

were selected from the navy's immense holdings. Four professionally drawn maps are also included. Official histories, even on a narrowly focused topic such as HADR, benefit from access to government resources, documentation, and staff. An academically-trained professional historian like Sherwood brings all the strands together in a very readable form. His coverage of the Canadian contribution to the Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts is balanced and insightful, although the inference that it went some way in making up for Canada's decision to sit out the 2003 invasion of Iraq is peculiarly American.

A Global Force for Good is recommended for readers interested in the US Navy, modern humanitarian operations with a maritime dimension, sea-basing, and capabilities such as rotary wing, amphibious, diving, medical, and salvage, as well as the implications of operating (and fighting) in radioactive environments. A PDF version of the book is available for free download from the Naval History and Heritage Command website if a trip to the Washington Navy Yard is not in the cards to pick up a hardcopy.

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Brendan Simms and Steven McGregor, *The Silver Waterfall: How America Won the War in the Pacific at Midway* (New York: Public Affairs, 2022). 290pp, index, tables of losses, notes. ISBN: 9781541701373.

I was told once, back in my early graduate days, that if you wanted to make money writing military history, especially American military history, write about either the Civil War or Patton. As crazy as that sounds those subjects seem to be incredibly popular. However, I think that is incomplete. It would be more accurate to say, write about the Civil War, Patton, or the Battle of Midway. The drama and pivotal impact of Midway captures the imagination of readers and almost guarantees sales. Some incredible heroes come out of the battle and, of course, it is the end of Japanese expansionism in World War Two and starts the road to Japan's defeat. Sadly, it also runs the risk of beating a dead horse dropping anything new into the historical dialogue. The subject of many books, articles, documentaries and two Hollywood blockbusters, Midway is a tale repeated often in many ways. Needless to say, it has also been a favorite in classrooms. It is with this in mind that Brendan Simms and Steven McGregor's book *The Silver Waterfall: How America Won the War in the Pacific at Midway* enters the historical discussion.

Simms and McGregor bring quite a bit of experience to the work. Simms has written on the Battle of Waterloo, on Hitler's gamble of declaring war on the US, and a biography of Adolph Hitler. This is the first book for McGregor,

who was an infantry officer with the 101st Airborne Division and was wounded in combat in the Sunni Triangle of Death. Over the course of 290 pages, broken up into seven chapters, their text looks at Midway from the perspective of the Dauntless dive bomber and its role. More than half the text fixates on the development of the dive bomber and the role played by three individuals (engineer Ed Heinemann, Admiral Chester Nimitz, and pilot Norman Jack Kleiss) in the run up to the battle. In this way the authors argue that the Dauntless was clearly the key to victory. The second half of the text provides a rather straightforward history of the battle and the aftermath. Backed up by a table of losses, the text presents a unique view of the battle of Midway to say the least.

While lively and interesting to read, the text is a very jaundiced interpretation of the battle of Midway that falls short in several ways. The emphasis on Nimitz, Kleiss and Heinemann is interesting but bizarre. As Commander in Chief, Pacific, Nimitz definitely plays a key role in the run up to the battle. And as the designer for the plane that the authors emphasize as being deeply critical to victory, of course Heinemann should be discussed. Kleiss, as one of the Dauntless pilots, had a unique perspective of the battle. However, the discussion of these three individuals is fundamentally flawed. The most important is the authors' emphasis that these three individuals were of German descent, which is meaningless. All three were American citizens by birth, they were all raised in the US, and none of them had ties to Germany. The authors' emphasis that German-Americans were fighting to defeat the Axis implies that there is special significance to their ethnic background. There is nothing genetic about being German that makes them better at being soldiers, sailors, or airmen. The inclusion of that into the text seriously undercuts its credibility.

The emphasis on the Dauntless dive bomber is also slightly disruptive to the text. Yes, the dive bomber played the critical role in the destruction of the four Japanese carriers. However, it did not do that in a vacuum. It was part of a larger team effort that saw thousands of people working in conjunction to produce a critical victory. The torpedo bombers and fighters were important, as were the crew of the *Nautilus* and the men who manned the carriers and supported the flight operations. Victory was not simply the product of a few pilots. Likewise, the argument that America won the war in the Pacific at Midway is somewhat simplistic. The advance of the Japanese was definitely curtailed, but it was certainly not a cut and dried fact. The American Navy had a healthy respect for the Imperial Japanese Navy and the raw power that it could still project. With two effective carriers left in the Pacific, the US fleet remained vastly outgunned, and it was still a long road to victory with no guarantees.

The text has some incredible human interest and that is a definite advantage. Kleiss as a pilot had a different perspective of the events and of course he isn't well talked about in other literature. Thus, a small window was opened into the lives of the people involved. However, the text suffers from several key failings that can't be overlooked. The battle of Midway is one that has been written about prolifically to say the least. Gordon W. Prange's work, Jonathon Parshall and Anthony Tully's monumental book *Shattered Sword*, and David Evans and Mark Peattie's *Kaigun* all stand out as exceptional and important works. In the light of such incredible resources, the constant use of Fuchida's writings, which have been discredited in Japan since the late 1950s, is perplexing. Fuchida's work was self-serving and fundamentally flawed, yet the authors here perpetuate the flaws. Simms and McGregor discuss codebreaking, but fail to reference probably the pivotal book on the subject, John Prados' *Combined Fleet Decoded*. The authors even equate Star Wars and the battle of Midway at one point. And the total absence of a bibliography hurts the value of the text as well.

The result of these and other issues is a text that suffers from serious credibility issues. What starts as a book with great promise becomes a simple rehash of a tale well told by others. If you are interested in Midway and don't know where to start, I would be hard pressed to recommend this text for you. It carries a lot of baggage that will muddy the water and thus be counterproductive. On the whole, I don't recommend this text for anyone.

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David A Smith. *A New Force at Sea: George Dewey and the Rise of the American Navy*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2023. 384 pp., illustrations, notes, biography, index. US \$44.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-68247-570-6.

An average American today might be hard pressed to identify George Dewey. Admiral Dewey was an outstanding naval commander. During the Civil War he took part in many major naval battles. He later commanded American forces at Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War. This victory was won with only the loss of a single crewman and no major vessels, while destroying nearly the entire Spanish Pacific fleet in the Philippines. Nationally acclaimed, he was promoted to become Admiral of the Navy, the highest-ranking naval officer in American history. The admiral's celebrity led to a very short-lived candidacy for President. More positively, he was a leader influencing the