

through technology, an idea that Schmuhl wisely criticizes in favor of the informed-debate, representative democracy advocated by the Founders.

The above rough summary of the books fails to do justice to Professor Schmuhl's many ideas and readable style. The weaknesses of the books grow from their virtue of a contemporary focus. Thus, the analysis would have been improved by deeper, less contemporary, background in American political science and American history. In American political science the classic analyses by V. O. Key, whose views resemble Schmuhl's in *Demanding Democracy*, would have added depth. In American history, more examples from earlier presidential campaigns and administrations would have done the same, utilizing, say, Presidents Lincoln, the two Roosevelts, and Wilson's wonderful balance of statecraft and stagecraft. There are also some factual caveats. For example, many American elections are decided by pluralities, not just majorities, and it is unclear which seven of the federal constitutional amendments since 1791 Schmuhl refers to "broaden voting rights or give more electoral involvement." Certainly, Amendments 15, 17, 19, 23, 24, and 26 (six amendments) do these things explicitly, Amendments 12, 14, 20, and 27 do so indirectly, and Amendment 14 very much so. However, neither of the lines of criticism in this paragraph detracts from this reviewer's recommendation of these interesting and useful books.

Macon College

Benjamin B. Tate

**Richard Crockatt. *The Fifty Years War: The United States and the Soviet Union in World Politics, 1941-1991*. London & New York: Routledge, 1995. Pp. xviii, 417. Cloth, \$29.95; ISBN 0-415-10471-8.**

The appearance of Richard Crockatt's *The Fifty Years War* is an event in historical scholarship, for it is the first attempt to date that I am aware of to chronicle the \$10 trillion arms race and all that was attendant with it during the Cold War era (1941-1991). I believe that this scholarly study will go a long way towards dispelling the long-held pervasive myth of the impossibility of writing an accurate history of this incredible era in international politics. Having been born at the outset of the Cold War, I never imagined, nor did anyone else (including Cold War experts such as Zbigniew Brzezinski and others) that it would end without a nuclear confrontation at some point and, even more incredibly, that it would end the way it did. It should be remembered that during the half century of Cold War tensions and confrontations, the NATO alliance never fired a shot in an offensive action, a testimony to the effectiveness of this European mutual-security system that was put in place shortly after the end of World War II to thwart Soviet expansion in Europe and elsewhere. Not even a Metternich could make such a boast!

Crockatt's scholarly study is essentially an attempt to chronicle the history of Cold War relations between the United States and the Soviet Union that were brought on by the traumatic geopolitical upheavals of World War II. By his own admission, it has been a near-impossible task, given the billions of documents extant on both sides of the struggle, coupled with the restrictive "national security considerations" that have severely limited the access that historians have to these documents. Despite the official ending of the Cold War in late 1991, all but a handful of these documents remain classified. It needs no elucidation that access to the Soviet archives is even more limited, despite the good intentions of the current leaders of both countries. A careful perusing of Crockatt's extensive bibliography and notes will indicate the heavy reliance on secondary sources that he readily admits.

Any Cold War historian worth his or her salt will candidly admit that we still know little of *how* and *why* the Cold War started (ideologues and conspiracy theorists being excepted), *how* and *why* it ended, and still less of what happened in between. This perhaps has resulted because of official government secrecy concerning the various and sundry episodes over the past half century. Contrary to public opinion, the Freedom of Information Act of 1966, though designed under the guise of giving the public greater access to official government documents, has only served over the past three decades to make things worse in that it has served to harden the purveyors of "national security considerations" (the CIA, Pentagon, and U.S. State Department bureaucracies) in their positions, for to declassify documents would only show the extent to which the United States government has consistently lied about things that happened here at home and abroad, some of which had nothing to do with the Cold War *per se*. Because declassification has gone on at a glacial pace (the Hiss case is a good example), conspiracy theories have proliferated and a gullible public has given them credence. It is hard for me to see how anyone has benefitted from this. It may take a century or so for historians to achieve a vantage point and to get an accurate perspective on the Cold War.

On balance, Crockatt's study has served "Clio, the Muse" well, for he has pointed the way for future studies in this area of historical scholarship, and his book is a reminder of the difficulties one is up against in writing in this area. As a student of international relations, I am not even certain that we are rid of the Cold War, which Crockatt readily admits did not simply collapse but was perhaps "bypassed." With a future election in the Russian Republic, it may be that Russian voters will choose to lapse back into communism or some ominous alternative and conceivably the Cold War could restart again, although hopefully not the Stalinist version of it.

*The Fifty Years War* would be a useful addition in an upper-level course on international relations in terms of indicating to students where the Cold War has taken us and what the prospects are for the post-Cold War era. It is worth introducing to students if for no other reason than to expose them to Cold War theories and policies.

Quincy College

Lawrence S. Rines