

sarily all.” He goes on to note, as he does throughout the work, that endings “vary from film to film” (116). This points to a basic dilemma of film scholarship: the application of generalities to the multitude of specific occurrences which are similar enough to warrant the generality yet varied enough to warrant MacDowell’s critique.

MacDowell delightfully equates the conservatism of film scholarship -- understood here as the tendency to read clichéd meanings (and implied effects) into closed and open endings, into happy final couples, and so forth -- with the conservatism of the PCA (151). While more than a few film scholars might be a bit chagrined to be aligned with Joseph Breen in their conception of the effects of endings on spectators, *Happy Endings in Hollywood Cinema* is a welcome contribution to the study of film narrative. As an antidote to the prevailing critical tendencies and through its focus on the final couple and happy endings, the work probes what Celestino Deleyto has identified as the “ambiguity and variety” of happy ending convention in the romantic comedy genre (quoted on p. 192). It would not be setting the bar too high to claim that MacDowell’s work, with its awareness of “the tensions between repetition and variation which lies at the heart of ... the ‘happy ending’” (25) offers a template for examining the ambiguity and variety that surely characterizes all filmic conventions.

Jody Pennington

Aarhus University

William C. Martel, *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 535 pages. ISBN 978-1-107-08206-9.

William C. Martel’s *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* is a compelling and important book on the evolution of grand strategy from the ancient societies to the modern states and on the development of American grand strategy from George Washington to Barack Obama. The book begins with chapter one presenting the book’s core arguments, its contributions to the field and chapter two reviewing the literature of American grand strategy. The other nine chapters are structured into the three main parts of the book.

Part I, *Makers of Grand Strategy*, includes four chapters. Chapter three shows Martel’s efforts to define grand strategy. Also, Martel underlines that

grand strategies are best assessed along two axes: articulation and implementation. Chapter four investigates the evolution of grand strategy from ancient China, Greece and Rome to the modern discipline of grand strategy characterized by the ideas of nine critical thinkers. This conceptual discussion demonstrates the philosophical, military and economic foundations of grand strategy which help to understand the forces that shape the articulation of grand strategy and its implementation. Chapter five examines seven case studies of grand strategy on how states and statesmen articulated and implemented grand strategy, and draws valuable lessons learnt from each case study for contemporary strategists and practitioners. Chapter six examines how the foundations of grand strategy were changed in the revolutionary and nuclear eras of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. With the advent of revolutionary wars, the use of political violence was altered by “shifting the focus from violence per se to the political use of violence,” which had dramatic impacts on grand strategy (121). With the advent of nuclear weapons, grand strategy was shifted “from its historical foundations of how to win wars to how to avoid wars” (121).

In Part I, Martel gains credits for providing a deep analytic basis for better understanding grand strategy in theory and practice. Martel includes various case studies of the evolution of grand strategy in both Europe and Asia, and summarizes complicated historical ideas into understandable explanations and arguments. Importantly, with the extensive review of the developments of the theory and practice of grand strategy, and the inclusion of his own thorough analysis, Martel achieves his goal of establishing a general framework for grand strategy within which states are able to accomplish their foreign policy goals.

Part II, *Makers of American Grand Strategy* (chapters 7 to 10), shifts focus from the general evolution of grand strategy to the development of American grand strategy from the eighteenth century to the modern, revolutionary, and nuclear eras. This is the most meaningful contribution of Martel’s book to the scholarship on grand strategy. His insightful and powerful prescription for Americans to chart their course in the rapidly changing environment makes the book essential reading for anyone interested in American foreign policy.

Chapter 7 emphasizes the impacts of American early presidents on establishing American domestic power (political, military and economic) and expanding American territory which was the first principle of American grand strategy. Their successes in building formidable domestic founda-

tions allowed the United States to become one of the most powerful and influential nations in the world by the early twentieth century. Chapter eight explores the evolution of the second principle of American grand strategy that focuses on how to deal with the sources of disorder and disruption in the international system. “In an era marked by revolutions and revolutionary ideologies, the United States established itself as a source of restraint to prevent rapid and radical change” (243). Chapter nine investigates the final principle of American grand strategy developed in the Cold War, the principle of reinforcing alliances and partnerships, both old and new, to deal with mutual threats and global challenges. America’s grand strategy following World War II was devoted to the containment of the Soviet Union. With the progress of the Cold War, the implementation of America’s grand strategy of containment “experienced several minor doctrinal changes” (245), but its overall articulation was consistent from Truman to Reagan Chapter ten looks at America’s grand strategy from the late twentieth century. By examining the successes and failures of post-Cold War American administrations in seeking balance among the three principles of American grand strategies, Martel shows that without a single and indefinable adversary, it was more difficult for the United States to articulate and implement its grand strategy.

The third part, which is also the final chapter, has a more future focus and draws on American grand strategy. Martel concludes that three principles presented in chapters 8, 9, and 10 are the foundations for an American grand strategy that can serve the nation well and underlines that these principles have to be carefully balanced in practice. He suggests that the future American grand strategy should be optimistic: “this state, while working with others, can build a more secure, peaceful, and prosperous world” (364).

Martel’s combination of an important subject, engaging writing style, and effective research makes *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice: The Need for an Effective American Foreign Policy* a strong book. He has carefully unveiled his arguments with a range of well-selected case studies, each contributing to defining what grand strategy is and highlighting tensions between the articulation of grand strategy and its implementation. Especially, with a focus on American grand strategy over the course of two hundred years, his book establishes an indispensable framework for understanding the past, present and future of American foreign policy.