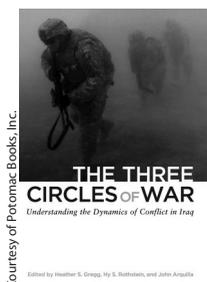


crime, terrorism, insurgency, and traditional warfare are blurred. Thus, his work provides the reader with a detailed portrayal of the probable future of intrastate conflict, internationalized civil war, and intervention. Although at times overly verbose and difficult to read, this book is appropriate for national security strategists and military leaders who see on the horizon a shift in US interventions from large-scale operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to a smaller footprint in regions of South America, Latin America, the Horn of Africa and, possibly, Mexico. Manwaring's book raises awareness about these actors and the changing international environment—an important contribution as we prepare for new and more varied security challenges.



Courtesy of Potomac Books, Inc.

Dulles, Virginia:  
Potomac Books,  
Inc., 2010

272 pages

\$60.00

## ***The Three Circles of War: Understanding the Dynamics of Conflict in Iraq***

by Heather S. Gregg, Hy S. Rothstein, and John Arquilla

**Reviewed by Major Scott A. Smitson**, Instructor,  
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Academy

As American involvement in Iraq decreases, it is only natural that scholars and policy practitioners will increasingly examine the “big questions” that hover over the American-led endeavor in that country: what type of conflict was (is) it; how do we understand the causes and effects of the direction of conflict; what can be done to mitigate policy failures in Iraq with an eye towards the future? The coeditors of *The Three Circles of War*, Heather Gregg, Hy Rothstein, and John Arquilla, attempt to address these and other “big questions” that will dominate the analysis of the conflict for years to come. By incorporating contributions from academic fields as disparate as economics, ethics, the Internet, and systems dynamics, the coeditors (and the contributors of each chapter) have embraced a significant multidisciplinary approach to examining Operation Iraqi Freedom. The multidisciplinary flavor of *The Three Circles of War* is its greatest asset, and like any worthwhile intellectual endeavor, it addresses many of these “big questions,” yet sets the conditions for the genesis of further scholarship related to even more questions that arise when studying the evolving nature of conflict in the 21st Century.

At its most elemental level, *The Three Circles of War* argues that the conflict in Iraq consisted of three types of war (interstate conflict, insurgency, and civil war), and that a solid, comprehensive study of the changing nature and dynamics of Iraq can only be achieved through an interdisciplinary analysis of the conflict. This interdisciplinary approach is applied through six sections, consisting of fourteen chapters, each with a unique perspective on the conflict.

Chapters effectively build upon the theoretical framework established by the coeditors, and brilliantly weave the three categories of conflict into their presentation. Tarek Abdel-Hamid's chapter on the application of systems dynamics modeling to the Iraq war stands out in this regard; his use of social contagion

forecast models to predict insurgent activity is intellectually appealing, as are his larger models that capture and link the three circles of war. In essence, Abdel-Hamid offers the reader a model to view the entire conflict holistically, making this chapter one of the strongest additions to *The Three Circles of War*.

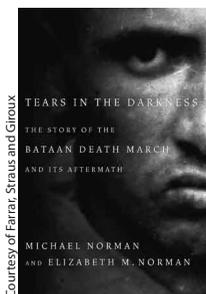
There are times when the marriage of the theoretical framework and a conceptual issue come together harmoniously, such as the chapters on identity politics and systems dynamics; however, there are also opportunities to link chapters together where it seems logical but for some reason they are not. For example, Dorothy Denning's excellent work on the relationship between the Internet and the war in Iraq is in no way structurally connected to Robert Reilly's chapter about 100 pages later critiquing the lack of a coherent plan for US strategic communication. It seems apparent that these authors are presenting related topics, but it does not appear that there is a dedicated synergy of their intellectual efforts. This structural issue is again seen when examining Josh Rovner's chapter on intelligence reform and Karen Guttieri's work on performance measurement in conflicts; both authors comment on weaknesses in data collection, the need for reconfigured intelligence assets, and the "learning trap" inherent in counterinsurgency. While these two chapters are excellent in and of themselves, combining presentations (or coauthoring chapters) along cross-cutting issues would only strengthen the book and provide value-added for the reader. To their credit, the coeditors do make a concerted effort to link many of the themes of the book in the concluding chapter, but the decisions to separate, rather than aggregate, certain chapters covering related topics is intriguing.

A central theme running throughout the book's chapters is the continued argument for security as an enabler and precondition for success in fields as far ranging as economic development, finance, and ethics. While this call for security may seem apparent to social scientists and policy practitioners, it does merit further consideration when examining what is meant by "acceptable" levels of security. Is it the creation of a security apparatus modeled solely off a Western understanding of what makes up a "proper" security force configuration? Are there other possible alternatives?

Hy Rothstein explores this issue to some degree in his chapter on creating indigenous security forces, arguing that the multiethnic "melting pot" approach to army building is flawed and that emphasis should be placed on the primacy of single-identity security forces. As an aside, it would be interesting to see a book compare and contrast the growth of the security sector in Afghanistan with that of efforts in Iraq, and see if the "melting pot" approach in Afghanistan suffers from some of the structural weaknesses that Rothstein identifies in Iraq. This search for optimal security mechanisms is an area of academic research that demands further attention beyond what is contained in the book, but *The Three Circles of War* does an admirable job of refining this conversation.

Despite some structural criticisms, *The Three Circles of War* is an excellent piece of scholarship that merits the time and attention of members of the defense community. The methods by which to study something as dynamic as the war in Iraq are as complex, layered, and multifaceted as the conflict

itself, and the coeditors and chapter authors of *The Three Circles of War* have assembled an excellent collection of thematic essays that inform our understanding of the complex nature of conflict in the 21st Century. One can only hope that the multidisciplinary approach of *The Three Circles of War* be further refined and applied to other conflicts, such as Afghanistan, and in a manner that continues to inform both the scholar and policy practitioner.



New York: Farrar,  
Straus and Giroux,  
2009

496 pages

\$18.00

## ***Tears in the Darkness: The Story of the Bataan Death March and Its Aftermath***

by Michael Norman and Elizabeth M. Norman

**Reviewed by Dr. Steve R. Waddell**, Professor of History,  
United States Military Academy

**I**n *Tears in the Darkness* Michael and Elizabeth Norman tell the story of the Bataan Death March through the eyes of Ben Steele, a twenty-two-year-old Montana cowboy who enlisted in the Army in 1940 and found himself in the Philippines when the Japanese invaded in 1941. They follow Steele as the US and Filipino forces retreat to Bataan and desperately resist the Japanese onslaught until hunger, disease, and lack of supplies finally forced the surrender of the 76,000 defenders. Forced by their captors to undertake a horrific 66-mile march (the Bataan Death March) to the rail station at San Fernando, Steele and his comrades suffered from a near total lack of food, water, and medical care. They endured the brutality of the Japanese guards and those lucky enough to survive witnessed the murder of massive numbers of their comrades who lacked the strength to continue. Steele survived the death march, making it alive to Camp O'Donnell. The authors follow Steele through his captivity in the Philippines, shipment to Japan on one of the hell ships, and his eventual liberation at the end of the war.

Michael Norman, a former reporter for the *New York Times* and Marine Corps veteran of Vietnam, is a professor of journalism at New York University. Elizabeth M. Norman is professor of humanities at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. The book they have written is a blend of history and literary journalism. That is both the strength and weakness of their approach. As such, it is both compelling and troublesome. One cannot help but get to know and admire Ben Steele. This work is not a comprehensive history of the Bataan Death March and the American prisoner of war experience in the Philippines. It is the story of Ben Steele with short sections on the Pantingan River massacre, 12 April 1942, and the hell ships. The authors manage to tell Ben's story of the Bataan Death March with little outward emotion. The story is told matter-of-factly. For such an emotional topic it reads more like a newspaper account than a history of one of the worst war crimes perpetrated against American forces during World War II. The Normans portray the American defenders as poorly led and trained,