

## Strategic Visions: Volume 18, Number II

### Contents

News from the Director .....	2
Spring 2019 Colloquium.....	2
Spring 2019 Prizes.....	2
<i>Diplomatic History</i> .....	3
SHAFR Conference.....	4
Thanks to the Davis Fellow.....	4
Note from the Davis Fellow.....	5
Note from the Non-Resident Fellow.....	6
News from the CENFAD Community.....	8
Spring 2019 Interviews.....	11
Erik Moore.....	11
Eliga Gould Conducted by Taylor Christian.....	13
Nancy Mitchell.....	15
Book Reviews.....	18
<i>Jimmy Carter in Africa</i> Review by Brandon Kinney.....	18
<i>The Girl Next Door: Bringing the         Home front to the Front Line</i> Review by Ariel Natalo-Lifotn.....	20
<i>Armies of Sand: The Past, Present and         Future of Arab Military Effectiveness</i> Review by Brandon Kinney.....	23
<i>Jimmy Carter in Africa</i> Review by Graydon Dennison.....	25

## News from the Director

By Alan McPherson



- **Spring 2019 Colloquium**
- **Spring 2019 Prizes**
- ***Diplomatic History***
- **SHAFR Conference**
- **Thanks to the Davis Fellow**

With this issue ends my second year as CENFAD director, and it has been as much of a pleasure as the first year. The spring semester colloquium series featured fascinating and diverse guests, and our graduate students continue to inspire us by earning prestigious prizes and fellowships (see “News from the Community” for additional details). Also, *Diplomatic History* is coming to Temple!

### Spring 2019 Colloquium

As always, most of our CENFAD speakers were suggested by fellow faculty members and students, and this semester’s lot was an impressive one.

The series kicked off on January 23 with Melani McAlister, Professor of American Studies and International Affairs at George Washington University. She spoke about her new book, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders: A Global History of American Evangelicals*, arguing that U.S. evangelicals

engaged beyond our borders proved to have a more ambiguous and complex set of interactions abroad, seeing themselves changed by the world as much as they hoped to change it. Thanks to Professor Petra Goedde for helping to invite McAlister.

Six days later, Colonel Edward A. Kaplan of the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army War College, brought a handful of his best students for a roundtable discussion of their most recent research on U.S. military strategy and history. Thanks to Temple Ph.D. student Taylor Christian for organizing this event.

On February 6, CENFAD hosted Erik Moore, Postdoctoral Associate at the University of Oklahoma and CENFAD Non-Resident Fellow, to discuss his manuscript now under contract with the University of Pennsylvania Press, “Activists and Insurgents: Human Rights Advocacy During the Contra War, 1981-1988.” He argued that U.S. non-governmental organizations found success influencing the Congress and even the Ronald Reagan administration by using a human rights-based strategy to attempt to end the U.S.-supported war against Nicaragua. You can also read an interview with Moore [here](#).

“Harry Washington’s Peace: Slavery and Freedom in the United States’ Founding Treaty” was the title of the talk by Eliga Gould, Professor of History at the University of New Hampshire. His talk focused on the ways in which the American Revolution interacted with the wider world. Thanks to Professor Jessica Roney for the suggestion and for introducing Gould. You can read an interview with him on page 13.

On March 14, Ali Ahmida, Professor of Political Science at the University of New England, joined CENFAD to discuss “The Ghosts of Colonial Past and the Crisis of Post-Qadhdhafi Libya.” Ahmida explained that the present chaos following the ouster of Qadhdhafi follows political patterns established during colonial times. Thanks to Professor Peter Gran for suggesting Ahmida.

Andres Etges, Senior Lecturer in American History at the Amerika-Institut of the University of Munich, visited CENFAD on March 26. His talk, “From Confrontation to Détente?: Controversies about a planned Cold War Museum at Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin,” discussed the multiple clashing motivations that have gone into the planning of a Cold War museum in this most symbolic of cities. Thanks again to Petra Goedde for the suggestion!

On April 3, Professor of History at North Carolina State University Nancy Mitchell spoke about *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War*, her prize-winning masterful new book. In her book and talk, she makes the case that President Carter was far more of a cold warrior than previously thought, using fine-grained case studies of Rhodesia and the Horn of Africa also to demonstrate the importance of race in these diplomatic crises. You can read an interview with Mitchell here.

And finally, on April 15, CENFAD co-sponsored a talk by former Temple Ph.D. and current professor of history at Salem State University, Michele Louro. Louro discussed her new book, *Comrades against Imperialism: Nehru, India and Interwar Internationalism*, demonstrating the fascinating pre-World War II connections between India’s Nehru and the many other anti-imperialists around the world.

Regrettably, the last planned talk, by Mark Lawrence of the University of Texas at Austin, had to be postpone until the next academic year. Please join us for Lawrence’s talk and many others in 2019-2020!

### Spring 2019 Prizes

In March, the following two graduate students won CENFAD funds to advance their research:

- Alexandre Caillot, to present "Why Keep Up the Fight: Motivations for and Perceptions of Service from Late-War Union Volunteers, USCT Soldiers, and Occupation Troops," at the annual conference of the Society for Military History to be held in Columbus, Ohio.
- Andrea Siotto, to present "Intelligence in the Trenches: Knowledge and Observation of the Enemy in the British Trenches during the First World War," also at the SMH conference.

Congratulations!

### *Diplomatic History*

To those who have not heard yet, I am also happy to announce that the History Department at Temple will be, starting in summer 2019, the new home of the scholarly journal *Diplomatic History*. Professor Petra Goedde will be co-editor along with Professor Anne Foster of Indiana State University. I will serve as associate editor. *Diplomatic History* will also provide assistant editor jobs to two Temple University students and make of the department an even more attractive place to study U.S. international history!

### **SHAFR Conference**

Please note that the annual conference of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (the organization that publishes Diplomatic History) will take place in Arlington, Virginia, June 20-22, 2019. CENFAD will be a major sponsor of the conference, and I encourage the entire CENFAD community to consider attending.

### **Thanks to the Davis Fellow**

Finally, I want to warmly thank Mike Fischer for his invaluable services as CENFAD's Davis Fellow in 2018-2019. He has been the logistical master behind all our events and the reason that this newsletter is of such high quality. Following in the footsteps of impressive predecessors, Mike has kept the bar very high indeed. Best of luck on Russian, comps, and your prospectus!

Next year's David Fellow will be Brandon Kinney, whose interests center on U.S.-German relations during the Cold War. Welcome to CENFAD, Brandon!

## Note from the Davis Fellow

By Michael Fischer

I would like to thank each and every one of you for an incredibly successful year at CENFAD! We have hosted fifteen events including colloquium presentations from scholars on a variety of topics, roundtable conversations with members of the US Army War College, talks from historians with compelling new books out, and visits from several former Temple graduate students and Davis Fellows. Without all of your generous support, these events would absolutely not have been possible. I have been honored to serve as the Davis Fellow this year. I am thrilled to have been part of such a proud tradition of scholarship and discourse.

CENFAD's success would also not have been possible without the leadership of Dr. Alan McPherson, whose guidance and dedication to high-level scholarship has been indispensable in the Center's success. Working alongside Dr. McPherson has been one of the bright spots in a long list of highlights during my year as Davis Fellow.

Though I am moving on from the Davis Fellowship, I will not be far or difficult to contact. I am eager to get into the classroom and teach on a variety of topics, including those covered by CENFAD's wonderful guests of the past year. I will also be busy at work, both in Gladfelter Hall and in the archives, working toward a dissertation wrestling with questions related to the Wilson Administration, American foreign policy, and the Russian Revolution.

As I leave the Davis Fellow's office, my friend and colleague Brandon Kinney will take my place as the 2019-2020 Davis Fellow. I know that CENFAD is in incredibly capable hands. Brandon will formally take over this summer, but in the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or comments that you may have related to CENFAD.

I look forward to the future of CENFAD and to being involved in the community in my post-Davis Fellow work. I wish you all a successful end to the academic year, and a restful but productive summer.

Best,

Michael Fischer

### Note from the Non-Resident Fellow

Dear CENFAD Community,

It has been a productive spring semester that began with my visit to Philadelphia. In early February I delivered my lecture at CENFAD and presented my research. I enjoyed the lively discussion that followed. I especially appreciated meeting with graduate students and learning about their projects. After my time at Temple, I remained in Philadelphia for a few more days and visited Swarthmore College's Peace Collection. This archive has been a wonderful resource for my work. I wanted to pick up on research I conducted there several years ago and begin gathering materials for a future project examining human rights activism for displaced persons in Central America in the 1970s and 1980s.

The majority of my work at Swarthmore was research for a book project that is now under contract with the University of Pennsylvania Press. The book, originally my dissertation, examines the influence of human rights activism on U.S. foreign policy during the Nicaragua Contra War of the 1980s. I argue that NGOs successfully used human rights advocacy to limit U.S. support for the counterrevolution and help convince Congress to cut off military funding for counterrevolutionary groups referred to as the Contras, effectively ending the war. The revisions and additional research have been my primary task as a CENFAD Non-Resident Visiting Fellow. The dissertation was narrowly focused on archival research of U.S.-based NGOs. For the book, I am strengthening my argument and enhancing the narrative through interviews with activists. The oral history of human rights

activism and the anti-Contra movement will be another original contribution of my book that I am excited to pursue. Second, I am examining Nicaraguan activism as part of a network with U.S. groups. I have already conducted substantial research in collections in Managua and in Nicaraguan sources in U.S. archives. This avenue of research will clarify the transnational nature of human rights activism regarding Nicaragua that other scholars are pursuing in different contexts.

Finally, I am finishing up a new article about the methods used by the Reagan administration to undermine the credibility of human rights organizations and refute evidence-based reporting of violations. Human rights watch groups investigated and testified before Congress about pervasive human rights abuse by the Contras. These investigations and resulting reports by organizations such as Amnesty International, Americas Watch, the Washington Office on Latin America, and the International Human Rights Law Group provided evidence of widespread Contra violations. Reagan and his administration countered these allegations by casting doubt on the veracity of the information and attacking the integrity of those organizations who advocated for human rights protections.

The White House and its allies worked to convince the American people that the Sandinistas presented the greater threat and that the questionable conduct, if any, by the Contras was not important because the Contras fought against communists and for democracy. Reagan was not the first U.S. president to use this justification for U.S. intervention in Latin America. However, NGOs faced additional concerns when Contra-backers accused human rights activists of aiding the Sandinistas and

and purposefully engaging in a disinformation campaign orchestrated by communists. These accusations tended to neutralize the effect of human rights reporting and endangered human rights activists throughout the world. NGOs responded by gradually altering their tactics to effect change in U.S. foreign policy.

Best Regards,  
Erik Moore

## News from the CENFAD

### Community

In August 2018, **Steven Baumann** was the recipient of the "Jews in the Americas Fellowship" awarded by The Alexander Grass Chair in Jewish Studies and the Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica at the University of Florida, where he researched the interactions between American and Cuban Jews at the beginning of World War II. Currently, Steven is working as a recipient of the "William J. Lowenberg Memorial Fellowship on America, the Holocaust, and the Jews" at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where he researches humanitarian networks at the beginning of World War II.

**Alexandre Caillot** is happy to announce that *The Strategy Bridge* published his piece entitled "Strategy from the Ground Level: Why the Experience of the U.S. Civil War Soldier Matters" in February 2019. Alexander is also the 2019 recipient of the General and Mrs. Matthew B. Ridgway Military History Research Grant, which is made available by the U.S. Army Military History Institute and U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center. Furthermore, in the Spring of 2019 he served as a Junior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute's Program on National Security.

**David Farber** and **Beth Bailey** are eagerly looking forward to the publication of their edited volume entitled *Beyond Pearl Harbor: A Pacific History*.

**Mathias Fuelling**, a graduate student at Temple University, had his article entitled "The Invisible Empire: Alt-Right Afterlives of George Kennan" published in the online journal *Refraction*.

**Richard N. Grippaldi** presented his paper, "The N.C.O. Are of Irish Birth and Catholic: Thomas Grey's Irish/American Quest for a U.S. Army Commission, 1846 - 1855," at the January 2019 meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago, Illinois. Dr. Grippaldi currently teaches in the history department at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. He completed his dissertation, "Birth of the U.S. Cavalry: The Regiment of Dragoons, Military Professionalism, and Peacekeeping along the Permanent Indian Frontier, 1833-1836," under the direction of Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin in 2011.

**Jay Lockenour** is excited to announce that *Dragonslayer: The Legend of Erich Ludendorff in Weimar and Beyond* (tentative title) is under contract with Cornell University Press.

**Andrew C. McKeivitt** (Ph.D., 2009), associate professor of history at Louisiana Tech University, has received a grant from the Louisiana Board of Regents' Awards to Louisiana Artists and Scholars (ATLAS) program. The grant will relieve McKeivitt of all teaching and other faculty duties for the 2019-2020 year in order to complete research and writing for his current book project on the history of U.S. gun violence in a global context.



**Alan McPherson** continued as CENFAD director and professor of history at Temple and served as Director of Graduate Studies in 2018-2019. He published an op-ed for the *History News Network* on Venezuela and was interviewed on television a half-dozen times about Venezuela and the “migrant caravan” in Mexico. He published a piece about U2’s activism in a Portuguese newspaper, *Expresso*, in September 2018, and a magazine article on anti-Castro terrorism in *Americas Quarterly*, also in fall 2018. He wrote a long encyclopedia article, “U.S. Interventions and Occupations in Latin America,” published *The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History* in March 2019. He also published two scholarly journal articles: “Caribbean Taliban: Cuban-American Terrorism in the 1970s,” in the March-April 2019 issue of *Terrorism and Political Violence*; and “Letelier Diplomacy: Non-State Actors and U.S.-Chilean Relations,” in the June 2019 issue of *Diplomatic History*. This last journal will be moving to Temple in June, and he will be its associate editor. In August-September 2019, his newest book, *Ghosts of Sheridan Circle: How a Washington Assassination Brought Pinochet’s Terror State to Justice*, will be out from the University of North Carolina Press.

**Ariel Natalo-Lifton**, a graduate student at Temple University, received a Russel F. Weigley Travel Graduate Student Travel Grant to attend the 2019 Society for Military History Annual Meeting. She will be participating in a roundtable on “The War Stories We Tell: World War II and the Vietnam War in Myth in Memory.” In addition, Ariel was named the Army Heritage Center Foundation’s 2019 Robert L. and Robert C. Ruth Fellow. This fellowship

will support research for her dissertation, “From Lady Soldiers to Brothers in Arms: Military Women and the Gendering of the United States Armed Forces, 1972-1992.”

**Kaete O’Connell**, former Davis Fellow, accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at the Center for Presidential History at Southern Methodist University. She will move to Dallas in August after defending her dissertation, “Weapon of War, Tool of Peace: U.S. Food Diplomacy in Postwar Germany.”

**Amy C. Offner’s** book *Sorting Out the Mixed Economy: The Rise and Fall of Welfare and Developmental States in the Americas*, will be published by Princeton University Press in September 2019. Offner is a CENFAD associate and assistant professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania.

Former Davis Fellow and current Fulbright Scholar, **Eric Perinovic**, has been selected as a Guggenheim Fellow at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum for the spring semester 2020. In this capacity he will make a childhood dream come true, conduct research in Washington, DC, and work on his dissertation under the advisement of the aviation and air power historians in the Aeronautics Department.

**Kelly Shannon** of Florida Atlantic University is the recipient of the 2019 Stuard L. Bernath Lecture Prize, awarded by the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. The Bernath Lecture Prize recognizes excellence in research and teaching by a younger historian, and it involves delivering the SHAFR luncheon address at the January 2020 American Historical Association annual conference in New York City and having my lecture published in *Diplomatic History*. Past winners (including Temple’s own Richard Immerman) have gone on to become leading scholars in the field of U.S. foreign relations, and she is deeply honored to receive this award.

Temple University graduate student **Andrea Siotto's** article entitled "Mapping the First World War: The Empowering Development of Mapmaking during the First World War in the British Army" won the 2019 Moncado Prize as one of the four best articles of 2018 published on the *Journal of Military History* from the Society of Military History. He has also received the 2019 Adams-Collins Dissertation Grant for Cold War Military History from the Virginia Military Institute's John A. Adams '71 Center for Military History and Strategic Analysis.

**Gregory J. W. Urwin**, Professor of History, recently published two articles: "The Bose Regiment is Excellently Armed': How a Hessian Regiment Rearmed with British Muskets," in *The Hessians: Journal of the Johannes Schwalm Historical Association* 21 (2018): 35-44, and "The Most Lofty Warlike Music in the World': The Use of Bugle Horns by British Light Infantry in the American War of Independence," in *Military Collector & Historian: Journal of the Company of Military Historians* 70 (Summer 2018): 115-20. On March 30, 2019, Urwin delivered the keynote lecture at a regional Phi Alpha Theta conference hosted at Liberty University – "Abandoned to the Arts & Arms of the Enemy': Placing the 1781 Virginia Campaign in Its Racial and Political Context." Finally, *Marine Corps History* asked Urwin to write an autobiographical article about his scholarship and *Army History: The Professional Bulletin of Army History* invited him to describe his many years as a staff ride facilitator for publication in those two journals' respective summer issues.

**Silke Zoller** will be joining the Clements Center for National Security at the University of Texas at Austin as a postdoctoral fellow in 2019-2020. She is eagerly working on her manuscript, tentatively titled *Criminalizing Insurgents*, which is under contract with Columbia University Press. Silke has enjoyed her current fellowship at Dartmouth College's John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding, and has developed a significant palate for New England maple syrup.

## Interview with Erik Moore

By Michael Fischer

**Q:** What pushed you to study what you do study?

**A:** I used to be an attorney. I practiced law for six years. What I like to learn about is how law and legal culture has influenced history and relations between countries and societies. That pushed me into researching law in US foreign relations. I landed on the topic of human rights because human rights is a point of contact where groups within countries or countries themselves differ on how they see right. I find it fascinating how different legal cultures around the world come into contact. Contestation, negotiation within human rights is one of those focal points that, and its within countries as well, I find really fascinating. My specific research topic is a situation where human rights had real specific consequences as far as foreign policy.

**Q:** Do you notice major differences with respect to human rights across presidential administrations or political parties? What is the source of differing domestic opinions on human rights?

**A:** The typical line from the United States government is that human rights are political rights, civil rights. That is built into the American legal and political system. The right to vote, free speech, and freedom from torture. Within that, there is also a view toward social and economic rights. Actually now, with this election cycle, we are hearing more about that. We heard much less about social and economic rights during the Cold War because that looked like Communism. If you got close to Communism, you were a Communist, as far as politics went. I deal with Latin America and human rights. There it is much more broad. Civil rights, economic rights, cultural rights, the right to

sovereignty, self-determination. These are seen as human rights before you got to the right to vote.

**Q:** For readers or those who cannot make it to the talk today, do you have one or two points for them to hear?

**A:** Grassroots activism really had an influence over policy. The organizations that I study had a compelling argument, a compelling story, based in human rights. They believed it, it was not just lip service. It was something that galvanized a lot of people. Grassroots activism really has an effect.

**Q:** Where does your work and research fit into the historiography?

**A:** Nicaragua has been largely neglected when it comes to human rights historiography. There are several reasons for that, but I am putting them front and center in the human rights debate. There are now a few studies, which Mark Bradley calls the second generation of human rights study. It has been the study of international lawyers, officials, diplomats, etc. until now. The current work is more focused on grassroots activists. They are people on the ground in the United States, their ideas on human rights, and how they are mobilizing them. It is relatively new. Mark Bradley, Sarah Sneider has done some work on it, but it is less top-down in methodological approach.

**Q:** What are some of the major challenges that you have either already encountered or are currently encountering in your research?

**A:** I would like to go back to Nicaragua for more Nicaraguan sources. Just the way the research went, I would like to revisit Nicaraguan resources. Some of the archives are not as organized, and I do not know that now is the best time to go with the current unrest against Daniel Ortega. Now, I am trying to find individual activists to talk to. I have identified them, and now I am trying to get into contact with them.

**Q:** What are some of the more exciting aspects of your research project?

**A:** Tracking down and interviewing individuals. Traveling to different archives is fun as well. Finding letters or reading transcripts of hearings before Congress, they are not the dry, black and white issues that you may think. Just finding the personalities, like Barry Goldwater, who wrote a letter, a scathing letter to the White House, you could feel how mad he was coming off the paper. Sometimes you can just sense the tension, and I find that fascinating.

**Making Peace, Making Early American Diplomacy: A Conversation with Eliga Gould**

By Taylor Christian

**Q:** Your talk today is about slavery and the peace treaty that ended the American Revolution. But in this story the British are, in many ways, the champions of liberty...

**A:** Hmm. . . The treaty makers together, in Paris, agreed to treat slaves as property. . . and that's a British act—it's an Anglo-American treaty. But it is the British soldiers in America who come off as liberators.

**Q:** That's a lesser-told version of America's founding. How did you first stumble across this project and what made you think you needed to share this story?

**A:** I first talked about this part of it in my most recent book, *Among the Powers of the Earth*, which is about the [American] quest for international recognition. So I've known about this for quite a while. . . . The book that really influenced my thinking about it was Chris Brown's *Moral Capital*, about British abolition. . . . So I knew about it from that. . . but it was one of these things where I then started looking into it myself and I realized there was so much more here than this liberationist story.

**Q:** I think it's a fascinating story--

**A:** It's a fascinating story.

**Q:** But it's certainly not the traditional story?

**A:** People have written about it—primarily from the liberationist standpoint. . . . There are a number of actually excellent books about the African American side of this. But, less so on the treaty itself. The larger book that this is drawn from is about the treaty. If you think about the United States as having three founding documents: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and, in between, the Treaty of Paris—the Treaty of Paris is hands-down the least studied one. . . . I don't think we think of the story of the black loyalists as a diplomatic story, but it definitely is.

**Q:** You're really writing about a time period that does not receive much attention in diplomatic history—early American diplomacy. What is your assessment of the field?

**A:** One of my other projects that I'm involved in, I'm co-editing the first volume of the new Cambridge—they're calling it the *Cambridge History of America and the World*—but it's basically a successor volume to the *Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations*, though they've given it a title that decenters diplomacy, so I've been spending a lot of time with other American diplomatic historians.

I think it's a problem that [early] American diplomatic history doesn't have the standing within the field of the history of American foreign relations that it could, because there's actually a lot of really interesting work being done on it. But I think one of the reasons why it doesn't have the standing that it [could] is that a lot of us who are doing \*chuckles\* well, in all modesty, the many people who are doing this interesting work. . . don't necessarily think of ourselves as diplomatic historians.

My interest in diplomatic history grows out of a much larger interest in political history. . . if you think of the American union as an international system of states—getting interested in the diplomacy is just sort of a natural extension of a set of interests that wouldn't necessarily be recognized as diplomatic history by modern diplomatic historians. So there's almost kind of a disconnect between what we are doing and what people—particularly in the twentieth century think of as American diplomatic history. The whole idea of an American state is deeply conjectural in my period.

**Q:** So the problem isn't a lack of scholarly attention to the period, but that traditional scholars of American foreign relations aren't recognizing that work as diplomatic history?

**A:** Yeah. . . The other thing is. . . the foundational premise of modern diplomatic history is that there's a difference between domestic and foreign. . . Some of the really innovative work sort of, you know, probes that boundary and looks at the way which they are interpenetrating and entangled with each other. You can take, as a given, a fairly stable line between, you know, the domestic United States and the world beyond our shores, whereas that's totally up for grabs in 1776 and '83 and, you know, heck \*laughs\* the Missouri Crisis. . . In some ways, right down at least to the Mexican War, it's an open question even where the United States' borders are.

*Eliga Gould earned his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins under Jack Greene. He currently teaches at the University of New Hampshire, where he is working on a new project entitled: Crucible of Peace. Gould is also a 2018-2019 Guggenheim fellow.*

**Interview with Nancy Mitchell**  
**By Michael Fischer**

**Q:** What pushed you to study what you do study?

**A:** I wanted to study Carter when I first wanted to do a PhD. I lived in Egypt in 1976, and so I was in Egypt for his whole campaign. I was aware as someone who grew up during the Vietnam War and Watergate, that Carter seemed to articulate American values that I had been taught, but those that had not been followed recently. I was interested in Carter, but then moved back to Ireland before returning to the states to do a master's degree. I loved it, so I decided to stay on and do a PhD. In order to do that, I had to talk to the person who would be my advisor. He had a reputation for being difficult and particularly difficult for women. The first thing he said to me was "Well Ms. Mitchell, what makes you think a woman can understand the realities of power?" All of the PhD students at this institution were male. I talked about Thatcher. The next thing he asked me was who I wanted to do my dissertation on, and I said Carter. He told me that I could not do it on somebody who is alive because I had no credibility as a young historian, so I switched to Wilson, to another person who was considered an idealist. When I finished that, I moved onto the second book, which is when I returned to working on Carter.

**Q:** This book challenges some of the dominant popular narratives with respect to Carter. How early in the research process did it become apparent that there was more to Jimmy Carter than meets the eye?

**A:** That's a very interesting question that nobody has ever asked me before. Research takes a really long time, and the evolution of thought is extremely difficult to pin down. From the beginning, I think, I had a question about the role of Jimmy Carter. So much of the press at that time was about [Secretary of State Cyrus] Vance and [National Security Advisor Zbigniew] Brzezinski. My question was "did Jimmy Carter have anything to do with this?" So from a very early stage I had that question. Another one of the myths came much later, and that was the realization was that Jimmy Carter was a cold warrior. I approached the topic, like most people, with the idea that he gave more attention to human rights than he did. I think the realization came out that he was really a cold warrior. He was fighting the Cold War in a different way, but he was still fighting it. That came about through looking at the war in the Horn. The war in the Horn really defies the myths about Jimmy Carter.

**Q:** One of the most compelling aspects of the book was the use of interviews. How were you able to gain access to Carter and the other subjects?

**A:** That was really fun! The Carter interview was, I think, truly a fluke. He doesn't give many interviews to historians. He appears to have almost no interest in spinning the story of his presidency. I wrote to him before I was ready with the idea that I would need to keep pestering him. I wrote in 2002, when I was just beginning. A bit later, I was standing in my kitchen and I get a call from his research assistant saying that the President would like to talk with me. We set up a time for about an hour, and I would talk only about Africa. The next week I went to Atlanta and I met Jimmy Carter. It turns out, the reason I got the interview was that I had written a review of Carter's memoir *An Hour Before Daylight*. I used to be an occasional reviewer for a local newspaper. I really liked that book, I think it is his best. My insight on it was that it was really an ode to his father, which is not obvious at all. It turned out that I was right, and Carter put the blurb on the paperback edition. That's how I got the interview. Then I was able to build a network from that. It was incredibly lucky, and that really opened a lot of doors. The one that was the hardest was the Zambian President. That was hard because he's old and millions of people want to interview him. I got friendly with the ambassador from Nigeria who knew him. People have been incredibly generous to me. Andrew Young was also really fun. He was a great interview. He talks and talks and talks and sings. I thought the interview would last an hour or two and it ended up being five hours. He was wonderful.

**Q [From Brandon Kinney]:** Can you talk about the process of the interview, bringing documents and showing them to the interviewee?

**A:** That can be really helpful. When you're writing to someone and you enclose a couple of key documents, that gets their interest. Usually people are very interested in reading documents related to them. It not only jogs their memory but it gets their ego too.

**Q:** Outside of the interviews, what were some of the more enjoyable moments or some of the challenges while writing the book?

**A:** I started out writing a short book on Carter's foreign policy in general. After a couple of years, I realized it was not working. Then I thought I would write a slim little book about Africa. Even that wouldn't work. I just had to focus on the two main crises. It was really fun in the beginning and then it was great after I submitted it to the publisher. The last two before submission were really hard. People told me nobody would publish it because it was too long. I had this panic, that I would never finish it. I remember sitting outside a café with my niece, talking about a chapter, saying "I'm going to die writing this chapter." The last two years were a lot of pressure. With the exception of that time though, I had an absolute blast. I loved it and thought it was great, up until the end. I didn't want to be one of the people who never finishes.



**Q:** What's next?

**A:** That's a good question. I'm working now, and it's still in early stages, on one of the things that interested me in the early stages of this book. The crisis in the horn is really a crisis of US-Saudi relations. It made me really curious about how the US government adjusted to the 1973 war, the OPEC War, and the shift in power to Saudi Arabia and Iran. You can't look to US foreign relations with Saudi Arabia and Iran without looking to the Gulf States, the peace process, to Pakistan, Turkey, and things like that. I will look at this in the context of the Carter Administration and a bit of the Nixon Administration. I'm going to try to write it in a bit of narrative style, a bit less deeply researched.

Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016. Xvi + 883 pp. \$45.00 US cloth, ISBN 978-0804793858.



When Nancy Mitchell sat down to interview former President Jimmy Carter as part of her research, she got something truly unexpected: a presidential admission that “we were on the wrong side” of a historical event (15). In her lengthy tome, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War*, Mitchell traces Carter’s policies towards Rhodesia and the Horn of Africa during his one-term presidency. In focusing on these two case studies, Mitchell’s purpose is to find out exactly what was President Carter’s foreign policy towards Africa.

For Mitchell, Carter lacked a singular identifiable political ideology, complicating the search for a coherent foreign policy that applied evenly in different areas. He pursued divergent courses in Rhodesia and the Ogaden War, experiencing both success and failure, respectively. In regards to the Rhodesian Civil War, ongoing for a decade when Carter assumed office, the president carefully addressed the conflict as a stated policy goal immediately following his election. The complexity of the war was conducive to Carter’s thoughtful nature: the president could not support the governing white minority due to its oppressive policies, but he also feared sustained Cuban involvement on the side of the nationalist rebels. To thread this needle, Carter brought the guerrillas into the diplomatic process to subvert Cuban influence. While the president’s critics saw “a White House that embraced Marxist terrorists,” Carter managed to transcend the bipolar Cold War tendency by legitimizing the nationalistic Patriotic Front guerrillas as

freedom fighters with grievances (507). What eventually resulted were democratic elections in the newly-christened Zimbabwe.

Carter’s Cold War victory in southern Africa contrasted starkly with the Horn of Africa, which experienced calamity when Somalia attacked Ethiopia, setting off the Ogaden War. Whereas Carter had a pre-planned roadmap for the Rhodesian conflict, Somalia’s sudden offensive caught Carter off guard. His eventual failure stemmed from the “ad hoc and reactive” nature of his response, which was inflexibly tied to the vision of a bipolar world that he had avoided in Rhodesia (6). Carter recognized the strategic Cold War importance of Berbera, a port coveted by the Soviets before Somalia broke with Moscow, and securing Somalia’s position in the American camp required the promise of an arms deal. The Somalis used this promise as a pretext to invade Ethiopia, and Carter was further embarrassed when the Cubans intervened on behalf of the Ethiopians, who had been an enduring ally of the Americans. Complicating diplomatic matters was the dysfunctional partnership America had with British, French, and West German allies, whereas in Rhodesia the United States dealt closely only with Great Britain.

Carter’s lack of ideology often made him a soft target for his critics. With time to map a plan of attack, as in southern Africa, Carter found success, but when he was pressured and forced into a reactive position, he faltered. His pauses created “corrosive suspense” and unease among Americans, the media, and even the US government (655). As a result of this unease, misinformation and leaks could dominate the public narrative and undermine the presidency by framing Carter as weak and indecisive. Among his contemporaries and for his historical memory, argues Mitchell, “feelings trump recollection of facts” (686).

Race is one of the most prominent themes of Jimmy Carter in Africa. For Carter, race and the Cold War were intertwined, and he viewed the Rhodesian Civil War through a Civil Rights lens. Though the two were not directly parallel, the oppression of a black minority and topic of racial injustice naturally lent itself to the discourse in American media and congressional debates. A second underlying theme involves the great pains Mitchell goes to in order to contextualize the historical events. She both places Carter in historical context, such as inheriting a difficult situation from Henry Kissinger in Angola and Rhodesia, and explains the president's behavior through his character and contemporary difficulties. Carter's upbringing, views on race and civil rights, the Vietnam War, and political pressure to "do something" about the Cubans and the Soviets all mix to color Carter's decision-making (446).

Jimmy Carter in Africa is a traditional diplomatic history and frames Carter's struggle as a larger story of Great Powers grappling with the decolonizing Global South. To add depth to the story, Mitchell attempts to read Carter's mentality and character to explain his views on the world and his subsequent actions. Research in archives from the United States, Britain, Germany, South Africa, and Zambia provides Mitchell with a diversity of perspectives on the events, though sources from Somalia, Zimbabwe, and Ethiopia were inaccessible. Mitchell rounds these more

traditional diplomatic sources out further with her own interviews of many of those involved, including Carter, the president of Zambia, and National Security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski.

While many Cold War historians have overlooked Africa in general in favor of Latin America and Asia, Mitchell argues that Africa was the center of attention for the Carter administration, choosing instead to analyze two lesser-known interventions of Carter rather than the Middle East. A second major intervention Mitchell makes is rehabilitating Carter's image. For Mitchell, Carter was not a weak, naïve idealist but a Cold Warrior from the beginning. His idealism and push for "moral restoration" (654) were actually part of the national interest and a realist foreign policy, because rehabilitating America's image would help it pursue its interests. Furthermore, Carter was not caught between Secretary of State Vance and Brzezinski, but he maintained cool control of a united administration.

Jimmy Carter in Africa is the result of exhaustive research, and Mitchell clearly has the talent of a writer's touch. She convincingly argues that Carter's legacy has been oversimplified and in some areas misremembered, but the sheer size, density, and breadth of topics covered in the book may discourage all but the most fervent Cold War enthusiasts from picking it up.

Brandon Kinney  
Temple University Graduate Student

Kara Dixon Vuic. *The Girl Next Door: Bringing the Home Front to the Front Line*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 2019. Pp.392. ISBN: 978-0674986381

Kara Dixon Vuic's book, *The Girl Next Door: Bringing the Home Front to the Front Line*, is an ambitious study of the women who were used in an attempt to domesticate the United States military in foreign conflicts throughout the twentieth century. These civilian women were symbols of home, reminders of the mothers, sisters, lovers, and daughters left behind. They were expected to "construct wartime gender roles, maintain an effective fighting force, mobilize home front support, render the military and its work palatable to the American public and manage the American military presence in foreign countries" while maintaining ideals of femininity, respectability, and service (3). And yet, these women used their service to forge their own ideas of their work and worth.

Vuic argues that civilian women in World War I were used to bring home to the front by embodying traditional ideas of womanhood in a combat zone, reframing traditional domestic duties in terms of patriotism and transferring traditional women's work to the public sphere abroad. Both civilian organizations such as the United Service Organizations (USO) or Red Cross and the military institution expected women workers to be "an antidote to the otherwise all-male environment" by exuding "a femininity that brightened the gloom of war and softened its brutality" while simultaneously reinforcing "conventional divisions of men's and women's wartime roles" (27). They were to simultaneously be symbols of maternal love and

heterosexual desire. And yet, women framed their service in much larger terms- symbolic of changing ideas of gender and service. Vuic traces this theme throughout the book: the ways in which women understood their work as a part of women's ever-expanding roles in American society, even as they were sent back to the home front after every conflict.

At the start of World War II, women were called to service once again, to represent idealized versions of home and reinforce ideas of American womanhood, and yet their roles changed dramatically. Vuic argues that while Red Cross and USO women's roles "reinscribed conventional notions of women's wartime roles," the women themselves challenged these boundaries, thus "embodying the fluctuating gender ideologies of the era" (61-62). Meanwhile, the military and the civilian organizations expected recreation and entertainment workers to precariously balance ideas of respectable femininity and professionalism with some form of wholesome sexuality that reinforced heterosexuality and martial masculinity.

In many ways, Vuic's book is a study of both changing and stable ideas of female respectability and what that meant to the civilian women who served the men on the front line. From carefully chosen clothing to fraternization, women were expected to balance professionalism with romance and sexuality. The military itself, Vuic argues, "couched the women's work in a language of respectability," but expected women to walk a careful tightrope between "sexual desire and familial love" (5-6). While ideas

concerning how much sexuality was respectable changed throughout the twentieth century, the expectations on women to embody these ideas of respectability did not change. These ideas of respectability were more apparent in the experiences of African-American women than anywhere else.

Vuic's strongest argument concerning the intersections between race and femininity are strongest in her discussion on the end of the Second World War. In analyzing the experience of black women in the USO and Red Cross, she speaks on the ways that discussions of their service emphasized patriotism and respectable womanhood, as the women themselves attempted to navigate "organizations that officially espoused but did not enforce racial equality along with a military that insisted on racial separation, especially in matters of sexuality" (103). This was made all the more difficult by women's service in non-Western theaters, concerns which were raised once again during the Korean War, where women were "caught between their own ideas about race and foreign occupation zones" (141).

The Cold War brought a return of World War I era understandings of women as "essential for steering men toward a wholesome lifestyle that, in the nuclear age, modeled Cold War preoccupations with the home, family, and sexuality," in ways that reflected domestic fears of political and social turmoil (145). Sexuality was to be constrained, once again, to reinforce ideas of western middle-class whiteness.

Vietnam era, on the other hand, brought a new set of challenges to entertainment and recreation work, as the feminist, antiwar, civil rights, and black power movements challenged the expectations and roles of women. And yet, women were expected to once again embody the sense of home that was so foreign in the combat zone, by bringing the feminine to a masculine domain. Vuic argues that competing ideas over the all-American woman forced Donut Dollies, Special Services women, and USO workers to be both wholesome ideals and sexual objects. While these organizations attempted to resist these changes, they could not prevent them entirely, as "notions of femininity" and "notions of manhood were in flux and contested" (215).

In her conclusion, Vuic cites a 2003 USO performance as a "modern iteration of the conflicting, yet intertwined, ways the military and civilian organizations have utilized women in recreation and entertainment programs throughout the past century" (270). And yet, in the time of the All Volunteer Forces, recreation and entertainment efforts were forced to adapt to the new diverse military. While their goals remained the same, women's work itself was affected in ways that reflected the contradictions that were a part of recreation and entertainment work from the very beginning of the twentieth century.

Vuic's strength throughout this text is in the way she brings the voices of these women to the forefront of her argument. Her extensive use of diaries, letters, and interviews, allows the women she studies to speak for themselves. In weaving the stories of women into her narrative, Vuic strengthens her

argument about the ways in which women assigned their own meanings to their service and the value that they placed on their work as a form of freedom. Thus, the women themselves show how their work was a part of changing ideas of gender throughout the twentieth century, as their very presence on the front lines, not to mention their experiences there, challenged preconceived ideas of a woman's expected place. "While much of the actual and symbolic work they performed drew on conventional notions, of womanhood," Vuic argues, "much of their lives and wartime experiences failed to conform to tradition" (235).

While many historians have examined the wartime recreation and wartime work of women, no historian has ever created such a comprehensive study of the subject. Previous studies have either concentrated on one organization or one conflict, or highlighted the individual stories of entertainment and recreation workers in the context of women's service during wartime. Vuic's approach teases out the common threads that existed throughout the twentieth century. Thus, while Vuic's arguments concerning women symbolizing the home: a reminder of domesticity and a feminine influence on the men serving on the front lines, are not new, tracing the changing ideas of and expectations of women in these roles on such a large scale allows the reader to understand the importance of this work in a way previous studies do not. The work of women changed the military institution in profound and permanent ways that reflected the affect their work had on the meanings they assigned to their own service, this adding to previous historical scholarship in both military and gender history.

Ariel Natalo-Lifton  
Temple University Graduate Student

## Strategic Visions: Volume 18, Number II

Kenneth M. Pollack, *Armies of Sand: The Past, Present, and Future of Arab Military Effectiveness*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. xvi + 676 pp. \$34.95 U.S. cloth, ISBN 978-0-19-090696-2

For the majority of the day on June 7th, 1967, nine Israeli tanks held a small pass in the Sinai Peninsula against three entire divisions of the Egyptian army. Four of the tanks did not have any fuel. Egypt's failure to push the outmatched Israeli force out of the pass was a particularly low point in the Six Day War, where the Arab coalition of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq had nearly every material advantage over their opponents yet were humiliated on every front. In *Armies of Sand: The Past, Present, and Future of Arab Military Effectiveness*, Kenneth M. Pollack, who spent a career as a military analyst of the Persian Gulf at the CIA, National Security Council, Brookings Institution, and American Enterprise Institute, tackles the vexing question: What factors have led Arab militaries to consistently “punch below their weight” and limited their military effectiveness in the post-World War II world?

For Pollack, the greatest factor in Arab underperformance has been the patterns of behavior in the military resulting from the “dominant Arab culture” (511). Various cultural traits, such as conformity and the centralization of authority, have hindered Arab success in military settings by stifling innovation and creativity on the battlefield. With few exceptions, the behavior of Arab armies has not been conducive to what Pollack terms the “dominant mode of warfare” in the late twentieth century (345). Due to technological changes in communications and weaponry, it is impossible for one supreme commander to orchestrate an entire battle alone. Modern

warfare is highly reliant on officers – even junior and non-commissioned - to show initiative and creativity during battle, and the centralization of authority, among other traits, has limited the ability to do this. Militaries of the Arab states are more effective in preplanned, set-piece operations, but in the heat of the battle, these armies have difficulties in reacting, counterattacking, and adapting to unforeseen developments as a result of a dogmatic approach to traditional military doctrine.

To further bolster his argument, Pollack points to the relative effectiveness of insurgencies and militias such as Hezbollah and ISIS over state militaries. These forces are not centralized and lack a traditionally organized structure. This dispersed, “cellular nature” promotes initiative, aggressiveness, and innovation rather than a deference to a central command. *Armies of Sand* also highlights other minor factors that limited Arab effectiveness on the battlefield. In some cases, politicization and patronage systems in military structure put men in positions based on loyalty rather than ability, and the underdeveloped state and late industrialization of Arab economies have also contributed to unfamiliarity with more sophisticated systems. For example, well into the 1990s, the Department of Defense reported that Egyptian pilots were unaccustomed with the avionics and rarely used the radar in their American-made F-16s, even after extensive support from advisers.

Pollack links the importance of analyzing Arab military effectiveness directly to international peace. He urges that American security forces must recognize the strengths and limitations of Arab state armies, because improving the military effectiveness of Arab allies is crucial for regional security and meeting the challenge of insurgents. The key here is not to “force them to think and act like Americans” but highlight what the armies are good at: keeping forces small and focusing on heavily scripted offensives while coalition allies support where needed. Pollack also offers hope for future military effectiveness: the region is undergoing profound political change, and the “information age” will change how all armies conduct warfare in the future.

Pollack breaks *Armies of Sand* into four parts, each examining a major explanation for Arab military ineffectiveness: the influence of the Soviet Doctrine, politicization, economic underdevelopment, and culture. He positions his book as a major historiographical intervention, because scholars have never looked at all of these explanations in relation to one another. While Pollack agrees that, to varying degrees, underdevelopment, politicization, and culture are factors, he rejects one prevailing scholarly notion that “the Soviet Way of War” – which stressed offensive flanking and encirclement operations from ground forces – hindered Arab armies. Instead, *Armies of Sand* argues against that in the few instances where Arab armies faithfully implemented it, the Soviet military doctrine was helpful.

*Armies of Sand* takes a truly multidisciplinary approach, combining military analysis with economic and cultural studies. Pollack’s research is based primarily on published secondary sources, and he adheres to the “Delphi method” of relying on the behavioral analysis of experts to inform his own analysis, claiming that this method has helped him in avoiding unfounded “folk theories” and arguments for which there is no clear consensus among experts regarding Arab culture. While his sources are primarily in English, he draws on the multilingual research of cultural anthropologists, sociologists, and cultural psychologists and applies them to military history. Pollack’s published sources – some translated from Russian or Arabic - range from studies on Soviet military doctrine to publications

from Edward Said and Iraqi sociologist Sana Al-Khayyat. While the majority of his research is secondary, Pollack brings his own research as well, including his analysis of Iraqi military manuals and interviews with U.S. and Israeli military personnel.

Overall, Pollack is careful to treat culture with its proper reverence and care. He acknowledges that culture is “a nebulous subject,” and that treating it with too much precision, as he has done, is ultimately unrealistic. The oversimplification is “an unfortunate necessity,” but he appears to achieve his purpose without doing “grievous damage” (367). While he focuses on broad cultural similarities, he emphasizes regional diversity as well. Attempting to untangle cultural, political, and economic matters is an equally difficult task, because these sources are in constant interaction with one another. This approach certainly opens his analysis up to dispute over the weight each factor deserves, but his process is sound.

Written at a time when the United States is experiencing trials and tribulations in attempting to piece the Iraqi army back together, *Armies of Sand* is a clearly-written and argued analysis for those interested in international relations and security in the Middle East.

Brandon Kinney  
Temple University Graduate Student



Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016. Xvi + 883 pp. \$45.00 US cloth, ISBN 978-0804793858.

In her extensively researched book *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War*, the historian Nancy Mitchell centers Africa in President Carter's diplomacy. Using government documents from twelve different countries, impressive oral history interviews conducted with key actors – including Carter himself – and a plethora of U.S. media sources and secondary literature, Mitchell constructs a comprehensive narrative of Carter's approach to African issues. In so doing, Mitchell makes two key interventions in the historiography of Jimmy Carter's foreign policy. The first assertion is that contrary to historical representations, Carter was not “indecisive, weak, or irresolute,” but decisive and central to his administration's foreign policy. Secondly, and perhaps more significant, are Mitchell's contentions that Africa preoccupied Carter's foreign affairs agenda and that race was critical to his handling of African crises (4, 654). These accomplishments make Mitchell's book a landmark text on Carter's presidency appropriate for any specialist on U.S. Cold War diplomacy.

Central to his book are Mitchell's challenges to common myths surrounding the thirty-ninth president. Mitchell grapples with the belief that Carter built his campaign and presidency on human rights, instead contending that he trained his attention on restoring transparency and morality to Washington in the wake of Watergate and the Vietnam debacle (33, 68). In fact, Mitchell cites Carter's admission that human rights entered his campaign rhetoric once Walter Mondale joined the ticket (87). Furthermore, Mitchell debunks the conception that Carter was indecisive and torn between the conflicting advice of dovish Cyrus Vance and the hawk Zbigniew Brzezinski. These diplomats, despite holding key positions in Carter's cabinet,

had relatively uncritical roles in the formulation of foreign policy – a task often conducted by the president himself (654-656). For Mitchell, Carter was always a Cold Warrior who sought the protection of U.S. interests vis-à-vis a more effective containment of communism (9-10). Mitchell demonstrates this through Carter's commitment to forging a settlement over Rhodesian majority rule in the face of Soviet-Cuban intervention and his diplomatic foray into establishing an alliance with Somalia – the former a victory, but the latter a failure. In this light, Mitchell reframes 1970s détente as an “organic continuation of Cold War containment” with Carter as its persona (661).

In this analysis, the reader sees that Carter was not a post-Cold War president nor irresolute, but an ardent Cold Warrior not easily influenced by his advisors. Carter won the U.S. a Cold War victory in aiding Rhodesia's quest for an independent democracy grounded in majority black rule. In this case, Carter did not lift sanctions against the racist minority white government of Ian Smith and labored hard to bring all parties of the Rhodesian liberation war to a negotiated settlement on racial equality in the newly created Zimbabwe (121, 353). Conversely, he embarked on an ad hoc response to a Cold War battle in the Horn of Africa, resulting in an Ethiopia flush with victory over Somalia through the military aid of Cuba and a new diplomatic alliance with Moscow. Mitchell, however, claims that Carter's blunders in the Horn stemmed not from a dysfunctional cabinet or misplaced idealism, but from the fact that Carter “had a vision but lacked a clear ideology” (654). The juxtaposition of Carter's approaches in Africa shows that Carter was able to uphold his objectives when patient and strategic, but rather ineffective when situations required rapid reaction. In this vein, Mitchell contrasts negative depictions of Jimmy Carter by Gaddis Smith and Adam Clymer and builds on the wave of recent scholarship – such as that of John Dumbrell and Donna Jackson – that reframe Carter as a competent and deliberate maker of foreign policy.

Mitchell also foregrounds Africa in Jimmy Carter's foreign policy agenda above more familiar situations in Iran or Afghanistan. Carter saw the strategic value in protecting U.S. interests in the Horn and knew he had to counter the communist threat in southern Africa. Mitchell breaks new ground in her inclusion of race in these decisions, weaving government documents and personal interviews to do such. She demonstrates that Carter – a southern progressive who lived through the civil rights movement – drew on personal experience to liken the Rhodesian liberation crisis to the U.S. civil rights struggle (23, 673-674). That, coupled with his realization that he could wage a Cold War battle in Rhodesia while simultaneously defending racial equality abroad, influenced how Carter viewed the majority rule crisis in southern Africa.

Despite these noteworthy accomplishments, Jimmy Carter in Africa is not without flaws. Mitchell largely neglects the pre-1975 relationship between the U.S. government and southern African states – an oversight that led to some misrepresentation. For example, Mitchell portrays Julius Nyerere as “a thorn in Washington's side since 1961” when the Tanzanian president had been a respected ally of President Kennedy (53). In addition, the author does not fully explore the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations' efforts to contend Soviet influence in Ethiopia, instead favoring the contention that Moscow supplied Ethiopia's military in the mid-1970s (374). Another drawback of this book is its size. Running 689 pages, it makes for a difficult read for anyone other than a specialist in U.S.-African relations or the Carter administration. There are several parts in the book where Mitchell unnecessarily delves into minutiae, such as in her lengthy discussion of Carter's presidential campaign. Mitchell also becomes repetitive, evident in her consistent rehashing of the link between Carter's southern roots and his views on race. Consequently, this book poses a challenge to anyone looking to implement it into undergraduate or graduate coursework.

Nancy Mitchell's Jimmy Carter in Africa makes a notable contribution to the historiography on President Carter and U.S.-African relations during the Cold War. The book reframes Carter as a Cold Warrior who actively conceptualized and implemented foreign policy. Furthermore, it centers race as a critical aspect of Cold War diplomacy and places Africa at the center of Carter's foreign policy. Despite its drawbacks, this book enhances our understanding of 1970s U.S. diplomacy and therefore, merits reading from any scholar of U.S. foreign relations of the era.

Graydon Dennison  
Temple University Graduate Student