Armageddon Insurance: Civil Defense in the United States and the Soviet Union, 1945–1991. By Edward Geist. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. xii, 323 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. $34.95, paper.
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The book is a unique institutional history in two ways—as the first study of Soviet civil defense systems and as a comparative history of civil defense institutions in the United States and the Soviet Union. As such, the book contributes to the literature on the comparative history of the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

The book proceeds chronologically, examining the development of civil defense institutions from the beginning of the Cold War until its end. The war scare of 1927 initiated the Soviet creation of civil defense, but WWII provided the impetus for the practical realization of the idea of civil defense in both countries. Ultimately, however, the two superpowers spent far less resources and effort on creating a defense against nuclear weapons than they did on producing those weapons. Both sides "doubled down on investments in strategic nuclear weapons while starving their civil defense programs" (245). In part, that was because of the realization, later in the Cold War, that a nuclear war was unwinnable. But it also seems to have been a reflection of a broader unwillingness to focus on safety and a tendency to maximize risk-taking as the only way, paradoxically, to enhance national security against the enemy. The result was to put populations in even greater harm's way in the event of the unthinkable nuclear war between the superpowers. In short, in both countries civil defense was often ignored, suggesting that despite the profound differences between the two systems, when it came to protecting citizens from the potentially disastrous consequences of the nuclear arms race, the United States and the Soviet Union preferred to ignore the problem.

Like any good comparative history, this study emphasizes similarities between the two systems but also critical differences. Among the major differences that emerge from the book is the relative absence of an "atomic culture" in the Soviet Union, as compared to the United States. Images of mushroom clouds and apocalyptic musings that became standard fare in American popular Cold War culture, were largely absent in the Soviet case. The Soviet state-controlled media prevented this kind of cultural output, thus, perhaps not surprisingly, producing a Cold War culture that was far less hysterical and alarmist than in the US. Geist also argues that the inability to strengthen civil defense illustrates the limits of militarization in the American case as well as the Soviet state's inability to mobilize society according to the totalitarian model: "For all its willingness to utilize coercive instruments to achieve its goals, the Soviet party-garrison state often stumbled in its ill-fated quest for domestic and international security" (11).

Meanwhile, in both the US and USSR a widespread belief in the impossibility of surviving nuclear war undercut popular support and encouraged skepticism toward civil defense initiatives. Both US and Soviet civil defense establishments considered themselves a failure in their ability to garner bigger budgets and greater support from the political establishment and the broader population. Imagining and preparing for worst-case scenarios of national disaster was something both Cold-War cultures were hesitant to do. The two systems were thus eager to plan how to destroy each other and the world, but much less willing to plan for the consequences of nuclear apocalypse.

While based on impressive research, it would have helped to deepen the historiographical and methodological context. For example, framing the analysis more in the historiography on post-WWII Soviet Union might have helped to draw out the significance of the study for understanding the nature of Soviet society during the Cold

War. There is also a well-developed literature on risk and safety that discusses the social and political construction of risk. This literature would have provided another lens through which to view the willingness of both sides to take risks in developing weapons of mass destruction than on focusing on the problem of providing security and safety.

Finally, while the author convincingly shows how institutional and political factors stymied the development of effective civil defense programs in both systems, the study could have addressed more explicitly the larger issues regarding the general challenge of mobilizing societies for large-scale disasters, whether man-made or natural. What would constitute an effective disaster-response system in the event of an exchange of nuclear weapons? Since the systems the author discusses were never called upon to defend against an actual nuclear war, how can one determine that they were not successful? How, in other words, do we judge a system a failure when the problem it is designed to combat is hypothetical and never arises?

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Military Masculinity and Postwar Recovery in the Soviet Union. By Erica L. Fraser. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 2018. xvi, 253 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. $65.00, hard bound.
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Women's participation in combat during World War II, as well as the war's calamitous impact on the male population, both served to disrupt the long-standing association between military service and Soviet masculinity. In this innovative book, Erica L. Fraser describes how postwar leaders sought to reestablish the social and cultural salience of military masculinity, which they saw as vital to reconstruction and Cold War victory. This effort entailed excluding women from the military, but also inculcating martial attitudes and disciplined behavior in a sometimes reluctant new generation of men.

Fraser argues that military masculinity was regenerated through a variety of policies, methods, and narratives during the twenty years following war, and each chapter of her book focuses on a specific aspect of this process. Part I draws on archival and published materials to examine military institutions. Chapter 1 describes conversations at the Ministry of Defense and Komsomol about conscription, avoidance, and malingering, and it highlights official concerns about the military fitness and zeal of young men. Chapter 2 focuses on the search for appropriate male role models for boys at the Suvorov officer training academies and the Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, the Air Force and the Navy (DOSAAF), a civil defense organization. Fraser concludes that the military could not resuscitate its version of masculinity unaided; a broader cultural effort was needed, which forms the subject of the second part of the book. Chapter 3 examines cartoons from the satiric journal *Krokodil*, which linked masculinity with the Cold War by depicting enemies as feminized, homosexual, or violent; such images featured General Francisco Franco in drag, for example, or Uncle Sam menacing Marianne, the symbol of France. In Chapter 4, Fraser analyzes the memoirs of nuclear physicists, and provides a nuanced analysis of their relationship to military masculinity. These scientists portrayed themselves in contradictory terms as victims of the state, yet also as members of an exclusive brotherhood of heroic cold warriors. The final chapter describes the publicity campaigns surrounding the first cosmonauts of the 1960s, which Frasers sees as the culminating moment in the regeneration of military