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Brian McAllister Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2007. Pp. 312. ISBN 978-0-674-02651-3.

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Brian Linn quickly and authoritatively evaluates the ever-shifting analyses of the meaning of American war-fighting to demonstrate the impact of military philosophy on policymaking. He argues that peacetime intellectual debate over war had a greater impact on the "army's way of war" than battle itself (234). To support his argument, Linn goes beyond discussion of operational planning and the legacies of past battles to discern "three distinct intellectual traditions that together make up the 'army way of war'" (5), traditions which he labels Guardians, Heroes, and Managers. He traces the evolution of these philosophical schools, pointing out aspects of each that have persisted in fascinating and significant ways through time. He stresses the poor understanding and ongoing misuse of the "echoes of battle" or "the dead hand of the past" in each era (235). He intends to break the pattern of such misconceptions. This is not a definitive history of army war-fighting but a survey of its salient characteristics and framework. Proceeding chronologically, Linn provides both an intellectual and an institutional history of the rise and transformation of military theory and professionalism during two centuries of often ill-conceived strategic plans.

The philosophy of "the Guardians" revolves around a technocratic and defensive stance adopted in the isolationist nineteenth century and still present in significant ways in army policy today. It espouses a belief in "the application of scientific principles by skilled technicians" for success. "Heroes," on the other hand, emphasize men over scientific method and have "defined warfare by personal intangibles such as military genius, experience, courage, morale, and discipline" (6). The Heroes, Linn argues, champion traditional martial virtues and battle itself and tend to disparage institutions in favor of a "muddy boots fundamentalism" (7). Finally, "Managers" contrast with the other two groups by their focus on the material and political contexts of warfare, accentuating the importance of mass mobilization, technological superiority, professionalization, and a concern with future warfare. "For Managers, war is fundamentally an organizational (as opposed to an engineering) problem" (8).

In less competent hands, such a schema might easily degenerate into bland generalizations and clever Thomas Friedman-style nomenclature. But Linn masterfully uses these categories to reveal Americans' conception of their own military history and strategic interests. Throughout, he tracks the influence and interrelations of "military intellectuals" and institutional power centers in the formulation of military policy.

In the Early Republic and Antebellum years, the major security concern of the United States was protecting the nation from European attacks on ports, cities, and shipping, no surprise after the British occupation and destruction during the American Revolution and the War of 1812, culminating in the burning of Washington. Security seemed to mean a series of fortifications along the coasts and the frontier coupled with a small army and a strong, outward looking Navy capable of projecting power abroad. At the heart of the effort was a search for the greatest security at the least cost. Linn argues that this approach reveals three of the "essential Guardian presuppositions": an emphasis on defense of the continental United States, a belief in the importance of marshalling "overwhelming strength," and a conviction that national defense and warfare were governed by scientific principles understood only by "a trained military elite" (12).

Linn appreciates the concern with achieving security without sacrificing liberties or opening the door to "military dictatorship" (12), but argues that construction of fortifications was often motivated by "alarmist future scenarios and statistics, many of them counterfactual" (18). He discusses essential military thinkers like Dennis Hart Mahan and Henry W. Halleck, and the influence of the experience and operations of the Mexican War, the Crimean War, and the late nineteenth century attempt to reform the defense system in line with the Guardian mentality. He traces the interplay between the Fortification Board, the Corps of En-

gineers, and the line army (infantry, cavalry, and artillery) and details changes and continuities in this coastal fortification policy suggested by the later Endicott Board but never competently implemented.

The Guardians' obsession with defense technologies blinded them to the shape of future conflicts and the potentials of new offensive technologies. They ignored or denied evidence that did not support their own understanding of proper warfighting. The Civil War clearly revealed the technological advances in heavy guns and the limitations of the coastal fortifications at places like Fort Sumter and New Orleans. The Guardians moved toward a new emphasis.

Linn argues that, contrary to some wishful analysis, for the army the time between the Civil War and the Spanish-American War was "an era of confusion and disagreement, of many wrong turns and mistaken assumptions" (41). He traces the rise of the concept of "modern warfare" to the transformations of battle and military logistics produced by industrialization and to the only partially learned lessons of the Civil War. Linn describes "the senior leadership's failure to provide a clear vision of a new way of war [that] was reflected at the lower levels as well" (48). Part of the problem was a lack of institutional development and focus. Linn writes approvingly of late nineteenth-century theorists like Emory Upton, Arthur L. Wagner, John Bigelow, and many lesser known military intellectuals in regard to technological advances in weaponry and their attendant effects on tactics and strategy.

In the third chapter, Linn discusses the rise of the Heroes out of the experience of frontier and imperial wars starting with the Spanish American War. He covers unconventional warfare and the use of the army in response to civil unrest and international terrorism, but notes that none of these actually prepared the army for its imperial uses overseas after 1898 and that the army's experiences in imperialistic overseas ventures "never coalesced into a formal doctrine based on a theoretical understanding of unconventional war.... Unconventional warfare has often been the army's task but seldom its calling" (89, 91).

Linn considers the transformations that Secretary of War Elihu Root (1899-1904) made in the army's preparation for war, marshalling of material resources, organizational restructuring, and adoption of the technology of modern war. He focuses here more directly on the interplay between Managers and Heroes, noting that, ironically, "many officers embraced the concepts of modern warfare while simultaneously rejecting modernization" (110); they sought not only to reform military policy but to bring social and political institutions in line with the army's interests as well. Linn also discusses the prominence of foreign examples in war plan making, which had become much more prominent at this time, and the ways that planning (such as in the case of war plans for Japan) transformed the understanding of the roles of and balance of power between the services.

The heart of the book treats the period since the 1920s. Post-World War I isolationism spurred a renewed emphasis on defensive fortifications and debates over the role of the rapidly evolving new technologies of war, including air power. Efforts to devise a coherent military policy after World War I were complicated by the intensifying struggle for position among Guardians, Heroes, and Managers; this resulted in "enormous divides between military intellectuals over strategy, technology, [and] the nature of war," as well as "radically different interpretations of the past and visions of the future" (149). Guardians, continuing to magnify future threats and the promise of new technologies, retained "the dominant influence on the nation's security policy" (128) throughout the interwar period. Heroes, nevertheless, helped shape preparations for offensive operations in future conflicts, though they struggled to fully grasp the meaning of new technologies like the tank.

In the post-1945 era, "service priorities" more than any consistent defense philosophy determined army policy. Competition between visions of the roles of airborne and armored troops, mislearned lessons from the Korean War, and the build-up of forces in Europe made for "a potent mixture of institutional self-interest and intellectual challenge that would captivate military thinkers for the next four decades" (164). Linn wisely underscores the influence of executive branch policymaking by Eisenhower and Maxwell D. Taylor (Army Chief of Staff, 1955-59): "In practice Taylor's reorganization was better described as disorganization; it created units more Potemkin than Pentomic" (179). He considers the significance and success of

Cold War army policy in responding to the astounding array of concerns wrapped up in conceiving of atomic warfare. Linn is at his best in this section—thorough, concise, and sharp.

Under the Managers during the early Cold War, the army unwisely deemphasized unconventional warfare, “pacification, nation building, or civic action” (182), though Linn finds new doctrines being explored by military intellectuals of the time. These prescient voices were, of course, wholly ignored as the United States embroiled itself in Indochina with disastrous results. Linn also details the evolving relationship between Guardian and Manager military intellectuals and the public regarding atomic war, characterizing the latter as a “largely negative” influence (190).

In the aftermath of Vietnam, the army did not embark on a self-study program as it had after previous conflicts. Instead, it promoted a “Vietnam myth” of political failure at home. A mixed, reactive reform program split along philosophical lines. The legacy of defeat in Vietnam challenged both Heroes and the Managers, while the Guardian school was revitalized by the Reagan-era Strategic Defense Initiative and the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine of maximum force and exit strategies. In the 1970s and 1980s, the army returned to a concern with conventional land conflict and achieving dominance in the competition with the Soviet Union. Linn focuses on General William E. DePuy, who ran the Training and Doctrine Command from 1973 to 1977. DePuy fused the Guardian and Managerial approaches in writing the “army’s keystone doctrinal manual *FM 100-5: Operations*” in 1976 (201), discussed in great detail here. Many changes ensued, including significant new weapons systems. Further reform followed in 1982 with the emergence of “Air-Land Battle” doctrine. Despite the army’s investment in new training centers like the School of Advanced Military Studies, Linn maintains it did not fully grasp the challenges of unconventional warfare. He critiques the army’s touting of the end of the “Vietnam Syndrome” after the 1991 Gulf War as cast in “the style of a biblical redemption narrative, replete with prophets and miracles” (220).

Linn’s book deploys an impressive array of sources, including the results of considerable archival work in core collections. The breadth of scope, dictated by the thematic approach, may leave unsatisfied those seeking more detail on any specific period, and its author does (appropriately) assume some familiarity with the basic flow of events. Nonetheless, by his fleshing out of the theoretical framework, Linn manages to make his book accessible to non-specialists as well as military historians.

However, despite Linn’s evident mastery of the material, the book feels a bit cursory at times, for example, in its handling of political issues that might have contextualized the ideas of particular military intellectuals. In addition, Linn covers most of the nineteenth century in a single chapter, jumps within a couple of pages from campaigns in the Philippines to the invasion of Mexico in 1914 to the post-World War I period, then skips World War II altogether in moving from the interwar period to the post-1945 “atomic war” army. One wonders if some attention to wartime adjustments in policy or plans for peacetime army roles might have strengthened the argument, particularly in the case of the Civil War and World War II. But there is much here to ponder and the theoretical framework is so innovative that one senses the book may launch a whole shelf of more detailed and specialized studies. And, too, this forcefully argued book is a delight to read—a model of the historical craft in its argumentation and use of evidence. It is sure to be welcomed as a significant interpretative text in military history.