

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY READING LIST

SUPPLEMENT – MARCH 2007

PREFACE

The *RAN Reading List* is an evolving document. A large number of books on maritime matters are published each year, while a few of the recommended readings from the previous year may be less relevant today than they were some years ago. This annual electronic supplement is intended to bring new works of interest to the fore in a timely and practical way.

The books included in this annual supplement to the *RAN Reading List* are not intended to be set in concrete for future generations, but rather they are included to engender debate and to foster feedback on changing perspectives in the naval genre and rising maritime issues.

Recommendations, reviews and comments are genuinely welcome by the editors of the *RAN Reading List*. Please contact us by email: seapower.centre@defence.gov.au

We hope you will enjoy reading and discussing the books in this supplement.

PROFESSIONAL READING

Modern Maritime Strategy

Positioning Navies for the Future: Challenge and Response

Edited by Jack McCaffrie

published by Halstead Press, Sydney, 2006

This book contains the proceedings of the RAN Sea Power Conference 2004, including wide ranging discussions on policy, strategy, operations, technology and future visions. Contributors include some of the most credible practitioners and academics who influence current maritime thinking in many of today's navies. Although the collection is a 'must read' for Australians interested in international relations and strategic studies, it is much more. It brings together the collective thoughts of some of the world's leading maritime nations, and hence offers a much wider perspective than many equivalent Anglo-centric works. It also effectively documents the recent discourse on maritime issues, including: expeditionary operations, littoral warfare, technological transformation, self sufficiency, oceans governance and maritime counter-terrorism. The future challenges identified by the 'Young Turks' were particularly illuminating and it will be interesting to revisit their suggestions in 2022. Of course, while many of us see the 21st century as one of constant change, this book subtly demonstrates that the fundamentals of naval strategy and the need for navies remain the same.

Australian Naval History

Australia's Navy in the Gulf: From Countenance to Catalyst, 1941-2006

Greg Nash and David Stevens

published by Topmill, Sydney, 2006

Australia's Navy in the Gulf is a timely introduction to the long running RAN commitment to combined operations in the Persian Gulf. Many people in Australia and overseas are simply not aware of the Australian Navy's major contribution to events in the Gulf. The importance of trade along the sea line of communication through the Gulf has meant that the security of this region has been high among Australia's interests for a considerable time. Indeed it is often suggested that Australia tends to 'punch above its weight' in the Gulf. The book successfully outlines the long running series of deployments: listing the ships and units involved, describing the major events and many of the people involved. Highlights include the warfighting activities during Operation DAMASK II - The 1991 Gulf War, Operation SLIPPER - Contribution to the International Coalition against Terrorism, and Operation FALCONER - the 2003 Iraq War. The book also emphasises the

persistent nature of maritime forces, where Australia's involvement during 'operations other than war' have included blockade, maritime intercept and maritime security operations. Although *Australia's Navy in the Gulf* is not a detailed history of Australian Navy operations, it certainly sets the scene for the official histories that are yet to be written. Overall this book is a lavishly illustrated readable narrative ideal for those who have served in the Gulf, their families and friends, as well as those who want to know what Australians have achieved in the region.

A Critical Vulnerability: The Impact of the Submarine Threat on Australia's Maritime Defence 1915-1954

by David Stevens

published by Sea Power Centre - Australia, Canberra, 2005

Many see the defence of Australia in terms of land forces fighting doggedly to resist foreign invaders. In fact, as a maritime nation linked to a global economy, defending Australia's sea lines of communications is much more critical than preventing an enemy landing upon our shores. This book examines how the submarine threat impacted upon Australia's defence from its beginnings until 1954, when anti-submarine warfare (ASW) became the major warfighting task of the Australian Navy. The detailed examination of Japanese submarine attacks in Australian waters during World War II, in particular the ASW crisis of 1943, clearly outlines the nature of the threat to Australia's sea communications. As Creswell warned in 1913: 'Australia's vulnerable point is her trade, practically all water borne. Australia depends for her daily business on the security of her interport, interstate, and oversea waterways and commences. ... Directly the flow is seriously blocked Australian business must be paralysed.'

While some scholars have criticised Prime Minister John Curtin's unwillingness to declare that Australia was no longer threatened until late in WWII, his comments were not far from the truth. This book reminds us that the defence of Australia and its sea communications, with limited ASW capabilities in Australian waters, remained critical until at least early 1945. Steven's conclusion remains poignant: 'What is clear is that Australia's dependence upon maritime communications did not lessen over the period studied and that this dependence has continued to the present day.'

U-Boat Far from Home: The Epic Voyage of U862 to Australia and New Zealand

by David Stevens

published by Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1997

U-Boat Far from Home details the little known German underwater offensive against Australia in late 1944. In an account that is both entertaining and enlightening, David Stevens describes the operation's strategic rationale, its practical implications and how the Australians and their allies responded. The story of U862 is one that places us in

touch with the confined and dangerous world of a submarine at war. We can see the sweat drip from the face of the boat's Captain, Heinrich Timm, while the young German submariners struggle to maintain their professionalism under the constant threat of depth charge attack. The U862 attack on the *Illissos* off South Australia in December 1944 is just one of the many incidents that highlight the need for vigilance in all theatres of war. The world's oceans are not characterised by a theoretical 'air-sea gap', rather they form an interconnected maritime super-highway. This well researched book should provide insight for those interested in submarine and anti-submarine operations, as well as those who are looking for a practical example of the global threat to maritime communications.

GENERAL READING

Military and Aerospace Strategy

The Transformation of War

by Martin van Creveld

published by The Free Press, New York, 1991

When first published in 1991, *The Transformation of War* was considered to be radical and even heretical. His central thesis is that Clausewitz's trinity of war – the state, the army and the people – is not applicable to modern conflicts. By examining the characteristics of war over many cultures and greater time-scales, van Creveld develops a theory of 'Nontrinitarian War'; where states are irrelevant, a separation between military and civilians does not exist, and the majority of people are nothing more than the victims of war. Written in a confronting and engaging style, *The Transformation of War* takes one on a kaleidoscope ride through a discourse that examines one man's view on the who, what, how and why of modern warfare. The result is a *raison d'être* for the nuclear balance and the rise in low intensity conflict and unconventional war since 1945. Much of van Creveld's final chapter on future warfare has been demonstrated time and again by conflicts since this book was written, and as a result *The Transformation of War* has become a little classic among many of today's military thinkers. But neither is it without its critics. Some have suggested that van Creveld's emphasis on unconventional war only hides the underlying dangers of future conventional conflict. Other critics tend to criticise his apparent disregard, or is it a lack of understanding, of the influence of maritime strategy on world affairs. Overall, although this work is now over 15 years old, it remains both relevant and influential.

Leadership and Command

COBRA II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq

by Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor
published by Atlantic Books, London, 2006

COBRA II is the story of the planning for and conduct of the US-led invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq. It was written by the authors of *The Generals' War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf* – the 1991 war against Iraq – and is equally well worth reading. Much of the criticism of the 2003 war has concentrated on the aftermath and the apparent lack of planning for the occupation. The real value of this book is that it examines dispassionately the lead-up to the occupation. We all know how easily the coalition forces appeared to account for the Iraqi Army. But this account shows that the reality was quite different and that despite the superior coalition 'situational awareness' the fog of war was rarely far away. It also points to some of the surprises encountered, such as the difficulties met by US Army attack helicopters and communications problems between the US Army and Marines. Gordon and Trainor deal equally effectively with the strategic, operational and tactical levels for both planning and operations and clearly have had access to most of those involved in the planning of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Overall, this is an excellent and quite detailed account of the war and those responsible for it.

Intelligence and Security

Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism

by Robert A. Pape
published by Random House, New York, 2005

Why do terrorists commit suicide and what do they think it achieves? *Dying to Win* helps explain the logic behind suicide terrorism. A demographic profile of modern suicide attackers is developed using the information gained from recent experiences across the globe, and the resulting depiction of the typical suicide terrorist is counter-intuitive to many Western observers. Pape also provides a database of 315 suicide terrorist attacks in the world between 1980 and 2005. This book allows one to gain insight into the minds of those who currently represent one of the greatest threats to global security. An understanding of the enemy is the first step towards overcoming that enemy. *Dying to Win* is a realistic analysis, which uses the available evidence without political bias to develop concrete ways for modern states to fight and win against terrorist attacks. His views need not be taken as gospel, but they represent a good start.

Naval Biographies

Australian Naval Personalities: Lives from the Australian Dictionary of Biography

selected and condensed by Gregory P. Gilbert
published by Sea Power Centre – Australia, Canberra, 2006

This book contains a selection of naval personalities that have been previously published within the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (ADB). Since 1966 the ADB has expanded, incorporating the lives of many of Australia's most famous and infamous personalities, and currently the work runs into 16 biographical volumes covering individuals who passed away prior to 1980. By including some of the most interesting naval personalities from the ADB within this volume it is hoped that a wider audience may gain familiarity with the deep and lasting contribution that these individuals have made to Australian maritime and indeed national affairs. The selected biographies include naval officers, sailors, administrators and other professionals. This collection is recommended as a source of inspiration. Naval personalities who have exhibited personal discipline, moral fortitude and strong leadership capabilities in the past are most suitable role models for Australia's present and future naval personalities.

Cochrane, The Life and Exploits of a Fighting Captain

by Robert Harvey
published by Carroll & Graf, New York, 2000

The life of Lord Thomas Cochrane (1775-1860) is so dramatic that writers of fiction have had to tone down his exploits to make them believable. Cochrane is the quintessential character whose brilliant leadership, unsurpassed seamanship skills and single-minded pursuit of his career should resonate with many 21st century commanders. In effect Cochrane excelled in each of his three careers; as a fighting captain he was among the best that Britain ever produced. His adventures in command of the brig *Speedy*, the frigates *Pallas* and *Imperieuse*, and his courageous assault using 'explosion' ships during the Battle of Aix Roads helped to make him a hero to the British nation, but his efforts to expose corruption, which led at times to insubordination, and his individualist ways made enemies within the Admiralty. His career was not helped by his radical political views, his election to parliament while in naval service, and his conviction and subsequent imprisonment after a Stock Exchange scandal. Cochrane's final naval service, as an Admiral for hire, supported of the independence struggles of the modern states of Chile and Brazil. His naval victories, which sometimes used deception rather than direct confrontation, helped to make him a national hero in South America. His work as admiral of the Greek nation was less successful, although it did help pave the way for Greek independence. While Nelson may have been the best role model for naval leaders of the 20th century, Cochrane should be studied by today's leaders. As Cochrane himself wrote, 'It is wonderful what an amount of terrorism a small frigate is able to inspire on

an enemy's coast. Actions between line-of-battle ships are no doubt very imposing, but for real effect I would prefer a score or two of small vessels well handled to any fleet of line-of-battle ships.' This biography is highly recommended.

General Naval History

Shattered Sword: The Untold Story of the Battle of Midway

by Jonathon Parshall and Anthony Tully
published by Potomac Books, Dulles, 2005

Although the Battle of Midway is one of the most significant naval battles of the Pacific, its treatment by historians has not necessarily reflected this. In writing this book the authors set out not only to tell the story of the battle and events surrounding it but also to discredit many of the myths associated with this important engagement. For the first time, extensive use of Japanese as well as English sources are used to help determine: 'Why did Japan lose?' Doctrine, strategy, command personalities and intelligence all helped to determine the final outcome. The authors explain the intricacies of carrier operations to the layman and weave these details into the story of the battle. The narrative is supported by an extensive selection of maps, photographs and diagrams, while it also includes appendices with a raft of background information from Orders of Battle to technical drawings and details on Japanese aircraft. *Shattered Sword* is compelling reading and should become the standard history of the Battle of Midway.

General Military History

Battle, A History of Combat and Culture

by John A. Lynn
published by Westview Press, Boulder Colorado, 2003

Battle compares the discourses on war with the reality of war, in a kaleidoscopic journey through time from the classical Greeks to the terrorism of the 21st century. In rejecting the concept of a 'Western way of war', Lynn examines the philosophical discourses that influence how wars were both perceived and fought across the globe. He compares ancient Chinese and Indian texts on warfare that emphasise stratagems and exhausting an enemy rather than fighting toe-to-toe in battle, with the Roman practice that espouses battle averse campaigning typified by manoeuvre, stratagem and siege. Earlier in their histories the Chinese and Indian sources suggest battles were highly conventional and ritualised, with similar characteristics found in Greek polis warfare. Western warfare also reflects its temporal cultural setting, with chivalry in the Medieval arena, linear warfare during the Enlightenment, and the Romantic visions of decisive battle during the 19th century. Lynn sees Clausewitz as a man of his times, a time of 'military

Romanticism' and hence he suggests that the ideas in *On War* are neither timeless nor universally insightful. Race and military culture in the 1941-45 Pacific War raises a number of important issues including the escalation of violence leading to the use of atomic weapons against Japan, as well as evidence of hatred by both United States and Japanese forces. The level of race hatred by Australians during the Pacific War remains largely uninvestigated, and it suggests itself as a rewarding area for future research. Lynn's discussion of the Egyptian victory crossing the Suez Canal at the beginning of the 1973 October War offers evidence that doctrine and culture must coincide to be effective. The decision to fight a battle of attrition against the Israelis offers a cautionary tale to those who might believe in manoeuvre warfare as a panacea. *Battle* concludes with a plea for greater understanding of terrorism and a cultural redefinition that will reshape the current discourse on war. Lynn observes that 'proper action begins with proper ideas; the discourse becomes parent to action'.