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Introduction by Stacie E. Goddard, Wellesley College

Within security studies, scholars have increasingly called for work that bridges the gap between academics and policymakers and that moves beyond milquetoast nods to ‘policy relevance’ at the end of journal articles, and instead ask that theorists engage directly with their policy counterparts. In this context, Ron Robin’s biography of Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter provides a powerful account of how two scholars’ works on intelligence, uncertainty, and nuclear strategy influenced United States defense strategy, both during the Cold War and, through the lives of the Wohlstetters’s students, into the present day.

As Robert Jervis writes, while “those outside of the field of national security policy may be skeptical that there needs to be a book about the careers and legacies of Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter... they were indeed important.” In 1985, both Albert and Roberta (I, along with all of the contributors, will follow Robin’s practice in referring to the scholars by their first name, in order to differentiate them) received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the government’s highest honor given to civilians (281). When Albert died, he received a memorial ceremony in the U.S. Senate. Robin argues that the recognition of both Wohlstetters is not surprising. He traces how Roberta’s work influenced American thinking about surprise attacks, and the importance of considering the types of threats that were not only probable, but possible—what former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld might call attempts to think about the ‘unknown unknowns.’ He argues that Albert’s work on nuclear vulnerability and limited war were critical to the development of US nuclear doctrine. Perhaps most notably, Robin writes that the Wohlstetter’s philosophical commitment to the idea of an unchanging enemy influenced, not only their own Cold War thinking, but the perceptions of students such as Paul Wolfowitz, Zalmay Khalilzad, and Richard Perle, all of whom served in or advised President George W. Bush’s administration, and who, Robin argues brought the Wohlstetter’s concerns about unyielding threats into the post-Cold War and the ‘Global War on Terror.’

All of the contributors here agree that Robin’s biography is important, well-crafted and, beyond all, a much deserved account of the Cold War ‘power couple’ of strategic studies. But three questions stand out. First, while the contributors agree that the Wohlstetters were influential, they question the extent to which the couple directly influenced American strategy. There can be no doubt, for example, that Albert’s work on nuclear strategy gained attention within defense circles, and that his advocacy of counterforce and limited options resonated with certain coalitions. As Jervis notes, however, policymakers and defense elites rejected Albert’s conception of “controlled counterforce nuclear wars as simply impractical. It was not the counterforce aspect of the strategy that bothered them...but rather the notion of control (especially control from the White House), which they thought was the product of ivory-tower thinking unacquainted with the realities of warfare and unaware of how fragile communications would be once bombs started landing.” It may have appeared that Albert had more influence than he did because “the generals, for their part, never wanted to openly quarrel with Albert. Not only was he well connected in Washington, but he consistently lobbied for higher budgets and more weapons.” Likewise, Colleen Larkin notes that while some defense officials might have embraced Albert’s counterforce strategy, this was “more in response to concerns about massive retaliation, and not because of the theoretical debates that motivated Albert’s work.”

Second, the contributors also express some skepticism about the Wohlstetters’s influence on Wolfowitz, Khalilzad, and Perle. Yes it is true that these policymakers’ worldviews echo the Wohlstetters’s vision of a threatening and uncertain world, one where the United States must be ready and willing to retaliate if necessary. But, as Jervis simply notes, “Many people who were unexposed to the Wohlstetters held these beliefs,” and it unclear if we can trace policies like regime change in Iraq to the Wohlstetter’s influence.

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None of this is to say that the contributors believe that Robin is wrong about the Wohlstetters's influence. To the contrary, they note places where Robin may have underestimated the couple's effects on American security strategy. As Lynn Eden writes, it was Albert who, in the late 1950s, wrote "that U.S. retaliatory, or 'second-strike,' forces—at that time the bomber force—had to be 'survivable,' or else the bombers would be an attractive target for the Soviet Union to strike in a pre-emptive attack on the United States, thus setting off catastrophic nuclear war. Wohlstetter's idea, in principle, has endured and is widely accepted." Moreover, in her review, Larkin traces Albert's thinking on precision nuclear weaponry into current debates about the practical and moral need for limited options in U.S. nuclear strategy.

Finally, the reviewers are united in their praise for the book's treatment of Roberta as not only an equal, but perhaps even the intellectual driver of the Wohlstetters's ideas about defense policy. Academics have long appreciated Roberta's contribution to studies of intelligence, and Jervis notes that all students of surprise attacks "take her landmark study as our starting point." But prior studies of the Wohlstetters treat Roberta, as Eden writes (quoting Robin, 3), "as Albert's wife, a den mother," "dishing out delectable soufflés," (which Robin's photographs do portray).¹ In contrast, Robin is an unabashed (if not uncritical) admirer of Roberta's intellectual capabilities. He notes that Roberta had a "voracious intellectual curiosity" (29), one that ranged, as Jervis writes, across the humanities and social sciences. Perhaps most notably, he attributes Albert's concerns about strategic vulnerability to Roberta's thinking; as Larkin writes, "he drew much inspiration for his strategic thinking from her monograph, *Pearl Harbor: A Warning*, and its implication that major nuclear deployments could best ward off surprise attacks (68).² This raises questions, Larkin notes, about the "hidden women" of international relations theory, the extent to which prominent international relations theorists may have been influenced by female interlocutors who, unlike Roberta, may have left no written record of their own.

Overall, Robin has provided an account of the Wohlstetters's thought and influence as having been deeply embedded in relationships. The Wohlstetters's strategic thought cannot be separated from their marriage. Nor can their work be seen as distinct from their (often Albert's) contentious relationships, be it his feuds with fellow nuclear strategy theorist Bernard Brodie, or, as Eden recounts, Albert's debate "with M.I.T. physicist George Rathjens on missile defense in 1969 (184);³ and, in the early 1980s, the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on [nuclear] war and peace, with which Albert disagreed. Robin's work reminds us not only of the influence of the Wohlstetters, but the ways in which academic and personal relationships are critical in shaping individual contributions to both scholarship and policy.

Participants:

Ron Robin is the President of the University of Haifa in Israel. Previously he held the position of Senior Vice Provost at New York University, where he was also Professor of Media Culture and Communication. His

¹ Robin in turn is quoting Fred Kaplan's enduringly important *The Wizards of Armageddon* (Simon & Schuster, 1983), 122. Kaplan's quote re soufflés continues "and not missing a beat of the conversation."

² Roberta Wohlstetter *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).

³ On the broader context, see esp. Rebecca Slayton's excellent *Arguments that Count: Physics Computing, and Missile Defense, 1949-2012* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013).

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books include *Scandals and Scoundrels: Seven Cases that Shook the Academy* (University of California Press, 2004) and *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex* (Princeton University Press, 2001). Robin is a graduate of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem (History and Romance Languages) and he holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of California at Berkeley.

Stacie E. Goddard is the Jane Bishop '51 Associate Professor of Political Science, Wellesley College. Her book, *Indivisible Territory and the Politics of Legitimacy: Jerusalem and Northern Ireland*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2010. Her articles have appeared in outlets such as *International Organization*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Theory*, *Security Studies*, as well as in the *New York Times*. Her second book, *When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order*, is forthcoming with Cornell University Press.

Lynn Eden is senior research scholar emeritus at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation. In addition to articles and book chapters, she is the author of *Whole World on Fire: Organizations, Knowledge, and Nuclear Weapons Devastation* (Cornell University Press, 2004), which won the 2004 American Sociological Association's Robert K. Merton Professional Award in Science, Knowledge and Technology. She was one of several editors of *The Oxford Companion to American Military History* (Oxford University Press, 2000), which won the Society of Military History's Distinguished Reference Book Award, 2001. A community study Eden wrote as an undergraduate, *Crisis in Watertown, The Polarization of an American Community* (University of Michigan Press, 1972), was a finalist for a National Book Award in Contemporary Affairs, 1973.

Robert Jervis is Adlai E. Stevenson Professor of International Politics at Columbia University. His most recent book is *How Statesmen Think* (Princeton University Press, 2017). He was President of the American Political Science Association in 2000-2001 and has received career achievement awards from the International Society of Political Psychology and ISA's Security Studies Section. In 2006 he received the National Academy of Science's tri-annual award for behavioral sciences contributions to avoiding nuclear war.

Colleen Larkin is a Ph.D. student at Columbia University.

Review by Lynn Eden, Stanford University

Ron Robin's Warm World

Ron Robin's *The Cold World They Made: The Strategic Legacy of Roberta and Albert Wohlstetter* (Harvard University Press, 2016) is a collective biography of an early post-World War II think tank 'power couple,' Roberta and Albert Wohlstetter, at the RAND Corporation, and three of their students and younger friends who later became important U.S. government officials: Paul Wolfowitz, Zalmay Khalilzad, and Richard Perle.

Albert Wohlstetter is the most prominent; he was an influential nuclear strategist at RAND, and later a professor at the University of Chicago—despite not having a Ph.D. Roberta Wohlstetter is best known for her classic 1962 book on intelligence failures at Pearl Harbor.¹ Wolfowitz and Khalilzad were Ph.D. students of Wohlstetter's at Chicago. Wolfowitz served in the Departments of State and Defense, reaching ambassadorial rank in State and serving as deputy secretary of defense during George W. Bush's first term. *He was a key architect of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq.* Khalilzad had a long career in the State Department and also served under George W. Bush as U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the United Nations.

Perle was not a student of Wohlstetter's at Chicago, but knew the couple and their daughter from when he was in eleventh grade. Perle, who was very politically effective, had the moniker "Prince of Darkness" during and after the period he spent working as a staff member for the hawkish Democratic Senator from Washington, Scoop Jackson (also known as the 'senator from Boeing'). When Jimmy Carter was president, Perle and Wolfowitz (also on Jackson's staff then), blocked the formal Senate ratification of the arms control treaty SALT II. During almost all of Ronald Reagan's presidency, Perle was Assistant Secretary of Defense for international security policy (257-258).

Cold World is unusually well written, engaging, and stylish. As well as a collective biography, Robin also provides an intellectual and social history, and offers a strong critique of its protagonists. *The Cold World They Made* conveys a vivid sense of time, place, culture, and social interaction, especially from the Cold War through the administration of George W. Bush. In particular, Robin sets us in the heyday of 'mid-century moderne,' including the open architecture of, and gorgeous Eames chairs in, the Wohlstetters's Los Angeles home. It is here that we see, with the help of a few very well chosen photographs, Albert Wohlstetter's glamour and importance in the eyes of his colleagues and "acolytes" (15)—as well as in his own.

A cultural historian of America's making and displaying of power, Robin is very well suited to write *Cold World*. In his earlier *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex*, Robin focuses on post-World War II developments in U.S. behavioral science, and includes a chapter on the economist and strategist Thomas Schelling and RAND.² Among other books, Robin has also

¹ Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).

² Ron Robin, *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

written on architecture and American culture, including *Enclaves of America: The Rhetoric of American Political Architecture Abroad, 1900-1965*.³

The Cold World They Made emphasizes the intellectual milieus of the principals. These include factions of the Trotskyist left (relevant to the Wohlstetters when they were a young couple, though they later completely rejected such ideas); Cheryl Bernard, Zalmay Khalilzad's wife; the strategists and social scientists at RAND—for example, Nathan Leites's ideas on Albert; the effects of Roberta Wohlstetter's ideas on those of her husband; and, of course the effect of Albert Wohlstetter's ideas on his students at Chicago and also on Perle.

The ideas of the Wohlstetters and their circle were also formed in contentious relationships: Albert's with RAND strategist Bernard Brodie; Albert's trapping of M.I.T. physicist George Rathjens on missile defense in 1969 (184);⁴ and, in the early 1980s, the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on [nuclear] war and peace, with which Albert disagreed. Also contentious was Noam Chomsky's debate with Richard Perle in 1988. And finally, Robin takes down the idea that the philosopher Leo Strauss had any influence on Wolfowitz or others in the Wohlstetter circle (219-220).

Perhaps most striking is *Cold World's* focus on Roberta Wohlstetter's background, ideas, and impact. Contra Fred Kaplan's not untypical characterization of her role as Albert's wife, "Roberta the den mother," or "Roberta dishing out delectable soufflés," (which Robin's photographs do portray)⁵, Robin places Roberta (née Morgan) in context. She came from a prominent academic family, the daughter of a Harvard law professor and the sister of the historian of early America, Edmund S. Morgan.⁶

It is thus not surprising that Roberta had a "voracious intellectual curiosity" (29). She wrote a well-argued master's thesis challenging the arguments of leading criminologists. After a stint at law school (Albert spent time in law school as well), she began a doctoral dissertation at Radcliffe on "representations of Hamlet in Western art and literature" (33). Because of a conflict with one of her advisors, she did not finish her Ph.D. degree. She did, however, publish articles on Hamlet in two prestigious journals. Hamlet plays importantly in *The Cold World They Made* in two ways. First, the Wohlstetters used Hamlet's dithering and distress as a deeply negative (if well-spoken) model of how not to act. Indeed, Hamlet's failure to act often encapsulated for the Wohlstetters and their circle the core deficiency of U.S. strategy and foreign policy. Second, Robin describes the Wohlstetters's sensibilities by skillfully weaving their use and understanding of *Hamlet* throughout the book.

³ Ron Robin, *Enclaves of America: The Rhetoric of American Political Architecture Abroad, 1900-1965* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁴ On the broader context, see esp. Rebecca Slayton's excellent *Arguments that Count: Physics Computing, and Missile Defense, 1949-2012* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013).

⁵ *The Cold World They Made*, 3, quoting Kaplan's enduringly important *The Wizards of Armageddon* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 122. Kaplan's quote re soufflés continues "and not missing a beat of the conversation."

⁶ See, for example, Morgan's superb *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988).

Of course, Roberta Wohlstetter is best known for her RAND monograph on the failures of U.S. intelligence at Pearl Harbor, later published, after a maddening government security review, as *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*, which won the important Bancroft Prize in history in 1963. Robin's take on this work is not entirely clear. He acknowledges it is a classic. He shows how intelligent disagreement with its argument launched at least one academic career. But, Robin seems snide and likely incorrect when he says that *Pearl Harbor*, "originally hailed as a foundational text, ... slowly receded into the underworld of footnotes and then passed into silence" (69) twenty years later. To offer just one contrary argument, Albert Wohlstetter explained that, "[h]is fixation on a Soviet surprise attack ... was due to Roberta's towering ... influence on his intellectual itinerary. Surprise at Pearl Harbor, Albert explained 'was implicit in the way I dealt with [the Soviet threat]'” (171).

Albert Wohlstetter is best known for arguing in the late 1950s that U.S. retaliatory, or 'second-strike,' forces—at that time the bomber force—had to be 'survivable,' or else the bombers would be an attractive target for the Soviet Union to strike in a pre-emptive attack on the United States, thus setting off catastrophic nuclear war. Wohlstetter's idea, in principle, has endured and is widely accepted. (For some strategists, however, survivability is not more important, and may be less important, than its opposite: the U.S. ability to quickly destroy enemy 'time urgent targets,' such as missiles. Attacking such enemy targets would be done most effectively by launching U.S. forces *before* they would be 'at risk' of destruction.)

Robin is ambivalent about the Wohlstetters, particularly Albert. He writes of them, as he says, with a "comfortable familiarity of a first-name basis," and says he is "smitten by this erudite couple," but also he feels "horror at their nuclear brinksmanship" (22). Robin writes of "Albert's unbounded self-promotion and high sense of self-regard" (21). With more of this, and there is more, one begins to wonder why his wife stayed with him.

By the middle of the book, Robin writes: "Wohlstetter acolytes emulated Albert in form and substance. Albert had modeled for them a unique style of subduing rivals by all means possible, formulating this strategy for cowing the opposition.... When arguments of substance faltered, the paterfamilias and, subsequently, his godchildren employed blasts of innuendo and defamation.... Albert's tendency to rage ... was a centerpiece of his legacy. Never one to merely contest facts, Albert ostracized opponents and commandeered debates through intimidation, while avoiding compromise and consensus in any form of fashion.... He did not hesitate to scorch earth and destroy critics by excommunication" (182).

One can see how Albert Wohlstetter's certitude and disdain could build similar qualities in his protégés. It is beyond the scope of this review to go into detail, but the reader of *The Cold World They Made* will quickly see a transfer of certitude about the rightness of one's own understanding, including, in Wolfowitz's case, deep confidence in one's own understanding of history and the course that history will take.

The Cold World They Made does have one problem that I am not sure the author could have avoided, and that he has not solved. How do you write a modern history about people whom you mostly dislike? One solution is to generally leave out people and personalities and, instead, to write about ideas and arguments, what led to them, whether historically and/or logically, and how the ideas have played out. This is not uncommon and often is a highly successful approach. But that would lose much of the context and personalities that make this book compelling. Or, one could write only about people whom one likes. But that would seem terribly limiting and certainly would have precluded Robin from writing this deeply engaging book.

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The solution is to write with a certain kind of empathy. Empathy need not be ‘warm.’ An author does not necessarily need to identify with, or feel warmly toward, or even like the person or people he or she is writing about. That requirement would eliminate a large number of important books, including this one. I think the solution is a ‘colder’ more distant empathy: delineating the world as understood and possibly felt by the person or persons one is writing about, and explaining or showing why. Robin comes close at times, but incisive critique and some dislike of his characters often swamps incipient empathy. An exemplar of what I am calling cold empathy is Charles Thorpe’s critical but not uncompassionate *Oppenheimer: The Tragic Intellect*.⁷

However, as Joe E. Brown’s character Osgood Fielding III said in the last line of the film *Some Like it Hot*: “Well, nobody’s perfect.” Nor is any book, including this excellent, original, provocative, and evocative one.

⁷ Charles Thorpe, *Oppenheimer: The Tragic Intellect* (University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Review by Robert Jervis, Columbia University

Those outside of the field of national security policy may be skeptical that there needs to be a book about the careers and legacies of Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter, names that are not only unfamiliar to the general public, but may not be known to most students of international politics. But they were indeed important. Albert's death was marked by a memorial ceremony at the U.S. Senate, attended by numerous dignitaries including President Bill Clinton (181). Ron Robin has written a fascinating if critical study of them, filled with insight and details that even people like myself who thought we knew the full story will find intriguing. At the start, I should note that I know almost all the characters Robin discusses: I audited a course with Albert (following Robin's practice, I will use the Wohlstetters's first names to differentiate them) at Berkeley in 1965 and interacted with him while I was at UCLA in the late 1970s; I met Roberta on several occasions (I also corresponded with her, something I had forgotten until Robin kindly sent me a letter he found in her archives); I was a colleague of Bernard Brodie, Albert's fierce rival; and I know Paul Wolfowitz a bit, and was a colleague and remain a friend of Zalmay Khalilzad, two of Albert's most important students, each of whom receive chapter-length treatment. Taking advantage of the fact that there are three other reviewers in this Roundtable, I will concentrate on the Wohlstetters's contributions to nuclear strategy, which is the area I know best.

As Robin notes, Albert has received much more attention than Roberta, and one of the contributions of his study is to right the balance. Roberta's best known work is *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*,¹ which argued that the root cause of the intelligence failure was not the stupidity of the individuals involved or the chaotic nature of the existing intelligence organizations, but the inherent difficulty of separating signals from noise ('connecting the dots,' to use the phrase that became popular after the attacks of September 11, 2001). Robin argues that this work strongly influenced not only Albert's general view of the world and the need to build policies that were robust against unlikely but possible adversary actions, but that it also directly contributed to his most famous work, which was the "basing study" he led for the Air Force in the mid-1950s. The RAND Corporation, in which both Wohlstetters were employed (a fascinating side note is that it was Roberta who was hired first, and then Albert was taken on as a consultant as a favor to her) was asked by the Air Force to examine the advantages and disadvantages of various ways of using overseas bases for American bombers and tankers in the era before the Air Force had a true intercontinental range.

The topic seemed merely technical, but Albert and his colleagues showed that actually the central question was one of vulnerability, and the danger that without focusing on this factor the bombers could be wiped out. This led to the conceptual distinction between first- and second-strike capability, which defense analysts take for granted today, but was absent before. (For those not schooled in nuclear strategy, a first-strike capability means not the ability to strike first, but the ability to do so in a way that destroys so much of the other side's forces that it cannot effectively retaliate. Conversely, the ability to absorb a strike by the other side and retain the capability for massively destructive retaliation is a second-strike capability.) Even a very large force would not provide a deterrent--and indeed would invite attack--if it were highly vulnerable, as Wohlstetter argued the American forces were in the 1950s. Albert became famous in policy circles when he presented an unclassified version of the argument in the pages of *Foreign Affairs*, the most prestigious and widely-read journal at the time. He argued that the balance of terror then was not sturdy, as many people including

¹ Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had believed, but actually was delicate.² I think Robin underestimates the importance of this conceptual development. To see this, all one has to do is to read the National Security Council debates in the 1950s. The members were deeply disturbed about what they saw as growing Soviet nuclear capability, but to our minds their discussion is remarkably confused because they failed to distinguish between the fear that the Soviets would develop first-strike capability and the fear that it would be the American first-strike capability that was endangered--i.e., that the USSR would reduce its vulnerabilities and develop its own second-strike capabilities.

As Robin notes, despite the acclaim, the U.S. government paid less attention to Albert's views than he thought was warranted. Ironically, given Roberta's interest in intelligence, and the fact that Albert's work at RAND was highly classified, the reason largely was that neither Wohlstetter was privy to the most highly classified information about the Soviet posture. This indicated that American leaders were quite confident that another Pearl Harbor was impossible; the Soviets were simply not geared up for a surprise attack, and the measures needed to enable them to launch one could be readily detected. A second reason for the reduced concern was that President Dwight Eisenhower, consistent with the Wohlstetters's admonition to act rather than be paralyzed by indecision, probably would have launched a preemptive strike if he thought the Soviets were preparing to launch their bombers.

Although Robin explores Albert's rivalry with Brodie, further insight into the former's thinking would have been possible by noting his differences with Thomas Schelling, who became the dominant figure in strategic studies, and whose writings, unlike Albert's, came to have great influence on scholarship in the social sciences, particularly the study of international politics. Whereas Albert and Roberta seized on the danger of American vulnerability, Schelling saw that Soviet vulnerability could be a danger to world peace as well because it could tempt the U.S. into striking first. (Neither the Wohlstetters nor Schelling knew the extent to which the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations considered launching such an attack.) Even more dangerous, Schelling realized, was a situation in which both sides were vulnerable, which would lead to the reciprocal fear of surprise attack, which could lead to a war that neither side wanted.³ Although Albert never thought much of this argument, it came to underpin the American shift from seeking disarmament (i.e., lower levels of arms) to arms control (i.e., arrangements that increased mutual invulnerability, thereby avoiding crisis instability).

Robin argues that it was Roberta's study of Pearl Harbor that led him to see the importance of vulnerability and the fact that the U.S., despite improved intelligence capabilities since 1941, could not count on adequate warning of a Soviet first strike. This is intriguing and possibly correct, but not only is direct evidence about how Albert arrived at his ideas missing, but the chronology seems to undermine the claim. While Roberta's study was finished in 1958, the basing study was completed four years earlier. It is unclear when Roberta began the study, and it is always possible that her preliminary work set Albert on the path he was to follow, but on the evidence Robin presents this proposition is difficult to sustain.

But Robin is certainly right that Albert and Roberta worked closely together, and she is a very interesting figure in her own right. Here I think Robin underestimates her influence. Even if it did not shape Albert's

² Albert Wohlstetter, "The Delicate Balance of Terror," *Foreign Affairs* 37 (January 1959): 211-234.

³ Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), ch. 9.

thinking on the importance of second-strike capability, it had great influence on the study of surprise attacks. Robin is right that some of the most important studies, including that by my colleague Richard Betts,⁴ had only few footnotes to her work, but all of us who have worked on this question take her landmark study as our starting point. I know that even though I disagree with parts of it, it has had a great influence on my own studies of perception.

More interesting is Robin's discussion of Roberta's earlier career. He shows her to have had a voracious mind, ranging broadly across the humanities and social sciences. Most intriguingly, in pursuit of her degrees in English literature, she concentrated on Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and how it was interpreted in various time periods and cultures. The importance of this for her and Albert, Robin suggests, is that they and their students constantly returned to the figure of Hamlet as a warning against the paralysis that intellectuals often feel. Action, often preventive action, was needed, and Robin shows that the Wohlstetters, and their students, like Wolfowitz for example, did often urge action rather than waiting. Whether this shows the influence of Roberta's early studies or rather is a reflection of a fairly widely-shared orientation is impossible to know, however.

There is an irony here that Robin could have brought out. He shows that both Albert and Roberta drew from her study of Pearl Harbor the lesson that it is a mistake to focus only on what seems most probable and to ignore what else is possible. This, he argues, leads to worrying about all sorts of dangers that might materialize and can undercut a moderate foreign policy. But a belief that things are uncertain can also bring out the Hamlet in leaders. When they are looking for reasons to postpone making a decision (as they often are), dwelling on multiple possibilities can inhibit action.

The question of how to deal with unlikely possibilities is an important and intriguing one, as Robin notes. On the one hand, they cannot be dismissed when their consequences would be great if they do eventuate. On the other hand, in international politics almost anything is possible. This is more than an intellectual puzzle; governments have to decide how much they should prepare for low-probability events, especially if such preparations are costly or dangerous, and this issue was one that sharply separated Albert from Brodie. The later was scathing in his criticism of Albert and others who worried about a "bolt from the blue" attack or a limited nuclear war. "All sorts of notions and propositions are churned out, and often presented for consideration with the prefatory words: 'It is conceivable that....' Such words establish their own truth, for the fact that someone has conceived of whatever proposition follows is enough to establish that it is conceivable. Whether it is worth a second thought, however, in another matter."⁵

Robin stresses Albert's abiding interest in technology, especially its influence on warfare. He was a strong defender of missile defense, making claims that critics thought were unsupportable, and in retrospect, seem wildly exaggerated. More presciently, he saw the possibilities of precision guidance long before any of his peers. As Wolfowitz said, "it was a considerable matter of personal satisfaction to watch those missiles turn right-angle corners" in the Gulf War in 1991, doing what Albert envisioned fifteen years before (190). Somewhat surprisingly, despite their wide-ranging interests, neither Albert nor Roberta sought to explore the

⁴ Richard Betts, *Surprise Attack* (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution, 1982).

⁵ Bernard Brodie, "The Development of Nuclear Strategy," *International Security* 2 (Spring 1978), 83.

possible changes that new technologies would bring to the broader society and to international politics, in contrast to Zbigniew Brzezinski, who shared some of the Wohlstetters's general political views.⁶ For Albert, the new technologies were important in combating the danger the U.S. faced from a world in which not only the United States but also the USSR followed Albert's advice and developed a secure second-strike capability.

Here Robin's book misses one of the central debates in which Albert played a large role. The strategic problem for the U.S. was that while a secure retaliatory force could ensure the safety of the American homeland, it could not automatically extend the nuclear umbrella over allies. Everyone's fear was that the Soviets would use their enormous advantage in manpower and tanks to launch a conventional attack in West Europe, which the U.S. and its NATO allies could not thwart (there was a debate about whether the conventional balance really did favor the Soviets, but I leave that aside here). With no more than a secure retaliatory force, the U.S. would be faced with the choice of losing West Europe or triggering armageddon. Albert was not alone in thinking that this would undermine the credibility of the American threat, and eventually lead to Soviet intimidation, if not domination, of West Europe. For him and many others, the only option was then to develop meaningful nuclear superiority, which would mean the ability to conduct and prevail in a controlled counterforce nuclear war. The arcana of this debate need not concern us here,⁷ but two points are relevant. First, this debate and the related issues preoccupied Albert from the mid-1960s until the end of the Cold War, and so deserves more attention than it receives here. Second, and more interestingly, Albert's belief that a nuclear war could be fought in a limited and controlled manner may reflect some of his broader views about the ability of human beings to control complex situations filled with great noise and ambiguity. This might clash with some of the lessons that one could learn from Roberta's study of Pearl Harbor.

It is also worth noting that while in academic circles the debate was won by Bernard Brodie and his followers, who insisted that once both sides had mutual second-strike capability (the situation of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD)), nuclear superiority was meaningless because controlled counterforce wars were impossible, in the White House and higher levels of the Defense Department, Wohlstetter won. Every President, starting with John Kennedy, sought multiple nuclear options, and very skilled analysts and planners sought to provide them. But this approach was never embraced by the uniformed military. While they did not think that MAD ensured the survival of the U.S. and its allies, they scorned controlled counterforce nuclear wars as simply impractical. It was not the counterforce aspect of the strategy that bothered them, as it did Brodie and his colleagues, but rather the notion of control (especially control from the White House), which they thought was the product of ivory-tower thinking unacquainted with the realities of warfare and unaware of how fragile communications would be once bombs started landing. For them, if there were to be a nuclear war, the U.S. would have to strike first, even if this could not disarm the Soviet Union. The irony here is that the Wohlstetters and their followers prided themselves on being practical people who realized that although abstract thinking had an important place, it had to yield to the hard realities of the world. The generals, for their part, never wanted to openly quarrel with Albert. Not only was he well connected in Washington, but

⁶ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technechronic Era* (New York: Viking, 1970).

⁷ I have explored it in *The Illogic of American Nuclear Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984) and *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989). One of the key chapters of the latter was designed as a rebuttal to what I heard were Albert's objections to the view I espoused in the former and that were widely held among the critics of counterforce.

he consistently lobbied for higher budgets and more weapons. They never accepted his idea of how a nuclear war could be fought, however.

Robin is on target in another of his criticisms. Although the Wohlstetters claimed to situate their military analysis in the broader political framework, and Albert in particular stressed that military planning was often flawed by assuming that the adversary would adopt the strategy that the US preferred, in fact their analysis of the Soviet Union was flawed. While leaning on the brilliant, but strange, views of their psychoanalytically-oriented RAND colleague Nathan Leites, they eventually settled on the simpler picture of the Soviet Union as being irredeemably aggressive. Just as in her analysis of why the U.S. was taken by surprise at Pearl Harbor, Roberta ignored the American failure to understand how U.S. policy had put Japan in a box in which the only choices were to surrender its dream of dominating East Asia, or to gamble and to strike at the U.S. and Great Britain, so too the Wohlstetters never seriously considered the possibility that the Soviets felt embattled and encircled. (To be fair, Roberta well understood that the American leaders expected Japan to strike in early December; her task was to explain why they were surprised when the target turned out to be Pearl Harbor.)

The Wohlstetters were more perceptive in joining their RAND colleagues Harry Rowen and Charles Wolfe in arguing that while the Soviet Union was strong militarily, it was vulnerable economically and if the U.S. increased its military spending, it would force the Soviet Union to match, and that this would bring on its collapse. In the event, Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev chose to make enormous concessions to the U.S. and to try to restructure Soviet society because he realized that keeping pace was simply impossible. While many of us ridiculed this view at the time, and in retrospect I think it is likely that if Gorbachev had followed a different path he could have preserved the Soviet system, ossified as it was, the Wohlstetters deserve more credit here than the book gives them.

A minor but interesting aside (144-147) is that contrary to what I would have expected, the Wohlstetters opposed American involvement in Indochina, albeit after the fact (144). Albert smartly rebutted the claim that given that North Vietnam and China were much closer to the fighting than was the U.S., the former were certain to prevail, but he also argued that not all the revolutions were inimical to American interests. Implicitly, this seemed to reject the domino theory on which not only this adventure, but much of American foreign policy rested, but Robin does not explore the roots of the Wohlstetters's position.

Albert's students, Wolfowitz and Zalmay Khalilzad, and his best-known protégé, Richard Perle, are perhaps best known for their support of the 2003 Iraq War. They argued that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was particularly dangerous because he was a dictator and since countries that oppress their own people are prone to expand abroad. They also believed that once Saddam was removed at least a limited form of democracy would emerge. I had always thought that this was a strong break with Albert's thinking, but Robin shows that in his commentary on post-Cold War crises like Bosnia (1998-1999) and the 1990-1991 Gulf War, Albert had taken a similar position. Indeed, Robin explains that far from being in conflict with what Albert had believed earlier, this argument is consistent with his views about the free market and the distortions in society imposed by central decision-making.

I think, however, Robin may make too much of the links between the master and his protégés here. Many people who were unexposed to the Wohlstetters held these beliefs, and Wolfowitz may have been influenced by his role in convincing President Ronald Reagan that the U.S. should tell the Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos that he had to surrender power rather than repress the protesters. I think Robin also exaggerates the influence of Albert's students on the decision to overthrow Saddam. While they certainly urged this course of

action, not even Wolfowitz, who held a high position in the Department of Defense, was a central decision maker. Policy was set by President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. The latter three certainly knew of the Wohlstetters, but it would be hard to claim them as followers of theirs, and Robin does not make this claim. We can argue that Albert's students were wrong, and while they played a much larger role than most of us, history would have unfolded in pretty much the same way had they been removed from the scene.

Robin is correct to note another continuity, one I had not been aware of. One reason that Bush and his colleagues were taken by surprise by the attacks of 9/11 was that they doubted the power of terrorists who were not supported by a powerful state. After the attacks, it is well known that many in the administration, especially Wolfowitz and some of his subordinates who had also studied with Albert, kept insisting that Saddam did play a role in the attacks. What is interesting is that Roberta, who had studied terrorism long before it became fashionable, also argued that terrorists were a real danger only when they were tied to states (288). We now know that Saddam was not a supporter of al-Qaeda; the intelligence community and most government experts on terrorism understood this at the time and also realized that al-Qaeda was a major menace anyway. It seems to me that those who clung to the opposite position did so less for reasons of evidence than for the assumptions behind their general view of the world. This was a deductive way of approaching things that the Wohlstetters associated with their critics, but before those of us who found this judgment implausible at the time are too quick to feel superior, it should be noted that Roberta and others were right that the Soviet Union and East Germany played a much greater role in supporting Cold-War terrorism than most of us believed.

I think Robin underestimates the intellectual independence of those he calls Albert's acolytes, a term that carries undue negative connotations. Robin does highlight one important break with the Wohlstetters in that the latter saw history as always repeating itself, and, in the wake of the Cold War, the former saw the possibility of transforming world politics through the spread of democracy and American hegemony. Overall, however, he does less than full justice to their own thinking. In my numerous interactions with Khalilzad, he did not hesitate to criticize Albert, and from co-teaching a national security policy course with him, I could not tell with whom he had studied.

One of the reasons why Albert was such a polarizing figure was his style. As Robin says, "One of Albert's less endearing qualities was his impulse to invective. His response to criticism was vengeance" (111); "Albert's tendency to rage... was a centerpiece of his legacy. Never one to contest facts, Albert ostracized opponents and commandeered debates through intimidation" (182). Imperious is the word that comes to my mind. When a senior faculty member at Berkeley who knew that I was auditing Albert's course asked me how it was going, I hesitated before criticizing, but then finally stammered out, "He seems to be a bit condescending," to which the professor, himself a rather forbidding figure, responded, "He is condescending." The point is more than stylistic, as Robin understands. Albert's approach and manner closed questions rather than opening them. In class and in the seminars with colleagues in Los Angeles he was interested in hearing opinions different from his only to form refutations. Although Albert clearly had a very agile mind, open-ended discussions that might take all of us in unexpected directions, let alone ones that might question Albert's ideas, were absent. He had a sharp eye for talent, but he never wanted or was able to try to understand how others could be equally intelligent and yet disagree with him, let alone to try to learn from the disagreements.

Tone and style are a problem with Robin's book as well, although with fewer negative consequences. He says he is portraying the positive as well as the negative aspects of the Wohlstetters' thinking and reports that

“many of my fellow scholars at New York University’s [International Center for Advanced Studies] rejected my approach, which, truth be told, is perforated with begrudging admiration for this intimidating couple” (353). I, on the other hand, find the admiration not grudging, but well disguised. There is too much snark here, but I grant it does not come close to Albert’s own level. Robin’s earlier book was critical of the role of social science in the Cold War,⁸ and this book is similar. Also, a series of errors, each unimportant in itself, taken together show that while the author has provided insights unavailable to those more deeply involved in the subject, it also comes at a price in term of familiarity with this the literature, arguments, and minor facts. Herman Kahn’s famous book is *On Thermonuclear War*, not *On Thermonuclear Warfare* (20); my late colleague was Warner Schilling, not Werner (68); the well-known IR scholar Bruce Russett, taught all his life at Yale, not Georgetown (115); the citizens of Afghanistan are Afghans, not Afghanis, a term that refers to the currency (ch. 10). Richard Perle’s opposition torpedoed a proposed agreement on Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF), not the broader arms control agreement discussed at Reykjavik (262); the bombs that brought down the Marine barracks at the Beirut Airport in 1983 were carried by a truck, not by a car (288); Secretary of State George Shultz’s name is misspelled. None of these change the story, and I am sure that I have made similar errors in my own writings. But they may suggest that while Robin has carefully read the writings of the Wohlstetters and some of their critics, and he has used their papers to show parts of the story that had not been known before, the book’s discussion of the issues and multiple players is somewhat limited.

Even if I am correct in this and my other criticisms, much of this story is fascinating and well told. How much of the truth it recounts is subject to debate, but is indeed well worth debating.

⁸ See his earlier study, *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Review by Colleen Larkin, Columbia University

In *The Cold War They Made: The Strategic Legacy of Roberta and Albert Wohlstetter*, Ron Robin recounts the lives of Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter, a formidable couple among the circle of intellectuals who theorized about U.S. defense policy during the Cold War. Roberta's study of intelligence failures at Pearl Harbor provided the foundation for their thinking about the requirements of defense against surprise attacks.¹ Albert, incorporating quantitative models into deterrence theory, became a fierce advocate of brinkmanship and counterforce targeting in nuclear policy. Robin's joint biography traces the couple's lives from their childhoods and meeting at Columbia University, through their time at RAND and beyond. The second half of the book demonstrates the Wohlstetter legacy through the present day by showcasing the careers of three of Albert's "acolytes" (15): Paul Wolfowitz, Zalmay Khalilzad, and Richard Perle. Wolfowitz and Khalilzad, two of Albert's Ph.D. students at the University of Chicago, held prominent positions in the George W. Bush administration: Wolfowitz served as Deputy Secretary of Defense, and Khalilzad served as U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the United Nations. Perle, who met the Wohlstetters as a teenager, served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs under Ronald Reagan. Robin describes how these followers espoused both their mentor's hubris and his ideas about the necessity of aggressive, offensive military strategy.

Robin's book is a well-written account that offers a new perspective on the Wohlstetters's contributions; his biography both places their thinking in a broader personal context and traces their contributions beyond their time at RAND. Albert's inelastic morality and abrasive personality fed into his thinking about the need for U.S. invulnerability against enemy capabilities. Albert frequently disparaged his RAND colleague Bernard Brodie and other proponents of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), arguing that the balance of terror's fragility demanded U.S. investment in overwhelming retaliatory forces. Ultimately, Robin's portrayal of Albert is fairly critical, depicting excesses in Albert's personal life as well as his nuclear policy. Robin's description of the partnership between Roberta and Albert is particularly compelling. His work is a welcome corrective to accounts that portray Roberta as a supportive wife in the shadow of her husband. Indeed, Robin argues that Roberta should be regarded at a minimum as Albert's intellectual equal, if not the source of his ideas on nuclear strategy; he drew much inspiration for his strategic thinking from her monograph, *Pearl Harbor: A Warning*, and its implication that major nuclear deployments could best ward off surprise attacks (68). The couple shared a cynicism about looming enemy confrontation which was manifested in Albert's nuclear strategy to deny the enemy second strikes and Roberta's recommendations of escalating military threats to contain potential terrorist threats in the 1970s (143).

Robin's account demonstrates a deep understanding of the Wohlstetters's relationship. Less straightforward is the question of how much Albert or Roberta influenced the broader defense establishment on nuclear strategy, particularly in terms of the development of the counterforce doctrine. The book's title suggests that Albert's offensive nuclear strategy influenced some policymakers' thinking and contributed to the Cold War weapons buildups and arms racing. Robin does paint a vivid picture of groups of defense intellectuals gathered at the Wohlstetters's beautiful house in Laurel Canyon, Los Angeles, but at times it is unclear how Albert convinced policymakers to support an explicitly offensive and war-winning nuclear strategy. Other

¹ Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: A Warning* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).

scholars are skeptical of defense planners' actual influence on policy,² and Robin admits that Albert's position gained limited traction (80). Most U.S. policymakers embraced MAD in declaratory policy—public statements describing the role of U.S. nuclear weapons—for much of the Cold War.³ When they did move toward counterforce and flexible response, it was more in response to concerns about massive retaliation, and not because of the theoretical debates that motivated Albert's work. Moreover, Robin's book raises questions about whether it was Albert's work in particular that shaped Cold War nuclear policy, or that of the group of nuclear scholars as a whole. Although Albert's work was not derivative, it emerged from a community of thinkers at RAND and elsewhere with a range of views on deterrence theory.

Robin's biography is effective, not only in its account of the Cold War, but also in its description of how the Wohlstetters continue to influence American foreign policy. He devotes significant attention to the Wohlstetter legacy as embodied by Wolfowitz, Khalilzad, and Perle, focusing mostly on their policies related to the Middle East. It would have been interesting if Robin had more directly explored how the Wohlstetters's legacy lives on in U.S. nuclear strategy, Albert's area of expertise. Albert called for the discriminate use of tactical nuclear weapons against Soviet military targets to prevent escalation to general nuclear war. These arguments persist today, as proponents of low-yield options stress the need to control escalation in a nuclear conflict.⁴ Similarly, Albert's faith in precision technology raises questions about morality and warfare today. As Robin recounts, Albert believed that precision technology would eventually allow for discriminate targeting with nuclear weapons, which was easier to morally justify than targeting population centers in a MAD strategy (116). We see similar arguments touting the morality of precision in both nuclear and conventional targeting in today's discourse. It is perhaps a testament to Albert's legacy in U.S. defense policy that these questions remain significant in contemporary policy debates.

Finally, Robin's book is unique in its treatment of Roberta, a woman involved in the boy's club of strategic studies, raising broader questions about women's historical role in international relations scholarship. While defense planning was certainly a male-dominated area, several of the men mentioned in this book had wives who were their intellectual equals and influenced their work. Robin describes Fawn Brodie merely as the inspiration for Bernard Brodie's sexual analogies in his writing (99), but she was an accomplished historian in her own right. She also co-authored with her husband the 1962 book *From Crossbow to H-Bomb: The Evolution of the Weapons and Tactics of Warfare*.⁵ Robin describes Roberta's constant and at times constraining influence on Albert's thinking. Roberta's contributions to the "Wohlstetter doctrine" raises the question of the extent to which women behind the scenes shaped the thinking of other towering figures in the defense intellectual community. Roberta secured her own respectable career in this community and left an

² For the salience of deterrence theorists, see Fred Kaplan and Martin J. Sherwin, *The Wizards of Armageddon* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991). For a skeptical view, see David Alan Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960," *International Security* 7:4 (1983): 3-71.

³ Francis J. Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft: History and Strategy in America's Atomic Age* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 34.

⁴ William J. Broad and David E. Sanger, "U.S. Ramping Up Major Renewal in Nuclear Arms," *New York Times*, 21 September 2014.

⁵ Bernard Brodie and Fawn Brodie, *From Crossbow to H-Bomb: The Evolution of the Weapons and Tactics of Warfare* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962).

attributable written record. Yet other women remain hidden in the history of international relations, contributing to the work of their partners, but never recognized themselves. Robin's book highlights these types of possibly unconventional contributions; such research can only enrich our understanding of the field's development by giving women their due.

Overall, this is an engaging book that interrogates the Wohlstetters's lives, their relationship with each other, and the legacy of their thinking in American foreign policy. It thoughtfully connects a group of thinkers whose fear of enemies lurking on the horizon necessitated a proactive foreign policy that often gave way to excess and aggression—a group whose thinking still echoes in U.S. policy today.

Author's Response by Ron Robin, University of Haifa

I am most appreciative of the comments from this group of distinguished readers. A whole slew of issues arise from this collective reading of my book; I will respond to just a couple of the central critiques. First and foremost I am compelled to respond to comments regarding the elusive quest for objectivity when dealing with a politically fraught topic. The commentators seem somewhat unconvinced about my ability to adjudicate the Wohlstetter political epistemology without prejudice. In one way or another, they politely interrogate my claim to objectivity. I admit that I was less than forthcoming.

The crux of my vicarious relationship with the Wohlstetter creed is buried in the bowels of this book—pages 169-175 to be exact. It is there that I document a confessional statement by Albert. This 1985 oral interview, conducted for a Rand historical program, is perhaps the moment when the scales fell from my eyes. During the course of this exercise, Albert defined the ostensibly dangerous Soviets as useful idiots, a comfortable enemy meant to fill the role of an indispensable adversary that a vacillating American society so sorely needed. From this point onwards, I became sensitive to the interplay between the Wohlstetters's doctrine on strategic affairs and their philosophical creed. Upon delving into their oeuvre beyond strategic affairs, I realized that I had probably missed the Wohlstetters's primary concerns, even though they were hiding in plain sight. I began to wonder if they ever really saw the external clash with the Soviet bloc as the primary existential threat to American society.

Long before gaining notoriety in the field of strategic studies and, in fact, throughout their careers, Albert and Roberta expressed apprehension concerning the resilience of American society. From their early days as an intellectual couple, they identified wavering social resilience, a theme that began to dominate their writing following the outbreak of the Cold War. One merely has to peruse the Wohlstetters's papers embedded on the Rand website to identify their alarm bells. The Wohlstetters's were at least as concerned about the undermining of capitalism by the siren song of socialist alternatives as they were of anything else. Hence, I have devoted a significant part of this study to the Wohlstetters's thoughts on domestic challenges: race relations, the free market, and the role of what they saw as liberalism-gone-wild in the press and in academia. The American way of life—they implied and occasionally stated explicitly—was constantly challenged by Panglossian, simplistic notions of adversarial social systems as well as well-orchestrated campaigns executed by fellow travelers whose modus operandi they knew all too well from the own days as radicals. It is within this context that their otherwise mystifying insistence on an external Soviet threat, even after that adversarial empire was obviously and plainly moribund, makes sense.

The most elusive Soviet threat, according to the Wohlstetters, was domestic. As far as the international arena in general, and nuclear policy in particular, were concerned, the Soviets were mere midgets, “albeit normally bright midgets” (171). Both Roberta and Albert were comfortable with variations of nuclear brinkmanship because they never feared a reckless response from their overly cautious, reactive, and often frazzled enemy. The Wohlstetters cavalierly spread a potentially destabilizing interpretation of the arms race because—as they made it amply clear to those who are willing to read what they actually wrote—they did indeed recognize a remote possibility of Soviet aggression, but they never believed in the probability of a Soviet attack. Always the economist, Albert fervently believed that the way to bring down this ideological nemesis and its threat to domestic tranquility was to intimidate its agents into a spending frenzy that would bring their economic superstructure crashing down, thereby exposing the specious nature of the socialist creed.

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It was at this point, I confess, that I fell out of love with the Wohlstetters. My awe of and admiration for their impressive scholarship paled in the light of their mendacity. As is sometimes the case with brilliant scholars, their inquests became subservient to what were basically counter factual attempts to rewrite reality to serve a greater cause. Armed with a great expository skill, as well as the sheer intimidation of those who expressed different views, the Wohlstetters disarmed competing argumentations through hostility and solipsistic argumentation. In retrospect, I wish I had been more transparent about this moment of disenchantment.

I am equally dissatisfied with my incomplete discussion of gender in strategic studies and academia, in general. Throughout the book, I have argued for Albert's debt to Roberta's brilliant, albeit flawed study of Pearl Harbor.¹ The role of Hamlet, based upon Roberta's complex representation of indecision in times of conflict, perforated Albert's scholarship as well. It was Roberta who opened up the door for Albert at Rand after his disastrous forays into the business world, compliments of his indulgent entrepreneurial brother, Charlie (49-54). In his great moment of triumph, during the Medal of Freedom ceremony in 1985, Albert's intense obsession with the limelight diminished his spouse's accomplishments (281-284). And yet it was Roberta, scion to the Morgan family of intellectual giants, who led Albert down the path to what he would later claim as his intellectual proprietary rights. Domestic relationships, cultural conventions, as well as Roberta's adoration for her pugnacious and garrulous spouse, placed her on the sidelines. A more skilled writer than myself would have spent more effort coaxing her out the shadows.

The same would go for the other women scholars who make cameo appearances in the book. Fawn Brodie, a founding figure of the psycho-historical approach the American past often found herself toiling in the shade of Bernard, her unfaithful, brooding, and ponderous scholar-spouse who fed off her neo-Freudian observations in building up his counter arguments to Albert. While the fate of Roberta and Fawn may be attributed to the cultural norms of their times, Cheryl Benard's brief appearance here is due to oversight rather than any objective flaw of in the cultural mores of her times. Benard's spouse, Zalmay Khalilzad, was heavily influenced by her take on Islam in a post-Cold War era. A careful reading of Benard's novels reveals a central tenet of Khalilzad's political views: radical Islam would eventually collapse under the weight of its own internal contradictions. It was up to shrewd individuals, like Khalilzad himself, to ascertain that the United States would not lose this opportunity and would have the capacity as well as the will to capitalize on the demise of radical Islamic regimes. Moreover, it was Benard who facilely identified similarities between the struggle for freedom in the Cold War and what she saw as an analogous struggle to "build free and democratic institutions" in the Muslim world (243-245).

In sum: the Wohlstetter epistemology cannot be assigned to a narrow reading of their strategic papers. The Wohlstetter doctrine blurred distinctions between life and the arts, and was the creation of a symbiotic interplay between culture and politics rather than a straight-laced interpretation of an exogenous threat. Roberta and Albert are enshrined in the pantheon of strategic river gods, yet their writing achieves a complexity and twist when embedded in their personal world and the cultural anxieties that beset the United States in the second half of the twentieth century. This modest insight is my contribution to the many fine studies that flank my own work. I am grateful for the opportunity to present my findings to the readers of this wonderful forum.

¹ Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).