

The book's most absorbing chapters cover the late 1790s, which, along with the decade prior to the Civil War, "were the most politically contentious" years in American history. The source of discord was the conflict between France and England. Although almost everyone agreed in principle that the United States should remain neutral, profound disagreement existed over specific policies. A poisonous atmosphere transformed "quarrels over policy into contests over basic principles," and invariably led to charges of treason and conspiracy on both sides. The fever broke only when President John Adams courageously defied his Federalist colleagues to negotiate an end to a naval "quasi-war" with France, and the Jeffersonian Republicans swept into office with the election of 1800.

Wood concludes with the War of 1812, a contest he labels "the strangest war in American history." The United States, under the Republican leadership of James Madison, ostensibly entered the war to end British depredations on America shipping. Yet New England, the portion of the country most invested in maritime rights, resolutely opposed the war. The Republicans prosecuted the war in republican fashion, without raising taxes or fielding a professional military, both anathemas to their vision of small, weak government. As a result, American forces were largely routed on land and, despite a brave showing by a handful of frigates in single-ship combat, the Royal Navy commanded our shores as well. Yet, Great Britain grew weary of the backwater struggle and signed a peace on Christmas Eve 1814. While the British conceded nothing on maritime rights, the agreement, coupled with Andrew Jackson's one-sided victory at New Orleans two weeks later, convinced most Americans that they had won a "second war of independence."

By 1815, Americans could turn their backs on Europe and look "westward across their own expansive continent." Much had changed in a generation. "Anyone aged 40 or older born in America had once been . . . a subject of His Majesty George III." Anyone younger born on these shores had entered the world as an American citizen, and 85 percent of the population was under 40. The terms "democrat" and "democracy" were no longer epithets, as they had been in 1789. An American national character was taking shape. Yet there was a serpent in the garden. For, as Wood concludes in his magisterial work, while the Founders had "created a Union devoted to liberty," it "contained an inner flaw that would nearly prove to be its undoing." Not until the dark shadow of slavery was lifted could the new nation achieve its promise. The great republican experiment was not over and faced further tests.

**Shooting Up: Counterinsurgency and the War on Drugs.** By Vanda Felbab-Brown. Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2010. 273 pages. \$28.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Paul Rexton Kan**, author of *Drugs and Contemporary Warfare* and Associate Professor of National Security Studies, US Army War College.

Merely because counterinsurgency and counternarcotics share a common prefix and often occur in the same theater does not mean that they are mutually reinforcing operations. This truism is the essence of *Shooting Up*, a solid contribution to the growing body of literature on the nexus between illicit economies and violent conflict. Using a "political capital" model, the book explains the complexity of conducting a

counterinsurgency in an atmosphere of widespread illicit activities perpetrated by insurgent groups. Through rigorous field work and exhaustive research, Vanda Felbab-Brown argues that many counternarcotics approaches used through the years have actually strengthened the dynamics of insurgencies. Thus, a paradox is generated; counterinsurgency undermines the war on drugs while the war on drugs bolsters insurgent groups. It is a paradox that few embattled governments have been able to resolve.

The first chapter lays out the case for a new understanding of this paradox beyond the narrow and clichéd concept of “narcoterrorism.” This conventional approach seeks to undermine narcotics-funded insurgents by attacking their funding streams, primarily through coercive crop eradication schemes launched by governments. As the author argues, such an approach actually strengthens insurgent groups who are able to protect the livelihoods of those who are involved in cultivating illegal crops. By doing so, insurgent groups gain political capital.

The following chapter details how insurgent groups can gain political capital from the population when four mediating conditions are present in a country: the poor state of the legal economy; a labor-intensive illicit economy; the presence of thuggish traffickers; and a harsh government response to the illicit economy. These conditions can help an insurgent group improve its physical resources, freedom of action, legitimacy, and popular support.

Such conditions have existed in Peru, Colombia, and Afghanistan, and are the case studies detailed in chapters 3, 4, and 5 respectively. These chapters form the heart of the book and demonstrate the utility of the political capital model in assessing the evolution of Sendero Luminoso, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the Taliban. It is within these chapters that the author’s field work and research shine through. Interviews and key studies are integrated to give each chapter a rich context enhancing the understanding of how the emergence of insurgent groups as key players in international narcotics trafficking made them lethal threats to the stability of their countries.

That criminal capital has been translated into political capital in these cases is beyond dispute. In these chapters the author fails to acknowledge, however, that this is not a unidirectional relationship. An increasing yield of political capital for an insurgent group does not necessarily occur everytime a drug harvest is challenged by the government. In fact, overreliance on participation in criminal schemes by insurgent groups can distort political objectives, leading to internal splits and factionalism. Members of various groups who profit from drug activities often place more importance on assuring monetary gain than the advancement of strategic goals. This prioritization was especially true in the case of Sendero Luminoso where the national leadership attempted to reassert command and control of (without alienating) its branch in the Upper Hualaga Valley, a branch that was flush with coca profits. Among members of drug-funded insurgent groups, banditry has been known to undermine political capital.

In the final chapter, Felbab-Brown demonstrates how, for governments, the paradox of counterinsurgency and counternarcotics manifests itself as a dilemma. How should governments respond to drug-funded insurgent groups without strengthening them and without permitting them to continue their criminal activities? The author argues that governments can forgo forcible eradication and focus on the provision of

security. Governments may choose interdiction or licensing as policy options that do not play into the hands of the insurgents. But the success of these approaches occurred in unique cases in unique times. If the FARC were defeated, it is unclear how the licensing of cocaine production, on such a scale that could be as profitable as it is for farmers now, would not spark a popular uprising that may lead to the generation of another insurgency. A “coca rebellion” might quickly ensue.

The novel use of the political capital model is a valuable contribution, but it becomes strained as the book unfolds. Each case study appears self-contained, although the conflicts themselves are not. Political capital is also gained, much like contemporary financial capital, through substantial transnational linkages. Broader global patterns of drug trafficking and war are increasingly interrelated and dialectic in many cases, including those covered in this book. For example, cocaine produced by the FARC transits a number of unstable West African countries on its way to the burgeoning European market; this trade path demonstrates the multicontinental dimensions of crime and insurgency. Peace in Colombia may well rest with state strength in nations such as Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone, while stability in the West African region may depend on successful counterdrug policies in the Andes. None of this substantially detracts from a book that will be of great benefit to scholars, policy-makers, and military officers who routinely confront the paradox of illicit drug trafficking and intrastate conflict.

**Allies Against the Rising Sun: The United States, the British Nations and the Defeat of Imperial Japan.** By Nicholas Evan Sarantakes. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2009. 458 pages. \$39.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Clayton K. S. Chun**, author of *Japan 1945* and Chairman, Department of Distance Education, US Army War College.

In *Allies Against the Rising Sun*, Nicholas Sarantakes fills a major gap in the study of the Pacific theater in World War II with a presentation of British and Commonwealth actions in the war. Most Pacific War studies concentrate on the American or Japanese perspective. Authors tend to forget that British and Commonwealth forces fought in the theater, too. British forces were engaged in Burma, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Singapore, but not with their American allies in the Southwest and Central Pacific.

Little is written about the period before the end of the war that involved British and Commonwealth actions. By this point in the conflict American military forces had advanced throughout the Pacific in the final effort and were on Japan’s doorstep. They had conducted major actions to defeat Tokyo. By 1945, Britain and the Commonwealth nations had expended their military manpower and wealth through heavy engagements in Europe and the Mediterranean. A question that has challenged historians is why did London agree to participate in an invasion of Japan during the closing days of the war? Was the rationale based on helping an ally, satisfying a previous agreement, or post-war considerations? Britain also pressed Australia, New Zealand, and Canada to consider and eventually agree to play a role in these operations. One needs to remember that all these nations were facing demands at home to demobilize their armed forces and return to peace. Although the United States appeared to have reached its limit on providing additional forces, a number of military and civilian leaders believed that it was not necessary to seek help from Britain in the final push to conquer Japan. Many felt that