their energies on private agendas. Sometimes it takes an outsider to congeal potentially great men into a heroic team.

The relevance of Ms. Olson's book today is clear when thrown against the shadow of ineffective and weakly-pursued policies to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons amongst rogue states. The only example of forceful intervention by the leadership of our own government has been the quixotic jostling of the former President George W. Bush against an Iraqi nuclear program that did not in fact exist and that no serious student of nuclear proliferation thought existed.

Progressive red lines in the sand, drawn by both parties, have been ignored by Pakistan, North Korea, and Iran. The fear of near-term consequences has overshadowed the fear of long-term consequences. Diplomatic dilatory rhetoric has replaced the use of meaningful action, whether it is military, economic, or unconventional warfare. Precious time has been lost as those who would wish us harm have grown stronger and our options have narrowed. We should ask Ms. Olson—"Who shall speak for America and the generations that will undoubtedly suffer as too many voices pursued 'peace in our time'? Let us pray that we can muster the same nonpartisan courage as Amery, Greenwood, and Churchill and speak up for our values and our honor before the fate of generations to come is sealed in a nuclear doomsday.

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