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Introduction by Marc Gallicchio, Villanova University

“The Scholarship of Nancy Bernkopf Tucker”

Nancy Bernkopf Tucker was an eminent scholar of the history of US-China relations with a special interest in the volatile region of the Taiwan Strait. She began her academic career at Columbia University under the mentorship of the legendary Dorothy Borg, who gained renown for her studies of US diplomacy in China before World War II and her contributions to the development of US-East Asian relations.¹ Nancy earned her Ph.D. in 1980 and taught at Colgate University before moving to Georgetown University in 1987. Government service and regular participation in policy forums sponsored by organizations like the Woodrow Wilson Center made Nancy familiar with the process of diplomacy and, equally importantly, the people who made and implemented policy. A gifted stylist whose crisp prose and narrative skill brought her subjects to life, she was the author of four major books, editor or co-editor of three others, and the author of numerous scholarly articles in the profession’s top journals.² She also wrote for influential publications geared toward policymakers and shared her ideas about contemporary issues with a wider audience through articles and interviews with major news outlets.

I first encountered Nancy Tucker’s scholarship when I was a graduate student at Temple University in 1980. Waldo Heinrichs, my advisor, and Dorothy Borg, were coediting a conference volume that included Nancy’s paper on Chinese Nationalist efforts to obtain military and economic aid from the US as Chiang Kai-shek’s regime was headed towards defeat on the mainland of China. One of the interesting features of what became *Uncertain Years: Chinese-American Relations, 1947-1950* was the editors’ inclusion of summaries of the commentaries and audience discussions of the papers. Two things stayed with me from reading the volume in manuscript. The first was that Nancy’s paper met with universal approval. In addition to deflating the reputation of the China Lobby, Nancy had demonstrated how the Nationalists’ poorly coordinated program in Washington had doomed Chiang’s chances of receiving aid from the U.S. The second thing that impressed me was the civility of the discussion, not only of Nancy’s paper, but of the others in the volume as well. This was a group I wanted to be a part of.

The only problem was that Nancy’s paper was also intimidating to a fledgling graduate student. The depth of her research and the mature, almost second-nature confidence she displayed in explaining what went wrong with the Chinese Nationalists’ effort were lightyears ahead of what I thought possible. Nevertheless, I kept plugging away. My friend and colleague Mike Palmer assured me that a dissertation was really just a bunch of seminar papers bound together. Anyone who wrote a seminar paper could write a dissertation. That was reassuring. After I passed my comprehensive exams, Russell Weigley, another advisor, said all I needed now was persistence. Then I saw Nancy’s dissertation. Waldo had a copy in manuscript form. At first glance, it appeared that Mike was right. Sitting there in typescript, Nancy’s dissertation looked like a collection of research papers. Upon further examination, however, the resemblance was entirely superficial.

The book that eventuated from that dissertation, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950* (1983) was a pathbreaking study that revealed the Truman administration’s approach to the Communist Revolution to be far more circumspect and flexible than historians had previously imagined. Part of that

¹ See the H-Diplo tribute to the scholarship of Dorothy Borg, with an introduction by Warren I. Cohen and essays by Lloyd Gardner and Akira Iriye at <https://issforum.org/forums/34>.

² The four books are Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945–1992: Uncertain Friendships* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994); Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); Tucker, *The China Threat: Memories, Myths, and Realities in the 1950s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

argument had been previewed by Warren I. Cohen in his contribution to *Uncertain Years*, “Acheson, His Advisors, and 1949-1950.”³ Later, the historian Robert MacMahon would dub the lost chance in China thesis the Cohen-Tucker thesis.⁴ As Meredith Oyen points out, one of Nancy’s signal contributions to that thesis was her inclusion of non-governmental actors in her analysis of the competing pressures on the Truman administration in the wake of the Nationalists’ flight to Taiwan. The importance of domestic politics on US policy towards China was a recurring theme in Nancy’s work.

I finally met Nancy a year or two later at a SHAFR conference in Washington. I don’t know what I expected but however intimidating she was in print, she was the opposite in person. That was nice to know because her scholarship continued to awe. In 1986 Nancy received a Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs fellowship that enabled her to serve on the China Desk in the State Department. That experience sharpened Nancy’s already keen understanding of the policy process. The following year, she also won SHAFR’s Stuart L. Bernath Lecture Prize, which is awarded to rising scholars in the field of US foreign relations. Nancy’s second book *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945–1992: Uncertain Friendships* (1994), which was awarded SHAFR’s Bernath Book Prize, continued her upward trajectory as a scholar and established her as a leading authority on the US relationship with the Republic of China.

Nancy’s next major publication was an edited volume of oral histories by China Hands that were collected by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. Assembled between book covers resembling an old file folder, the oral histories were expertly edited and organized into a cohesive narrative by Nancy. The historian Michael Schaller observed that *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations, 1945-1996* (2000) admirably offered readers an insider’s look at “the human dimension of policy formation....”⁵ As Shelley Rigger notes, *China Confidential* took Nancy’s “conviction that individuals matter to its fullest conclusion, allowing the participants to tell in their own words the story she was writing as a professional historian.”

Following publication of *China Confidential*, Nancy turned her attention to the Taiwan Strait. Nowhere, she insisted, was the danger to Americans greater. “The dilemma of Taiwan’s future,” was a problem that required rethinking in light of the momentous changes that had occurred since the end of the Cold War.⁶ Nancy’s contribution to that reexamination was the edited volume *Dangerous Strait*, a collection of papers originally presented at workshop held in conjunction with the Department of State.⁷ The purpose was to challenge conventional wisdom on the course of Taiwanese politics, economic relations with the People’s Republic of China (PRC), military development, and relations with the United States. In addition to editing the volume, Nancy contributed a chapter that defended the American policy of strategic ambiguity towards Taiwan against a rising chorus of critics in government and think tanks. Proponents of strategic clarity were mistaken, she wrote, in thinking that a clear delineation of American responses to provocations on either side of the Strait would lead to stability in the region. The antagonists would continue to probe the limits of American commitment, which could only lead to disaster. Moreover, proponents of strategic clarity failed to

³ Warren I. Cohen, “Acheson, His Advisors, and 1949-1950” in Dorothy Borg and Waldo Heinrichs, eds., *Uncertain Years: Chinese-American Relations, 1947-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 13-52.

⁴ Robert J. MacMahon, “The Cold War in Asia: Toward a New Synthesis?” *Diplomatic History* 12: 3 (Summer 1988): 307-327. See page 313 for the reference to the Cohen-Tucker thesis.

⁵ Michael Schaller review of Tucker, *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations, 1945-1996* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), in *The China Journal* 47 (January 2002):125-126.

⁶ Tucker, “Introduction,” in Tucker ed. *Dangerous Strait: The U.S.-Taiwan-China Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 1.

⁷ Tucker, ed., *Dangerous Strait: The U.S.-Taiwan-China Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005),

understand that “American domestic politics as much as circumstances in the Taiwan Strait will determine Washington’s reaction to developments between China and Taiwan.”⁸ No president, she noted, “will want to be constrained by decisions made in the past—his own or, even less, those of a predecessor.”⁹

Dangerous Strait was published as Nancy was working on what Shelley Rigger rightly describes as her magnum opus, *Strait Talk*. One of the earliest samples of that work-in-progress was the article “Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China,” published in 2005 in the *Journal of American History*, the flagship journal of American historians.¹⁰ Nancy punctured the myth that President Richard Nixon was the only one who could go to China and disputed the claim that the “Week that Changed the World,” as the administration described it, was a brilliantly executed diplomatic maneuver. Instead of triumph, she saw a policy that betrayed America’s ally and misled the People’s Republic of China, thereby sowing mistrust that would plague US relations with both governments for decades.

“Taiwan Expendable?” had an immediate impact on Nancy’s career, but not in the way she expected. As Thomas Fingar explains in his contribution to this symposium, it was after reading a copy of the article that Nancy had sent him that he decided to recruit her for a position in the Office of Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). As Fingar explains, Nancy brought to her new job the same willingness to question conventional wisdom that she used to take Nixon and Henry Kissinger down a few pegs and challenge the opponents of “strategic ambiguity.” She also did not shy away from engaging in a full and frank exchange of views when faced with bureaucratic foot dragging. Her successor, Richard Immerman, agrees with Fingar’s assessment of Nancy’s record. Richard notes that Nancy needed to win the respect and cooperation of an understandably skeptical group of mid-level professionals. She succeeded by impressing them with her work ethic, analytical skill, and high standards. He also observed that working in government enhanced Nancy’s scholarship by providing her with insight into bureaucratic process and the culture of intelligence analysis. Speaking from his own experience, Immerman observed that there is a significant difference between reading about bureaucratic politics and seeing it in operation.¹¹

In 2007, Nancy returned to Georgetown after her year of government service and completed her work on the unresolved Taiwan Strait controversy which was published two years later as *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (2009). Among its many accomplishments, described by Shelley Rigger, *Strait Talk* was a fervent plea to policy makers to realize that history matters and that the American penchant for ignoring the history of US-China-Taiwan relations could prove disastrous for all involved.

Nancy’s fourth and last book was published in the final year of her life. Nancy opened *The China Threat: Memories Myths, and Realities in the 1950s* (2012), in her typical fashion by debunking the long-held myth that outgoing President Dwight Eisenhower warned John F. Kennedy that he would come out of retirement to oppose Kennedy if the new president attempted to normalize relations with the People’s Republic of China. Nancy had done preliminary work for *The China Threat* in the late 1980s, before she focused her attention on Taiwan and the Strait.¹² Benefiting from the

⁸ Tucker, “Strategic Ambiguity or Strategic Clarity?” in Tucker, ed., *Dangerous Strait: The U.S.-Taiwan-China Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 206.

⁹ Introduction, Tucker, ed., *Dangerous Strait*, 15.

¹⁰ Tucker, “Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China” *The Journal of American History* 92:1 (June 2005): 109-135.

¹¹ Marc Gallicchio interview with Richard Immerman, January 20, 2022.

¹² Tucker, “A House Divided: The United States, the Department of State, and China,” in Warren I. Cohen and Akira Iriye, eds., *The Great Powers in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990): 35-62; Tucker, “John Foster Dulles and the

work of the Eisenhower revisionists, she found that Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles were far less dogmatic in private about the recognition question than they were in public.¹³ The Eisenhower who emerges in this study was fatalistic about the survival of the PRC and resigned to the US dealing with that country, just not during his administration.¹⁴ Here was another reminder of how domestic politics shaped foreign policy. In some respects, Nancy had come full circle with *The China Threat* by demonstrating similarities between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations that neither president would have been comfortable acknowledging. For both, a Europe-first world view relegated China policy to a secondary consideration that was not worth the risk of a political battle with Chiang Kai-shek's friends in the US.

Nancy died the year that *The China Threat* was published. She left behind an impressive record of achievement. An intellectually formidable scholar, Nancy was an inspiration to diplomatic historians who hope to make their work matter to scholars and policymakers. She certainly mattered to her colleagues and students. As the essays below show, she was also a highly regarded and beloved scholar, mentor, and public servant.

Participants:

Marc Gallicchio is a Professor of History at Villanova University. He is the author of several books on US-East Asian relations including *The African American Encounter with Japan and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000) which was awarded the Robert H. Ferrell Prize by Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations and *Unconditional: The Japanese Surrender in World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020). He is coauthor with Waldo Heinrichs of *Implacable Foes: War in the Pacific, 1944-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), which won the Bancroft Prize in History.

Thomas Fingar is Shorenstein Asia Pacific Research Center Fellow at Stanford's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. He served as the first Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analysis and Chairman of the National Intelligence Council (2005-2008), and as Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research in the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations.

Meredith Oyen is an associate professor of history and director of the Asian Studies Program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Oyen has received fellowships from NSEP Boren, Fulbright, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, in addition to research funding from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. Oyen has published articles in *Diplomatic History*, the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, *Modern Asian Studies*, and the *Journal of American Ethnic History*. Her first book, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-Chinese Relations in the Cold War*, was published in 2015 by Cornell University Press.

Taiwan Roots of the 'Two Chinas' Policy," in Richard Immerman, ed., *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990): 235-263.

¹³ See for examples Richard Immerman, "Eisenhower and Dulles: Who Made the Decisions?" *Political Psychology* 1 (Autumn, 1979), 21-28; Immerman, ed., *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); Blanche Weisen Cooke, *The Declassified Eisenhower* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981); Robert Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Stephen G. Rabe, "Eisenhower Revisionism: The Scholarly Debate," in Michael J. Hogan, ed. *America in the World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 300-325.

¹⁴ The one exception was on relaxing trade restrictions for the sake of Allied unity.

Shelley Rigger is the Brown Professor of East Asian Politics at Davidson College and the author of four books about the politics of Taiwan and cross-Strait relations.

Essay by Thomas Fingar, Stanford University

“Nancy Bernkopf Tucker: Scholar and Public Servant”

Nancy Tucker is widely and appropriately recognized for her brilliant scholarship and teaching abilities, but too few know about her important contributions to the United States while serving at the State Department (1986-1987) and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (2006-2007). Three factors account for this lack of recognition: Nancy’s self-effacing modesty, the propensity of academics to view even temporary assignments to government positions as digressions from serious scholarly activity, and the failure of government agencies to acknowledge individual contributions to what are inherently collective undertakings. This essay is intended both to illuminate Nancy’s contributions to the national security enterprise and to encourage other accomplished scholars to explore what they can gain from and contribute to the work of government agencies.¹

I lack the space and the knowledge to describe in detail what made Nancy the person, the scholar, and the bureaucratic player that she was. My goal in this short essay is to complement the other tributes to her scholarly contributions by illuminating the lesser-known public service dimension of Nancy’s extraordinary career.

Many scholars believe their work has policy relevance and that government decisions would be better if policymakers made time to study their research findings. Their belief might be warranted, but passively hoping that busy decision makers will discover, appreciate, and apply their scholarly insights is wishful thinking. A much smaller number seek to apply what they have learned and/or improve their own work by serving in government positions. Nancy took the later course. Doing so increased the accuracy and impact of her scholarly work and had a profound effect on the quality and efficacy of intelligence analysis. Other scholars can learn from Nancy’s example, but few are likely to be as successful as she was unless they have her rare combination of intellectual rigor, willingness to take risks, and exceptional interpersonal skills. I wish we had more scholars like Nancy and hope that more will attempt to follow her example.

I met Nancy in the early 1980s and had read several of her early publications by the time we became colleagues at the State Department in 1986.² She was assigned to the China Desk when I moved from Stanford to the State Department as Chief of the China Division.³ As two of the few ‘scholars’ working on China issues, we chatted often about what we regarded as methodological flaws in the analytical work produced by different components of the Intelligence Community (IC). Although we both judged that the work done by ‘my’ division was better, I listened carefully to her critiques with the goal of making our work even better. It quickly became apparent that her analysis and criticism of analytic work were more than the usual carping of an academic claiming to be smarter than the ‘bureaucrats’ working in government positions. She wanted to understand the reasons IC analyses were written as they were and to make them better. Knowing that she was not in a position to change the way the IC studied China, she pummeled me with

¹ Limited movement between academe and government is not a new phenomenon. See, for example, Alexander L. George, *Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993); and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Bridging the Gap between Theory and Policy,” *Political Psychology* 29:4 (2008): 593-603.

² Although I am a political scientist, I developed a life-long interest in diplomatic history when taking several courses from Walter LaFeber at Cornell in the mid-1960s. This avocational interest and my professional focus on China made me an avid reader of Nancy’s work.

³ The China Division is part of the Office of Analysis for East Asia and the Pacific in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR). INR is the analytical component of the State Department and one of 16 agencies in the Intelligence Community. The China Desk is part of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs responsible for policy formulation and implementation.

suggestions of ways to improve both process and products. At the time, I was not in a position to do much with her suggestions. Two decades later, I was.

In May 2005, I accepted the newly created position of Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analysis (DDNI/A) with a mix of exhilaration and anxiety. The recently passed Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA) had created a new cabinet-level organization and mandated or authorized the most sweeping reform of the US Intelligence Community since its creation in 1947.⁴ That I had been given the opportunity to design and implement reforms to integrate and improve analytic work in sixteen intelligence components spread across seven cabinet departments was both thrilling and daunting. As I have described elsewhere, I had a broad mandate but no blueprint.⁵ When I accepted the position, my organization chart consisted of a single box labeled DDNI/A. The reform legislation and a subsequently issued presidential directive mandated several dozen goals and requirements but were largely silent on how to achieve them.⁶ Completing the organization chart required grappling with several interconnected chicken-and-egg problems. To recruit people, I (and they) had to know what they were being recruited to do. That, in turn, required grouping the mandated tasks—plus others necessary to achieve them—into logical, integrated, and manageable portfolios. But assigning tasks to portfolios and portfolios to people required understanding of the skills required for the job and possessed by prospective candidates. There was no obvious starting point.

The challenges summarized above were endemic to all dimensions of my yet-to-be constructed directorate. But each cluster of tasks also had specific challenges and considerations. The cluster that eventually came to be called analytic integrity and standards was particularly vexing because it was critical to improving the actual and perceived performance of analysts and analytic components of the Intelligence Community, restoring policymaker and public confidence in intelligence products, and restoring the morale of the thousands of analysts who had been tarred with the brush of incompetence wielded by critics inside and outside government. The analytic sins that triggered demands for reform of the Intelligence Community were the “failure” to provide operational intelligence that might have prevented the 9/11 attacks and erroneous judgments about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Only a tiny percentage of IC analysts had anything to do with those assessments but all were tarred by them. This created not only problems of morale but also, and more serious, erosion of policymaker confidence in all IC analytic products.

Although I still had only a dim vision of what the person recruited to lead this dimension of intelligence reform would have to do, I immediately recognized the substantive and symbolic importance of the selection. Substantively, I needed someone with a strong commitment to good analytic tradecraft and the skills needed to design institutional mechanisms to assess, enhance, and monitor the quality and utility of analysis produced in highly diverse components of the Intelligence Community. Doing this effectively was imperative, but speed was even more important. Members of Congress thought they had solved the problems of IC analysis by passing reform legislation. Executive branch officials needed to be convinced that IC products were trustworthy and objective. Analysts needed to be instructed and enabled to practice good analytic methods and persuaded that any changes would help them to do their jobs better than existing procedures allowed.

The choice was also important symbolically because it needed to demonstrate to oversight bodies in the Congress and the executive branch that the newly-created Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) ‘got it’ with respect to

⁴ *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004* (Public Law 108–458), December 17, 2004 (hereafter *IRTPA*), https://www.dni.gov/files/ISE/documents/DocumentLibrary/IRTPA_amended.pdf; and President Bush Administration Actions to Implement WMD Commission Recommendations, June 29, 2005 (hereafter *Bush Administration Actions*), <http://fas.org/irp/news/2005/06/wh062905-wmd.pdf>.

⁵ Thomas Fingar, *From Mandate to Blueprint: Lessons from Intelligence Reform* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021).

⁶ *IRTPA*; and *Bush Administration Actions*.

how much weight was attached to improving analytic products.⁷ This argued, in my mind, for selection of a well-known and highly regarded scholar from the academic community to demonstrate that the IC recognized that it needed help and was not going to ‘reform’ by repackaging old practices. These competing considerations created a dilemma. An “outsider” would appease critics but alienate IC analysts; an “insider” would be more acceptable to the analysts and agencies on which I depended for success but intensify scrutiny and criticism from skeptics and those eager to see the new experiment fail.

I was mulling this dilemma when serendipity came into play. After relegating considerations about how to build, staff, and achieve both mandated and desirable changes in analytical practices to the back of my mind, I turned to the stack of mail that had arrived earlier in the day. The item at the top of that stack was an offprint from *The Journal of American History* entitled “Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China” by Nancy Bernkopf Tucker.⁸ Nancy had sent me her latest article because she knew I would be interested and was in a position to provide informed feedback. I read it immediately. Long before I reached the final page, I had decided that Nancy was the perfect candidate to lead the quest to improve IC analysis. She had the reputation and stature needed to satisfy external critics, greater understanding of how intelligence products support the national security enterprise than all but a handful of scholars, and the personal demeanor to reassure skeptical IC analysts. Memories of our conversations two decades earlier were reawakened and reinforced my conviction that she would be perfect for the job—if I could persuade her to take it.

I phoned Nancy immediately, sketched out what I had in mind and acknowledged that there was enormous uncertainty about and substantial animosity toward the undertaking for which I wanted to recruit her. Predictably, she was untroubled by the lack of a clear job description, undaunted by the prospect of opposition, and excited by the opportunity to improve policy decisions by improving the quality of IC analytic support. She asked only a few questions before saying, “I’ll do it if Warren will let me.” I knew that the real potential obstacle was her obligation to Georgetown, not the need to obtain husband Warren Cohen’s permission, but acknowledged that taking the job would disrupt their plans for collaborative work on diplomatic history projects. Fortunately for me and for the Intelligence Community, she chose to temporarily subordinate scholarly goals to public service.

When I explained my recruitment of Nancy to Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte, I assumed that he did not know her. I described her as disarmingly pleasant but very tough minded with respect to the need for intellectual rigor. Tough minded without being hard edged. John surprised me by responding, “You’re kidding, right?” Misinterpreting his question as uncertainty about whether Nancy was tough enough for the job, I elaborated the reasons I thought she was perfect for the position. This time he replied, “I know she is demanding and a hard-ass. She was my wife’s dissertation advisor.”

When Nancy accepted my job offer, neither of us had a clear vision of what it would entail. Most political appointees and in-and-outers who accept government jobs move into well-established positions with clear tasks and procedures. Nancy had accepted a much more demanding set of challenges. For starters, she had to design, build, and staff the organization she had agreed to lead. To do that, she first needed to elaborate and group tasks specified in the reform legislation and presidential directive. That task was inseparable from the need to develop and inculcate tradecraft standards, ways to use the standards to evaluate individual products and agency performance, and securing the buy-in of skeptical analysts. All tasks and goals were interconnected and all had to be managed simultaneously. Most people

⁷ These expectations are discussed in greater detail in Fingar, *Mandate to Blueprint*; and Thomas Fingar, “Office of the Director of National Intelligence: From Pariah and Piñata to Managing Partner,” Roger Z. George and Harvey Rishikof, eds., *The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth, Second Edition* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017), 185-203.

⁸ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, “Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China,” *The Journal of American History* 92:1 (June 2005), 109-135.

would have found the challenges daunting if not overwhelming. Nancy never flinched. She simply assumed that she could achieve what was necessary and set out to convince others that they needed to help her.

Recognizing the need to demonstrate rapid progress, she began to think about and float ideas about building a staff and assigning responsibilities even before she made the formal move from Georgetown to the ODNI. To start things rolling and to address the potential morale and resistance problems alluded to above, Nancy immediately saw the wisdom in selecting a respected IC analyst to serve as her deputy. The combination gave ODDNI/A the ability to highlight Nancy's leading role to critics who insisted the IC needed help from outside to correct its analytic deficiencies. It also enabled us to highlight her deputy's inside knowledge when reassuring IC analysts that any changes would be informed by deep understanding of IC missions and procedures. The pairing proved highly effective, in part because the combination of Nancy's stature and command of good scholarly research methods and other team members' understanding of and reputations in the Intelligence Community. But it was also due to Nancy's low-key ability to elicit information, listen to what others told her, and quickly develop first-draft courses of action.

When she accepted the position, it did not have a title. I was comfortable with deferring the title until we had developed organization charts and grouped tasks for all subdivisions of the analysis directorate. Nancy was among the first to recognize that in Washington the absence of a title was an impediment to gaining cooperation and getting things done. I told her to call the position whatever she thought would be effective.

Having a title was less important than what she did. Her approach to defining and implementing goals specified by the IRTPA legislation resembled development of first approximation hypotheses to interpret research findings. Rather than struggle indefinitely to devise a perfect plan, Nancy and her team developed preliminary solutions and subjected them to both critical review and real world experimentation. Her personal style fit well with and contributed to the overall approach of ODDNI/A. Another deputy, Mike Wertheimer, characterized that approach as "Think big, start small, fail cheap, and fix fast." That approach worked for the reform of analytic tradecraft because Nancy made clear that all decisions were tentative until proven effective.

Although the varied dimensions of her portfolio of responsibilities were interconnected and too complex to examine in detail in this essay, they can be illustrated by focusing on three clusters of activity.⁹ I have labeled those clusters tradecraft, training, and teamwork.

Tradecraft. The reforms included in the 2004 intelligence reform legislation and subsequently issued presidential directive were a direct response to criticisms of IC analytic practices.¹⁰ Some of the criticisms were overstated, but there was widespread recognition within the Intelligence Community that we could and must both do better and, as importantly, be seen to do better. Nancy's job was to make that happen.

⁹ For additional information on the content of the reforms overseen by Nancy see, for example, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, "The Cultural Revolution in Intelligence: Interim Report," *Washington Quarterly* 31:2 (2008), 47-61; Richard H. Immerman, "Transforming Analysis: The Intelligence Community's Best Kept Secret," *Intelligence and National Security* 26:2-3 (April-June 2011), 159-181; Jim Marchio, "Analytic Tradecraft and the Intelligence Community: Enduring Value, Intermittent Emphasis," *Intelligence and National Security* 29:2 (2014), 1-25; and Fingar, *From Mandate to Blueprint*.

¹⁰ See, for example, The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004); *Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence on the US Intelligence Community's Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq together with Additional Views*, 108th Congress, 2d Session, S. Report 108-301, July 9, 2004 at <http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/108301.pdf>; and Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, *Report to the President of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005).

The requisites and methodology of intelligence analysis are fundamentally the same as those necessary for good scholarly analysis (e.g., objectivity; logical exposition; and clear distinctions among facts, assumptions, and interpretative judgments). Nancy's training as a historian made her acutely sensitive to the reliability of evidence. Busy recipients of intelligence analyses must be confident that those providing reports have made informed judgments about always incomplete, often contradictory, and sometimes deliberately misleading information obtained through open and clandestine means. Scholars seldom must contend with information intended to deceive or mislead them. Consumers of intelligence analysis must be confident that analysts have done the work with integrity and adherence to the rules of evidence and inference. In academe, we 'show our homework' in footnotes and methodological prologues. Policymakers lack the time to wade through or check the homework of IC analysts. They can and often do challenge IC judgments, but most of the time must trust that analysts have objectively evaluated, assessed, and interpreted all available information, considered alternative interpretations, and appropriately caveated their judgments. Stated another way, the recipients of intelligence analyses must have confidence that IC analysts consistently employ world-class analytic tradecraft.

One of Nancy's first tasks was to translate the goals specified in the IRTPA legislation into guidance and evaluative criteria. Most IC analysts assumed that they were already employing good tradecraft. Most of them were, at least most of the time. This was good, but it also made them reluctant to review or reform familiar procedures to rebuild confidence and make products even better. Nancy and her team not only had to clarify and codify what was expected, they also had to persuade often skeptical and reluctant analysts to become even more conscientious about applying tradecraft standards. Her skill as a teacher proved invaluable in persuading analysts and agencies that they could and should want to be even better than they thought they were.

Nancy's team also had to develop criteria and procedures to evaluate the work of individual analysts and agencies. Adherence to common standards was essential not only to improve the actual and perceived quality of analytic work across all 16 IC agencies, but also to facilitate collaboration, divisions of labor, and willingness to rely on work done in other IC components. Before adoption of the standards and procedures Nancy helped to develop, analysts and agencies were reluctant to trust work done by others because they could not be confident that it conformed to the same tradecraft standards they employed. This was a necessary step toward taking greater advantage of distributed expertise and reducing duplication of effort.

Defining and developing tradecraft standards was only the first step. Operationalizing them and putting them into effect benefitted from Nancy's experience and skill as a teacher. Simply publishing the standards would not be sufficient. Her team had to train senior analysts and managers to use the standards when evaluating drafts and final products. Evaluation was needed to identify and address problems at the individual, agency, and IC levels. Nancy built the necessary staff and mechanisms to make evaluation routine. The triggering reason for establishing evaluative mechanisms was the need to comply with a provision of the reform legislation requiring a report to Congress. Nancy utilized new procedures developed elsewhere in ODDNI/A to deposit 'all' IC analytic products in a single data base to assess the work done by all agencies on selected regional and transnational issues.

The evaluative exercise initially was regarded with considerable anxiety and antipathy. No one wanted to receive a bad report card. But Nancy and her team persuasively argued—and demonstrated—that the purpose was primarily diagnostic and would help analysts and managers to identify and address problems and reward outstanding performance. Thanks to her effort, approach, and skill, antipathy yielded to compliance and, ultimately, acceptance.

Training. As a teacher—and student of human nature—Nancy recognized that it was unrealistic to think that merely issuing new tradecraft guidance would change behavior. If we really wanted analysts to behave differently, we had to teach them how to apply the newly issued standards in their everyday work. This was a multifaceted challenge. One challenge was of the teaching old-dogs-new-tricks variety. Almost half of the analysts in the Intelligence Community had been writing intelligence analyses for a decade or more. Most of them consistently applied all or most of the newly reformulated standards most of the time. For them, the standards had been internalized and were applied more-or-less

automatically. This group needed to be reassured that Nancy's efforts were not an insult to their capabilities, persuaded to conduct a self-evaluation of their own tradecraft, and to emphasize and employ the standards when mentoring and reviewing the work of junior analysts.

A second challenge was to quickly train or retrain the roughly fifty percent of IC analysts who had joined the Intelligence Community after 9/11. Since many of them had recently graduated from undergraduate or graduate programs, they could be assumed to have at least reasonable command of analytic methodologies taught in American universities. But limited training budgets and the perceived need to put new recruits to work as quickly as possible meant that they could benefit from additional tradecraft instruction.

The third category was comprised of very recent and future additions to the analytic workforce. This group became a primary focus of Nancy's efforts, but her objectives were broader than merely inculcating tradecraft standards. She, and others on the ODDNI/A senior team, saw this as a way to build what we described as a "community of analysts."¹¹ Briefly, we envisioned using this training program as a way to build personal relationships among analysts from across the IC and to build confidence that the work done by colleagues in other agencies was done in accordance with the same tradecraft standards. The first goal was to build networks that facilitated identification and connections among analysts in other agencies. The second was to facilitate collaboration, divisions of labor, and greater willingness to trust work prepared by IC colleagues.

Nancy early on articulated the need for and value of what she immediately began calling "Analysis 101." My first response was that a different component of the ODNI enterprise was responsible for training and creation of a mandated National Intelligence University (NIU) and that she should explain to that group what was needed. A few weeks later, she not quite stormed into my office (Nancy could be a force of nature but she achieved this without histrionics), closed the door, and ranted about the failure of those responsible for training to understand the urgency of her/our need for Analysis 101. They insisted that it would take a year to start the program. Nancy stepped closer to my desk and declaimed, "You've developed new courses and know that the only way to work out the bugs is to actually teach it. We can do this and be ready to go in a month." I told her to do it and that I would take the flak for going around the nascent NIU. Her team developed the syllabus, hired instructors, and was ready to go in a matter of weeks. All but one agency became enthusiastic participants, hundreds of analysts went through the program in the first year, and it achieved both the pedagogic and networking objectives.¹²

Teamwork. Nancy would be the first to insist that accomplishments attributed to her in this tribute were really the work of a team that she was privileged to lead. She would say it and she would mean it. Such a statement would not be a sign of false modesty because she very much saw her role as one of assembling, organizing, guiding, and trusting members "her" team, and as being a contributing member of the larger ODDNI/A and ODNI teams of which she was a part. Although too few academics spend time in government positions, most of those who do act as scholars-in-residence who use their positions primarily to do their own work or as plug-in substitutes for other professionals with well-defined responsibilities. Very few, in my experience, accept the risks and challenges that Nancy shouldered in her ODDNI/A position. She did not simply slip into a pre-existing position with well-defined responsibilities. She had to create the position, define its responsibilities, and recruit people to help. It is difficult to exaggerate how difficult and important it

¹¹ For more on this see Thomas Fingar, "Building a Community of Analysts," Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce, eds., *Analyzing Intelligence: National Security Practitioners' Perspectives, Second Edition* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014), 287-301.

¹² See Nancy Tucker's interview with Mary Louise Kelly, "Intelligence Community Unites for 'Analysis 101,'" National Public Radio, May 7, 2007, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10040625>.

is to manage the interconnected challenges this entailed. Most people would not consider—or be considered for—such a position. Nancy accepted without hesitation and achieved remarkable and lasting success.

One dimension of her teambuilding efforts centered on the standup of the Analytic Integrity and Standards division. Timelines in the reform legislation and both real and perceived pressures to demonstrate rapid progress made it imperative to begin recruiting people and prioritizing tasks without delay. Nancy and her team made early engagement with IC analysts a top priority. She was not the only one taking risks by accepting a position in what became the Analytic Integrity and Standards (AIS) division. Most of the people she needed to staff the organization would have to come from within the Intelligence Community. Taking a position in the unproven and, in many circles unwanted ODNI posed career risks for all who did so. This provided both incentive to achieve reform objectives and, in theory, opportunities to slow or subvert progress. Nancy attracted first-rate colleagues and melded them into a smooth functioning and enthusiastic team.

A key reason for the success of this teambuilding effort was Nancy's solicitation and careful consideration of suggestions and feedback. She not only asked people for ideas and criticism, she demonstrated that she was genuinely interested in what they had to say. She listened and adjusted her preliminary plans. This made for better plans and increased internal and external buy-in for what the team was trying to accomplish.

Her attention to teamwork was also manifest in the ways that she contributed to the parallel and interconnected standup of ODDNI/A. As one of six assistant deputies (i.e., deputies to me as Deputy DNI for Analysis), Nancy participated in the daily senior staff meetings at which we shared information on what we had undertaken, the problems we had encountered, and what was needed from other components of ODDNI/A and/or ODNI to achieve the goals of each division. There was remarkably little attention to “turf” issues and a commendable amount of collaboration to achieve overarching objectives. Nancy needed help from everyone else on the team. For example, she needed cooperation from the assistant deputies for the National Intelligence Council (NIC) and the President's Daily Brief (PDB) to first pilot the new standards and then to facilitate their acceptance across the Intelligence Community by mandating—which I was able to do by virtue of delegated authorities—that the standards would be used for all NIC and PDB products. She usually got what she needed, in part because she responded positively when others needed help from her division or individual members of her staff. Anyone who thinks, “Well, of course that is the way things should work” has never worked in a complex bureaucracy with competing priorities, hard deadlines, and ambitious people. Nancy had the patience, perseverance, and good judgment to make it work for her and her responsibilities.

A final manifestation of commitment to teamwork and sensitivity to the political and bureaucratic contexts of what we were attempting to do concerns her choice of a successor. As I had weighed the pros and cons of selecting someone from outside the Intelligence Community before selecting Nancy, she thought long and hard about who should succeed her when she returned to Georgetown. Her team had more than demonstrated the skills necessary to continue and build on the reforms that she had initiated, but our overseers on the Hill and on the President's Intelligence Advisory Board still expressed concern that the noble experiment would stall without continued leadership by an “outside” scholar. I shared that assessment of oversight body attitudes but Nancy and I did not discuss it until after she had taken the initiative to recruit fellow diplomatic historian Richard Immerman.

I knew of but did not know Richard personally until we were introduced by Nancy. In typical—and in my view commendable—fashion, she had reached out to Richard and talked him into accepting the position before telling me anything about it. I wasn't upset or offended that she had taken the initiative because I trusted her judgment and recognized that no one knew better than she did what skills and personality traits were needed to continue the mission she had begun. When we did meet over lunch, I thought the purpose was for me to persuade him to accept. Richard thought the purpose was to inform me that he had been persuaded by Nancy to accept the position. He proved to be an outstanding choice and played a crucial role in continuing Nancy's efforts and solidifying her legacy in the Intelligence Community.

This tribute to Nancy's government service would be incomplete without an explanation of her title. When I recruited her for the position, I had only a dim idea of the tasks and responsibilities involved and no idea whatsoever about its title or place in the bureaucratic hierarchy. Nancy accepted that and agreed to call herself the deputy for TBD (to be determined). A few weeks after she assumed full time duties, she declared that she needed a proper title because people inside and outside the Intelligence Community did not know what to call her and that without a proper title, everything she attempted to do would appear transitory. I said, OK, what do you want to be called. She flashed her impish smile and said the longer the title, the more important people think you are. I again said, OK, what do you want to be called. With a bigger smile, she declared, "I want to be the Assistant Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analytic Integrity and Standards and, Concurrently, the Ombudsperson for Intelligence Analysis." This time I replied, to her even larger grin, if you can remember all that, that is what you shall be. She made the position her own, but she also built an enduring institutional legacy that has made intelligence analysis better. We should all be grateful for her detour from academe to public service.

Essay by Shelley Rigger, Davidson College

“Nancy Bernkopf Tucker’s Contributions to Taiwan Studies”

The preface to Nancy Bernkopf Tucker’s fourth book, *The China Threat: Memories, Myths, and Realities in the 1950s*, published in the last year of her life, begins, “This book argues that individuals matter”¹ That claim may not seem very bold to her fellow diplomatic historians, but to this card-carrying member of the American Political Science Association, it is a striking assertion. Perhaps she wrote that sentence because she knew the book’s audience would include China and Taiwan specialists across the social sciences, and she wanted to make sure those outside her field understood where she was coming from, and where she was going. Whatever her reasons in that instance, Bernkopf Tucker’s scholarship exemplifies the best practices and standards of the historian’s craft, even as it pushes back against political science’s tendency to deny human agency in international relations, a perspective those who make US policy in East Asia need now more than ever.²

This sentiment that “individuals matter” was more than a scholarly stance. The sentence captures Bernkopf Tucker’s character as well as her intellect. In her personal life and in her scholarship, she put people first. Not just the grand historical personages who populate her diplomatic narratives – American leaders Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, and Henry Kissinger; Taiwanese and People’s Republic of China (PRC) politicians Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Chiang Ching-kuo, and Lee Teng-hui – but also the ordinary (and extraordinary) citizens who are, all too often, reduced in historical writing to the objects of larger forces, and in social science to statistics. Bernkopf Tucker was interested in – she *cared about* – people, and her ability to bring that curiosity and attention to her work as a historian of post-World War II relations among the United States, China (in all its forms), Taiwan, and Hong Kong gave her a powerful voice in the emerging field of Taiwan studies and among policy makers working on the US-Taiwan-PRC triangle.

Bernkopf Tucker had every reason to expect that *The China Threat’s* readers would include practitioners as well as scholars from many academic disciplines because her previous work had helped to create that readership. Bernkopf Tucker’s books and articles played a central role in nurturing a community of researchers and policy-makers interested in and concerned about Taiwan and US-Taiwan relations. She was among the first scholars in any field to focus her attention on Taiwan, and her work is foundational to both the academic study of Taiwan and to how Americans think about US policy in the Taiwan Strait. Her work both narrates the history of US-Taiwan relations and provides a fierce analysis of that history. It is impossible to understand how the US-PRC-Taiwan triangle has evolved over the past seventy years without reading her work.

She chose the topic against the advice of the man who would become her husband and devoted cheerleader, Warren Cohen. When she first consulted him about whether to accept an invitation to write about Taiwan and Hong Kong in the early ‘80s, Cohen – a leading historian of US foreign policy – didn’t think it wise for a promising young scholar to narrow her focus to a country that seemed, at that moment, in terminal decline. Fortunately, Bernkopf Tucker set aside Cohen’s guidance and forged ahead with her Taiwan-focused research.

Bernkopf Tucker’s first book, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950* (Columbia University Press, 1983) was about Taiwan – even if the title didn’t mention it. The recognition controversy referenced in the title was the decision-making process within the US government over whether to recognize

¹ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *The China Threat: Memories, Myths, and Realities in the 1950s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), xi.

² Nancy was a bit of a stickler for “Bernkopf Tucker.” Her birth name was important to her, but she had published work under the name “Tucker,” so she herself used both names. I’ve followed that preference here.

the People's Republic of China, which declared itself on October 1, 1949, or the Republic of China (ROC), the state founded in 1912 by the Chinese Nationalists and driven into exile on Taiwan at the end of the Chinese civil war. In 1949, Taiwan was little more than a platform on which the ROC was standing, wobbly but upright, but its future as a free-standing entity on the world stage was already coming into focus.

In *Patterns in the Dust*, Bernkopf Tucker weaves together the elite processes shaping US policy with a broad range of forces that influenced those processes and their outcomes. The book focuses on a brief period, barely 18 months, in which US policymakers considered a path that they soon abandoned. Writing about a dead end may seem like an odd choice, but *Patterns in the Dust* ensures that the moment between World War II and the onset of the Cold War in Asia will not be forgotten. At that moment – after the end of the Chinese civil war but before the beginning of the Korean War – President Harry Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson crafted a strategy aimed at supporting Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government while preserving and – they hoped – even expanding informal ties with the Chinese Communists.

Bernkopf Tucker's account of the Truman Administration's efforts to navigate between the two claimants to the Chinese state reveals a US administration that was both more creative and more hardnosed than most histories suggest. The book exposes Chiang's deficiencies as a leader after his regime took refuge on Taiwan (his deficiencies on the mainland are well-known), and it explores the many domestic and international voices – including European allies, missionaries, the business community, and educators – that Acheson considered as he charted his difficult course. The book argues that Acheson was aware but unintimidated by the partisan forces arrayed against him. It was only after the Korean War broke out and the US was compelled to side firmly with Chiang's Nationalist government that Acheson found himself defenseless against the McCarthyite faction of “who lost China” witch-hunters.

Once the Cold War took hold in East Asia – once the “bamboo curtain” descended – the possibility of a different future with the PRC was forgotten. Preventing Communist expansion became the driving logic of US foreign policy, with Chiang Kai-shek's “Free China” lauded as a bulwark against the spreading Red menace. That narrative provided the context in which Nixon's trip to China in 1972 seemed both incredibly bold and incredibly unlikely. It is Bernkopf Tucker who reminds us that the US was not committed to defending Chiang's regime from the beginning, but instead was dragged to that position by the Korean War. Her work also helps to bridge the gap between histories of World War II that portray the relationship between Chiang and the US as fraught and those that emphasize the post-war alliance between the two. By analyzing the activity of so many interested parties seeking to influence US decision-making, Bernkopf Tucker also bridges the gap between elite decision-making and domestic political drivers of foreign policy.

Bernkopf Tucker's second book, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945–1992: Uncertain Friendships* (Twayne, 1994) picked up the story of US-Taiwan relations where *Patterns in the Dust* left off, covering the period between 1950 and the early 1990s. Once again, Bernkopf Tucker looked at a range of forces, including domestic politics, that influenced US policy toward Taiwan. She charted the rise – and limitations – of the “China Lobby,” a collaboration between Taiwanese and American political figures that gave Taiwan outsized influence on US foreign policy. The book includes a discussion of Taipei's great reversal of fortune in the 1970s – the US decision to normalize relations with Beijing and break ties with Taipei – but it also reveals how Taipei and its US allies were able to continue advocating effectively to protect Taiwan from total abandonment.

Much of *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States* is devoted to describing Taiwan's development between 1950 and 1965. Bernkopf Tucker explained her decision to broaden her focus beyond the diplomatic relationship between the US and Taiwan in the preface: “Scholars in the United States have been too absorbed with examining every wrinkled brow of mainland Chinese leaders to pay adequate attention to developments affecting the interests of the United States in Hong Kong or Taiwan.”³ Although the book was part of a series devoted to US relations with other countries, Tucker

³ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994), xiii.

used it as an opportunity to tell a much bigger story, to address what she rightly saw as the absence of good information about Taiwan's post-war development.

The book delves into Taiwan's politics, economic development, society, and culture in the first two decades of the Cold War. The economic section was especially important at the time, as it was the first scholarly overview of Taiwan's developmental state directed to a general readership. The book draws extensively on Tucker's research for *Patterns in the Dust*, including her work on transnational forces that affected US-Taiwan relations. As a result, her discussion of Taiwan's economic miracle foregrounds the interactions among US businesses, academics, and government advisors and helps to link the two countries' economic relationship to their political and economic ties.

Writing about recent history and contemporary events took Tucker out of the archives and into conversation with many of the participants in US-Taiwan-PRC relations. For *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States* she interviewed officials in the US, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the PRC. According to Warren Cohen, it was her interactions with her interview subjects and others close to the events she was writing about that made her so passionate, not only about US diplomacy with Taiwan, but about US diplomacy more broadly.⁴ She had had a taste of diplomatic life during a Council of Foreign Relations fellowship at the State Department China Desk and in the US Embassy in Beijing, and her keen interest in US foreign policy, not only as a historical and scholarly subject but as an arena in which she could contribute her historical knowledge and analytical expertise, continued to flourish after she began teaching at Georgetown University in 1987.

Bernkopf Tucker turned down attractive university offers because she wanted to stay in Washington, where policy was made and the people who made it were close at hand. Those policy makers turned out in force for her lectures and presentations; for the rest of her life, (except for her time at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), which is covered in Thomasingar's contribution) Bernkopf Tucker was a regular at Taiwan- and China-related programs at universities, think tanks, and government offices across Washington. Some of her most widely-read and influential writing appeared in policy journals, including "Should the United States Abandon Taiwan?" coauthored with Bonnie Glaser (*Washington Quarterly*, 2011) and "If Taiwan Chooses Unification, Should the United States Care?" (*Washington Quarterly*, 2002).

Her fascination with policy and policy makers shines through especially brightly in her oral history volume, *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations, 1945-1996* (Columbia University Press, 2001). The book is an intricate patchwork edited together from interviews conducted, for the most part, by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training's Foreign Affairs Oral History Program. The interviews are a rich source, but it is Bernkopf Tucker's careful editing that transforms them into a readable and coherent insiders' narrative of five decades of US-China diplomacy. In *China Confidential* Bernkopf Tucker took her conviction that individuals matter to its fullest conclusion, allowing the participants to tell in their own words the story she was writing as a professional historian.

Bernkopf Tucker's magnum opus is *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Harvard University Press, 2009). The book unearths and contextualizes an enormous amount of historical data covering post-war US-Taiwan relations with a particular focus on the process of US-PRC normalization and its aftermath. The book is infused with moral outrage, indicting the Nixon Administration for allowing the desire to achieve a breakthrough with China to justify a process that deceived Beijing and betrayed Taiwan. That ends-justify-the-means policy making created a dynamic in which distrust permeated – and continues to permeate – the United States' relationships with both Taipei and Beijing.

To craft this history, Bernkopf Tucker dug deeply into archives, unearthing evidence that National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and his boss, President Richard Nixon, viewed Taiwan as, as she put it, "expendable." She quotes Kissinger responding to Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai's comment that Taiwan was Chinese territory and thus "must be

⁴ Interview with the author, January 20, 2022.

restored to the motherland” by saying, “As a student of history, one’s prediction would have to be that the political evolution is likely to be in the direction which Prime Minister Chou En-lai indicated to me ... We will not stand in the way of basic evolution.”⁵ Bernkopf Tucker’s work explodes the heroic myth of the Nixon/Kissinger opening to China by showing that – far from cleverly managing PRC priorities to allow the US to gain normalization without sacrificing other interests – the two Americans secured Beijing’s cooperation by implying that the US would stand aside while the PRC had its way with Taiwan.

The climax of *Strait Talk* comes early; most of the book covers the long *denouement* that followed the Nixon and Kissinger visits to Beijing. It shows how the original sin of the Nixon-Kissinger compromises complicated everything that followed: normalization of US-PRC relations, the Taiwan Relations Act, the 1982 Communiqué in which the Reagan Administration appeared to promise an end to US arms sales to Taiwan (and the secret “Six Assurances” to Taipei that undercut that promise), Taiwan’s democratization, George H. W. Bush’s decision to upgrade arms sales to Taiwan, Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui’s successful Congressional lobbying for a visa to visit the US in 1995, the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, and George W. Bush’s disavowal of Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian in 2003. For each of these episodes, Bernkopf Tucker illuminates the toxic effects of that original sin on relations between Washington and Taiwan, and between Washington and Beijing. Taipei, she argues, lives under the shadow of abandonment, while Beijing stewes over what it sees as a series of broking promises.

Many of the arguments Bernkopf Tucker explores in *Strait Talk* appeared in journal articles, public talks, and book chapters before the book came out, including “Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China” (*Journal of American History*, 2005/6). She also edited a volume entitled *Dangerous Strait: The US-China-Taiwan Crisis* (Columbia University Press, 2005) which emphasized the contemporary challenges facing the relationship.

The arguments from *Strait Talk* also infused, informed, and inspired Bernkopf Tucker’s interactions with the policy world. In the Introduction to *Strait Talk* she wrote, “The final reason for writing this book has been to demonstrate that history matters. Current relations and future problems can be fully understood only through a historical framework. Policy makers often believe themselves too busy to consult the past regarding the needs of the future. They draw on analogies unpredictably and inaccurately. They assume that some policies are foreordained and others shapeless, open to thorough reformulation. All too often Americans have been ahistorical in seeking to influence Taiwan’s path. Taipei and Beijing have stepped in and interpreted the past competitively. When memory is absent, those who wish to create their own reality have free rein.”

Her penultimate book declared that history matters; the final one proclaimed that people matter. These two assertions convey who Bernkopf Tucker was, as a scholar and as a person. Early in her career her attention was drawn to Taiwan, and she saw in that place people who mattered, and who were put in peril by political forces beyond their control. She fought back against those forces by insisting on the value of Taiwan and its people, to themselves and to the United States. She used her prodigious gifts as a scholar and human being to press the US foreign policy establishment to attend to history – and to do right by the people of Taiwan. In the process, she built a body of work that contributed enormously to the interdisciplinary study of Taiwan that blossomed after Taiwan’s democratization in the 1990s.

Nancy Bernkopf Tucker’s scholarly work is essential to understanding Taiwan’s domestic and international development in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. Her pioneering writings and encouragement were essential to building a community of scholars specializing in Taiwan. And her leadership and mentorship gave permission to a generation of Taiwan specialists to engage with policy makers and the public to work toward sounder, more ethical, relationships among the United States, Taiwan, and the PRC.

⁵ Quoted in Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 44.

Essay by Meredith Oyen, University of Maryland Baltimore County

It is difficult to write anything about the United States and China in the Cold War without referencing the many works of Nancy Bernkopf Tucker. The body of her work has shaped so many of the ongoing contributions in the field that we do not always recognize her influence in them. As one of her graduate students, I don't recall ever having written a paper for her with fewer than three pieces of evidence, so here are my three supporting statements for that claim. First, she played a major role in the shift to take seriously the influence of non-state actors on foreign policy, beginning with her dissertation and continuing through the body of her work. Second, she centered questions of Taiwan in discussions of China policy, and she helped make the case for why the "other" China cannot be omitted from discussions of Cold War events and policies. And third, she pioneered a thoughtful integration of scholarly and policy work for historians, long before the conversations about 'alt-ac' careers became common.

I remember Nancy telling me about the motivation for her dissertation, which became her first book, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950*.¹ As befits an excellent teacher, it was an opportunity to teach about research questions: she said she was curious why the United States did not extend recognition to the People's Republic of China after its founding. Her search for an answer led to a study that carefully examined the purported foundations of the "China Lobby," especially leaders of business, missionaries, journalists, scholars, and other Americans with strong interest in an ongoing relationship with China. *Patterns in the Dust* argued that President Harry S. Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson had been open to the possibility of recognition, but the door closed with the onset of the Korean War.

Not everyone agreed with that conclusion then or in subsequent years. Nancy took part in a lively scholarly debate that considered both the American openness to accommodation, and in later years as sources became more available, the Chinese willingness to pursue it. The Chinese side seemed to close the door on the 'lost chance' debate with a resounding 'no, there was no lost chance' – not because the Truman administration did not consider it, but because the Chinese side was not all that receptive.

Beyond the 'lost chance' argument, however, *Patterns in the Dust* helped lay the groundwork for more recent histories that have centered non-state actors. This includes my own work, which focused on migrants, and more recent efforts to study business and education in Hong Kong or understand the 1970s through the eyes of the business leaders, scholars, and artists who took part in trade fairs and scholarly exchanges.² Nancy's second book, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States 1945-1992*, also fits this category, in that it seriously examined the role that both cultural influences and

¹ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). For several years after I graduated, I addressed all emails to my advisor with "Dear Dr. Tucker." She took issue with the address, and for a while I tried to get away with not using any name, just opening with "Hi! How are you?" Nancy, naturally, saw through this effort and informed me that until I used "Nancy" she would not be responding again. So I use her first name here, though if I'm honest, I still feel a little weird about it.

² Meredith Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of US-Chinese Relations in the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015); for other examples of scholars working on non-state actors, see also Peter E. Hamilton, *Made in Hong Kong: Transpacific Networks and a New History of Globalization* (New York: Columbia, 2021) and forthcoming books scholars such as Pete Millwood (*Improbable Diplomats: How Ping-Pong Players, Musicians, and Scientists Remade US-China Relations*, forthcoming from Cambridge University Press) and Kazushi Minami (*People's Diplomacy: How Americans and Chinese Transformed US-China Relations during the Cold War*, forthcoming from Cornell University Press).

private actors with an interest in transnational ties played in how the United States interacted with the Republic of China on Taiwan in the Cold War.³

Nancy made the related case in her work that individuals mattered, and that despite the many institutional constraints inherent in foreign policy work, there were numerous contingencies born of the attitudes and perspectives of the men (and very occasionally, women) involved. Her work helped to provide more nuanced views into the views that US political leaders Dean Acheson, Harry S. Truman, John Foster Dulles, and Dwight D. Eisenhower held on China. Though these two president-secretary of state duos led the United States through the height of its Cold War opposition to Communist China, she made convincing arguments in both *Patterns in the Dust* and in her final monograph *The China Threat* that these leaders had complex views of China and often proved more interested in accommodation than the public record might suggest.⁴

That interest in individuals carried over in one of her other most cited works, *China Confidential*, in which she edited together selections from oral histories of more than fifty US diplomats who served in China-related capacities over the five decades after World War II. By compiling the recollections thematically around particular issues and policies, Nancy created a book that serves as both a useful reference for scholars as well as a genuinely readable glimpse into the sausage making of US approaches to China. In the forward, Nancy identifies herself as a “novice” at working with oral histories (xi), but of course, a hallmark of especially her later work is her extensive use of oral histories from policy practitioners, access to whom she gained from years of scholarship and her own time in government.⁵

Carefully researched studies that examined the nuanced views of both state and non-state actors in US-China relations were a hallmark of Nancy’s body of work, but so was a persistent attention to the importance of Taiwan. Beyond *Uncertain Friendships*, which did so much to unpack the complicated domestic politics in both the United States and Taiwan and demonstrate their influence on policy, Nancy had two works that centered on the tensions in the Taiwan Strait, an edited volume called *Dangerous Strait* and a monograph entitled *Straight Talk*.⁶ Both took as a starting point the contention that the Taiwan Strait is the most dangerous place in the world: a flash point that, if not successfully managed, could legitimately lead to nuclear war between two great powers. Tempting as it may be to split hairs on the designation of ‘most dangerous,’ it is undeniable that the Taiwan Strait, and with it, the future of Taiwan remains one of the most significant sources of tensions in the region. *Strait Talk* especially served as a reminder to scholars of the United States and China and the Cold War that Taiwan matters. Unofficial as they are, Washington-Taipei relations play an outsized role in the stability of East Asia, and careful management of this relationship and conflict of the Strait is vital to the foreign policy success of any US presidential administration. At a moment when access to research centers in China is increasingly constrained, perhaps more young scholars will pick up the mantle of Taiwan policy and make the argument for new and better attention to its role in regional events.

In addition to the many contributions of her scholarship, Nancy Tucker was also the rare historian with significant experience in government, and that experience helped to shape her perspectives. She made two major forays into government. The first was on a Council of Foreign Relations International Affairs fellowship, which positioned her on

³ Tucker, *Uncertain Friendships: Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States: 1945-1992* (New York: Macmillan/Twayne, 1994).

⁴ Tucker, *The China Threat: Memories, Myths, and Realities in the 1950s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

⁵ Tucker, ed., *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations: 1945-1996* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). Xi.

⁶ Tucker, ed., *Dangerous Strait: The US-Taiwan-China Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) and Tucker, *Straight Talk: US-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

the China Desk inside the State Department and in briefly in the United States embassy in Beijing. Her Bernath lecture on the experience, given in 1987, is worth a reread now both in light of what it reveals about the nature of document production (and excessive classification) and the burgeoning democracy protests in late 1980s China.⁷ Later in her career, she took time away from Georgetown's history department and School of Foreign Affairs to serve as the assistant deputy director of national intelligence for analytic integrity and standards at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. She used that experience to make recommendations for the intelligence community grounded in her perspective and analytical chops as a historian, and at the same time, provided historians with a valuable account of the state of intelligence work in the United States after 9/11.⁸ Moving between academic and government appointments is more common in D.C.-area universities than perhaps it is in the rest of the country, but the willingness to see value in applying historical skills beyond the academy made Nancy a useful role model in this age of public-facing history and dwindling academic opportunities.

There are, no doubt, any number of substantive critiques of her scholarship that can and will be made, though as her still slightly starry-eyed former graduate student, I am not the one most inclined to make them. While her works focused on English-based sources and US policy perspectives instead of the more transnational research model that has dominated the field in the last two decades, Nancy was adamant that those of us she trained would help fill that gap. And she was an amazing advisor. Nancy had a unique way of offering the kind of encouragement and critiques that students sorely needed. One episode always sticks with me. After coming home from a year working in Chinese archives and struggling to figure out how to take all the information and bring it into dissertation-ready form, I confessed my darkest fear to her. "Sometimes I think I'm really just not a scholar." I'll never forget her response: she laughed. Nothing else. That peal of laughter was the shot of confidence I needed to take myself seriously. It also worked like no earnest pep talk ever could, because it made clear that she did not accept the premise. Talking me out of my worries could mean that maybe I was a scholar, maybe I wasn't, but here are some arguments for the former. That laughter, though – I can still hear it, and I try to remember it whenever I really need to.

Again and again, I return to the books and articles Nancy wrote to ground my work and spark ideas. And over and over, I return to memories of support and critiques she offered me as her student. The field is stronger for her contributions, even if they ended far too soon.

⁷ Tucker, "Alone in the Policy Jungle: An Academic Braves the Department of State," *Diplomatic History* 11:4 (Fall 1987): 291-301.

⁸ Tucker, "The Cultural Revolution in Intelligence: An Interim Report," *The Washington Quarterly* 31:2 (Spring 2008):47-61. I have often wondered how many China scholars have read the title, noted Tucker as a China specialist, and read expecting to eventually learn new things about the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China but learned something about US intelligence by accident.