highly secularized Europe. At the national level, they document that it is the Protestant nations that continue to resist efforts to integrate more fully. At the group level, they note that the Catholic Church continues to be a strong supporter of increased integration and that Catholic groups and organizations are well represented in Brussels. Finally, they cite *Eurobarometer* data of individuals to conclude that the "[c]onfessional culture (as measured by self-identified religious tradition) has a significant effect on attitudes toward integration, even under rigorous controls for other factors" (p. 321). Yet, the authors also acknowledge that in more recent years, the dividing lines are not always so clear. An increasing number of Protestant groups are showing support for integration and an increasing number of Catholic groups and leaders are showing reservations about the new European nation. Despite some non-confirming findings, however, the authors conclude that the two confessional cultures remain strong predictors of support for a united Europe.

The authors open the book by acknowledging that few readers, if any readers, will find it surprising that the Protestant nations of northern Europe are more resistant to unifying efforts, or that the Catholic nations of southern Europe are more supportive. Likewise, they are well aware that the reasons and motivations for unity go far beyond the confessional cultures. Yet, they are unrelenting in their argument that the confessional cultures are an important determinant in the support given for integrating Europe.

The evidence they presented for their thesis is far more compelling than I expected. From the reformation to recent events, they effectively trace how the confessional cultures have shaped support for integration. Moreover, they go beyond vague notions about cultural ideas, beliefs, and attitudes to show how transnational organizations, movements, leadership, and political parties helped fuel Catholic support for integration. The arguments presented will not replace the materialist arguments explaining support for European unity, and the persistence of these confessional cultures will no doubt be challenged by future research, and should be. That being said, the authors make a convincing case that the confessional cultures are an important explanatory factor that should not be ignored. We are indebted to the authors for a well written and carefully researched book.

Pivotal Countries, Alternate Futures: Using Scenarios to Manage American Strategy. By Michael F. Oppenheimer. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 272p. $99.00 cloth, $27.95 paper.
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— Daniel S. Markey, *Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*

Situated uncomfortably between the community of academic political scientists aspiring to build predictive models of international relations and the harried, too-often purely reactive policymakers who populate Washington, DC, one can identify a cadre of strategists committed to developing tools for systematically improving how the United States thinks, plans, and implements its global strategy. *Pivotal Countries, Alternate Futures* is a comprehensive guide to one such tool—scenario-based analysis—written by one of its foremost practitioners.

As Michael F. Oppenheimer explains, the book is based partly on wisdom distilled from a series of workshops he conducted between 2007 and 2013 in which experts assessed the plausible futures of eight "pivotal states" (Iraq, Iran, China, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Pakistan, and Syria). Each time, Oppenheimer's workshops followed a similar procedure intended to drive small but diverse groups of specialists—some academic, others current and former policymakers—to consider scenarios likely to be of significance to the United States.

The main purpose of the book is to explain precisely how his methodology works and to demonstrate how it could help U.S. policymakers "make assumptions more explicit, reduce surprise, imagine and mitigate risk, rehearse and thus improve policy responses to wild card events, and recover rapidly from—even take advantage of—the blindsides" (p. 56). To his credit, Oppenheimer is not attempting to predict the future, a task he correctly perceives as beyond our ken. But he does believe that common sorts of myopia among U.S. policymakers reflect a broken analytical process more than the inherent limits of our ability to unravel global complexities.

The author has two other goals as well. First, he aims to explain how the most likely character of the future global order (broadly defined, he suggests, by greater multipolarity, "non-westernization," and globalization) will lead the United States to have less control over or certainty about outcomes. He reasons that as a diminished superpower, the United States will not be able to suffer as many surprises or mistakes as it has in the past. Washington is thus under pressure to better anticipate and prepare for events even when prevention may prove impossible. This is a reasonable pitch and a good way to motivate the need for adding new tools to our policymaking kit.

Second, Oppenheimer offers a nonpartisan critique of Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush. Both are faulted for "incompetent strategic management" and for substituting "wishful thinking for close observation and testing of assumptions against emergent reality" (pp. 2–3). These findings lead the author to argue that future presidents should institutionalize a version of his alternate futures methodology into the heart of their policymaking process.

Oppenheimer's work finds its scholarly origins in the synthesis of three strands of literature: scenario-based analysis by futurists like Peter Schwartz (*The Art of the*

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Long View, 1991) and its application by the U.S. intelligence community (e.g., see National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2030*, 2013); traditional international relations theory (starting with Kenneth Waltz and Samuel Huntington, and more recently in post—Cold War assessments of the global order such as by Charles Kupchan); and U.S. grand strategy and policy planning (especially essays in Daniel W. Drezner, ed., *Avoiding Trivia: The Role of Strategic Planning in American Foreign Policy*, 2009). Oppenheimer is clearly more eager to apply mainstream lessons from these subfields than to challenge or explore the many distinctions between them.

Oppenheimer's most important practical contribution is his detailed explanation of the scenario-construction process, one he describes as part art, part science. His book includes sample discussion papers and agendas, pointers for how best to select participants, and recommendations for how to focus discussion on a handful of futures most likely to tease out lessons relevant to American policymakers. Here, he is commendably self-critical, noting, for instance, that "the most consistent process error has been a failure to push the group far enough beyond its collective comfort zone" (p. 202), in ways that could have forced consideration of seemingly less probable scenarios, but ones that with the benefit of hindsight were actually closer to reality.

Although few analysts outside the U.S. government would have access to the resources and expertise needed to replicate Oppenheimer's process, it is easy to imagine other academics and analysts attempting to tailor it to their own purposes. Scenario-based analysis holds particular allure as a teaching technique for advanced policy courses in international relations and U.S. foreign policy. The author, however, devotes little attention to this topic, clearly stressing the tool's analytical utility for policymakers over its pedagogical value.

Having personally participated in Oppenheimer's futures workshop on Pakistan, I would suggest that this emphasis is at least partly misplaced. In my experience, the participants of scenario-based and other sorts of group gaming exercises are likely to be the greatest beneficiaries. This is true for at least two reasons. First, as Oppenheimer observes, it is actually quite difficult to get policy experts into a frame of mind that permits them to depart from well-worn positions and to consider plausible but unlikely scenarios. Once there, however, those experts are well placed to factor their new insights into subsequent research and writing. By comparison, the readers of after-action reports from scenario workshops (whether they are policymakers or simply other experts who did not participate) are likely to be skeptical consumers if only because they missed the prior process of acculturation.

A second reason is related to the ways in which lessons from scenario-based exercises are packaged for outside audiences. Oppenheimer recommends write-ups in the form of stylized narratives, or "histories of the future," interspersed with explanations of "particularly important deflection points," "key driver interactions and events," and descriptions of "policy effects" (p. 177). Although it might be possible to construct a future history compelling enough to grab the attention of senior policymakers, the format is difficult to master. It probably requires a fiction writer's touch to spark the reader's willing suspension of disbelief. As a practical matter, it also ends up being a long-winded way to convey information. For both reasons, the format is ill-suited to senior U.S. policymakers, who tend to be time-pressed and skeptical consumers of information. The core insights derived from scenario-based analysis are probably better fed to even midlevel policymakers in other streamlined formats.

This, in turn, raises the broader issue of how to integrate Oppenheimer's methodology into the U.S. foreign policy process. I tend to doubt the likelihood of his preferred solution: establishing a futures office inside the fast-paced, operationally oriented, already bloated, and at times politically charged conditions of the National Security Council (NSC). Yet Oppenheimer is right that without "top level oversight and direct participation" (p. 221), the process would lack sufficient weight in the context of ongoing policy debates.

Perhaps a better solution is to teach the value of scenario-based analysis in academic settings, especially graduate schools of public policy. That way, senior officials within the NSC, State Department, and Pentagon would be more likely to encounter the method at earlier stages in their careers, just as many of them have become familiar with war games and red-teaming exercises. This seems a more realistic scenario for how Oppenheimer-style exercises could—over time—become more commonplace within the foreign policy agencies of the U.S. government.

Free Expression, Globalism and the New Strategic Communication. By Monroe E. Price. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 286p. $88.00 cloth, $33.99 paper.
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— Jon R. Lindsay, *University of Toronto*

Political science as a discipline may not pay enough attention to communication technology, but the field of communication takes great interest in politics. In the tradition of Harold Innis's *The Bias of Communication* (1953), Monroe Price sets out to explain how innovations in social media and marketing practices can constrain or enable free speech and democratic values, and further, how the new technologies provide new opportunities for various actors to shape or contest these effects.

Although occasioned by the social media revolution, *Free Expression, Globalism and the New Strategic Communication* is not exclusively or even primarily concerned

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