

American Wars, Barely Visible to Americans

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In 2001, the US launched a War on Terror the failures of which were not altogether unpredictable. More surprising has been how little the war has been visible to the American public, despite the occasional scandal. This invisibility was not foisted on the US by the necessities of war. It is the product of phenomena with old roots in American history.

Briefly back for a “victory tour” with his fellow “heroes,” Iraq war soldier Billy Lynn, the title character of Ben Fountain’s terrific 2012 novel, returns to an America that seems to have become “a giant mall with a country attached.” Earlier, just two weeks after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, President George W. Bush famously asked Americans to shop and play: “Get down to Disney World in Florida,” he urged. “Take your families and enjoy life, the way we want it to be enjoyed.” The tension between warzone urgency and homefront comfort was hardly new in the United States, because few things in modern war are: fighting Americans in World War II sometimes railed against a homefront “wallowing in unprecedented prosperity.” But even the familiar evolves. That tension, like America’s militarization broadly, took on hypertrophic dimensions after 9/11. “Missing was any rhetoric of sacrifice,” historian Richard Kohn wrote, “leading to the normalization of war: ‘the military at war and America at the mall.’”¹

Under that normalization, America’s longstanding militarization became even more diffuse, distended, and dangerous, and more shadowy and secretive as well. Diffusion characterized many nations’ responses to terrorism, which in Britain and Western Europe sometimes echoed American practices that many of their politicians and pundits had once condemned. But the stakes were bigger with the United States, since it had far more capacity to destroy and far more responsibility (at least in the eyes of its leaders) to protect. America’s militarized system metastasized across a dizzying array of systems, platforms, and sources of authority, public and private, operating as much by the mechanics and principles of the marketplace as by those of the state. Virtually every federal agency had a security-related duty, from Agriculture to the Voice of America, as did any local police force, charged to look out for terrorists as well as drunks and burglars. For an agency like the Port Authority of New York and

1. Ben Fountain, *Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk* (New York 2012), 222; Bush, “Remarks to Airline Employees in Chicago,” September 27, 2001; Journalist Richard Sherrod, *Tarawa* (1944), quoted in Michael S. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven 1995), 92; Richard H. Kohn, “The Danger of Militarization in an Endless ‘War’ on Terrorism,” *Journal of Military History*, 73 (1): January 2009, 198.

New Jersey Police, protecting myriad bridges, tunnels, and airports, that duty was far graver. Meanwhile, thousands of private or quasi-private companies did much of the work, plying their trade with varying levels of legality and authorization.

Counter-terrorists everywhere

The result was webs of authority and communication so tangled that even high officials must have scratched their heads, and jurisdictional conflicts and mis-fires proliferated. “Every agency wants to be involved in counterterrorism and intelligence now,” one congressman noted in 2014--a comment applicable to any time after 9/11.² New York City’s cops could plausibly claim that they--not the armed forces or FBI--were “the first line of defense for the nation’s top terror targets,” especially given how “the new breed of terrorist will strike anywhere and at any time.”³ It was enough to make President Dwight Eisenhower’s notion in 1961 of a tidy “military-industrial complex” seem quaint. Many more hyphens would now have to be added to that phrase. Cold War militarization had been messy, but lines of authority did rise fairly clearly to the top--the Joint Chiefs, the Secretary of Defense, the White House. Not any more. Cold War statisticians could plausibly estimate defense spending--the Department of Defense budget plus a few other agencies (some, like the Central Intelligence Agency, with secret budgets). No one knows any longer, making claims of a decline in US defense spending since the 1950s dubious.⁴

The reasoning, or at least the tacit assumption, behind this diffusion was that a more diffuse threat required a more diffuse response. Power could be centralized when the big threat was a Soviet nuclear attack ordered from Moscow and the big need was to deter it. Now enemies might attack through a bewildering array of means and portals (“anywhere and at any time”)--ramming planes into skyscrapers, sneaking bombs onto subways, smuggling nuclear devices into ports, plotting anthrax attacks, slipping explosives into the shoes of airline passengers. “Defending against such threats is like playing goalie blindfold, where the opposing side can score from in front, behind, above, or below,” as David Cole paraphrases “one former US official.”⁵ The diversity of threats was impressive, and against none did old-fashioned deterrence seem remotely relevant. True, many Americans had once seen their Soviet and Chinese enemies as capable of a dazzling array of dastardly deeds, or as too crazed to be deterred by America’s rockets (hence insistence by some Cold Warriors that the US should shoot first). But most Americans in their post-9/11 shock saw no continuities with their recent past (after all, Bush instructed them, this was “a war unlike any we’ve ever had,”⁶ which of course most wars are). Enemies that could attack in almost any way required systems that could respond in almost any way: a hyper-vigilant post office was as necessary as the Pentagon.

2.Representative Rush Holt (Democrat-New Jersey), quoted in James Risen and Matt Apuzzo, “Getting Close to Terror, But Not to Stop It,” *The New York Times*, November 9, 2014.

³Patrick J. Lynch, New York City Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association president, “NYC cops not equipped for new terror threats,” paid opinion piece, *The New York Times*, November 10, 2014.

4.On the costs, confusion, and much else, see, among many sources, James Risen, *Pay Any Price: Greed, Power, and Endless War* (New York 2014).

5.David Cole, “Must Counterterrorism Cancel Democracy?,” *New York Review of Books*, January 8, 2015, 26.

6.Bush, “Remarks at a Dinner for Senatorial Candidate James M. Talent in Kansas City,” June 11, 2002.

But militarized systems never simply mirror imagined threats. They also develop through the pull and haul of politics, institutions, and values. Diffusion especially characterized America's militarization because of the illusion that infinite resources were available, the rudderless nature of its state, and the habit of thinking that more was always better. The 9/11 attacks also came at a peak moment of an anti-statist fervor shared in some part by the president, Congress, and both political parties, one that weighed against centralizing authority. Institutional rivalries abetted diffusion: no agency wanted to cede power to another. The meshing of crime-fighting and war-fighting further exacerbated diffusion. Well before 9/11, the two arenas had entwined as American criminal justice waged its "war on crime," tolerated police torture (torture did not start at black sites or Abu Ghraib), and adopted militarized policing, while the armed forces assumed crime-fighting roles, especially to interdict drug trafficking. The feedback loops-political, institutional, attitudinal--between those two arenas had proliferated for decades, as veterans were urged to become cops and de-commissioned military bases became sites for prisons. Backstopping that war were sharply punitive attitudes that President Bush redirected after 9/11 against terrorist "evildoers" (he promised nothing less than to "rid the world of evil") and channeled into his feckless war in Iraq, begun on March 20, 2003. Bush himself seemed uncertain whether his nation's response to 9/11 should be a "Global War on Terrorism," as he proclaimed, or a crime-fighting crusade, as when he quipped about "an old poster out west, as I recall, that said, 'Wanted: Dead or Alive.'"⁷ (French authorities exhibited similar uncertainty after the January terrorist attacks in Paris, with the prime minister vowing a "war against terrorism" while the Paris police were hailed). No wonder that "first responders" to the 9/11 attacks were celebrated as "heroes" akin to soldiers, that police agencies rushed into counterterrorism, and that military agencies took on new policing duties. The line between war-fighting and crime-fighting, always blurry, had further faded.

Soldiers Nowhere?

Highly diffused, militarization was also less visible. With conscription having ended in 1973 in the US (and in most Western European countries before or after then), fewer people joined the armed forces, diminishing the points of contact that most Americans had with it. More work was done by nominally private contractors who surfaced to public attention only when scandal erupted. Few paid attention to the foreigners doing the scut work of American forces in "the Pentagon's invisible army," some "seventy thousand cooks, cleaners, construction workers, fast-food clerks, electricians, and beauticians from the world's poorest countries" working in Iraq and Afghanistan. "Filipinos launder soldiers' uniforms, Kenyans truck frozen steaks and inflatable tents, Bosnians repair electrical grids, and Indians provide iced mocha lattes."⁸ The big

7. According to the official record for Bush, the phrase "Global War on Terrorism" was first used by his press secretary on February 21, 2002. See George W. Bush: "Statement by the Press Secretary: Danish Prime Minister to Visit Washington," February 21, 2002. Bush, "Remarks to Employees in the Pentagon and an Exchange With Reporters in Arlington, Virginia," September 17, 2001. For "to rid," see Bush, "Remarks at the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service," September 14, 2001.

8. Sarah Stillman, "The Invisible Army," *The New Yorker*, June 6, 2011.

US rockets and bombers that once scared Americans were still on duty, but in diminished numbers and more out of sight. Bases visible near cities--Fort Sheridan near Chicago, Fort Dix in New Jersey, Grissom Air Force Base in Indiana--had been downsized or decommissioned in the 1990s. New structures did spring up, but the buildings for security agencies and contractors in suburban D.C. looked like any city's office parks. And much of what US forces now did took place in the invisible reaches of cyber and drone warfare rarely observed by prying reporters. Fighting with machines rather than men had long been the American dream, or a nightmare as Mark Twain presented it in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889). As the visible apparatus shrank, the invisible systems swelled.

Less visible also meant more secretive. The Bush Administration and to a large extent the Barack Obama Administration claimed unprecedented authority to spy at home and abroad, to seize and sometimes torture detainees, to keep them beyond the reach of the law, to lock up government records past and present, to cut out Congress (largely compliant anyway, starting with the 2001 US Patriot Act), to do much else--and to fashion new legal doctrines in secret to justify it all. Nags complained about a civil-military disconnect--a widely proclaimed "chasm between soldiers ('the other 1 percent') and civilians," as the *New York Times* put it⁹--in which civilians no longer cared about military men and women, as if they had turned callous or oblivious since the glory days of World War II. But the "chasm" war hardly new, only differently configured, and the problem was institutional, not attitudinal: so much had become hidden that it was unclear how bewildered spectators could care. Altogether, America's post-9/11 militarization was not an intrusive or vivid presence in the nation, but a gray, ominous blur hanging over it, normalized by the tedium of security procedures at airports and the saturation of action movies and television shows about terrorism.

Ever-more diffuse and secretive hardly meant ever-more efficient. To the contrary, because it could not be monitored and managed, the post-9/11 apparatus risked spinning out of control, its parts at cross-purposes with each other. In terms of protecting the nation, its most dangerous weakness was coping with "signal noise," a problem before Pearl Harbor, before 9/11, before most catastrophic security events, including, one can guess at this early stage, the terrorist attacks in Paris in January. Critics imagined a National Security Agency efficiently gobbling up bits of info about everyone and everything, and apparently that was NSA's aspiration. "In the words of an NSA PowerPoint slide disclosed by [Edward] Snowden," David Cole reports, "the agency's goal is to 'Collect It All,' 'Process It All,' 'Exploit It All,' 'Partner It all,' 'Sniff It All,' and 'Know It All.'"¹⁰ But managing and assessing those bits, much less coordinating findings with myriad other agencies in the US and abroad, was probably impossible. To "Know It All" was to risk getting lost in all that was known.

It was a system that lumbered and lurched. It was whack-a-mole. The evidence of official dishonesty and amateurism--the two former Air Force psychologists abruptly hired by the CIA to

9. Michiko Kakutani, "Human Costs of the Forever Wars, Enough to Fill a Bookshelf," *New York Times*, December 26, 2014.

10. Cole, 27.

oversee torture, the Bush Administration's colossal failure to come clean about Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction" and to foresee the consequences of the US invasion there, the NSA's failure to stop Snowden--offered more reason to doubt that secret systems operated effectively. They surely had successes--no major terrorist attack on the US occurred after 9/11, and for most Americans, that was all that counted. But they endangered the nation's democracy and liberties in part because they were unmanageable and ungovernable. Certainly the furious reaction against, and the Obama Administration's tepid response to, the Senate Intelligence Committee December 2014 "torture report" gave little hope that this apparatus would be more tightly governed. As Richard Kohn predicted in 2009, "any diminishing" of civil liberty would soon become "permanent" and "the nation could very well move incrementally and unknowingly toward diminishing freedoms," although enough was known to doubt that the nation was moving "unknowingly."¹¹

Caring for the Troubled Veteran

Nervous attention to veterans became Americans' primary means of connecting with this phase of militarization and the wars waged during it. They provided flesh and blood to an otherwise faceless, bloodless machinery of war. Little else did so. Big-name military and civilian chiefs grabbed headlines, then disappeared into obscurity (who remembers General Tommy Franks?) or scandal (General David Petraeus), although Secretaries of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates and the grimly monotonous Vice President, Richard Cheney, stayed long in the public limelight. The fighting was obscure to most Americans, perhaps more so than in any modern American war. Constrained by the military's rules and the wars' realities, the media's record was sparse, usually cherry-picked by the armed forces. The photos leaked in 2004 of American abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib were so jarring in part because they stood out against an otherwise thin visual record. War reporting was limited since Iraq and Afghanistan were exceptionally dangerous places where action was hard to anticipate and get positioned for (before D-Day, hundreds of reporters knew roughly in advance that something big would unfold). And much of the best reporting was in print, a medium fewer Americans indulged. The few movies about Iraq and Afghanistan were more applauded than viewed. It proved tough to give form and meaning to "shapeless struggles with no clear ends in sight."¹²

Nor did these wars offer the social connections that had once brought war home. Few Americans abroad romanced warzone women or fathered their children; their isolation from local peoples was remarkable. Few refugees from war-torn lands streamed into the US and few of their brethren in the US championed their cause. Once, Brits, Poles, Koreans, Vietnamese and others in the US--as refugees, wives, children, orphans--had served or been used to mediate American wars and their aftermaths, providing felt if fraught connections between warzone and homeland. Nothing like them arose after 9/11. And there were almost no US POWs, who had been used to shape understandings of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Their absence made the few who did return, notably Army soldier Bowe Bergdahl (released in 2014 in a trade for Taliban

11.Kohn, 204, 205.

12.Kakutani, "Human Costs of the Forever Wars," which provides a lengthy, useful survey of post-9/11 war reporting and fiction.

prisoners), the victims of outsized scrutiny, as if all the diverse opinions about post-9/11 wars momentarily funneled into one glaring spotlight trained on him.

What was left was the returning troops? It was a narrow prism--and a highly national one in this presumably globalized age--through which to view the wars, made narrower by the Bush Administration's prohibition on photography of coffins of the dead ones arriving at Dover Air Force Base. Almost all those who served were deemed "heroes" ("So proud," Billy Lynn hears one group of men say to the returning "heroes," "So grateful, so honored. Guardians. Freedoms. Fanatics. TerrRr."¹³), rather than a rough cross-section of humanity with all its foibles and virtues. At the same time, they (the men at least) were often presented as time bombs ready to explode or self-destruct from their PTSD or other wounding experiences. That bifurcated image was hardly new (the crazed vet also haunted 1940s culture), but it stood out more starkly in an otherwise impoverished culture for imagining post-9/11 wars. Nor did vets have much voice in that coverage, for they returned (and often then went back) in dribs and drabs over many years, rather than in a single attention-grabbing moment, and they lacked the status and elite connections that facilitated the voices of many veterans of earlier wars, such as John Kerry, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War spokesman who is now the US Secretary of State. They were not, as Fountain writes of them, "the greatest generation by anyone's standard, but they are surely the best of the bottom third percentile of their own somewhat muddled and suspect generation" (Billy Lynn himself enlisted when he feared jail was his fate).¹⁴ The low standards for enlistment and retention that the armed forces enforced in their desperation for personnel meant that many were less than fit or had troubled, sometimes criminal, backgrounds, while National Guard and Reserve personnel went to war theaters ill-prepared and against their expectations.

Ignoring Other Dead

The jittery media coverage of veterans highlighted American sacrifice. The nearly seven thousand killed abroad in 13 years of post-9/11 war were few compared to US losses even in its lesser previous wars (Korea, Vietnam). That coverage diverted attention from the killing that American forces had done, a toll admittedly hard to calculate and to separate from the killing done by other forces, but also barely visible to Americans. It reflected a popular post-Vietnam sense of the American mission in war--to protect its forces and get them safely home often seemed more paramount than winning wars.¹⁵ And it reflected medical reality--thousands who once would have died now returned badly maimed. Still, little of this was new. As historian John Kinder shows, the tropes regarding wounded warriors from the 9/11 wars replayed verbatim the tropes used for disabled vets after World War I and World War II, leaving Kinder "struck by how much has stayed the same" despite the differences between those wars and earlier ones.¹⁶

13.Fountain, 56.

14.Fountain, 166.

15.See Michael Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill 2009), 303-05.

16.John M. Kinder, *Paying With Their Bodies: American War and the Problem of the Disabled Veteran* (Chicago, forthcoming March 2015), 292.

Replayed too were accusations--familiar to any American newspaper reader in the 1920s or the 1970s--that federal agencies neglected, mis-diagnosed, or mistreated veterans.

Military personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan--over two and one-half million so far--had no single normalcy to which they might return, at least none like what we imagine for soldiers returning from earlier US wars.¹⁷ Here, too, diffusion--a scattering over experience and time---ruled. Their return was strung out over a dozen-plus years (in that regard, the Vietnam War is comparable). It was often disrupted by new tours, voluntary or forced, in a combat theater. It occurred amid shifting economic conditions--returning in the depths of the Great Recession differed from returning in 2015. Returnees in an all-volunteer force had choices (if able-bodied) to re-enlist or retire that few in draft-era armies had. For the first time, many were women, some with combat experience. Returnees settled more heavily in southern, lower midwest, and western states than had veterans of earlier wars. They were on average older (perhaps a factor in recovery from physical and mental wounds) than earlier veteran cohorts, often returning to families (perhaps disintegrating) and children that few twenty-year-old vets in 1945 or 1971 had. They returned to a more scattered, confusing landscape of benefits and supports, medical and otherwise, one lacking the singularity of the GI Bill of 1944. Returning in an anti-government era, they had less access to the federal jobs--from postman to rocket scientist--afforded the World War II generation. Returning veterans also differed with each other in their sensibilities over the course of the endless war: compare the fired-up nineteen-year-old enlisting after 9/11 to the nineteen-year-old signing up in 2014. Their experience was framed as "American"--almost no commentary compared it to that of allied soldiers. As in all modern US wars, only a small percentage had routinely faced combat, but many returned with life-scarring wounds, primarily those in the ground forces (air crews, who suffered severe losses in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, emerged almost unscathed, having faced no enemy air force). Struggle though politicians and pundits did to imagine it, there was no particular "normalcy" to which veterans could return. That was another aspect of their burden and another contributor to their relative invisibility.

The attention given to America's vets also served to offset the depressing outcomes of the wars they fought. America declared more and more "heroes" even as it had fewer and fewer victories. The ultimate test of a militarized system is whether it can prevent or win wars, or at least bring about some good that offsets the costs. By that standard, America's militarized system failed in Iraq and Afghanistan. There were no major terrorist attacks on the US after 9/11, but Americans were given few reasons to believe that this success had anything to do with the wars waged in Iraq and Afghanistan. The system was huge, clumsy, costly, destructive, and yet remarkably ineffectual, at least as measured by the failure to put an end to terrorism abroad. Indeed, it manufactured the very terrorism it was supposed to subdue insofar as its destructiveness (massive with bombing and invasions, presumably pin-point with drones) destabilized terrorism-prone regions, alienated terrorism-averse peoples, and dumped US

¹⁷ For one survey of their attitudes, see Pew Research Center, "[The Military-Civilian Gap: War and Sacrifice in the Post-9/11 Era](#)," October 5, 2011.

weaponry that often found its way into terrorists' hands. Those were predictable outcomes insofar as they resembled the consequences of the US war in Vietnam and US support of anti-Soviet rebels in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Nonetheless, the system lumbered on, resorting, with each new scare about terrorism, to the much same methods that had already failed to stop terrorism, as responses by the US and its allies in 2014 to the Islamic State indicated. It was "the American system at its worst: Gigantic resources guided by scant wisdom produce minimal results with a maximum of noise," as one critic put it.¹⁸

That noise also amplified the fear the system was supposedly designed to address. Having failed to anticipate the 9/11 attacks, the Bush Administration hurled thunderbolts about possible new attacks, lest it appear asleep at the switch again. Bush's proclamation of a war without apparent end established fear as an open-ended, semi-permanent state. The effort to round up or monitor suspected Islamicists in the US told Americans there must be dangerous Islamicists in their midst, just as the incarceration of Japanese-Americans in 1942 had told other Americans they had something to fear from them. Above all, so many organizations were invested in the production of fear that if one went silent, another could be counted on to make noise. Any prolonged war sends fear scattering in many directions, and the 9/11 attacks by themselves were enough to do so. But feckless leadership, the incoherent system over which it presided, and the indeterminate nature of enemies made that inevitability worse.

Absent new attacks on the US--hardly to be taken for granted, as the rise of the Islamic State indicated--that system was shrinking a bit by the mid-2010s. Torture was banned, the armed forces downsized, the US military footprint in Europe diminished, the troops (mostly) brought home from Iraq and Afghanistan. But as when the Vietnam war and detente prompted pullback in the 1970s and the Cold War's end did likewise in the 1990s, the shrinkage was modest--hardly poised to disrupt America's militarization--and capricious: much that was bad and costly (jet fighters without enemy planes to shoot down, nuclear weapons with no targets to strike) would be kept, much that was useful and less lavish (good training for soldiers, good maintenance for weapons) would be trimmed.

In the mid-twentieth century, American militarization had ridden the wave of the nation's abundance and world economic dominance. How, and how much, it could persist in more straitened circumstances was uncertain, even as new threats seemed to loom, with a revanchist Russia and an expansive China offering reminders that old-fashioned state military muscle still mattered. Of course, a system jacked up to confront terrorism might well face some very different threat, one as poorly foreseen now as 9/11 was before 9/11. The great age of terror, like the great age of world war and inter-state conflict before it, would not last forever. What would persist was a belief that had long undergirded America's militarization: whatever military system it had, its leaders presented it as forced on them by enemies--not America's choice, not America's doing, not done in the pursuit of power or in blind rage but in the interest of

18. Walter Russell Mead, book review, "National Insecurity, A Look at American Leadership," *Washington Post*, December 5, 2014.

protection. That belief, though not fanciful and common enough among great powers, hid and justified for Americans a great deal that was chosen, costly, counterproductive, and deadly to thousands of American personnel and many more thousands elsewhere.

I wish that scholars had done and would do more to address these matters, but it's no surprise that journalists, lawyers, and writers have offered the first draft of this history, as they did earlier episodes in modern US history. Their work—by Mark Danner, Jane Mayer, David Cole, Lawrence Wright, among others—has been impressive. Academics lack the status they have in some European countries (even when they write, few are widely read), they have much else on their plate, and the ruling elite among them, economists, don't have much to say on this score. Older scholars may look back fondly on intellectuals' spirited role in debates about the Vietnam War, but that role was an historical anomaly, not a repeatable norm. The diffuseness and secrecy of post-9/11 militarization also make it hard for scholars to tackle: Just where in that vast phenomenon oozing so widely over time and space does one start (though the same might have been said of World War II)? Meanwhile, a founding generation of scholars examining militarization (I include myself) has gotten older, less productive, and less influential, and few younger ones are following in their wake. There are prominent academic voices, such as the scholar/pundit Andrew Bacevich, but not many. Fewer still focus on war itself—why it happens, how it gets justified and resisted, how it is waged, why the US keeps waging it—insofar as that's separable from the cultural and legal politics of war.¹⁹

The post-9/11 wars offer a special challenge. Once, historical convulsions like the Great Depression and the world wars had early, well-punctuated ends, followed by fairly speedy availability of archival records, allowing scholars to pounce quickly. Even the long Cold War was marked by crises, wars, and turning points that reached (often bloody) conclusions, opening the way for reflection on them. The endless war of our time offers no such closure, and no foreseeable opening of the archival floodgates (Edward Snowden and WikiLeaks excepted). If scholars wait for it, they'll be caught in endless silence and succumb to the very numbing they often deplore. That is one reason that I leapt at the chance to write this essay.

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¹⁹ See Marilyn B. Young, “I was thinking, as I often do these days, of war’: The United States in the Twenty-First Century,” *Diplomatic History* 36 (January 2012), 1-15, and Marilyn B. Young and Lloyd C. Gardner, eds, *Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam, Or, How Not to Learn from the Past* (New Press 2008). Among Bacevich's many books, see *Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country* (Metropolitan Books 2013). For an exemplary scholarly study of the armed forces, see Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).