

and reconnaissance and UAV capabilities.

Wired for War is also relevant to the important debate about how best to optimize and balance resources for ongoing wars and future threats. Complicating this debate is the participants' tendency to articulate their views as dramatically as possible so as to make the most impact. Too often, those advocating for radical restructuring to prepare for future counterinsurgency or stability operations will frown upon technology or the possibility of scenarios where high technology plays a decisive role. Those who resist the need for substantial reform tend to downplay both the requirement for and ability of U.S. forces to prepare for what General Rupert Smith in *The Utility of Force* calls "wars amongst the people." But for this so-called robotics revolution to be unfolding amid three so-called irregular conflicts—Iraq, Afghanistan, and the global campaign against al Qaeda—makes *Wired for War* that much more relevant. It is hard to tell what combination of battlefield necessity, industrial pressure, simple technological advancement, and a quintessentially American "high-tech" strategic culture is driving these military innovations. That they are occurring despite the decidedly unconventional nature of current conflicts speaks volumes.

Readers may question the scope of the vision in *Wired for War*—of a robotics revolution that redefines who and what will conduct war, and how—but in Singer's words: "We do know that major shifts are already going on in computing power and machine intelligence. And if the trends for the future do hold true even at the most minimal level, then things are going to get real interesting" (p. 81).

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Strategic Advantage: Challengers, Competitors, and Threats to America's Future

by Bruce Berkowitz

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Reviewed by

GREG GRANGER

Bruce Berkowitz offers an exposition of what the United States requires in its national security policymaking to retain "strategic advantage" over a diverse, fluid set of adversaries and potential adversaries. Based on the book's subtitle, one expects to read analyses of actors (*challengers* and *competitors*, though their difference is undefined in the text) and how they constitute threats to the advantaged U.S. geopolitical position. One indeed encounters threatening actors in its pages, but the book actually addresses a particular perspective that Berkowitz believes must drive U.S. national security policymaking in order to dispatch threats and ensure the country's future. This perspective is informed by six well-reasoned principles that he concludes are necessary underpinnings of a national security policy geared toward "staying on top" (p. 231).

Berkowitz's first principle is "to try to understand as many potential scenarios for world events as practical. Identify the most important variables . . . that underlie each scenario. Identify the mileposts that might signal how events are actually unfolding" (p. 231).

The second principle "is to recognize the special strengths that give the United States outsized influence—and then cultivate and exploit them." These strengths include the Nation's support for a "large professional military force," the global reach of American culture, and "the 'critical mass' that the United States enjoys in several economic, cultural, and technical sectors" (p. 231).

The third principle calls on policymakers to plan for the future "knowing that that situation five or even three years from now will . . . almost inevitably look very different from what we think it will be" (p. 232). He echoes Donald Rumsfeld's warning of "unknown unknowns" and, understandably perhaps, does not go very far in recommending specific ways to prepare for an uncertain near-term future.

Berkowitz's fourth principle is a reminder to "realistic planners" that they are working under "practical constraints" such as the availability of necessary resources (p. 232). One such constraining factor is the subject of his fifth principle: the need to "rejuvenate" government organizations that "tend to become ossified, bureaucratic, and averse to risk as they mature" (p. 232). The sixth principle emphasizes the significance of a strong and growing economy to national security because a growing economy makes "more options" available to policymakers (p. 232).

According to Berkowitz, the goal of U.S. national security policy is to produce a resilient and agile superpower that will excel in military, economic, and cultural capabilities. However, each category of capabilities—military, economic, and cultural—could be better supported with more diverse data. Regarding military matters, Berkowitz argues that the Jacksonian spirit of the American people should continue to provide the public support necessary for high military expenditures—a perspective problematic in its determinism and in its failure to account for diverse views on national

security matters among the population and for changes over time that may deviate from the "Jacksonian spirit."

In regard to economics, the current U.S. lead in gross domestic product is an inherent advantage for continuing to lead the world with an innovative and high-tech economy amid growing competition. Given the global financial upheavals soon after the book's publication, only time will tell if Berkowitz's confidence in the U.S. economy as a key element in sustaining the Nation's global leadership is warranted.

One issue that spans economic and cultural sources of national power is immigration policy, which Berkowitz finds significant. Without a successful immigration policy, the United States would have a much harder time maintaining a healthy economic foundation to support national security strategy. However, Berkowitz chooses to perceive the topic through a narrow lens, saying too little about art, language, and media as cultural sources of influence, and instead choosing to place culture in the context of Joseph Nye's concept of soft power.

While this approach is perfectly valid, as soft power relies in part on the appeal of American culture as a source of international influence, Berkowitz emphasizes the attractiveness of the American workplace to foreign workers as the successful application of soft power. His point is well taken, but he misses the opportunity to more fully analyze the cultural component of ensuring continued American global leadership. Indeed, in the discussions of each of the economic, military, and cultural components of U.S. national security, Berkowitz's evidence and conclusions are supportable, but could be much stronger with discussions of multiple indicators of hard and soft power.

The book is a quick read written by an author who clearly grasps his topic, although it is stylistically geared toward the nonspecialist in national security