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Book Review, Digital Diplomacy

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Review

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United States defend one of the world's wealthiest nations (South Korea), which arguably has no inherent "strategic" value to the United States? The answer to this and other questions, of course, is that that strategy results from myriad forces, not all of which flow directly from protecting the nation's vital interests. History, politics, bureaucratic imperatives, international events, and budgetary realities are all inextricably intertwined in the process of developing and executing national security strategy. This is a process that unfortunately bears only tangential relationship to Eland's proposal that the process be neatly tied together in a succinct, logical construct.

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Digital Diplomacy: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Information Age by Wilson Dizard, Jr. Westport, CT, Praeger Publishers, 2001. 215 pp. Cloth, $69.95; paper, $24.95.

The specter of information war is but one of the many challenges facing foreign policy makers as information and communication technologies transform international relations. The Pentagon's recently announced disinformation strategy reflects the newly perceived importance of achieving information superiority over the enemy. The global span of vital computer networks exceeds the control of any one authority, thereby upending national security policy. Private companies, who control much of this critical infrastructure, must be enlisted to secure national borders against the viruses, worms, and "logic bombs" that threaten to cripple critical systems.

Digital Diplomacy looks at many of the key issues relating to information technology and foreign policy. It surveys watershed events that have transformed technology policy over the last century from purely trade into a foreign policy issue. But as a survey, the book still falls short by failing to examine crucial areas of current debate or to analyze events critically.

Wilson Dizard argues that communication technology from the telegraph to the Internet has changed the business of diplomacy in two ways: information gathering within the State Department and among diplomatic actors, and the political and security agenda of foreign affairs. *Digital Diplomacy* looks at international coordination of global communication-satellite policy, disputes over transborder telecommunications spectrum sharing, the challenge to national sovereignty posed by satellite direct broadcasting technologies, opportunities created by telecommunications liberalization, and the emergence of electronic trading (e-commerce). Dizard's historical overview would be improved by attention to events of more recent significance, such as the U.S.–European pri-

vacy wars, the international debate over encryption, cybercrime, and information warfare. He also ignores recent wrangling over telecommunications standard-setting for next-generation wireless technologies and gives short shrift to the negotiation over international instruments for intellectual property protection.

Written prior to September 11, the book accurately portrays the policy community's earlier inattention to technology's challenges. Dizard's description of two trends holds true. First, technology continues to present new challenges to the way that diplomacy is conducted. For example, computer databases enable the collecting and sharing of vast quantities of information, while upgraded networks facilitate instantaneous communication with and within the State Department. Simulation programs alter the science of war. Having described how new technologies are changing diplomacy, Dizard stops short of suggesting how they ought to be brought to bear.

Second, he points out, the economic dominance of multinational media companies shifts the balance of power in foreign policy making to forge "a very different relationship between government and private interests, one whose eventual form is still to be defined" (p. 13). The conclusion Dizard draws is that this is to the good, because it drives a policy of free trade and "open information flow" (p. 79).

Dizard characterizes European privacy regulations, for example, as merely protectionist measures. But the situation is more complex than the way he portrays it. He does not mention that Europeans have traditionally protected information privacy as a human right. His analysis of the impact on international relations would be more convincing if, for example, he grappled with such facts as Rupert Murdoch's willingness to drop carriage of the BBC to gain access to the Chinese satellite television market. He does not look critically at the consequences of the power shift from public to private. Nor does he discuss the security implications of the fact that America's critical infrastructure rests mostly in private hands.

The events of fall 2001 have heightened awareness of the security challenges posed by modern technologies and demonstrated Wilson Dizard's exhortations to be on the mark. What we need now is a more nuanced guide to show us how to move forward and identify the new paradigms for diplomacy in a privatized yet networked world.

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Strategic Warfare in Cyberspace *by Gregory J. Rattray. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 2001. 517 pp. $49.95.*

What is "strategic warfare?" Will it migrate to cyberspace? These are the fundamental questions that Greg Rattray explores in this very thoroughly re-