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Introduction by Julie McBrien

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Introduction by Julie McBrien, University of Amsterdam

The first ethical obligation listed in the American Anthropological Association's Principles of Professional Responsibility is to "do no harm," even when this "supersede[s] the goal of seeking new knowledge and can lead to decisions to not undertake or to discontinue a project."¹ For many American anthropologists the 'do no harm' principal is not merely a professional obligation but likewise a deep personal commitment to their interlocutors; it is so axiomatic to the discipline's understanding of itself that it is hard to imagine anthropology, and anthropologists, without it. Nevertheless, as David H. Price's book *Cold War Anthropology* impressively demonstrates, anthropology has not always been so principally committed. From World War II through the Cold War, a number of anthropologists colluded with U.S. civilian and military intelligence services to produce and make strategic use of knowledge about the then 'third world' populations in efforts to combat the global expansion of communism.

In *Cold War Anthropology*, the third in a series about anthropology, the intelligences services, and mid-century wars, Price focuses on anthropologists as collaborators in Cold War efforts. He details the ways in which the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon targeted anthropologists for recruitment and how they used anthropology as a cover for agents. Price describes contributions of anthropologists in the production of 'dual-use' knowledge, paying careful attention to the most significant mode through which the intelligence services could influence them—research grants. While some anthropologists may have been at least partially aware of where their research funds were coming from, and hence who was setting, in part, the agendas, significant resources were also channeled through institutes and organizations that had been set up to occlude the source of their funds; many had no idea they were conducting research commissioned by the intelligence services.

Price is careful in his book to tease out the differences between direct and indirect contributions, as well as witting or unwitting involvement of anthropologists; he details many hitherto unknown instances of collaboration. While his book can be read as a history of how U.S. anthropology became wrapped up in the machinations of the U.S. civilian-military intelligence apparatus, it is clear from the outset that Price aims at more than a descriptive account. It is not for nothing that anthropologist Marshall Sahlins, a long-time and outspoken critic of anthropology's contributions to the military industrial complex, has dubbed Price 'anthropology's conscience' in a blurb on the book's back cover. Price clearly aims to lay bare the way the discipline played a role in practices that may have been very harmful to the populations with which the anthropologists were working. Price's intervention is likewise cautionary, as becomes clear in the concluding chapters. There he warns the discipline, which has long seen itself as having moved beyond ethically questionable political entanglements, against the subtle ways it is still enmeshed in, and at least partly at service to, the strategic ends of government and capital in the post 9-11 era.

The reviewers featured here found much to praise in Price's book. George Blaustein calls it a "righteous account of a poisoned discipline" which gathers many lively stories of culprits, "the 'half-unwitting' and the shamefully naive, and finally the resisters." These detailed stories of collusion and defiance are similarly praised by Artemy Kalinovsky. He remarks that one of the book's strengths is the attention paid throughout to "instances of collaboration and, occasionally, on resistance to such collaboration from within the profession or

¹ American Anthropological Association, AAA Ethics Forum, *Statement on Ethics (2012)*, "1. Do No Harm," <http://ethics.americananthro.org/ethics-statement-1-do-no-harm/>.

by individual scholars.” Sergey Abashin classifies Price’s book as part of “a large and multifaceted tradition of analyzing the relationship between power and knowledge.” Lawrence Rosen describes the book as “serious and methodical,” arguing that the discipline is indebted to Price for uncovering so much information especially regarding “funding agencies and their governmental entanglements.”

Nevertheless, the reviewers have some reservations about Price’s book. In fact, they are more critical of it than I, or most anthropologists, seem to be. The majority of anthropologists who have reviewed Price’s work have been highly flattering and have offered little criticism;² Rosen’s analysis featured here is an exception. Perhaps the book struck a chord in most that called for personal and disciplinary reflection rather than our more usual kinds of engagements. This seems to be book’s strength and likely what Price intended with its publication. It may also be why partial outsiders were necessarily more discerning in their readings.

In other regards as well, the reflections and criticisms of each of the reviewers featured here clearly emerge from their disciplinary training, their personal interests, and, their biographies. Kalinovsky and Abashin, who conduct research in the former USSR, see Price’s book as a rather provincial view of a global, Cold War story. The gaping absence of the USSR struck these two reviewers. While the title *Cold War Anthropology* begs for a discussion of geo-politics, as pointed out by Abashin and Kalinovsky, the U.S. intelligence services and academia take center stage and the USSR is little more than the backdrop to the story. This was an unfortunate missed opportunity to see the globally intertwined nature of Cold War-era knowledge production, or the similarity of power-serving, post-colonial critiques in both the ‘Second’ and ‘First’ Worlds, for example. And, as Abashin, an anthropologist of Central Asia, points out, Price squandered the opportunity to both critically analyze the congruous ways variant imperial power regimes have influenced and utilized academic knowledge, and to tease out the differences between them.

Blaustein likewise critiques Price’s occasional broad-stroke analysis. For Blaustein, however, this intermittent lapse is found in Price’s argument about hegemony, an analysis that Blaustein argues too often presents totalizing narratives of power that simultaneously explain all and naught. In some ways, Rosen’s critique parallel’s Blaustein’s. Both miss what such a sweeping narrative leaves out. For Rosen this is an omission of how other forces and movements of the era—the Civil Rights movement, for example—impacted the discipline. He argues that Price’s view of the discipline’s intellectual history is overly gloomy and grants too much weight to the role of the intelligence services and funding schemes in forming its contours.

These assessments aside, Price’s is a timely and relevant book. In it, he intends to track the reach and influence of U.S. intelligence services into academic endeavors and undercover the modes of, and extent to which, anthropologists served the Cold War effort. He succeeds in his aims and presents a well-argued, detailed book that should be essential reading for generations of anthropologists to come. Though its story is not always as well argued, and is not as fully fleshed out as the reviewers would have liked it to be, it is one worth being told, if for no other reason than that history tends to repeat itself.

² For example, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, featured a roundtable with five leading anthropologists commenting on Price’s book. *HAU* 6:2 (2016): 441-472.

Participants:

David H. Price, Ph.D., is Professor of Anthropology at Saint Martin's University, in Lacey, Washington. His work uses archival sources and the Freedom of Information Act to examine historical and present interactions between anthropologists and military and intelligence agencies. His other books include, *Threatening Anthropology* (Duke University Press, 2004), *Anthropological Intelligence* (Duke University Press, 2008), and *Weaponizing Anthropology* (2011). He is currently writing a book drawing on extensive records from a CIA funding front that funded international research during the 1950s and 60s.

Julie McBrien is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. She is author of *From Belonging to Belief: Modern Secularisms and the Construction of Religion in Kyrgyzstan* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017). She currently co-directs the European Research Council funded program 'Problematizing Muslim Marriages: Ambiguities and Contestations.'

Sergey Abashin received a Ph.D. in Anthropology and is Professor at European University at St. Petersburg (Russia). His main publications include *Soviet Kishlak: between colonialism and modernisation* (Moscow, 2015, in Russian) and articles: "A prayer for rain: practicing being Soviet and Muslim," *Journal of Islamic Studies* (2014, 25/2, 178-200); "The logic of Islamic practice: a religious conflict in Central Asia," *Central Asian Survey* 25:3 (2006): 267-286. His current project involves transnational and translocal aspects of migration in Russia.

George Blaustein is Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He received his doctorate in the History of American Civilization from Harvard University and is the author of *Nightmare Envy & Other Stories: American Culture and European Reconstruction* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

Artemy M. Kalinovsky is Assistant Professor of East European Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He is the author of *A Long Goodbye: The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan* (Harvard University Press, 2011). He has also co-edited and co-authored several works, including *The Routledge Handbook of Cold War Studies* (Routledge, 2014), *Cold War Orientalism: Interlocking Orientologies in the Cold War Era* (Routledge, 2015), and *Missionaries of Modernity: Advisory Missions and the Struggle for Hegemony in Afghanistan and Beyond* (Hurst, 2016). His current work is *Laboratory of Social Development: Cold War Politics and Decolonization in Soviet Tajikistan*.

Lawrence Rosen is the Wm. N. Cromwell Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Princeton University and Adjunct Professor of Law at Columbia Law School. He is spending this academic year as a visitor at The Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, currently writing a general book about tribes. His most recent books are *The Judgment of Culture* (Routledge, 2017) and *Islam and the Rule of Justice* (University of Chicago Press, 2018).

Review by Sergey Abashin, European University at St Petersburg

David H. Price's *Cold War Anthropology: The CIA, the Pentagon, and the growth of Dual Use Anthropology* belongs to a large and multifaceted tradition of analyzing the relationship between power and knowledge. The relationship between anthropology and the colonial politics of the western empire in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century is a classic theme, one that is already well established among scholars. Contemporary researchers, most of whom were born after the collapse of empires, do not feel personally connected to colonialism; they are therefore able to distance themselves from it and to look critically at their predecessors. There does not appear to be much disagreement that dual-use anthropology, or "the symbiotic relationships between the 'pure' and 'applied' sciences" (xiv), which has been, to various degrees, written into imperial projects, nevertheless maintained some autonomy, allowing empathy for the people it studied and opposition to colonial power. The contradictory roles of Imperial anthropologist are taken as a given today, understood as a consequences of a long complicated epoch and a changing society.

The period from the end of the Second World War to the present day, however, is more problematic for anthropologists studying their own role in systems of power. We see in Price's book many gaps, silences, and presumptions. Most of the examples presented belong to the end of the 1940s and early 1950s, and the closer we get to the end of the Cold War the more rare and vague they become. Since many contemporary scholars were also witnesses of the mid-twentieth century, or were in close contact with those who worked in the 1950s to 1980s, the emotional distance from the events shrinks significantly. Contacts with government officials, intelligence services, and the military are viewed from the angle of one's personal biography, in which each person sees themselves as an autonomous subject, freely taking decisions and independent from power to a much greater degree than can be confirmed by formal evidence of such direct or indirect relations. This is clear both in the statements made by anthropologists quoted in the book as well as in the first responses to the book.¹

If I am correct, does this mean a different relationship to the two periods: before the Second World War and after it? Does each need to be viewed in its own conceptual framework? Or does this difference result from the degree of distance from, and the sensitive nature of, the topic? This question is not addressed in the book. Price uses the Cold War as an umbrella term for what in fact were various neocolonial projects. Each of these, in one way or another, continued former colonial policies of using anthropology, and in each case, power influenced scholarship. I see this book as a continuation of the kind of analysis used to examine European anthropology of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries;² viewing it in this way provides an opportunity to see the adaptation and reproduction of practices of rule over an extended period of the modern era.

The question nevertheless remains: was there something particular about the "Cold War" period? What new trends and practices appeared at this time? In what ways did the context created by the competition of two political and ideological centers—the U.S. and USSR—to which Price points, affect post-World War II

¹ See the Symposium on *Cold War Anthropology* in the *Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6:2 (2016): 441-472.

² Talal Asad, ed., *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (London: Ithaca Press, 1973); George W. Stocking, Jr., ed., *Colonial Situations: Essays on the Contextualization of Ethnographic Knowledge* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991); Peter Pels and Oscar Salemink, eds., *Colonial Subjects: Essays on the Practical History of Anthropology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

anthropology? How did anthropologists define the parameters of their field and subject? How did they shape the formation of their institutions, as well as their education and research programs and priorities? These questions require further unpacking in at least two directions: what kind of possibilities were there for anthropologists to take critical positions in the Cold War, and what happened with anthropological research beyond the United States?

While listing the confirmed and probable cases of collaboration between anthropologists (or pseudo-anthropologists) and the CIA and the Pentagon, Price regularly repeats that anthropologists constantly criticized such collaboration publicly and privately. He emphasizes that from the end of the 1960s, against the background of anti-war sentiment, this criticism became institutionalized, that is, it became mainstream and almost mandatory for the American anthropological community. How can we account for this, considering the interests of those in 'power,' who saw themselves in a state of Cold War, and the logic of "dual use anthropology"? We see a somewhat paradoxical picture. The spread of American political influence paralleled the spread of this critical knowledge, itself an element of neocolonialism, despite its claims of anti-colonialism. The Soviet political and ideological machine, confronting the American one, also used anti-colonialism and anti-racism as a way to appeal to the post-colonial world and as a language of communication with political allies and clients. Does that mean that such criticisms in the second half of the twentieth century become a part of global claims to domination? Clearly, in studying the Cold War, and the relationship of anthropologists to power, it is necessary to change the accent from conspiratorial reconstructions of the mutual relationship between scholars and secret services and the military to civilian types of activity in international and non-governmental organizations, private business, film production, and so on. Of course, one must not forget the secret side of this activity, which Price warns about in his Marxian critique of the postmodern understanding of power. He reproaches the anthropologists, who "adapted [Jean-François] Lyotard's 'incredulity towards metanarratives'" that they had "no means of systematically interpreting recurrent intrusions of military and intelligence agencies on the discipline" (359-360). It nevertheless seems that the particularities of the "Cold War" period are evident in the diversification of agents and institutes who participated in it, and in the methods and practices through which competition took place.

Another possible direction for the study of Cold War anthropology might be the examination of how the project of dual-use science took place in other countries which participated in global and regional political struggle. The exclusively American perspective, which is the focus of Price's work, is incomplete when discussing a world-wide contest of ideological and military-political ambitions. We can speak in this case of the American anthropologists' participation in the Cold War, but not the specificity of Cold War anthropology.³

If we turn to Soviet ethnography, which is presumed analogous to, and a twin of, American anthropology, one can see a number of similarities. Ethnographers carried out research projects around the world and, in all likelihood, maintained ties with secret services and the military. One could refer, for example, to the assembly of ethnographic maps in Eastern Europe in the 1940s or the expeditions to Yemen and Cuba in the 1980s.⁴

³ See Katherine Verdery, "The Cold War is not a trope," *Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6:2 (2016), 449.

⁴ Sergey Alymov, *P.I. Kushner i razvitie sovetskoi etnografii v 1920-1950e gody* (Moscow: In-t etnologii i antropologii RAN, 2006), 131-140.

Another example is Iosif Grigulevich of the Soviet Institute of Ethnography who had previously spent many years as an ‘illegal’ spy in Europe and America, where, among other things, he organized an attack on Leon Trotsky. Besides the direct collaboration with government institutes, the Soviet Institute of Ethnography carried out an important ideological task in compiling a database about the peoples and cultures of the world, in some ways similar to the work of George Murdock. The 13-volume Soviet publication *Peoples of the World*, published in the 1950s and 1960s,⁵ offered its own exhaustive classification and universalist explanation of cultural diversity, to which officials and politicians could refer.

But I would also note some important differences. Price mentions the Soviet Institute of Ethnography, which, according to a CIA report from 1961, discussed African development back in 1954 (121).⁶ Ivan Potekhin, a researcher at the Institute of Ethnography who was employed by the Soviet intelligence services (NKVD) during the war and later became a specialist on Africa, did in fact take part in Soviet outreach to African politicians. In 1957, for example, he went to Ghana, and his work there was probably not limited to academic research. By 1959, however, Potekhin was installed as head of the newly created Institute of Africa, which was supposed to collect material about the continent. In the 1960s the institutes of the Far East, Latin America, the U.S., and Canada were founded and funded by the government via the Academy of Sciences. Ethnographers did not play a prominent role in these institutions, which were dominated by economists and historians. The development of regional studies, which Price describes using the U.S. as an example, took place in the USSR with only a minimal institutional and conceptual participation of ethnographers. In general, Soviet ethnographers remained quite limited in number and were not a particularly influential scholarly group, and most of their efforts were in any case concentrated on studying Soviet society and especially its cultural peripheries.

In the history of Soviet ethnography during the Cold War one can see, therefore, a significant difference with American anthropology. Exclusively government funding, institutional and ideological centralization, and proximity to power paralyzed, on the one hand, the very possibility of scholars to publicly criticize or oppose power, and on the other hand facilitated the marginalization of humanities scholars, decreasing their influence in political decision making and turning them into prestigious symbols rather than full-fledged elements of power. In this way, after the Second World War, on both sides of the new global confrontation, there emerged different models of relationships between power and knowledge, different types of subjectivity among academics, different understanding of disciplinary boundaries and interests, and different practices of research ethics and so on. Several questions immediately emerge: how did these models relate to each other, how did they observe each other, what did they borrow from each other and what did they reject, and in which way did intelligence services and international organizations influence scholars and scholarship in the land of the “potential enemy”?

David H. Price’s *Cold War Anthropology* reads like an expose. It overwhelms the reader with the amount of assembled facts, which need to be discovered and discussed despite their sensitivity and soreness. At the same time, a wider understanding of the Cold War as a particular period in the history of anthropology, in my

⁵ Series *Narody mira. Etnograficheskie ocherki*, Vol.1-13. Moscow: Academy of Sciences of USSR, 1954-1966.

⁶ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), “Soviet Policy toward the Underdeveloped Countries,” Current Intelligence Staff Study (Reference Title: CAESAR XIII-61), Series OCI, No. 1803/61, 28 April 1961, (Classified Secret).

view, should not be limited to the study of military and intelligence activity, when anthropologists were participants, victims, and or both at the same time. We should see different angles and spheres, in which political and ideological confrontation unfolded, a more diversified repertoire of mutual relations between anthropologists and power, with society and with each other.

Review by George Blaustein, University of Amsterdam

David H. Price's *Cold War Anthropology* is a sequel to his earlier *Anthropological Intelligence* (2008), which charted the weaponization of American anthropology during the Second World War.¹ It is a prequel of sorts to *Weaponizing Anthropology* (2011), which addressed the post-September-11 era.² The transformation chronicled in this most recent volume is dramatic: "In less than three decades the discipline shifted from a near-total alignment supporting global militarization efforts, to widespread radical or liberal opposition to American foreign policy and resistance to anthropological collaborations with military and intelligence agencies" (xxi). That history would find a parallel in the history of American Studies, among other American endeavors in the humanities. Anthropology is unique because of all humanities disciplines, it was fated to be in the wrong places at the wrong times, and because it was "dual use": weaponizable and esoteric in equal measure.

Cold War Anthropology is a righteous account of a poisoned discipline. It reconstructs the workings of CIA- and Pentagon-front groups, and catalogues the anthropologists, projects, and institutions that worked directly for those groups, or that received roundabout money. Money (or the Cold War political economy) is the real protagonist here, ever inflecting that fragile distinction between 'pure' and 'applied' science. A comprehensive account would be impossible, but Price follows the available crumbs, drawing on recently declassified material, other scholarly accounts, memoirs, disciplinary histories, and FOIA requests. "Anthropology, perhaps more than other disciplines," Price notes, "is used to dealing with such traces of the phenomena we study," and the book must make do with "questions, shadows, and other residuals" of overt and covert relationships (163). The structure and narrative are at some points frustratingly convoluted, and at other points suggestive and anecdotal in the best sense.

Different kinds of culprits emerge. The economist and political theorist Walt Rostow, a hawkish voice in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, is a familiar figure in the intellectual history of the Cold War, and in this book he knowingly orchestrates "a mixture of CIA, Ford Foundation, and Rockefeller Foundation funds" (119). Others culprits are opportunists, ambivalent or unambivalent, and the book tests their accounts against harder truths. Later come the unwitting, the "half-unwitting" (98), the shamefully naive, and finally the resisters.

Among the opportunists is the anthropologist Frank Bessac, who had worked for the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in China during the war and for the CIA in 1947. He would later claim that he resigned in October 1947. But in 1949 he was on a Fulbright in China, during the Communist revolution of 1949, and just happened to cross paths in Tihwa with Douglas Mackiernan, a CIA agent working under State Department cover. Bessac joined Mackiernan and "a group of White Russians and Mongols," Price writes, "packing gold, machine guns and an assortment of other light arms, ammunition, hand grenades, a shortwave radio, and Geiger counters on an overland trip to Tibet." Mackiernan was killed—in fact the CIA later recognized him as the first agent killed in the line of duty. Bessac made it out and wrote about it in *Life*

¹ David H. Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

² David H. Price, *Weaponizing Anthropology: Social Science in Service of the Militarized State* (Edinburgh: AK, 2011).

magazine, “with no mention of the political dimensions of the mission or of Mackiernan being a CIA agent.” (150-151). The book gathers many such lively examples and applies a common test of ethics and honesty. Bessac’s account, for instance, “strains credulity” (150).

The more interesting type of culprit (if culprit is the right word) is the “half-unwitting scholar who was not directly concerned with the forces and politics of the Cold War, even while contributing to the intellectual discourse in ways that supported American hegemony” (98). This is how Price describes Clifford Geertz, who worked as part of the Modjokuto Project in Indonesia starting in 1952. It had been funded by the Ford Foundation, and then moved to MIT’s Center for International Studies (CENIS). CENIS’s connections to the CIA were exposed by William F. Buckley, of all people, in 1957. In an interview with Price, Geertz recalled “a certain mild paranoia” among his colleagues about where the money came from (95).

Price’s readings of scholarship from the era comes down to alignment and access. “Though Geertz insisted that CENIS’s economists did not impact his work, his analysis aligned neatly with theirs.” Geertz’s model of “involution” in treating the “systemic poverty and political brutality of Indonesia,” his emphasis on “ideology” rather than “the material forces of colonialism,” aligned with those who paid the piper, as some critics noted in the 1970s (97-98). Geertz’s own insistence notwithstanding, his work “was shaped by the milieu of CENIS.” And whatever Geertz knew about his research funds, wire-pullers like Rostow and the CIA-affiliated economist Max Millikan “had access to *his* research” (98). Price’s point, in the end, is that any claim to apolitical work is moot in a discipline that was wound up with the Cold War. All cockfights are political.

By the mid-1960s, naïveté or half-wittedness is harder for *Cold War Anthropology* to stomach. The anthropologist Gerald Hickey worked in Vietnam for RAND, cameoed in the 1958 film adaptation of Graham Greene’s *The Quiet American*, and embraced the ideology behind the Strategic Hamlet Program. Price’s assessment of Hickey’s reports is withering: “He wrote as if he were living between dimensions in a world where traditional Vietnamese ethnic and linguistic groups maintained an existence outside of the American carpet bombing, napalm, and Agent Orange” (313). By contrast, Delmos Jones, who had conducted research in Thailand and would become a founder of the Association of Black Anthropologists, awoke to the dangers of cooptation and complicity. He withdrew and wrote with measured eloquence about the culpability of anthropologists.

The denouement of Price’s history is the American Anthropological Association’s belated adoption of an ethical code in 1971. But a true reckoning for the discipline would be practically impossible. Price’s argument is about hegemony, and arguments about hegemony make it difficult to salvage the untainted from the tainted. *Cold War Anthropology* has this in common with recent books like Inderjeet Parmar’s *Foundations of the American Century*, which likewise found ostensibly-but-not-really nonstate, nonpolitical, scientific/nonideological foundations undergirding academic networks and American hegemony.³ Price’s preface notes that “the Pentagon and the CIA can be difficult to write about in ways that do not make them out to be totalizing forces that explain everything, and thereby nothing, at the same time” (xiv). At times, even while Price’s connecting of institutional and intellectual dots is heroic, the book falls into that trap.

³ Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

This somewhat saturated argument about hegemony might paradoxically deflate some of the outrage or disappointment that earlier chapters provoked—or at least it did for this reader. The epigraph to chapter seven quotes a 1958 letter from Melville Herskovits—a remarkable and still noble figure in the history of modern African and African American Studies—to the CIA’s Allen Dulles, saying that the African Studies Association “would be happy to aid you in any way that it can” (165). *Et tu*, Herskovits? The CIA’s “ethical depravity” (220) is the well, and pretty much every anthropologist drank from the bucket, wittingly or unwittingly, in good faith or bad.

Cold War Anthropology argues that the Cold War hegemonically inflected the discipline of anthropology, that “military and intelligence agencies quietly shaped the development of anthropology.” Price attends to “gentle nudges” and broad but subtle incentives that steered the discipline over three decades (xi). And yet this ever-present shaping was not at all quiet, and the same evidence might support a different kind of argument—one that is less about tragedy than about farce.

A farce, I hasten to add, can be as disastrous and ethically bankrupt as a tragedy, but it might better accommodate, say, the Pentagon’s frequent misunderstandings of what anthropology could actually achieve. The Pentagon-funded Special Operations Research Office (SORO) at American University “fantasized about weaponizing ethnographic knowledge to manipulate native populations in absurd ways,” imagining that studies of witchcraft could fuel magic-based counterinsurgency campaigns in Congo (255-6). Also farcical is the extent to which, by the 1960s, anthropologists faced a general suspicion of being tied to the CIA even when they were not. Some of Price’s details call to mind Joseph Heller more than John le Carré. An anthropologist who had studied in Zambia tells a visiting lecturer that a particular scholar in Zambia was CIA; it turns out that the lecturer, John Stockwell, had himself supervised CIA agents in Zambia, and “the person she named was *not* one of them” (222). It was less that the discipline was poisoned than that the entire environment was.

Such was the Cold War’s predicament of culture. The CIA and the Pentagon paid the piper and often called the tune. But just as often the tune was a cacophony.

In recent years, scholars of the Cold War have turned their attention to the role of knowledge in foreign relations. The United States' obsession with preventing Communist influence in post-colonial states led Washington to commit ever greater resources for economic development, military aid, and, ultimately, direct intervention. But in most cases the United States lacked deep knowledge about areas of the world where it was now prepared to establish democracy and defend liberal capitalism. In particular, the U.S. lacked the kind of people with detailed granular knowledge about the everyday workings of local societies it now hoped to mobilize for the Cold War. As Daniel Immerwahr noted in his book, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development*, "although anthropologists were prominent figures [in the U.S.], few of them had experience in the places to which the United States would send aid after 1945."¹ The main colonial powers had been reluctant to allow Americans to poke around in their domain.

By the 1950s, however, the situation had changed substantially. Anthropologists and rural sociologists who had previously worked within the United States now put their skills to work abroad. Area studies programs at the nation's elite universities and state colleges trained a younger group of scholars, many studying on the GI bill. There is little doubt that, as with other disciplines of the natural and social sciences, the U.S. military-industrial complex helped the expansion of anthropology in the second half of the twentieth century. As David H. Price details in *Cold War Anthropology*, the links between institutions like the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency on the one side, and anthropologists on the other, were often hidden, sometimes even from the scholars themselves. That influence was so pervasive that there were few corners of the profession that remained untouched. Yet Price's aim is not merely to show how government institutions appropriated anthropology; rather, it is to document how anthropologists themselves were implicated in the workings of the Cold War national security state.

The book's main argument is thoroughly convincing. It is hard to imagine how anyone might think of anthropology—or any other social science—functioning separately from the state's security apparatus. Price's book is based on extensive research, and the many individual cases are systematically documented with evidence collected through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, the archives of individual researchers, and personal inquiries made by the author. Although the book is clearly aimed at Price's fellow anthropologists, it will be of great interest to all scholars of the Cold War, the U.S. security state, and the history of knowledge in twentieth century America.

Price's focus throughout the book is on instances of collaboration and, occasionally, on resistance to such collaboration from within the profession or by individual scholars. This focus is one of the book's strengths but it is also its weakness. It allows Price to build up a watertight case without fully considering its broader implications.

First, the book never provides a satisfactory explanation for why so many scholars ended up working with government agencies. Could it be that the very democratization of education and scholarship was at fault? After all, those new young scholars from non-elite backgrounds studying in the post-war years needed grants to support their work and jobs where they could apply their skills; these were presumably in (relatively) short

¹ Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 53.

supply among universities. The question is an important one, because it points at the contradiction of the United States' often touted achievements in equality and standards of living in the post-war decades. Developing societies that invest heavily in education often find that they have to make room in their bureaucracies to hire graduates. Sometimes this increased the state's capacity to provide services and coordinate development, but in other cases it led to bloated bureaucracies that accomplished little besides creating a privileged class. The United States was not so different—graduates in those fields who did not provide a route to the private sector still needed work; their research in turn, showed the need for more research. In the context of the Cold War and the rise of the national security state, this created a virtuous (or vicious, depending on your point of view) cycle. Regardless, the expansion of these professions in the post-war decades is impossible to imagine without the rise of the national security state.

As I read the book, I could not help wondering about the scholars' motivations: is it possible that many of these anthropologists welcomed the opportunity to do something of use to their country? Anthropologists and rural sociologists had already gone into service on behalf of the federal government during the 1930s, helping officials plan and execute New Deal programs. Certainly scholars like Arthur Raper, who appears here in Price's book working to install a "counterinsurgent democratic system" (44) among Japanese farmers during the post-war occupation, saw the federal government as a crucial ally in attacking racial inequality and poverty in the south, and they put their skills and knowledge to work. Some of these individuals went abroad in the early Cold War years, not because they necessarily agreed with all U.S. government initiatives, but because they saw a role for themselves in shaping those initiatives on the ground. As Immerwahr argues, for example, scholars like Raper went abroad in part because they disagreed with the growing emphasis in Washington on modernization, and tried to reshape U.S. aid programs towards community development.² And if the goal was to preserve communities in a time of rapid change, would it not make sense to do this in alliance with somewhat sympathetic U.S. agencies, rather than leaving these communities to the onslaught of socialist industrialization and state-building, or, for that matter, to the American military?

This is where Price's reluctance to engage with the broader historiography on the politics of knowledge during the Cold War becomes particularly frustrating. Historians might also wonder if Price's otherwise commendable work with FOIA sources at the expense of government and institutional archives limited opportunities to contextualize the work of his subjects, their movements through institutions, and their influence. After all, anthropologists were hardly the only scholars in this position. The entire field of Russian and Soviet studies in the United States would be unimaginable without the largesse of the federal government over many decades. Yet it would be a mistake to see those specialists as simply tools, unwitting or otherwise, of government agencies. A number—the Harvard historian Richard Pipes and the scholar of Central Asia Alexandre Bennigsen among them—were committed anti-Communists, who exerted no small effort to actively shape government policy and to make sure their knowledge was being applied.³ The anthropologists

² Immerwahr 54-56.

³ See, for example, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, "Encouraging Resistance: Paul Henze, the Bennigsen School, and the Crisis of Détente." in Michael Kemper and Artemy M. Kalinovsky, eds., *Reassessing Orientalism* (Routledge, 2015), 211-230. More broadly, on Soviet studies, see David C. Engerman, *Know your enemy: The rise and fall of America's Soviet experts*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.)

in Price's book rarely seem to be such active agents unless they were actively resisting the government's role; one cannot help wondering if, for some of them, the story was rather more complicated.

The book also leaves one wondering about the ultimate effect of anthropology on the way that the CIA and other U.S. government agencies viewed the world. Even if government officials only wanted anthropologists for their skills at providing useful empirical information, they would have also begun seeing the field through those scholars' eyes. This certainly had an effect on how changing approaches to development, as well as to counterinsurgency. It would have been interesting if Price had used his vast material to explore the effects of anthropological knowledge on government practices.

Review by Lawrence Rosen, Princeton University¹

Approaching any study of anthropology's entanglement with military and intelligence operations during the Cold War is something of a Rorschach test: It is as much about what you bring to the encounter as it is about what others can make of your reaction. You may shrug and think 'what did you expect'; you may be shocked, shocked that such things are happening right here in academia; and if you are over a certain age you may give the book a hasty Washington read, searching the index for the names of your colleagues or granting agencies. If you start from the beginning you will undoubtedly reach the final chapter wondering what lessons the author will draw from it all as a retrospective measure of his very credibility.

After reading Price's most recent study of anthropologists, the Cold War, and military involvement several conclusions present themselves: (1) that Price's book is serious and methodical, though the author has a tendency to draw inferences without proof and makes occasional errors that speak more to his overall orientation than probing appraisal; (2) that anthropologists actually played a very slight and, by the author's own admission, almost entirely harmless role in events of the cold war period; and (3) that what lessons one draws are largely a function of what one brings to the enterprise rather than what one is required to take away from it.

For his central assessment Price relies on the idea of dual use - that even where scholarly works are not directly commissioned for CIA or Pentagon purposes they could be (mis)used by such agencies. That some scholars during the Cold War were naïve in this respect or believed they could help their subjects by cooperating with government entities is unsurprising. But to hold one responsible for the uses to which others may apply a publicly available work of scholarship, as the author suggests, constitutes more an expression of one's politics than a well-reasoned moral argument.

Price notes that as the Cold War era commenced, many anthropologists had been molded by their experience in the Second World War, when whatever studies the discipline contributed were in furtherance of defeating mortal enemies. But claiming that government funding for subsequent research led scholars to align their studies with Cold war topics is too crabbed a view of the intellectual history of the times. Though Cold War efforts are the book's topic, its failure to consider how much anthropology was influenced in this period by the civil rights movement, the newfound independence of former colonial countries, and the burgeoning theories of cultural evolution, structuralism, science studies, and symbolic analysis leaves the impression that militarism, nefarious grants, and employment opportunism or career apprehension alone led those described in the book to pursue their specific interests. Scholarship may follow the flag, but that does not mean that academics read the same meaning or attachments into that act as do the reigning powers. In fact, many of those individuals Price mentions were not even doing anthropology. The author rarely tells us how much of the subject they had studied, and some of his most detailed examples—such as Donald Wilbur, who planned the overthrow of Iran's Mohammed Mossadeq and whose doctorate was in architectural history—were not anthropologists at all. Price acknowledges that anthropologists actually contributed very little to Cold War efforts, that even government-commissioned studies were constantly ignored, and that there are virtually no known instances in which anthropologists did any real harm. Moreover, even when the author acknowledges

¹ This review first appeared in slightly different form in *Journal of Cold War Studies* 19:3 (Summer 2017): 239-4. It appears here with the kind permission of the author and of Professor Mark Kramer, Editor of *JCWS*.

that “few anthropologists have historically used their professional credentials and fieldwork as covers for espionage” (245) he is able to offer only a single example.

Indeed, throughout a book that is based on unprecedented use of little-known sources, including grant applications and reports on the research completed, the author constantly implies connections while offering almost no substantial proof. He gives a fact or two and then adds that ‘questions remain’; he fills in blanks by suggesting what ‘would likely’ have been so; he speculates about ‘military gains’ based on anthropological work without offering evidence of what those gains were; and he uses words like ‘frequently’ and then offers no follow-up examples. While largely presenting data in a straightforward manner, he nevertheless leaves out information at crucial spots or accepts as true assertions that are false. Thus he refers to Margaret Mead’s protégée Mark Zborowski without mentioning that he was a self-confessed and convicted NKVD spy. He relies on unproven allegations about Clifford Geertz’s work by Paul Rabinow, a former student of Geertz and currently Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, to suggest that Geertz’s *Agricultural Involution* was attached to the questionable activities of others at MIT and its Center for International Studies in that period.² The cover blurb by the American anthropologist Marshall Sahlins states that “Price proves he is anthropology’s conscience.” But while the author notes that the American Anthropological Association condemned Sahlins’s attempt to turn its ethics committee into a credential-denying instrument, his account of those Viet Nam years leaves out much about the political and academic climate that affected debates during that era.

Thus when we reach the final chapter, where intermittent innuendo without solid evidence gives way to a more direct expression of what we are to make of the data presented, what we get are even more vague pronouncements: that the Cold War period represented a generational divide in the discipline (without indicating that younger anthropologists, too, argued that scholars could not be held to account for the uses made by others of their publicly available research, or voted at professional meetings not for the Viet Nam war but against a board of ethics that could oust members based on their political views), that anthropologists should have seen what was coming as a result of their research (as if everyone could somehow possess a crystal ball), that until they confront it directly anthropologists are “doomed to recurrently suddenly discover militarized misappropriations” (363) of their findings (as if the sins of others should be allowed to stop work altogether), and that anthropologists should realize that “motivations can have little impact on outcomes” (322) (when it is surely unfair to say that scholars are the ones primarily liable for the abuse by others of their writings).

We do indeed owe a debt to Price for ferreting out so much information, particularly about funding agencies and their governmental entanglements. But it is not a knee-jerk defense of a discipline or a political leaning that prompts the conclusion that the author’s approach to the data is one that relies too heavily on presumptions rather than evidence for the lessons he would have us draw. At a time when the discipline has become overwhelmingly focused on the political—indeed the personal politics of the investigators – it behooves us to treat the Cold War, no less than any other era, in all its complexity and not to imagine that we have accomplished a full portrait simply by piling up numerous files that, for all they add to an understanding

² Paul Rabinow, *The Accompaniment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Clifford Geertz, *Agricultural Involution: The Processes of Ecological Change in Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).

of our disciplines and their past, neither speak for themselves nor for the entire range of issues and interpretations the history of this period warrants.

Author's Response by David H. Price, Saint Martin's University

I thank each of these four reviewers for taking the time to read and seriously respond to *Cold War Anthropology*. As a reader and author, I am never quite sure what to make of these sort of author-engages-with-reviewer responses; after all, the author has had a few hundred thousand words with which to make his or her position clear, and it strikes me as at least a little odd to engage beyond a text which presumably had a chance to speak for the author. Nonetheless, for what it is worth, here I am again with some remarks engaging with these four reviews.

Sergey Abashin observes that for those whose careers took shape during the Cold War, personal biographies and proximity to the events and institutions of the period significantly impact responses to and analysis of this periods—giving importance to one's "emotional distance from the events" of the Cold War. Like some of those who read and respond to this work, my own educational experiences and opportunities during the last decade of the Cold War explicitly shaped elements of this research and raised the fundamental questions I explore in this work.

While Abashin argues that one's distance from historical events can limit understanding, I would add that one's temporal closeness to such events can, at times, limit analysis in other ways. For example, almost two decades ago, when I was researching the intelligence work of the four archaeologists whom Franz Boas attacked, but did not name, in his famous 1919 letter to *The Nation*, I asked George Stocking why he had never identified the archaeologists attacked by Boas in his otherwise detailed 1968 analysis of these events.¹ Stocking told me that when he wrote his analysis, it still seemed too soon to draw attention to these individuals, and this might direct attention away from his thesis—as if half a century were too soon to unpack these events. This dynamic mirrored the political cautions I received as a graduate student at the University of Chicago in the mid-1980s when asking elder anthropologists about their experiences during the Second World War—experiences which they were generally interested in discussing, but others told me were then too controversial to write about, four decades after the fact. So yes, I agree that a scholar's Cold War experiences necessarily shape responses and analysis, but as often as not they shape silences, mostly in very political ways that are often claimed to be apolitical.

Abashin wonders if I might be arguing that the Cold War period needs its own conceptual framework. I do not and would not argue anything like that, but instead try and analyze (using much the same framework, with some different situations) interactions between anthropologists, funders, and military/intelligence agencies during the contemporary terror wars in *Weaponizing Anthropology* and other works.²

My focus on the primacy of funding impacting elements of research has remained constant during the two decades I have been writing about these issues. But I do not find resonance with Abashin's assumption that I

¹ George W. Stocking, "The Scientific Reaction Against Cultural Anthropology, 1917-1920," in George W. Stocking, ed., *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); David H. Price, "Anthropologists as Spies." *The Nation* 271:16 (29 November 2000), 24-27, <https://www.thenation.com/article/anthropologists-spies/>.

² David Price, *Weaponizing Anthropology: Social Science in Service of the Militarized State* (Petrolia: CounterPunch Books, 2011).

focus on the post-war 1940s and 1950s for reasons linked with my own personal non-involvement with this period; instead the roots of this project come from my own experiences observing what appeared to be obvious links between anthropological research, funding, and the American military and political agenda in the academic world training me and others during the late Cold War, and I began exploring documentation for these relationships in the past and present, writing a series of books exploring these interactions in different periods. While it is difficult for one to know how such limits impact oneself, given that I have written dozens of articles and a book bringing similar critiques to contemporary links between anthropologists and military and intelligence agencies, I am less sure about this connection.

I like Abashin's call for an expansive look at the ways Cold War anthropologies developed in other nations. Given the difficulties in researching a book focusing primarily on how these often-hidden dynamics impacted U.S. anthropology, I have long hoped other scholars would research these connections in other nations. As he notes, Soviet ethnography produced similar variations, of government linked projects of studying the other in ways that collected information for reasons of both pure knowledge and control. I would anticipate that the limits and contours of specific funding would produce knowledge of use to the state, sometimes with differences of technique, but in overall similar ways.

Artemy M. Kalinovsky reads me as viewing Cold War anthropologists largely as "simply tools," which is not the sort of reduction I would claim for myself. I instead tend to view most of the anthropologists discussed in *Cold War Anthropology* largely as opportunistic; getting funds for research of interest to them and sometimes even doing work counter to American policies; hence the dual use focus of the book. Kalinovsky wonders, "even if government officials only wanted anthropologists for their skills at providing useful empirical information, they would have also begun seeing the field through those scholars' eyes." This reveals some distance between our views and of our varying beliefs that smart well-intentioned anthropologists could fundamentally change governmental agencies. As I found in studying World War II anthropology, most government actors had no idea what to do with anthropological views that were so at odds with the institutional culture they tried to impact.³ I find much the same dynamic in contemporary anthropologists' military engagements.⁴ Kalinovsky is far more optimistic than me that anthropological knowledge meaningfully impacted government practices; if anything, I think my work argues that these institutions shaped anthropology more than anthropology has shaped them. Perhaps one could envision a world where an anthropologist placed in charge of a large powerful governmental agency, say the International Monetary Fund or World Bank, exerts anthropological influence on changing the core features of this agency, rather than simply enacting a few new protocols as the agency removes whatever agency the anthropologist thought he or she had to affect change and largely continues running as before, with the addition of few new niceties; but I see no reason to think that anthropologists' disciplinary orientation or good intentions could shift the fundamental features of such agencies.

Lawrence Rosen attributes several positions to me that seem foreign to what I wrote. These include claims that I globally hold individuals "responsible for the uses to which others may apply" their publicly available scholarship. He argues I have misidentified Donald Wilbur as an archaeologist; when as recounted in my

³ David Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 197-191.

⁴ Price, *Weaponizing Anthropology*.

book, obviously Wilbur was an architectural historian with a background in archaeology, who worked on archaeological remains and historic-prehistoric projects, which provided the context for the fieldwork in which he undertook CIA work. He also claims I am unaware of or ignoring Mark Zborowski's story.

My original book manuscript had to be cut almost in half due to length. In efforts to streamline narrative continuity, I published several cut portions elsewhere as articles that are cited in *Cold War Anthropology*, often with little discussion. One of these involved a two-part series of articles on Zborowski's conviction as a NKVD spy (cited on *CWA* page 208, where Zborowski's involvement in other matters is discussed) drawing on National Archives materials and Zborowski's massive FBI file and other materials I had released under FOIA.⁵ Zborowski's story was merely one of the many side stories that had to be moved elsewhere in the interest of trying to smooth narrative continuity—a narrative which Blaustein notes at times wanders as I try and incorporate two decades of collected materials.

Rosen's selective reading highlights the point well made by Abashin, that one's relationship to events under consideration shapes analysis. Rosen is defensive about discussions of the political context of his dissertation advisor, Clifford Geertz's, Indonesian work. This is an understandable even honorable position, but one fraught with problems if duty to the ancestors obscures one's vision. There is a personal nature to Rosen's critique.⁶ This leads me to note here that similar protective notions and feelings of personal affront have created numerous hurdles during the years that I have published articles documenting connections between military and intelligence agencies and prominent American anthropologists. On many occasions during my two decades writing on this topic I went through multiple deadlocked rounds of peer reviews when seeking to publish this work—reviews not deadlocked over the facts presented in the FBI and CIA documents, but over concerns of what such publication would mean for the discipline and the reputations of the anthropologists under consideration

As George Blaustein observes, the central focus of *Cold War Anthropology* is on political economy; exploring links between this and knowledge production. I really like Blaustein's point that the vignettes in this book might well have been framed as farce rather than tragedy; an arrangement more to my personal taste, so much so that when I have done readings from this book in bookstores or academic departments I enjoy reading passages others might have read as tragedy, as comedy. I could not agree more that the Pentagon's Special Operations Research Office (SORO) work studying witchcraft, or its more modern twin, the three-quarters-of-a-billion-dollar Human Terrain Systems boondoggle, have such core absurdities that they might have been created by a novelist such as Kurt Vonnegut, Thomas Pynchon or Joseph Heller. I take this observation to heart and am working to incorporate more openly farcical analysis in a large institutional history project I am now working on with a colleague.

There remains fundamental disagreement between Blaustein and Rosen about whether or not 'all cockfights are political.' I clearly side with Blaustein on such matters, and note that if I were to follow his suggestion of organizing this narrative as farce, I would start with an account I found last spring at the Rockefeller

⁵ David Price, "Mark Zborowski in a World of Pain," *CounterPunch* 18:12 (2011): 1, 5-8 and 18:13 (2011): 1, 4-17.

⁶ Interested readers can read the original version of the review.

Foundation archives, showing that before the Foundation would give Geertz funding for further Indonesian fieldwork, the Foundation first checked to make sure he had not joined troublesome civil rights activist groups and held no radical political associations of the sort that vocal critics of American neocolonial policies joined.⁷ The absurdist potential of this is wonderful: a foundation extending the reach of a capitalist giant beyond the span of his lifetime, vetting the non-communist standing of a grant recipient sent half way around the world to chronicle developments of a poor nation then considering choosing between communism or capitalism. This was a common enough occurrence during the period that most would view it with the normative respect of the discipline, but as farce it might strain the credulity of readers.

I suppose it was the writing of the first book published in this trilogy, *Threatening Anthropology* (2004),⁸ that more than anything restrained my farcical urges and fueled whatever sense of outrage some detect in the pages. Just as *Cold War Anthropology* is in part a story of rewards for work some thought might be of use to the state, *Threatening Anthropology* chronicles the Cold War punishments under McCarthyism suffered by anthropologists who applied their discipline to challenge neocolonialism, racism, and class inequities. If the punishments had not so significantly helped the discipline shy away from its Boasian activist roots, with so many casualties, it might have been easier to write this history as farce. While the irony shines clear, the humor dulls when seeing that the elimination of activist anthropologists fighting racial segregation and neocolonialism in the 1950s as Rockefeller and other funding sources shaped the discipline in real and meaningful ways that are still seen today.

⁷ RFA Series 200, Box 532, Folder 4550, Official Indices Check, C. & H. Geertz, 1/18/57), Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York.

⁸ David Price, *Threatening Anthropology: McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).