

of the North Vietnamese cause that doomed the South. Nor did the South lose because its government, army, and people lacked courage or conviction. The outcome was in no way inevitable. It was the result of faulty strategy, treacherous diplomacy, and some bad luck. In any case, Joes' analysis is insightful and provocative because his question is not "how did the Americans lose" but "how did the South Vietnamese lose?"

This is not a book for those whose viewing point or views are fixed. It is a book either for those who want a readable one-volume introduction to the war or those who want a brief but intelligent politico-military analysis of the war rather than a straight history. The book is also for those to whom the author has dedicated it: "the Vietnamese people, who have paid so much."

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James, Patrick. *Crisis and War*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988.

International relations scholars have, over the years, produced a number of theories aimed at explaining the occurrence of interstate war. We all agree that none of the existing theories is completely satisfactory in that even the most complete and rigorous cannot explain and predict all instances of war between states. Most attempts at improving our understanding have been directed toward the development of additional theories rather than toward improving and extending those we already have. The result of this, perhaps not surprisingly, is that we have too many incomplete theories and not enough evaluation, comparison, and synthesis of these theories to permit judgments regarding their relative usefulness. This lack of cumulation is perhaps the most serious obstacle to improving our knowledge regarding the causes of wars. Without some effort at building on existing ideas we will see only the continuing proliferation of underdeveloped and undertested theoretical frameworks.

Patrick James, in *Crisis and War*, presents one effort at contributing to the cumulation of knowledge regarding the causes of war. Rather than proposing a new theory he has subjected propositions derived from three different theories to empirical tests. His purpose is not just to confirm (or disconfirm); rather, his work is aimed at identifying the strengths of each approach in the hopes that these might be integrated into a more complete explanation.

To provide focus to the exercise James selected one theory from each of Kenneth Waltz' three images, or levels of analysis. He examined the balance of power as a theory that focuses on the structure of the international system to account for war, the argument that war is a product of the externalization of domestic conflict as a theory that explains war as a product of features of nation-states, and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita's expected utility theory as a theory that

focuses on the nature of man as the cause of war. Although this reviewer found the classification of this latter theory somewhat questionable (in that the components of Bueno de Mesquita's theory are more characteristic of the international system than the nature of man) the selection of theories was quite sensible. Each focuses on somewhat different factors to account for war but there is some overlap; and, while there are some points at which the theories disagree, James shows how the theories might also complement each other. For example, consider Bueno de Mesquita's theory, which has determined necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for war. James suggests that domestic political factors might determine which of a set of cases meeting these necessary conditions actually result in war.

Much of the book is devoted to summarizing the theoretical arguments and to recasting them to specify hypotheses regarding the escalation of crises to war. Refocusing the arguments on crisis escalation is useful in at least two respects. For each theory, it incorporates the variables believed to be important determinants of war into a framework that views the occurrence of war as the outcome of a dynamic process. This allows us to see how the variables affect that process rather than viewing them as specifying the conditions under which war might, almost mystically happen. More importantly, considering how the various variables affect the process of crisis escalation provides a common ground for the integration of the theoretical frameworks. This, more than anything, constitutes James' contribution to the cumulation of knowledge on the causes of war.

The statistical analyses contained in this book utilize data characterizing 132 interstate crises in the 1948-1975 period to test the propositions derived from each theoretical framework. As in much of James' previous work, these data are drawn from the International Crisis Behavior project. The analyses are done competently and the techniques, while appropriate, are sufficiently simple to be understood by those with little training in statistical methods. The results of the tests are somewhat mixed in that some propositions are confirmed while others are not, but in general, they provide support for the theoretical arguments. The tests of the "externalization of internal conflict argument" were particularly interesting in that they are among the first results from a large sample, systematic quantitative test to support this widely accepted argument. This suggests that James' recasting of the research question is on the right track.

In the concluding chapter, which the reader found to be the most intriguing, analyses were directed at comparing the theories and at combining them. James found that, to a great extent, the incorrect "predictions" produced by each argument were in the direction of expecting war when none occurred. This suggests that the arguments individually specify necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for war; and, it raises the possibility that they might jointly determine sufficient conditions. While the findings from a single test cannot be considered conclusive, it would seem that the notion of integrating theories from across levels of analysis by focusing on how various factors combine to influence crisis decision-making provides a useful guide for future research.

The major criticism this reviewer has of the book is that it is too brief to

cover adequately the wide range of material considered. This was particularly troubling when the propositions following from each theoretical argument were presented. The propositions dealt with expectations regarding crisis outcomes and, since none of the theories were originally developed to address these questions directly, a great deal of effort should have been devoted to showing exactly how the propositions follow logically from the theoretical perspectives. Since such detailed expositions are missing, one is not entirely convinced that there truly is a theoretical basis for the hypothesis. The concluding chapter should also have been more fully developed. We are left with the prospect that the three theories could be integrated into a single explanation for crisis escalation, but this argument is not carried to the point where we have a firm grasp of what the resulting theory would look like. In general, however, the book is a commendable effort at evaluating and integrating previous research on the causes of war.

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Cohen, Eliot A., and John Gooch. *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War*. New York: The Free Press, 1990.

Eliot Cohen and John Gooch have written an intelligent book about military failure and what they call "pathways to misfortune." Finding that previous analysts of misfortunes in war have too often decided that military failure was due to single causes such as individual incompetence, the military mind, institutional problems, and cultural failure, the authors of this book turned to business and civilian disasters for a model on which to base their analysis of severe military reverses. Specifically, Cohen and Gooch borrow from the work of the organization analyst Charles Perrow, and his study of systems. Perrow thinks of systems as linear or complex, and their interconnections as tightly or loosely coupled. Systems accidents that occur in tightly linked, but complex systems, are analogous to military failures and the causes of these failures can be traced through the different levels of the system. These are the pathways to military misfortune, and Cohen and Gooch find that such pathways operate in five basic kinds of military failure, namely, failures to learn, to anticipate, and to adapt. When two kinds of failure combine, this is aggregate failure, and when all three come together, the resulting disaster is a compound failure.

Cohen and Gooch then look at Pearl Harbor as an example of their method, which comprises firstly asking precisely what the failure was; then analyzing the critical tasks that went unfulfilled or uncompleted; then thirdly attempting a "layered analysis" of behavior at different levels of the system; fourthly an analytical matrix is constructed, i.e., a chart presenting key problems at different levels; and finally from this chart are derived the pathways to misfortune.