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Introduction by Thomas Maddux, California State University, Northridge

Professor Michaela Hoenicke Moore's *Know Your Enemy: The American Debate on Nazism, 1933-1945* received the Myrna F. Bernath Book Award in 2010 from the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) for the best book written by woman in the field of U.S. foreign relations history and honorable mention for the Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize which is awarded annually to an author for her or his first book on any aspect of the history of American foreign relations. The roundtable reviewers certainly agree with this favorable recognition. J. Simon Rofe praises Hoenicke Moore's study as a "tour de force"; Justus Doenicke begins his review by declaring that *Know Your Enemy* "is an academic tour de force, equal in research to several doctoral dissertations;" Heather Dichter concludes that Hoenicke Moore has produced an "excellent book" that "will appeal to scholars interested in a variety of topics;" and David Schmitz describes the book as a "path breaking work" and a "model of combining cultural analysis with more traditional approaches to the study of foreign policy."

One of the Hoenicke Moore's many contributions is her focus on the evolving nature of American views on Nazi Germany and the interaction between these views and the policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his administration, a subject that has received little comprehensive research and analysis. Earlier studies have developed the diplomatic relationship between the U.S. and Adolf Hitler's regime before World War II and many studies have discussed the wartime strategy of Roosevelt and Hitler which is not the main focus of Hoenicke Moore's book.¹ Aspects of American views on Germany and the emerging conflict with Hitler have been covered, but these accounts have not provided the detailed assessment of a variety of different American perspectives that focus on the nature of the Nazi leaders, the relationship between them and the German people, and after the war came in 1941, the issue of what should be the appropriate strategy of the U.S. towards reform of Germany to remove the threat of Nazism and the possibility of another war.²

The reviewers endorse Hoenicke Moore's central thesis that neither the Roosevelt administration nor the American public reached a consensus on Nazi Germany, especially on the relationship between the Nazi leaders and the German people. In the first of the four

¹ See Arnold Offner, *American Appeasement: United States Foreign Policy and Germany, 1933-1938* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969) and, more recently, Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War against Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). For Hitler's views on the U.S. and policies, see the many works of Gerhard Weinberg, especially *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Diplomatic Revolution in Europe, 1933-36* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), and *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Starting World War II, 1937-39* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980). For a thorough listed of relevant studies including Germany language publications, see *Know Your Enemy*, pp. 3-4, n. 7.

² See several studies by Justus Doenecke on isolationist groups such as *In Danger Undaunted: The Anti-Interventionist Movement of 1940-1941 as Revealed in the Papers of the American First Committee* (1990); Geoffrey Smith's *American Countersubversives, the New Deal and the Coming of World War II* (1973); Mark L. Chadwick, *The War Hawks of World War II* (1968); and Frank A. Warren, *Noble Abstractions: American Liberal Intellectuals and World War II* (1999).

parts of the study, as Dichter notes, Hoenicke Moore develops two conflicting American perspectives, extending back into the late nineteenth century and reinforced by World War I in which Americans distinguished between on the one hand, the German people and their culture, and, on the other, their autocratic leaders. Rofe explores how Hoenicke Moore develops the sources of American rationalizations about Hitler and the Nazis after 1933 including the legacies of the Versailles peace settlement as being too harsh on Germany and a betrayal of Woodrow Wilson's agenda, the strength of isolationist sentiment, and favorable views of German Americans, anti-semitism, and anti-communism. Even as the American public became more critical of Hitler and Nazi leaders, as Doenicke emphasizes, *Know Your Enemy* provides detailed evidence that the public and some journalists continued to distinguish between the leaders and the German people. As Americans became aware of the spreading holocaust against Jews and destruction of other groups, they failed to understand the degree to which Germans supported the war and participated in the Nazi holocaust.

Hoenicke Moore's analysis of the views of Roosevelt and his leading advisers and agencies dealing with the war and the shaping of American opinion, most notably the Office of War Information, is another significant strength. The author develops Roosevelt's evolving views from his initial visits to Germany through World War I before the arrival of Hitler, and, as Dichter points out, recognizes the differences between what the President stated in public with much ambiguity and what he believed in private about the Nazis and the threat of Hitler to the U.S. Rofe emphasizes how the administration's efforts to shape American opinion "lacked decisive leadership and was poorly coordinated with numerous agencies and individuals contributing," but Roosevelt and the campaign did reinforce the view of the Nazis as "gangsters" and depicted the German people as innocent victims until later in the war. "Moore's portrayal of Franklin Roosevelt is nuanced," Doenicke suggests, and points to how the President "successfully pinned the pro-Nazi and appeasement labels on patriotic isolationists" and during the war "juggled" the multiple and sometimes conflicting considerations of winning the war, reforming Germany, shaping a peace settlement with Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union that would endure unlike the Versailles settlement, and dealing with advisers who didn't always agree on what policies to pursue on reforming Germany.

One of the best examples that Hoenicke Moore provides of the challenges that Roosevelt faced in the development of plans to deal with a defeated Germany came in the Morgenthau plan, a series of proposals put forward by Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of the Treasury, and his advisers in September, 1944 in reaction to plans being developed by the State and War Departments. (295-321) The reviewers agree that Hoenicke Moore has significantly clarified the nature of this issue and uses it to highlight not only the different views of Roosevelt's advisers but also the larger, evolving Washington debate on how to reform Germany and cure that country of the Nazi disease or more deep-rooted German traits. As Schmitz emphasizes, Hoenicke Moore's discussion "provides an excellent illustration of the impact of the differing views of Germany on American policy." Hoenicke Moore "notes that there was no single proposal per se but instead a series of memoranda outlining policy proposals," Doenicke observes, and "...the Treasury secretary did not seek to deindustrialize all of Germany but desired, in varying degrees, to close plants and destroy

mines in the Ruhr and Saar.” Dichter also emphasizes the successful revisionism on Morgenthau’s proposals as less of an effort for revenge by the Jewish secretary, as opposed to a New Deal plan for trust-busting and redirection of the German economy to peaceful objectives. Hoenicke Moore highlights the debate between Morgenthau and Secretary of War Henry Stimson as one over methods and not a “hard and soft peace,” and, characteristically concludes that “all participants in the debate on policy toward postwar Germany had their blind spots,” such as Stimson’s lack of concern about the reports on genocide of European Jews and Morgenthau’s failure to consider “how many Germans had not supported the Nazis and whether they might possibly become the core of a new democratic Germany.”

Roosevelt’s response to the debate in the fall of 1944 is viewed by Hoenicke Moore as typical of the President’s evolving views on the necessity to punish the Nazi leaders, to disarm Germany so Berlin could not start another conflict, and to assist the German people “to earn their way back into the fellowship of peace-loving and law-abiding Nations.” (318) As the President shifted away from Morgenthau’s suggestions, Hoenicke Moore depicts him as not only having doubts about how “to gauge the German potential for change” but also realizing more than his advisers that cooperation with the Soviet Union would depend on agreement on Germany which Roosevelt pursued with Stalin at the Yalta conference.

Throughout *Know Your Enemy* Hoenicke Moore resists hindsight both in focus and judgement, an approach applauded by Rofe. Yet the author knows that the Cold War was on the horizon and that American views on Germany developed in the 1930s and 1940s would facilitate the “relatively swift postwar rehabilitation of West Germany” and movement into the Western alliance. (10-11) At several points Hoenicke Moore notes how anti-communism and a critical perspective on Stalin and the Soviet regime intersected in different ways with American views of Hitler and the Nazis, both in reducing criticism in the early 1930s and intensifying it later on, especially when Stalin joined Hitler in the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact and seized territories from Poland, Rumania, Finland and annexed the Baltic states. “Red Fascism, Brown Bolshevism” became a popular critical image across the American political and media spectrum. (68) After 1941, Hoenicke Moore occasionally points out that after 1941 concerns and issues with respect to the Soviet Union did have an impact on postwar plans with respect to Germany.

The reviewers offer some criticism of *Know Your Enemy* but emphasize that the issues are for the most part minor “in comparison to the general excellence of the study.” Schmitz, for example, would have appreciated more analysis of the 1930s with respect to U.S. policy toward Nazi Germany and “how the American response to European fascism fit into larger patterns of U.S. relations with right-wing authoritarian regimes” as well as how images of Germany influenced Roosevelt’s policies before and during the 1939-1941 period. Dichter suggests that images would have enhanced Hoenicke Moore’s thesis and a broader comparison of attitudes on Germany and Japan would have provided a valuable contrast. Rolf also suggests an alternative perspective to address the complexity of *Know Your Enemy* by distinguishing between war aims and peace aims since they may not always be aligned “as compromises have to be made.” Doenicke also notes some minor errors.

In her response to the reviews. Hoenicke Moore is receptive to the suggestions offered and provides new insights on her study.

Participants

Michaela Hoenicke Moore is associate professor of History at the University of Iowa. Apart from holding academic positions in Berlin, Toronto and North Carolina, she served as program director for transatlantic relations at the German Council on Foreign Relations from 1999-2001. The focus of her current research is the connection between nationalism and U.S. foreign policy with special attention to the multiple legacies of World War Two

Heather Dichter is currently an Adjunct Professor at York College of Pennsylvania. She received her PhD from the University of Toronto in 2008 with a dissertation on the centrality of sport to western Allied occupation efforts to rebuild Germany. Her article, "Strict Measures must be taken': Wartime Planning and the Allied Control of Sport in Occupied Germany," was published in *Stadion: International Journal of the History of Sport* in 2008, and she has co-edited a forthcoming special issue of *Sport in Society* on Olympic Reform.

Justus D. Doenecke is professor emeritus of history at New College of Florida. He received his B.A. from Colgate University (1956) and Ph.D. from Princeton University (1960). *Among his books are In Danger Undaunted: The Anti-Interventionist Movement of 1940-1941 as Revealed in the Papers of the America First Committee* (1990); *From Isolation to War, 1931-1941* (with John E. Wilz, 3rd ed.; 2002); *Storm on the Horizon: The Challenge to American Intervention, 1939-1941* (2000); *Debating Franklin D. Roosevelt's Foreign Policies* (with Mark A. Stoler, 2005); and *Nothing Less Than War: A New History of American Entry into World War I*, scheduled for March 2011. He is currently writing a study on American debates concerning US engagement in World War I, the Paris Peace Conference, the League fight, and the 1920 presidential election.

J Simon Rofe is currently a Visiting Scholar at the Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs at the George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M. He is working on a Leverhulme Trust funded project on 'Presidential Peacemaking'. He holds the post of Lecturer in International Relations at University of Leicester in the Centre for American Studies; and the Centre for Diplomatic and International Studies, in the Department of International Relations. Dr. Rofe earned a BA Hons degree in American Studies and International History, and an MA with Distinction in International Relations both from Keele University, and a Ph.D. in U.S. Foreign Policy and Anglo-American Relations from the University of Wales. His research interests focus upon US foreign policy in the twentieth century, and particularly presidential diplomacy. Relevant publications include: *Franklin Roosevelt's Foreign Policy and the Welles Mission* (Palgrave: New York, 2007) 'Under the Influence of Mahan: Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt and their Understanding of American National Interest', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 19:4 2008. pp.732-745. His current research projects include a book entitled "Diplomats at War: The American Experience" with Dr Andrew Stewart; and a work on "The London Embassy: 70 years in Grosvenor Square 1938-2008" with Dr Alison Holmes.

David F. Schmitz is the Robert Allen Skotheim Chair of History at Whitman College. He is the author of *Brent Scowcroft: Internationalism and Post-Vietnam War American Foreign Policy* (2011), *The Triumph of Internationalism: Franklin D. Roosevelt and a World in Crisis, 1933-1941* (2007); *The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1965-1989* (2006); *The Tet Offensive: Politics, War, and Public Opinion* (2005); *Henry L. Stimson: The First Wise Man* (2001); *Thank God They're on Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965* (1999); and *The United States and Fascist Italy, 1922-1940* (1988). He is currently writing a book on nationalism and American foreign policy.

In *Know Your Enemy: The American Debate on Nazism, 1933-1945*, Michaela Hoenicke Moore argues that the lack of consensus in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration regarding how to treat Nazi Germany reflected the varying opinions of high-ranking government personnel as well as public opinion. While in times of war governments often work with a binary set of views – that their country represents good and the enemy is symbolic of the bad and opposing qualities – Hoenicke Moore uses a wide selection of materials to demonstrate that government-sponsored propaganda representing the evils of the Third Reich did not gain much traction as a result of longstanding ideas about Germany held by Americans. This fascinating study reveals that the American public as well as its government could not simply be classified as having “harsh” or “soft” attitudes toward Nazi Germany (11) but, instead, expressed a broad range of opinions that were not limited to opposing sides of the political spectrum.

Hoenicke Moore draws upon government documents, published commentary on the political situation in popular media, the personal papers of these political writers, and public opinion research to show that a multitude of opinions appeared among Roosevelt's advisers as well as the general population. She divides her study into four parts of three chapters each. The first section, “Prelude to War”, explores the debates in the years before the United States entered the Second World War. These debates did not arise in 1933, when both Roosevelt and Adolf Hitler assumed office. Even before the First World War, two divergent strands of opinion pervaded in the United States: admiration (by “average” Americans) for a country which provided a significant percentage of the immigrants that populated America, and the view of the German as “Hun” (largely held by elites) as a result of the political failures of the 1848 Revolutions (21). These opinions were further complicated during the Great War, when a distinction was made between the German people and their political leaders, with the Allies offering to welcome Germany to the community of nations if they “got rid of their autocratic leaders and freed themselves from militarism” (31).

Hoenicke Moore then traces the development of these ideas once Hitler assumed power, as reported to the American public by popular journalists (chapter 2) and to the president by his advisers (chapter 3). American journalists based in the Third Reich had to negotiate a balance between accurate reporting from Germany with self-censorship in order to remain inside the country. Historians have often criticized Roosevelt's public statements as demonstrating a lack of understanding of the differences between Imperial and Nazi Germany, but Hoenicke Moore reveals that, instead, these sweeping statements were deliberately employed. Roosevelt, Hoenicke Moore argues, personally held a version of the *Sonderweg* argument, that Germany followed a special or different path of political development based on militarism, authoritarianism, and political intolerance (22-23). Roosevelt was purposefully ambiguous in his public statements regarding Nazi Germany leading up to the United States' entry into the war, although he had realized by the end of 1940 that “the German government was bent on a collision course with the United States” (89). To prepare for this conflict, Roosevelt invoked the imagery of Nazism as a disease that

needed to be cured and Nazis as gangsters who had a conspiratorial nature to commit evil acts. In his 1940 address to the Democratic National Convention leading up to the fall elections, Roosevelt portrayed American interests in stark contrast to those of Nazism, as a battle of “freedom versus slavery... religion against godlessness” (90).

These four ideas reappeared frequently throughout the government efforts to mobilize the home front (part two) and public debates (part three) during the war. Roosevelt’s desire for domestic support of the war over “a more visionary political agenda” (116) contributed to the plethora of public opinion research conducted by various branches of the government and the promotion of different ideas about the German enemy from the separate branches. The Office of War Information depicted the majority of Germans as victims and attempted to scare Americans into identifying with them as in order to motivate the public against the German state as an enemy (146). The War Department, on the other hand, did not debate who the enemy was, whether it was a country’s leaders, a political system, ideas, or the people; instead, it argued that all of them were responsible (157). Using whatever tactics were necessary in order to prepare its troops for combat, the War Department most successfully presented these ideas in its *Why We Fight* series of movies, produced by Hollywood and using popular journalists, including William Shirer, to develop the script. The mass media, including newspapers, magazines, books, and radio, picked up on the various arguments and contributed to the public debate on how to deal with the German enemy. In addition, psychologically inspired studies “both shaped and reflected basic assumptions of the larger discussion” and representations of the German people (218). This psychological approach continued to develop the disease and gangster leitmotifs, which also allowed the United States to reinforce its self-image as a missionary or helper to the world (222).

This “abundance of competing ideas and proposals” regarding Germany as an enemy (276) and their representation across multiple media forms and by various groups of people ultimately hurt their overall effectiveness. Without a consensus on why the United States was fighting Germany and who was responsible, the American government also had a difficult time developing a consistent wartime policy on how to deal with Germany after its defeat, which Hoenicke Moore addresses in the final section of the book. Perhaps her most novel argument – and the one that revises the general view of the options for the postwar occupation of Germany – is that there was no single “Morgenthau Plan” to turn Germany into a deindustrialized agricultural state. Instead, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau submitted to Roosevelt a maximum program of the harshest treatment, knowing that it would undergo changes and not be implemented as presented. Morgenthau’s understanding of decartelization was not a removal of all industry in Germany but instead a restructuring of industry to peaceful endeavors. These ideas stemmed not from Morgenthau’s Jewish background and a desire for revenge but rather should be viewed as part of the “American tradition of trust-busting” (301). Thus, competing plans for the postwar treatment of Germany advocated by Morgenthau and the War Department’s Henry Stimson had the same objective and only differed in methods as a result of their differing understanding of Nazism and the causes of war (315). The lack of consensus regarding the nature of German society ultimately permitted the quick

transformation in public opinion from viewing Germany as the enemy to seeing it as America's ally in the deepening Cold War.

Know Your Enemy is a solidly researched book, which relies on both American diplomatic history as well as the history of Germany (both English and German scholarship). In addition, Hoenicke Moore supports her argument with extensive archival research as well as a thorough examination of the various forms of media through which these debates were presented to the American public. *Know Your Enemy*, as persuasive as the argument is, would have benefitted from the inclusion of images, particularly stills from the various propaganda movies (at least from the government-sponsored movies – it is understandable if copyright would be too expensive for Walt Disney's *The Fuehrer's Face* or Alfred Hitchcock's *Lifeboat*).

While Hoenicke Moore states in the introduction that the aim of “this study is not to answer the question of what Americans thought of Nazi Germany” (5), she uses the many arguments conveyed by popular media forms to demonstrate the lack of consensus in America regarding Germany. The views expressed by leading columnists and authors clearly contributed to the broad spectrum of opinions held by Americans as recorded in public opinion polls. Some additional statistics regarding publications, such as the circulation of the magazines and newspapers in which columns ran, or where a book's sales placed it on the year's bestseller list (not just the number of copies sold) could have helped demonstrate how far-reaching and influential these writers were.

The varied answers to public polls both before and during the Second World War – and particularly before the United States' entry into the war – help demonstrate Hoenicke Moore's argument that no consensus existed regarding the Germany. Occasionally these opinions regarding Germany were contrasted with American opinions regarding the country's other main enemy: Japan. These comparisons often concerned a specific poll question and were buried within Hoenicke Moore's extensive footnotes (211, 213). A broader comparison of the changes in American opinion regarding Germany with respect to American attitudes on Japan over the same period would have provided an interesting contrast. The United States occupied both Germany and Japan after the war, and yet rarely are these two countries examined together.¹ Hopefully scholars will build upon Hoenicke Moore's work to bring together American wartime and postwar plans for both Germany and Japan.

One of the strengths of *Know Your Enemy* is that Hoenicke Moore has skillfully integrated some of the major German historiographical questions into her examination of the American debates on Nazi Germany. The pervasiveness of the *Sonderweg* idea among the public and governmental debates in the United States provides an interesting insight into how the idea was able to influence postwar historians of Germany, particularly in the

¹The notable exception is Ian Buruma, *Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux: 1994).

1970s and 1980s.² In the final chapter of the book, “The Enemy in Defeat: German-American Encounters at ‘Zero-Hour,’” although Hoenicke Moore delves deeper than previous scholarship into the earliest encounters among Germans and the American military,³ she uses the term “Zero Hour” without addressing the recent scholarly debate regarding whether 1945 was, in fact, a complete break with the past.⁴

These small enhancements could have only added to an already excellent book. *Know Your Enemy* will appeal to scholars interested in a variety of topics: the Second World War, American diplomacy, and public diplomacy. Hoenicke Moore’s book will be particularly useful to studies on the occupation of Germany, where scholars can build upon the ideas in the final section to better understand the policies implemented during the occupation of Germany. In *Know Your Enemy* Michaela Hoenicke Moore has convincingly demonstrated how a lack of consensus within the American government and among the broader public contributed to the inability of the United States to develop clear and consistent policies regarding its German enemy. Her argument will certainly impact the understanding of the German-American postwar relationship and the early Cold War.

²Jürgen Kocka, “German History Before Hitler: The Debate About the German *Sonderweg*,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 23 (1988): 3-16.

³Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender, and Foreign Relations, 1945-1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

⁴Rebecca Boehling, *A Question of Priorities: Democratic Reform and Economic Recovery in Postwar Germany* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996); Michael R. Hayse, *Recasting West German Elites: Higher Civil Servants, Business Leaders, and Physicians in Hesse Between Nazism and Democracy, 1945-1955* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Hans Braun, Uta Gerhardt, Everhard Holtmann, eds., *Die lange Stunde Null: Gelenkter sozialer Wandel in Westdeutschland nach 1945* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2007).

K*now Your Enemy* is an academic tour de force, equal in research to several doctoral dissertations. In a rich, clearly written, and perceptive study, Michaela Hoenicke Moore covers the variety of American opinions concerning the nature of Nazi Germany and the theories offered during World War II to prevent any rebirth of the Third Reich. She draws upon a variety of sources in both English and German, among them manuscripts of the U.S. State Department, the Office of Strategic Services, the Office of War Information, and the papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, Ambassador to Germany William E. Dodd, and journalist Dorothy Thompson. Also utilized are published U.S. government documents, film footage, radio scripts, contemporary periodicals, and unpublished doctoral and masters theses. The range of scholarly monographs is almost encyclopedic in scope. On the grounds of synthesis alone, this work is a formidable achievement.

Recently references to World War II have been used as precedent for crusades against totalitarian aggression, the toppling of brutal dictators, the halting of ethnic cleansing, and in 2003 the elimination of evil and alien forces by preventive attack. Seventy years ago, amid the most successful military intervention in American history, the United States-- observes Hoenicke Moore-- could not reach a consensus on whether the enemy was the Nazi regime, that is Germany's rulers alone, or the German nation as a whole, the former view being held by many Americans until 1944. If some Americans saw Nazism as the latest manifestation of traditional Prussian militarism, others believed it to be an aberration of a nation renowned for its culture and industriousness. Nor could they agree on just what American war aims were. Indeed, during the early 1940s, such matters were hotly debated.

Hoenicke Moore's research into opinion polling reveals some disturbing findings. During the 1930s Americans were reluctant to see Germany as a threat. Even after the United States entered the conflict, a large section of the public harbored pro-German attitudes. In June 1942 over 30 percent of Americans surveyed hoped for a negotiated peace with a German army that would have overthrown Hitler. That summer 44 percent of those polled thought that Jews wielded too much power within the U.S. At one point 40 percent of American GIs saw the war not worth fighting. In 1943 54 percent of combat soldiers believed that Germans were "just like us," feeling it "too bad" that they had to fight such a foe. These attitudes, Hoenicke Moore finds, were rooted in a variety of factors: admiration for "German qualities" such as diligence, efficiency, and ingenuity; an irresponsible differentiation between Germans (at times depicted as virtual serfs) and Nazis (presented far too often as mere gangsters comparable to John Dillinger and Al Capone); and disillusion with Wilsonian rhetoric and a flawed peace after World War I.

In this thorough study, Hoenicke Moore offers a number of surprising observations. Despite the popularity of British author Arthur Ponsonby's *Falsehood in Wartime* (1928), which debunked accusations concerning Germany atrocities in Belgium in World War I, many of the indictments were based on fact. Before 1939-40, family magazines portrayed

Nazism as less of a threat to Europe and America than communism. Although it is well known that by 1935 the Hearst papers were ultra-rightist, few realize that Hermann Goering and Alfred Rosenberg wrote columns for the newspaper chain. Ambassador Dodd, known for harboring staunch anti-Nazi views, was originally sympathetic to Berlin's efforts to revise the Versailles treaty as was British diplomat Sir Robert Vansittart, famous for his portrayal of German history as *The Black Record* (1941). (Vansittart did modify his polemic by claiming that German individuals were not that different from other peoples and by expressing optimism concerning prospects for postwar transformation.) The American media and government officials usually portrayed persecution of Jews as part of a general campaign against all religion rather than as a deeply rooted racist ideology. Some wartime explanations for German behavior are similar to later claims of a *Songerweg* (special path), the assertion that Germany became a modern industrial state without the bloody effects of social upheaval experienced by other Western nations.

Hoenicke Moore does a superb job of capturing the journalistic world of such figures as Edgar Ansel Mowrer, John Gunther, Howard K. Smith, William Shirer, and Dorothy Thompson, all foreign correspondents who offered firsthand accounts of Nazi rule. The same holds true for theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, who cochaired the American Association for a Democratic Germany, and historian Saul Padover, who, as an army intelligence officer, surveyed German opinion during the first throes of occupation. She also offers able treatment of such action groups as the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League, the Writers' War Board, and the Society for the Prevention of World War III.

Hoenicke Moore's portrayal of Franklin Roosevelt is nuanced. She notes that in the immediate aftermath of the Great War, FDR did not harbor lingering suspicions of Germany, much less see it as a political problem. At the same time, as president he was no friend of dissent, particularly during the early 1940s. He successfully pinned the pro-Nazi and appeasement labels on patriotic isolationists, the majority of whom believed firmly in democracy. Contrary to myth, once the United States entered World War II, Roosevelt announced his intent to fight Germany to the finish several times before the policy was announced at the Casablanca conference of January 1943. Furthermore, the president stressed that "unconditional surrender" did not mean "the destruction of the population"; rather, in Hoenicke Moore's words, he found it "an opportunity for a complete restructuring and reeducation of German society" (126).

Similar skillful treatment is given to the controversial plan of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., who was accused of seeking to turn occupied Germany into sheer pasture land. She notes that there was no single proposal per se but instead a series of memoranda outlining policy proposals. More important, the Treasury secretary did not seek to deindustrialize all Germany but desired, in varying degrees, to close plants and destroy mines in the Ruhr and Saar. Just as crucial, no design submitted by Morgenthau ever became official policy. Nor was it simply negative feedback from the American public that caused Roosevelt and Churchill to not abandon the scheme. Stalin strongly objected, as the Russian dictator sought to control, not destroy, German industry.

Hoenicke Moore notes the contemporary discussions of a possible German blueprint of world domination, in the process devoting two pages to anti-interventionist views. Had she explored the pre-Pearl Harbor views of the so-called isolationists in more greater detail, she might have found that some of their articulate leaders maintained that Hitler's Reich could dissolve internally, being subject to economic collapse or leftist revolt. (Such predictions also abounded in 1932-33 concerning the Japanese, just after they conquered Manchuria). In August 1941 the America First Committee released a position paper arguing that German occupation of Soviet Russia would weaken, not strengthen, the Reich, for the subjected nation would be far too pulverized to supply Hitler's war machine with oil, grains, or industrial products. Contrariwise, war against Germany was futile, as the mechanics of continental invasion made such an effort impossible. Furthermore, defeat of Germany could only lead to a costly occupation, the spread of Bolshevism, and the everlasting enmity of its people.

This reviewer finds any drawbacks minor ones. One desires further evidence for Hoenicke Moore's claim that before the U.S. entered World War II, American naval officers considered conflict with Germany inevitable. Certainly the naval brass usually considered Japan the more immediate threat. Hoenicke Moore is slightly inaccurate in claiming that *Time* magazine's coverage of the Third Reich remained favorable until the European war broke out in September 1939, for that March Henry Luce's weekly condemned "the treaty-breaking, lie-telling German Dictator" and issued the blunt warning: "Stop Hitler!" By October 1939, Milton Mayer, who wrote a pacifist article for the *Saturday Evening Post*, was no mere "college graduate" but an established freelance journalist. Minor misspellings include the Kellogg-Briand Pact and names of Thomas A. Bailey, Walter Millis, Livingstone Hartley, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

But these are extremely insignificant errors in comparison to the general excellence of this study. One small matter: it is a cause for rejoicing again to see references in footnote form at the bottom of the page, particularly as some are explanatory.

Michaela Hoenicke Moore's *Know Your Enemy* is an ambitious and deeply researched examination of a topic that has received surprisingly little scholarly attention: how the people and the government of the United States understood Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime. Hoenicke Moore's account focuses on the "intellectual side of the American war effort" (3) by combining diplomatic, political, and cultural analysis to demonstrate that neither popular nor government views of Nazi Germany coalesced into "a well-focused image of the enemy" (2). This lack of consensus, while frustrating to many policymakers at the time, turned into a blessing for the Truman administration as the ultimate failure to create a singular image of Germany allowed for flexibility in postwar policymaking that aided the U.S. efforts to transform Germany from an enemy to ally after World War II. Hoenicke Moore's analysis of how the "other image" was created, debated, and changed over time as the Roosevelt administration developed its plans for postwar Germany is the most impressive part of this significant work. It is no surprise that *Know Your Enemy* won the Myrna Bernath Book Award and was Honorable Mention for the Stuart L Bernath Book Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

Hoenicke Moore begins her study with an excellent examination of the different lessons Americans drew from the Great War and how these shaped understandings of the challenges presented by Nazi Germany and the crisis of the 1930s. She rightly notes that by the time Hitler came to power, most Americans were more critical of the policies of the Wilson administration, and the perceived actions of bankers and munitions makers in dragging the United States into a European war, than they were of Germany. Thus, the two long standing, albeit conflicting, images of Germany that Americans had developed during the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century continued to shape perceptions of that nation. On the one hand, Germany was seen as a civilized, advanced nation known for its "cultural achievements, progressive social reform, and the mainly positive experiences with assimilated German immigrants. The other one, dramatically summed up in the term 'Hun' can be traced back to American perceptions of German cruelty during the war of 1870-1871." (21) It was possible, therefore, for Americans to see German authoritarianism and militarism as something imposed and perpetuated by its rulers on an otherwise "healthy German culture" (23) or as a manifestation of a fundamental problem in Germany, a German peculiarity, that had to be eradicated before there could ever be peace.

Thus, the Roosevelt administration faced a question similar to the one Woodrow Wilson tried to resolve with his Fourteen Points and liberal peace aims: did the enemy include the German people or was it only the Nazi regime? Were the German people redeemable, or was it necessary to completely change German society? It is with how Americans addressed and understood these issues that Hoenicke Moore's work is concerned, and where she makes her most original contributions. As she concludes, "It was precisely the lack of crystallization in American views of Germany during the 1930s and 1940s that allowed for a complex awareness, as opposed to a simple vilification of the enemy, and it also facilitated the relatively swift postwar rehabilitation of West Germany" (11).

Numerous examples throughout the work demonstrate the impact of the division that existed between seeing “Nazism as the latest manifestation of perennial German militarism” and those who saw Hitler’s regime as a gangster government that was “a departure from mainstream German culture and distinguished between the Nazis and the mass of ordinary Germans” (342). To take just one, the crucial debate over the Morgenthau Plans for postwar Germany in the fall of 1944 provides an excellent illustration of the impact of the differing views of Germany on American policy. On one side was Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson who saw the problem of Germany as one of evil leaders rather than something inherent to German society, and viewed the Nazis as just the most recent manifestation of militaristic rule. He was determined to avoid a repeat of the harsh Versailles settlement and its economically unfeasible demands. Germany had to be punished, and its leadership changed, if there was to be postwar peace and prosperity. As Stimson noted in 1944, “Germany had been so under the military clique ... five times during a little over my lifetime she had been responsible for beginning an aggressive war in Europe.” This “stamped her apart from the ordinary nation” and demanded the punishment of German leaders. Yet, the treatment of Germany after the war would determine whether or not America was successful in rebuilding a prosperous and peaceful world. Stimson, therefore, supported war crimes trials for Nazi leaders, a denazification program to punish those responsible for the war, and the creation of a democratic Germany. But he opposed a punitive settlement that would leave Germany at the mercy of the Allies and dependent on others for commerce and industry.¹

In contrast, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau proposed a policy that would effectively have de-industrialized Germany and turned it into an agrarian nation as a means of punishment and of maintaining the peace. The Morgenthau Plan called for the German standard of living to be held down to subsistence levels, the Ruhr and Saar to be transformed into nonindustrial areas devoted to farming, and Germany to be made so dependent on other nations for basic goods that it would lack any capacity to convert its economy to war production. It was the only way, Morgenthau and his supporters believed, to prevent Germany from threatening other nations again and to bring about changes in its culture and society.

As Hoenicke Moore notes, both men “were motivated by the same overriding aims: to prevent a third world war, to safeguard Europe against any further German aggression, and to establish a lasting peace,” but their understandings of Germany led them to see different means as necessary. Stimson believed that “Germany had been temporarily captured and led astray by a band of gangsters. There was not, in his view, a ‘German problem’ that the United States had to solve” but a Nazi government that had to be defeated. He believed the Treasury Secretary’s proposals for a Carthagian peace “as sure as fate will lay the seeds for another war in the next generation” and sought the rehabilitation of Germany. Morgenthau disagreed, arguing that the only sure route to peace was the uprooting of Germany’s

¹ David F. Schmitz, *Henry L. Stimson: The First Wise Man* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2001), 166.

economic structure that had allowed “any German government to carry out a program of a century-old militaristic tradition, deeply anchored and perpetuated in German society” (315-317)

President Franklin Roosevelt, at Stimson’s urging, disavowed the Morgenthau approach after initially agreeing to its main features. While the president disagreed with Stimson’s concern about incurring the wrath of the German people with a harsh peace, he knew that a reconstructed and prosperous Germany was essential if there was to be stability and peace in Europe. Thus, what Hoenicke Moore terms “a certain whitewashing” (342) of the reality of Germans support for the Third Reich and the reality of Hitler’s regime was carried out by the United States to secure its postwar goals. It was necessary to downplay the barbarity of the regime and the final solution, distinguish between Nazis and ordinary Germans, and emphasize the positive attributes traditionally associated with Germans, such as their industriousness, efficiency, and productivity. The prevalence of anti-Semitism and anti-Communism in the United States greatly contributed to these efforts (343).

This last point leads to my main concern about *Know Your Enemy*. Hoenicke Moore asserts that a “Manichaeian streak and crusading spirit in its foreign-policy rhetoric and culture of confrontation” in the United States bred a Wilsonian vision of the international system and a “self-imposed world historical mission and religiously grounded chosenness and exceptionalism,” that has led to a zealotry to punish and forcibly reform enemies. She finds the “American war effort against the Third Reich ... stands as a notable exception” to this general pattern of American foreign policy. (9-10). Surprisingly, for a book based on such an impressive breadth of research, Hoenicke Moore’s analysis of the 1930s is based too heavily on the writings of a small number of journalists, and she never fully engages the historiography of U.S. policy toward Nazi Germany during the 1930s and how the American response to European fascism fit into larger patterns of U.S. relations with right-wing authoritarian regimes.

Images of Germany in the 1930s are examined, but they are not clearly linked to the policies of the Roosevelt administration, or any examination of the political, economic, or ideological reasons that Washington engaged in a policy of appeasement up until 1937-1938. Moreover, how the shift away from appeasement coincided with the adoption of an internationalist policy grounded on a vision of the United States as a world leader basing its defense on collective security and preparedness, and seeking to work with allies and internationalist organizations to promote American values and institutions, is not closely examined. While Hoenicke Moore concludes her book by noting that “the debate over the enemy led American intellectuals and policymakers, including at the highest level, the president himself, to formulate clearly what America stood for,” and that “Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech, the Atlantic Charter, the crucial American contributions to the UN charter, Bretton Woods, and the Nuremberg trials—all have to be counted as part of genuinely American response to Nazism,” she does not provide enough analysis of the crucial years of 1939-1941 to fully explain the emergence of these policies.

Nonetheless, Michaela Hoenicke Moore’s *Know Your Enemy* is a path breaking work that demands the attention of all scholars of American foreign policy, and is a model of

combining cultural analysis with more traditional approaches to the study of foreign policy. It rewards many times over a close reading and will serve as a companion to John Dower's *War Without Mercy*,² but also as "a counterexample to the usual tale of enemy images and vilifying the other" (342). In doing so, it adds to our understanding of the central role race and ideology have played in American foreign policy making.

² John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Memory in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon, 1986).

Michaela Hoenicke Moore's *Know Your Enemy – The American Debate on Nazism 1933-1945* is a tour de force. Hoenicke Moore tackles an emotive and complex subject in a thorough and measured fashion. This volume will be a reference point for those studying the United States in the Second World War for some time to come. With such an opening it is self-evident that this reviewer found much to commend here: the rest of my contribution to this roundtable review will explain what leads me to this viewpoint.

The book's main aim is to address the Roosevelt administration's deliberations "on Nazi Germany in the context of contemporary media and public controversies and to assess the reciprocal lines of communication and influence." (p. 2) It concludes that throughout the period no conclusive view of Germany emerged. In contrast, even when Americans were dying at the hands of Germany "the United States never achieved a politically coherent consensus on whether the enemy was the Nazi regime or the German nation as a whole." (p. 341)

Hoenicke Moore's central accomplishment is to weave together a multifaceted analysis of the development of German National Socialism as it was seen in America as a whole, including the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and, perhaps most interestingly, the American people. The picture that emerges is rich in complexity and supported by a variety of sources drawn from beyond those familiar to diplomatic historians. It is one of the many worthy and enjoyable facets of this book that the author has blended together an analysis which brings together the foundations of diplomatic history as extensive archival research, with relevant knowledge of literature, film, journalism and psychological studies (see Chapter 8). A comprehensive text is the result which maintains throughout its focus, detailing how Germany and Germans were held in America eyes at various stages through the interwar period and during the Second World War itself.

The breadth of the sources the author employs reflects the wide-ranging opinions that could be found in the United States on Nazi Germany at the time. It is striking in reading this volume to learn that a considerable portion of the American population - approximately 30% - consistently doubted the ferocity of Nazi policy through the 1930s and into the war years. Hoenicke Moore provides a thorough examination of why this was the case. The author provides ample evidence of how the legacy of the Great War and the perception of injustice suffered by Germany at Versailles induced Americans to look less critically at National Socialism than might have been supposed. Equally, this appraisal of Germany in the First World War and its aftermath caused Americans to re-evaluate their own involvement in the conflict. The result was that Americans "identified their British allies and domestic weapon manufacturers" and not Germany 'as the main culprits' for American entry into the Great War (p. 39). Hoenicke Moore argues "The impact of the broad-based reevaluation of World War 1 and the terms of the peace cannot be overestimated in this context. The most convincing justification for American participation

in the previous war – to make the world safe for democracy and to fight the war to end all wars – had turned out to be an illusion.” (p. 74)

Equally important to the overall analysis is the author’s contribution to the debate on Isolationism¹. This term, much used but rarely fully understood, is particularly well explained. Hoenicke Moore states ‘there was no ideological cohesion to unite the so-called isolationist camp’ instead it ‘spanned the entire American spectrum from socialist and progressives to conservatives and right-wing radicals.’ (p. 65) Drawing upon data collected by a nascent polling industry as well as established literature in the field, the author points to a variety of motivations that contributed to isolationism’s widespread appeal. “At the height of the isolationist current in the mid-1930s,” Hoenicke Moore writes, “the investigations of the Nye Committee and the congressional neutrality legislation reflected the attitudes of the majority of Americans, who were motivated by such different convictions and impulses as pacifism, domestic reform, foreign policy frustration, ethnic loyalty, anti-Semitism and national populism.” (p. 74) This assessment of multiple forces at work which the Roosevelt administration had to face was captured by the British Ambassador to Washington from September 1939 Lord Lothian. The Ambassador wrote to London soon after arriving in his post as the war in Europe began that the American people watched events in Europe “with all the keenness and intimate knowledge of the personalities and the moves in the diplomatic game characteristic of spectators at a football match”.² Lothian went on to reveal that interest changed once they realised they were not watching “a gigantic football show but a game in which the footballs were immensely destructive bombs”, and the American people were then engulfed by a “wave of emotional pacifism” that reinforced the desire to remain separated from events in Europe. Lothian’s assessment illustrates that twin impulses were at work amongst the American people, the first a strong aversion to the heightening crisis in Europe; the second, a keen interest in the fate of the Old World. Hoenicke Moore reinforces her analysis by covering dissenting viewpoints once war began. She tells of a sizeable portion of the American public in 1942 as being characterised by “Anti-Semitism, anticommunism and general distrust of the Allies, in particular of the Soviet Union, in addition to a readiness to “do business with Hitler” or at least to find some arrangements with “agreeable” elements in Nazi Germany, characterised the political credo of this group.” (pp. 10-111).

¹ Those interested in contemporary discourse on “Isolationism”, and its oft assumed “twin” “Internationalism”, may be interested in the Special Edition of the *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* on these subjects involving authors from the United States, the United Kingdom and continental Europe. *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* - ‘Special Issue: Isolationism and Internationalism in Transatlantic Affairs’, J Simon Rofe (ed.) Vol.9 No.1 2011.

² 141 Despatch No.119 Lothian to Halifax, 1 February 1940, Secret Re: Public Opinion. Viscount Halifax, Miscellaneous Correspondence folio 324 FO 800 324 National Archives, Kew, London. Lord Lothian wrote extensively to London on the American peoples’ influence on the Administration. Lord Lothian’s Ambassadorship is discussed by J Simon Rofe, “Lord Lothian in Washington”, in Priscilla Roberts ed. *Lothian and Anglo-American Relations 1900-1940* (Republic of Letters: Dordrecht, 2010). Other sources include: David P. Billington, Jr., *Lothian: Philip Kerr and the Quest for World Order* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2006), and David Reynolds, *Lord Lothian and Anglo-American Relations, 1939-1940* (Philadelphia: Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, 1983).

The necessary counterpart to the account of the forces at work during the 1930s and 1940s is the author's coverage of contemporaneous efforts by the Roosevelt administration to mobilise and educate the American people. The campaign lacked decisive leadership and was poorly coordinated with numerous agencies and individuals contributing. Nonetheless, certain aspects did recur in the effort, including an effort to portray the Nazis as somewhat distinct from the mass of the German people focusing upon them as "ungodly", and using metaphors such as the "disease" of Nazism and describing Hitler's entourage as "gangsters" engaged in a criminal conspiracy. The messages that the American people took from the mobilisation campaign were often juxtaposed with the administration's policy goals and the results were ambivalent in terms of galvanising the nation. The author attributes this to the legacy of the Wilson administration's propaganda campaign during the First World War. She states "Propaganda links the two world wars in a significant but tragic way." The legacy of the Great War had "handed-down notions of Germany's militarism, authoritarian government, and outrageous code of war" and these "competed in World War II with a sympathy for a country that had putatively been the victim of slanderous propaganda and too harsh a condemnation." (p. 30).

One of the key strengths of the book is to avoid relying on the retrospect history provides. Hoenicke Moore throughout acknowledges that those on all sides did not know the outcome of their decisions. She writes "the lessons that were retrospectively drawn from this war were substantively different in nature and spirit from the principles and ideas that had guided the government during the war." (p. 349). These judgements reveal the skill the author exhibits in balancing breadth and depth.

The balance that the book achieves is exemplified in the author's handling of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt is necessarily central, but not an overwhelming character in the work. Given the historiography concerning the 32nd President it might have been tempting to rely on existing literature. Instead Hoenicke Moore's work presents a shrewd assessment of Roosevelt in evaluating his role. The work assesses the influence of his early childhood experiences of Germany, and also the time he spent as Wilson's Assistant Secretary of the Navy, concluding that "Franklin D. Roosevelt never formulated a comprehensive view of Germany." (p.21) What emerges from Hoenicke Moore's analysis is a "complex picture" of Roosevelt's attitude toward Germany that would influence the decisions he made during his presidency and up to the end of his life.

By the end of Roosevelt's life, coinciding with the end of National Socialism, the focus of his administration was on the post-war world. The work plays particular attention to the development of post-war planning during the course of the war and culminates in a worthy revision of the Morgenthau Plan(s). The work persuasively argues that the efforts of the Treasury Secretary of Jewish origin were not the draconian measures that many histories have presented them as. They were in fact, part of far broader and more wide-ranging discussion. "Only if we pay attention to the complexity and intensity of the American wartime discourse on Germany", Hoenicke Moore argues, "can we appreciate that the proposals submitted by the Secretary of the Treasury were not an aberration, neither entirely out of line with other contemporary ideas on how to solve the German problem nor motivated by revenge." (p. 317) One minor point of clarification here that complements

the point but is absent from the analysis is that American efforts to consider the shape of the post-war world began earlier than Pearl Harbour which is the author's assertion. The State Department at the end of 1939 convened the Advisory Committee on Problems in Foreign Relations, with Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles becoming its chair, which addressed America's interests in the war and its eventual aftermath. Those involved, and the ideas they propagated would form the core of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Planning under Leo Pasvolsky after the Japanese attack of December 1941.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive experience of reviewing this work, one area of critique does warrant comment; not least because the author raises it in the opening to the conclusion. The author states that there was no "agreement on the ideological front regarding what the country was fighting *against* and what it was fighting for" (p. 341). Indeed to make this more explicit; there is, or at least can be, a difference in War aims and Peace aims. The goal may always be to align the two but that is not always possible; compromises have to be made. Had this framework for analysis been utilised to a greater extent from the outset it would have provided the reader with another explanation of the complexity that the work covers. It is a minor point in the context of the volumes many merits.

Before ending one further aspect of Hoenicke Moore's volume warrants mention. That is the footnotes that adorn almost every page of the work. The extent of these notes and their value to fellow scholars should not be underestimated and reinforce the work's overall significance to academy. From its foundation the contribution of this work to the field of diplomatic history and beyond, is to provide a reflective and revealing account of how Germany and Germans were held in America hearts and minds at various stages through the interwar period and during the Second World War itself; this it achieves with considerable aplomb.

Author's Response by Michaela Hoenicke Moore, University of Iowa

It is a great honor - and a somewhat daunting experience - to have one's first book discussed in an H-Diplo roundtable and I am grateful to the editors, Thomas Maddux and Diane Labrosse, for making this possible and recruiting such insightful experts. Heather Dichter, Justus Doenecke, Simon Rofe and David Schmitz read my book with great care and generosity for which I thank them. Two themes resonate in all four reviews and lie at the core of the book: how ideas translate into action, specifically how a wide-ranging, conflicted national discourse on Nazism shaped the Roosevelt administration's foreign policies, and, second, what conclusions and lessons Americans drew from World War Two and the confrontation with the Third Reich.

All four reviewers remark on the "lack of consensus" in American popular and official thinking about Nazi Germany leading to conflicting analyses and postwar plans. But behind what contemporary, especially British, observers experienced as a cacophony of voices and what we criticize today as ambiguity, several distinct explanatory models dominated the debate (Germans are like us, Nazis as gangsters, Nazism as disease, Germany as adolescent criminal, Germany's special path).

In retrospect the most striking of these is undoubtedly the inability or unwillingness to recognize "the other" in this particular enemy; instead Germans were seen as people "like us" - not by all, but both before and during the war, by a slight majority of Americans. This vague base of ethno-cultural identification was accentuated in some quarters by anticommunism, antisemitism, and a strong aversion to the New Deal president. But lest we think that the problem lay on the political right, leniency towards Germany was also made possible by a broader antiwar sentiment that included the left, a backlash against Wilsonian crusades and the liberal distinction between (basically peace-loving, misled) people and their (totalitarian, evil) regime - this last point reinforced by Office of War Information (OWI) policies. While these were societal preferences, translated into intellectual constructions, they had a considerable impact on foreign policy because everyone from the president down to State Department or OWI officials was either aware of, concerned with, or shared these views. The larger societal context shapes a nation's foreign policy in several ways from the most basic ideological orientations to official consideration and manipulation of enabling and restraining trends in public opinion. In the case of the United States in the 1930s and 40s this larger national context was particularly diverse and ideologically wide-ranging.¹

¹ We should perhaps not exaggerate the gap which undoubtedly existed between informed elites and the larger public. Other differences, rooted in political-cultural orientations, were at least equally important as David Mayers shows in his excellent article, "Neither War Nor Peace: FDR's Ambassadors in Embassy Berlin and Policy Toward Germany, 1933-1941", *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 20, no. 1 (2009), 50-68, describing the different responses of the Democratic, anti-Nazi, internationalist William Dodd who recognized the mind-boggling ambition of the Nazi program and the close link between territorial conquest and racist dystopia, and the appeasing, Republican, slightly anti-Semitic Hugh Wilson who in 1938 concluded that "the Third Reich deserved patient understanding plus a fair chance to fulfill its national destiny" (in Mayers' formulation, 59). George F. Kennan, also stationed in Berlin between 1939 and 1941, in turn, did not show himself to be as

What strikes us as most troubling today, the fact that many Americans failed to recognize an ideological other² in Nazi Germany, had - on closer inspection - among contemporary experts on the "German problem" a very different meaning. For commentators like Reinhold Niebuhr, Dorothy Thompson or Dwight Macdonald who understood that the Third Reich presented the most radical form of racism and political violence Europe had seen, there was simultaneous recognition that this deranged German nation had emerged from a shared Christian and modern culture. This made the problem which the Third Reich posed, even after its military defeat, rather more formidable. The political-intellectual debate on Nazism shows that it was rightly understood as not only a security threat but a more profound challenge to which the United States would respond not only militarily, but also on the level of political culture, race relations, government responsibilities as well as with reform of the international system.

The reviewers do not comment on the powerful counter-argument, pejoratively labeled "Vansittartism," after the British diplomat Robert Lord Vansittart which began to shape the wartime debate after 1942. Shocked by unprecedented German brutality, the proponents of this interpretation, a diverse group of influential commentators and politicians, emphasized the popular support the Nazis enjoyed in pursuit of their foreign policy aims, racial views, and hyperbolic nationalism. As one of their most important propaganda tools, the Vansittartists seized on the self-proclaimed pre-Nazi German myth of a special path, originally positively connoted, and argued that there were indeed long and deep roots of a German cult of superiority. Journalists like Edgar Mowrer and Bill Shirer had shaped this understanding since the 1930s; President Franklin Roosevelt, who recommended Vansittart's book *Black Record* to his psychological warfare coordinator, shared in particular the notion that the German people should not be viewed as victims of their regime. To this day the Vansittartist position has been maligned as an unfortunate, exaggerated enemy image. This interpretation of the Third Reich, however, was much more on target than the OWI version or other exculpatory lines such as that Hitler just sought what had been denied to the Germans a generation earlier. The Vansittartists argued that the Third Reich be judged by its objectives and its actions; they pragmatically insisted that German society was too deeply implicated in this system to be usefully separated from the Nazis. Today the accusation "enemy of civilization" has the ring of self-righteous

realistic as Dodd when he hoped (like some émigrés and other pro-German activists stateside, both leftist and conservative) that there might be a revolt against the Hitler regime (62).

² Even when the president and others emphasized in highly charged emotional terms the contrast between German fascism and Western liberal democracy, the impact of that Manichaeian rhetoric was significantly curbed because many Americans believed Nazi ideology had been imposed on rather than embraced by the German people. (344) Others questioned the ideological contrast outright before, during and right after the war. Particularly noteworthy is the War Department's assessment that "problem attitudes" were on the rise by 1946 among replacement personnel. This included not only one third of American soldiers who believed "that Germans were partly or wholly right in treating the Jews as they did" but also "a large proportion of enlisted men and even more officers [who] approve or partly approve of what they know of Hitler's record in domestic policy." The analysts concluded that the men did "not clearly understand the struggle for democratic ideals and practices as opposed to those of Nazism." (337)

propaganda, but at the time this emerging realization of what the Third Reich was all about constituted an important intellectual achievement.

In spite of its appeal and official use (by the War Department) as an enemy image, Vansittartism provoked angry counter-arguments. The most severe and frequent accusation was the claim that it amounted to “an inverted form of Hitler’s racial theories.” Similarly, critics were concerned about the “collective guilt” charge which the Vansittartists seemed to level against the Germans (when in reality it was the German policy of occupation and genocide that postulated “collective guilt” of Jews and Slavs). The demand that Americans should think and behave differently from the enemy was ever-present in public and official pronouncements. The German Jewish refugee Toni Sender, for example, rejected the Vansittartist “anti-German race theory” arguing that “democracy is based on faith in the common man, while Fascism believes in the permanent inequality of individuals and nations. This is the choice which is before every one of us and you cannot be in both camps at the same time.” (251)

There is some productive disagreement among the reviewers as to the lack of “clear and consistent policies” that resulted from the fluidity and conflict among American views of Nazi Germany. In the conclusion of my book I, too, wonder how to evaluate the incoherence in the debate on Nazism and suggest a list of beneficial as well as troubling implications. Reading the H-Diplo roundtable on my book’s illustrious twin, David Engermann’s *Know Your Enemy*, which offers an in-depth and rigorous analysis of the “rise and fall of America’s Soviet experts” I was reminded of Winston Churchill’s comment on democracy: the worst form of government except for all the others.³ As critical-minded academics we focus on the failures, aberrations and inefficiencies of public, elite (including academic) and political deliberations and disputes. But both books, I believe, also illustrate the fruitfulness of conflicting lines of inquiries.⁴

More specifically arguing in support of the value of the larger societal debate on Nazism, I would offer the following observations. The important scholarship on American indifference, disbelief and even sympathy for Nazi Germany cannot obscure the fact that many Americans in and outside the government *did* grasp the dimensions of this geographically and ideologically large-scale, ambitious, partially implemented dystopia and that most of them were propelled into action. Still, the extraordinary degree of its racism,

³ H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable Review of David C. Engerman. *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America’s Soviet Experts* (2009) at <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-2-11.pdf>

⁴ Whether FDR, Henry Wallace, Sumner Welles, Henry Stimson or Hans Morgenthau – their respective and divergent understanding of the Third Reich corresponded to similar views circulating among American political and intellectual elites; some more intently focusing on the stunning destructiveness of Nazi ideology and policies, others more broadly concerned with finding a way out of this Armageddon, laying the foundations for a more successful, cooperative peace than the last one. Likewise illustrating the benefits of a wider public debate are Benjamin L. Alpers, *Dictators, Democracy and American Public Culture. Envisioning the Totalitarian Enemy, 1920-1950s* (2003) and Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War* (1995).

the brutality and irrationality of its policies do not make the realities of the Third Reich any easier to comprehend – not for contemporary observers, not for scholars. This is also true for questions that lay intermittently at the core of the American popular and political debates: how much support did the Hitler regime have among Germans, how threatening were Nazi German war aims and policies to the United States, and what could be done to reform that country? These three areas alone generated scholarly controversies for the next sixty years.

The reality of the Third Reich was complex. Yet the contemporary slogan which serves as the title of the book expressed a widely recognized need to understand Nazi Germany in order to formulate appropriate responses. The urgency of the “second chance” – to improve on the peace-making of a generation ago, to learn the right lessons – is palpable in public and even more so governmental deliberations. Rofe rightly insists on a more careful distinction between U.S. war and peace aims, between how to defeat Germany and how to integrate a pacified Germany into its regional, i.e. European, context. Both war and peace aims reveal that American policymakers looked at Nazi Germany in a larger framework of wartime alliances, European postwar needs, and global security strategies.

It seems shocking in retrospect to read conclusions like that of a Council on Foreign Relations expert who wrote that “it is hard to know what to do in the face of the destruction of the Jews” (153) – but with greater knowledge and resources we still find it difficult today to know what to do in Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda and Sudan. The notion of “preventing genocide” and even the Munich myth of preemption are anachronistic when assessing U.S. foreign policy of this period. The concepts of humanitarian intervention, responsibility to protect, and international law that reaches through state sovereignty to both protect (victims) and indict (perpetrators) individuals were *results* of the trauma that Nazi Germany had caused. More importantly, the extent to which opportunities for effective action and rescue efforts were limited is explained by scholars like Shlomo Aronson, Richard Breitman and Gerhard Weinberg who avoid the unilateral trap and put this problem in its proper context, taking both the constraints of Allied coalition warfare and the lethal effectiveness of Nazi designs for genocide into consideration.⁵ A close reading of official and private reflections in the last year of the war shows that government officials recognized that the catastrophe which Germany had brought about was beyond the capabilities of American foreign policy to prevent, fix or overcome. Roosevelt, by nature unfailingly optimistic, shared with liberal intellectuals and conservative pragmatists an understanding of the limits of American political will and power.

The reviewers’ expertise in the field of great debates, internationalism and non-interventionism, has led them to zero in on an underdeveloped aspect in my book, the connection between ideas and policies in the prewar years – and I gratefully accept their

⁵ Shlomo Aronson, *Hitler, the Allies and the Jews* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Richard Breitman, *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998); Gerhard L. Weinberg, *A World at Arms. A Global History of World War II* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

criticism. Schmitz' concern with my pre-Pearl Harbor interpretation is twofold, I believe. On the one hand, he asks how views and policies regarding Nazi Germany fit in with larger patterns of U.S. relations with rightwing military dictatorships – a topic on which he is a recognized authority. And still, it seems to me that Nazi Germany as well as American responses defy the pattern he outlines in his book.⁶ Schmitz' criticism, however, also concerns my lack of detailed attention to the domestically and internationally crucial years 1939 through 1941, a weakness which Rofe mentions, too. And though I would like to refer to Rofe's appreciative remarks and chapter two in my book to counter Doenecke's observation that I did not devote sufficient space to the pre-Pearl Harbor non-interventionist camp, I have to agree with all three authors' criticism that this period will repay closer study than I have offered. From different vantage points each of the reviewers has substantially furthered our understanding of the conflicting national political priorities and objectives of the Roosevelt administration and its wide range of critics.⁷

The nature of America's great debates on its international role and historical purpose has fundamentally changed as a result of World War Two.⁸ Since the 1960s criticism of military intervention and alternative articulations of national values have been threatened with political invectives of isolationism and appeasement while the Munich lesson is endlessly recycled by every new generation of interventionist minded politicians and public intellectuals in spite of overwhelming evidence that it was not a particularly meaningful historical lesson.⁹ The readiness to deploy military power to prevent future aggression, however, was not simply a lesson learned from World War Two, the "failure" of the Munich conference and appeasement. Instead such lessons were drawn in a more complex maneuver of transferring the retrospectively obvious urgency and moral justification of World War Two on to the next crises.

⁶ David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're On Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorship, 1921-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999). I have found this book most effective in my U.S. foreign policy courses until Schmitz wrote *The Triumph of Internationalism: Franklin D. Roosevelt and a World in Crisis, 1933-1941* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2007) which I have used ever since it came out.

⁷ Over the course of four decades Justus Doenecke has helped us understand the ideological diversity and range of positions in the anti-interventionist movement, from *Not to the Swift: The Old Isolationists in the Cold War Era* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1979) to *Storm on the Horizon: The Challenge to American Intervention, 1939-1941* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000); Simon J. Rofe has emphasized the importance of US pre-war postwar plans – a crucial point in Schmitz' criticism, too - in different places, including his *Franklin Roosevelt's Foreign Policy and the Welles Mission* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁸ Robert Westbrook, "Isolationism Reconsidered" *Raritan* 30, No 2 (Fall 2010): 4-36

⁹ Gerhard Weinberg has shown that this lesson which more accurately ought to be called a myth, is based on a misreading of historical reality: there simply was no military alternative in 1938 for the Western countries; the only leader who wanted and actively sought war, was Hitler. Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War. Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) has examined the detrimental use of this historical analogy in the context of the decision to escalate the war in Vietnam. Stephen Walt recently offered some clever insights as to "why bad ideas don't go away." http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/01/02/where_do_bad_ideas_come_from?page=0.0

One of the more problematic aspects of American exceptionalism is to see the nation as standing somehow apart from the world and ordinary human history, leading to a false sense of insularity and invulnerability. In the middle of the World War Two this is not how the architects of wartime and postwar policies saw the world and their country's position in it. There was a stronger sense of interdependence, limits of American power, and responsibility combined with an understanding of contingency, the opposite of a free hand. The foreign policy lessons drawn from World War Two were substantially different from the principles and spirit that had guided the Roosevelt administration during the war. The president's partial internationalism stood in contrast to both the America First model but also Henry Luce's missionary enthusiasm for global American hegemony.

Dichter's call to analyze the American wartime discourse on Nazi Germany in a comparative framework echoes Schmitz' critique: the need to explain the significance of this war for the tradition of U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century. Why did the war effort against Nazi Germany become a model for resisting communist aggression and fighting terrorism? In addition to Japan, the transfer of enemy characteristics from Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union (344, 348f) is of particular significance. By the second half of the 1940s the United States had not only vanquished a formidable enemy but the experiences and lessons of this war could now be applied to an old/ new ideological enemy. Domestic mobilization for the Cold War proved so much easier given the greater appeal of anticommunism and America's newly secured power, prestige and globalist consensus.

Rofe's and Schmitz' comments on how lessons drawn from World War One shaped public opinion well into World War Two highlight what I see as an additional research desideratum: the impact that World War Two had not only on subsequent U.S. foreign policy thinking but also on its political culture and nationalism. As I discuss in the conclusion of my book, contemporary insights as to the meaning of Germany's break with civilization for this country went beyond the totalitarian enemy image and the anti-appeasement stance. Some of these intellectual responses were less operational in foreign policy terms but all the more relevant with regard to Western democratic culture. At a time when living memory of World War Two is fading and "Hitler" and "the Nazis" lead an ever more curious afterlife in American popular and political culture, the legacy of the war seems sometimes detached from historical reality. In addition to studying the important question as to how and why internationalism triumphed by the 1940s, the memory politics of American foreign policy, of how and why certain versions of past events were created, promoted and became successful is a related and important subject.¹⁰

¹⁰ While memory politics is a vibrant and vital theme of historical studies both for World War One and World War Two in European history, U.S. diplomatic historians are lagging behind with the notable exception of Brian Etheridge, "Desert Fox. Memory Diplomacy and the German Question in Early Cold War America" *Diplomatic History* 32, no. 2 (2008): 207-38 [DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-7709.2008.00689.x; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.2008.00689.x>]; John Bodnar, *The 'Good War' in American Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), and Carol Gluck, *Past Obsessions: World War II in History and Memory* (forthcoming). Cecilia O'Leary's *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) is an interesting model that shows how meaning and memory of the Civil war remained contested between different political, social, ethnic and geographical sections of the nation for

Again, my thanks to H-Diplo for making this exchange possible and to my four colleagues for their sympathetic reading but also their critiques which helped me understand what requires further research and reflection.

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half a century. In time for America's entry into the First World War a martial nationalism had won out over its progressive alternatives promoting equality and justice; an outcome that was reinforced by unprecedented government intervention in the formulation of patriotism, including criminalization of political dissent.