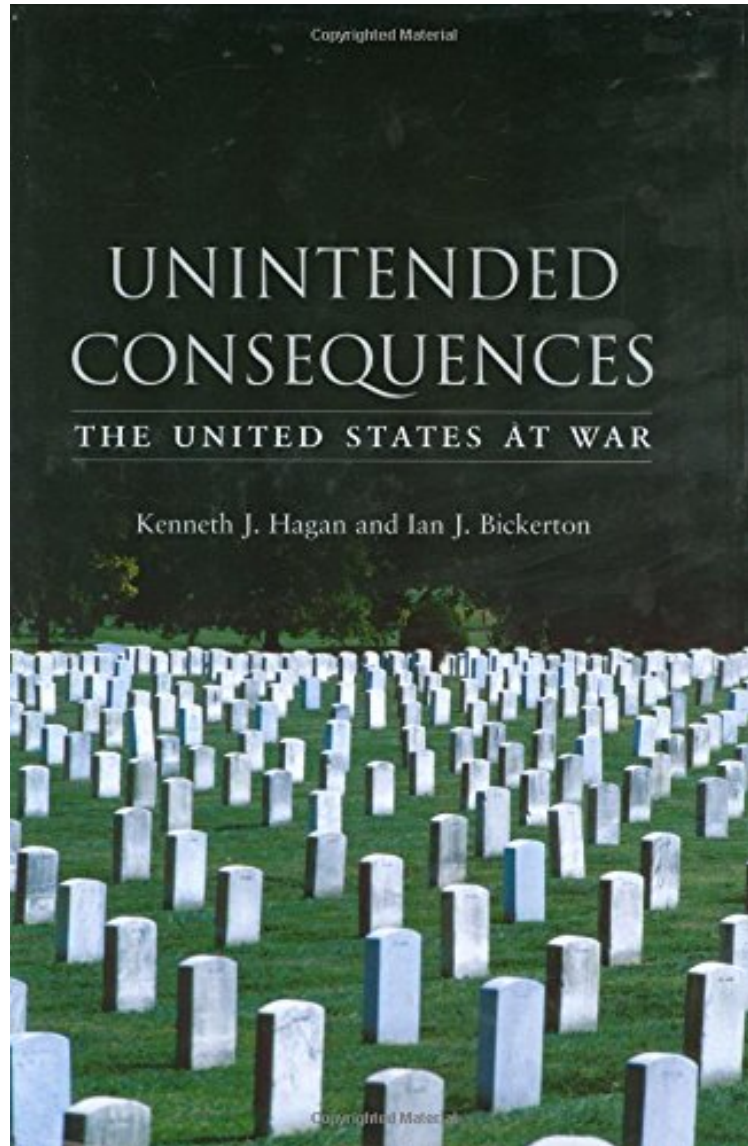


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Unintended Consequences: The United States at War

Kenneth J. Hagan, Ian J. Bickerton

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Kenneth J. Hagan, Ian J. Bickerton : Unintended Consequences: The United States at War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unintended Consequences: The United States at War:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Strong Buy, Simplistic but FocusedBy Robert David STEELE
VivasI think enough of this book by Hagan and Bickerton, both, significantly, respected professors in the US military war college system, to recommend it very strongly. It is simplistic, but in combination with the books I list below, it is

quite striking. Key points: 1. Wars have consequences, not only in the defeated region, but within the USA where the national and regional cultures (Nine Nations) can be conflicted. 2. War *alters* policy for all future generations. 3. America's wars have been engines of economic growth, but the authors fail to observe that the rich benefit while the poor die. 4. The post-war period is a continuation of the war and cannot be ignored. Both explicitly and implicitly, they crucify Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Feith. 5. In every single case, the outcome of the war has been "far removed" from the stated objectives. 6. Each war brings with it repressive measures against those who dissent. I am reminded of Valley Girl Condi Rice suggesting that General Tony Zinni was a "traitor" for saying the idea of invading Iraq was idiocy. How now, cow? 7. War tends to loosen the bonds of traditional authority and undermine community. 8. Across our history, not just at our inception, Native Americans have lost big. Genocide was not only perpetuated in the wars of independence, but after the Civil War, when the US Army practices scorched earth war. 9. The most important consequence of the war of 1812 was its total lack of achievement of ANY of its goals, together with an accentuation of sectional differences within the USA. 10. On page 47: "Enhanced chauvinism, ambitious jingoism, and patriotism [per Samuel Johnson, the last refuge of the scoundrel] were unintended consequences of the war. The slave trade continued. 11. The Indian Wars were deliberately genocidal. 12. In general, in its first hundred years, the USA was belligerent against Canada, Mexico, and the Indian Nations. 13. The war on Mexico caused long-term hostility and led to the civil war by aggravating differences between North and South (and one might add, Texas as the largest ego in the West). The war on Mexico was mostly fought and led by the South. 14. The Civil War was America's first ideological war. 15. The Emancipation Proclamation applied only to slaves in hostile states, not to Northern states. 16. Civil War extended the power of the Federal Government, which increasingly sold the American people out to special interests including European banks. 17. The authors provide a *fascinating* description of Abraham Lincoln's unprecedented abuse of presidential powers, including the suspension of habeas corpus, and I can now understand why "W" thinks he is following greatness by turning America into a police state. 18. Civil War introduced total annihilation (scorched earth) as an American "war of war." 19. Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino war is, in the author's view, most similar to the Iraq war in terms of the mendacity preceding and the insurrections following. 20. WWI, WWII, and the Cold War are discussed in terms that show the US to have been the more belligerent. Stalin learned not to trust the US, and this led to the ideological stand-off and the emergency of "fantasy war." 21. In Korea, General McArthur exceeded his authority, the Chinese warned the US via an Indian who was blown off, and the game was on. 22. The US concurrence in the restoration of the French in Indochina (now Viet-Nam), and the conflicts that Johnson had in having to support being a hawk on Viet-Nam in order to have his "Great Society," are covered. 23. The authors are *brutal* on the Bush Family, to the point that one is inspired to think of a lunatic asylum as the natural resting place for the whole lot of them. 24. According to the authors, Iraq is a "phony war" in every sense of the word except the casualties. 25. Iran is not in the index but the authors observe that US pressure on Syria to withdraw from Lebanon opened the door for Iran. Bottom line: going to war does not solve problems, it creates more of them. The authors conclude that war is both folly and futile. I agree. All Americans have a choice in 2008: they can continue business as usual, with the corrupt and inept Republican and Democratic "machines" that are "running on empty" and totally beholden to Wall Street, or Americans can reassert the fact that this is a Republic and the government as a whole can be fired for cause. See the books listed below. May God have mercy on our souls. It's time we started living up to our sacred responsibility as citizen-warriors, as Minutemen. The authors lose one star to simplicity and an avoidance of both the intelligence available but ignored, and lack of counter-vailing forces (e.g. Congress and the media inevitably fall for the Executive deceptions).

American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War On America
The Nine Nations of North America
None So Blind: A Personal Account of the Intelligence Failure in Vietnam
Running on Empty: How the Democratic and Republican Parties Are Bankrupting Our Future and What Americans Can Do About It
The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic (The American Empire Project)
The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy
The Fifty-Year Wound: How America's Cold War Victory Has Shaped Our World
The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People
War Is a Racket: The Anti-War Classic by America's Most Decorated General, Two Other Anti-Interventionist Tracts, and Photographs from the Horror of It
Who the Hell Are We Fighting?: The Story of Sam Adams and the Vietnam Intelligence Wars

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Why we do silly, sad things
By J. Czarnecki
The timing of this book is exceptional. In the policy making malaise of the "Long War," people look for scapegoats, for blame, for excuses, and sometimes for real reasons why "things" - my jargon for foreign and national security policy escapades - go awry, particularly for the United States and particularly in current times. Whether it be Somalia or Haiti, Afghanistan or Iraq, US foreign and national security policies and actions have fallen far short of achieving their estimable goals. Bickerton and Hagan now demonstrate to us that this always has been the way of foreign and national security policy with the US. Their book uses historical analysis in the most classic of ways to prove their point, that point being that every - yes, every - American war has had unintended consequences that far outweigh the intended purposes of the war. Beginning with their superb analysis of the Revolutionary War, they point out that this enduring aspect of American foreign and national security policy is a result of our structural form of government, a representative democracy, coupled with the political behavior that has political leaders oversell the goals and demonize the would-be

opponents. This book is controversial. Readers looking for comfortable, pat answers to our current problems will find none. In fact, Bickerton and Hagan always recommend diplomacy over the military instrument of national power. However, that may indeed prove antithetical to the American character that demands decisive action immediately. And therein lies the true tragedy described in their book: paraphrasing the old Greek dramatist, Aeschylus, the American eagle ends up being shot with arrows made of its own feathers. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One Star By Karen L. Lebron I don't know who ordered this book, I didn't

“The United States does not do nation building,” claimed Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld three years ago. Yet what are we to make of the American military bases in Korea? Why do American warships patrol the Somali coastline? And perhaps most significantly, why are fourteen “enduring bases” being built in Iraq? In every major foreign war fought by United States in the last century, the repercussions of the American presence have been felt long after the last Marine has left. Kenneth J. Hagan and Ian J. Bickerton argue here that, despite adamant protests from the military and government alike, nation building and occupation are indeed hallmarks—and unintended consequences—of American warmaking. In this timely, groundbreaking study, the authors examine ten major wars fought by the United States, from the Revolutionary War to the ongoing Iraq War, and analyze the conflicts’ unintended consequences. These unexpected outcomes, *Unintended Consequences* persuasively demonstrates, stemmed from ill-informed decisions made at critical junctures and the surprisingly similar crises that emerged at the end of formal fighting. As a result, war did not end with treaties or withdrawn troops. Instead, time after time, the United States became inextricably involved in the issues of the defeated country, committing itself to the chaotic aftermath that often completely subverted the intended purposes of war. Stunningly, *Unintended Consequences* contends that the vast majority of wars launched by the United States were unnecessary, avoidable, and catastrophically unpredictable. In a stark challenge to accepted scholarship, the authors show that the wars’ unintended consequences far outweighed the initial calculated goals, and thus forced cataclysmic shifts in American domestic and foreign policy. A must-read for anyone concerned with the past, present, or future of American defense, *Unintended Consequences* offers a provocative perspective on the current predicament in Iraq and the conflicts sure to loom ahead of us.