

changes in government to support even a respectable role for the country in the most likely of scenarios.

What makes Ucko and Egnell's work unique and invaluable is its take on future missions and its evaluation of options for British policy planners. Given the reduced resources and the experiences of the last decade, they concisely examine the merits of scaling down British contributions to niche investments, employment of more indirect approaches, and greater burden-sharing with regional organizations. The authors are doubtful that these approaches will meet British political objectives, noting that "strategic abstinence and 'strategic selectivity' are options fraught with a different type of risk, particularly for a state with global expeditionary ambitions or when alliance commitments come into play." Given the U.S. ambitions and its role in the world, American strategists should take serious note of Ucko and Egnell's conclusions.

This is a serious and objective scholarly analysis of British strategic and operational performance. The United States needs a similar assessment, as its leaders and key decisionmakers have been less willing to come to grips with its own shortfalls in the council chambers of government. Hopefully, someone in the United States will take up the challenge of writing a similar book about U.S. strategic performance.

Because of its objective analysis and solid scholarship, *Counterinsurgency in Crisis* is recommended to professionals in the transatlantic community interested in strategic studies, civil-military relations, military history, and contemporary conflict. JFQ

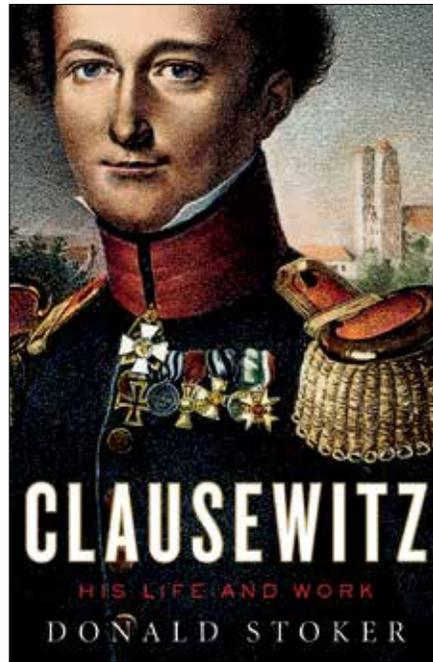
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Notes

¹ Alexander Alderson, "Counter-insurgency: Learn and Adapt? Can We Do Better," *The British Army Review*, no. 142, Summer 2007.

² Cited by Andrew Mackay, "Helmand 2007–2008: Behavioural Conflict," in *British Generals in Blair's Wars*, ed. Jonathan Bailey, Richard Irons, and Hew Strachan (Burlington VT: Ashgate 2013), 261.

³ See the chapter titled "Cracking On: British Military Culture and Doctrine" in Frank Ledwidge, *Losing Small Wars: British Military Failure in Iraq and Afghanistan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).



Clausewitz: His Life and Work

By Donald Stoker
Oxford University Press, 2014
354 pp. \$27.99
ISBN: 978-0199357949

Reviewed by John T. Kuehn

Donald Stoker, a professor of strategy and policy at the Naval Postgraduate School, has written what could be labeled a military biography of Carl von Clausewitz. One might reasonably ask why a biography of the Prussian general and military theorist is necessary, given Peter Paret's towering intellectual biography *Clausewitz and the State* (Princeton University Press, 1985).

The answer is threefold: new sources, new scholarship, and accessibility for

new audiences. Stoker's biography is also the result of a fruitful collaboration with Vanya Eftimova Bellinger, the first historian to publish a biography in English about Clausewitz's formidable wife and intellectual partner, Countess Marie von Brühl. Together, Stoker and Bellinger mined a treasure trove of recently rediscovered correspondence between Carl and Marie held in Germany by the couple's descendants. Stoker sprinkles this correspondence throughout his work, and it provides great value in understanding Clausewitz as he confides his innermost thoughts to his soulmate, the woman who took his unfinished work and had it published. The author also uses Clausewitz's own histories as well as those of his contemporaries (including Antoine-Henri de Jomini) to inform his work, including recent English translations of Clausewitz's work such as that of the Waterloo campaign by Christopher Bassford. In addition to these primary sources, Stoker uses the most recent and cutting-edge Napoleonic scholarship on key campaigns by Alexander Mikaberidze and Michael Leggiere.

Finally, there is the issue of accessibility for new audiences. Stoker states that his purpose for the book is to answer the question "How did it come to be written?" The reader learns that from the age of 11 until his death in 1831 at the age of 51, Clausewitz served first and foremost as a soldier. This speaks to the book's appeal to military professionals. Stoker has made Clausewitz more accessible to the military professionals of today by putting him into the context of his times as a long-serving soldier—including his disappointments, frustrations, and personal experiences with cold, heat, thirst, and danger—providing additive credibility and a human dimension. Readers meet a human Clausewitz who felt pain, hunger, and loneliness, experienced setbacks, and struggled with chronic ailments such as gout and arthritis throughout his life.

Readers will also discover in detail Clausewitz's participation in some of the most famous campaigns of the French and Napoleonic wars, including Russia in 1812 and Waterloo in 1815, as well as some of the more obscure battles. These

include formative experiences fighting limited and even irregular war as an adolescent in the 1790s, and serving as a de facto chief of staff to a multinational corps in the little-known northwestern German theater in 1813. Readers will find of particular interest the chapter titled “The Road to Taurrogen (1812),” which serves as the median of the book. Stoker argues, correctly in this reviewer’s assessment, that Clausewitz’s greatest historical triumph was achieved as an officer in the Russian army at this obscure Lithuanian village where he served as an agent for the Prusso-German uprising against Napoleon in the wake of the disastrous Russian campaign.

It is, however, Clausewitz’s great intellectual triumph, *On War*, that permeates the book, as well it should. Stoker does a commendable job of interweaving and referring to the evolution of Clausewitz’s key ideas on war, including friction (48, 101), center of gravity (100), and defense, including the idea of “political defense” (97). All of this occurs against the backdrop of Clausewitz’s life as a professional soldier who, at the same time, was developing into an impressive military intellectual, historian, and theorist. For example, Stoker highlights Clausewitz’s early writing on the relationship between war and policy in his treatise *Strategie* in the period between Prussia’s wars with France from 1796 until 1806. The Clausewitz revealed here is the original ends-ways-means guru, and this emerges in spades in the writing that Stoker highlights. Furthermore, if a man is to be judged by the character and esteem of his closest friends, Clausewitz ranks high in this regard due to Gerhard von Scharnhorst and August Neidhardt von Gneisenau, two giants of German military history whom Stoker portrays as virtual foster fathers to Clausewitz.

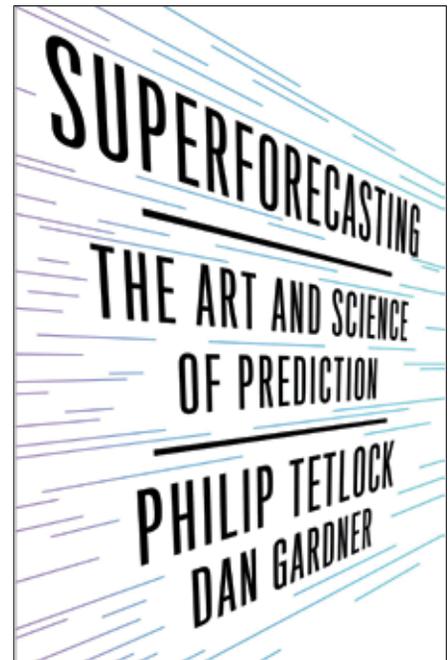
With the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, Stoker moves into the endgame of the book, the lengthy penultimate chapter titled “The Sum of It All (1813–1831),” which provides readers an excellent precis of Clausewitz’s major ideas as outlined in *On War*. Stoker does this against the backdrop of the historical framework of Clausewitz as director of

the *Kriegsakademie* (the Prussian military academy) in Berlin. Stoker suggests that Clausewitz, his life-long desire for a major accomplishment in war and combat stymied, turned to his *meisterwerk* as an outlet. Clausewitz, as one of the Prussian reformers, could do little else in the reactionary political environment that prevented him—and his mentor Gneisenau—from exerting real influence in the Prussian military and state. Stoker argues that this, in fact, resulted in a far greater and lasting triumph: “The fame Clausewitz hoped to win for himself—with sword in hand—he won with his pen” (287). Stoker also manages to skillfully avoid becoming mired in the major Clausewitz “controversies,” while still making the reader aware of them and adding value to those debates. For example, on the issue of just how finished *On War* really was, Stoker writes, “In reality we simply don’t know how complete *On War* truly is, and this is a question that cannot be definitively answered because we know that Clausewitz never finished the book” (264). Readers can draw their own conclusions. My own position is that had Clausewitz died at the ripe old age of 80, the manuscript would still have been sitting in his closet unpublished. Had he outlived his devoted wife, Marie, we might never have seen it.

Although a very well-written book, there are a number of discontinuities. For example, the larger historical narrative of the Napoleonic wars at times becomes desynchronized with Clausewitz’s role in those events. This is especially true later in the book when the reader is taken back in time as the allies prepared to drive on Paris in 1814, to the summer of 1813 when Clausewitz assumed the role of chief of staff to the corps of General Count Ludwig von Wallmoden-Gimborn observing Marshal Louis-Nicolas Davout in Hamburg. However, these problems fade when one considers the totality of what Stoker has accomplished in his book. For those readers who want a clear and up-to-date biography of Clausewitz as a soldier—without myth and without excuse—I can think of no better title to have on the bookshelf right next to *On War*, which

is where it is on mine. This book is absolutely essential for military and security professionals, and deserves as broad an educated readership as possible. JFQ

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Superforecasting: The Art and Science of Prediction

By Philip Tetlock and Dan Gardner
Crown Publishing Group, 2015
352 pp. \$20.51
ISBN: 978-0804136693

Reviewed by Michael J. Mazarr

Philip Tetlock has worked for decades on the problem of judgment in national security affairs. He became justly renowned for his book *Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know?* (Princeton University Press, 2006), which demonstrated, among other things, that foreign policy experts were no more accurate in their forecasts than