letters her first year in the White House, was the source of many of them.

Reading from the letters researched by Lovell gives one a glimpse into the mobilizing power of rights rhetoric that Stipelman claims was central to the narrative appeal of the New Deal. These letters and the governmental responses to them also reveal how woefully ill-equipped the national government was in addressing these protests and complaints. Most CRS responses were simply statements that the jurisdiction of their office did not extend to the complaint, or that (citing many precedents) the statutes enacted after the Civil War left them powerless even to address the most egregious violations of rights by state and local officials. Despite the many arguments and excuses, these same attorneys were "telling appellate court judges, readers of law reviews, and various local bar groups that such jurisdiction did exist and that the existing law provided room to expand jurisdiction even further" (p. 68).

As we know (but in long retrospect), many of these rights claims—combined with the imperatives of the Cold War and protest movements—eventually paid off. But they would not have been achieved had we relied upon popular elections and the mobilizing efforts of the political parties. At best, then, the aspirations and hopes found in these letters might, and under the right conditions, create a somewhat tolerant audience to hear the claims of the most deeply aggrieved. But given the bureaucratic and constitutional entrenchment of powerful groups—now including the interests of many of these early letter writers—the voices of the deeply aggrieved today often receive the same official response received by their counterparts in 1939.

The Naked Communist: Cold War Modernism and the Politics of Popular Culture. By Roland Végső. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013. 245p. $85 cloth, $24 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592714002059

— Edward D. Berkowitz, *George Washington University*

Roland Végső uses literary theory to illuminate the politics and literature of the Cold War during the 1950s. His book demands a background in, or at least a tolerance for, critical theory so that the reader can make sense of sentences such as the following: "I argue that representation must be understood as a form of division introduced into a terrain of ontological inconsistency" (p. 3). For those who persevere, *The Naked Communist* offers incisive readings of such key 1950s texts as Lionel Trilling's *The Liberal Imagination* (1950) and Arthur Schlesinger's *The Vital Center* (1949) and important 1950s anticommunist novels of both the low-brow (Mickey Spillane) and middle-brow (Ian Fleming) variety.

Végső employs four basic "figures" as a means of organizing and refining his analysis. The nature of atomic warfare made the whole world, the first of the figures, vulnerable to its destructive effects, but the Cold War, in a contrary sense, divided the world into the communist and the free zones. The presence of a menacing but illusory enemy, the second of the figures, meant that the United States needed to rely on nondemocratic measures, such as limiting free speech, in order to preserve democracy. The secret, and in particular the knowledge of how to make and deliver an atomic bomb, put certain topics off limits to normal political processes. The secret, the third of the figures, was good in that it helped to guarantee American military supremacy in a hostile world, but also bad when practiced by Communists in secret cells who wanted to destroy the American way of life. A sense of impending catastrophe, the fourth of Végső's figures, put the United States in a state of permanent crisis that greatly expanded the presence of the military in everyday American life.

Whether these are in some sense the "correct" figures is difficult to say, and indeed the author might be accused of putting a scientific gloss on an era that can best be chronicled in the subjective terms of the historian, rather than the formalisms of the literary theorist. What, for example, are we to make of the Civil Rights movement that showed up on the edges of 1950s life? For Végső, this movement showed the contradictions between domestic and foreign policy. On the one hand, the racial segregation of the South preserved order and brought stability to society. On the other hand, segregation complicated the anticommunist cause, which to Végső is the national cause, because it made it harder for the United States to win the hearts and minds of people in Third World countries. It is not clear that one gains more explanatory power by employing Végső's figures than one would by approaching a topic like Civil Rights through the lens of American political development. It mattered that with southern blacks not voting, the constituency of many powerful southern congressmen was white. The Cold War exerted a contrary national pressure that eventually triumphed in 1964 and 1965. The key point is that we need more than the Cold War to understand the Civil Rights movement.

Throughout the book, Végső delights in the existence of contradictions and paradoxes that inform his theory—"while art as such is anti-Communistic not everything that is anti-Communistic is actually art" (p. 82). Jackson Pollack splattering paint on a canvas could be liberating or decadent. Hence, modern art, like the very concept of modernism itself, became a contested realm that, more often than not, was resolved in favor of modernism. Pollack became an exemplar of an American free society that enabled creative artists to thrive, rather than an indicator of a nation too weak, too undisciplined, to face the rigors of the Cold War.

One would not expect Végső to employ the tools of a social scientist or the standard motifs of the historian. Sputnik, which some would highlight as a key turning

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point in the Cold War, does not show up in the text at all. Political parties divide between Communist and anti-Communist, rather than Republican or Democrat. Hence, the ready means by which the Democrats exploited Sputnik to win the 1958 congressional elections does not much matter to the author, since both parties lived in Cold War America and agreed on most things. This intellectually agile literary approach appears to best advantage in the book's very skilful readings of Cold War novels, such as Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* (1957) and Eugene Burdick and William Lederer's *The Ugly American* (1958). *On the Beach* tells the story of a world-destroying nuclear catastrophe from the standpoint of people in Australia who are waiting for the fallout to reach them. Such fiction helped to establish "the unity of the world." Végső adroitly contrasts nuclear holocaust fiction with spy novels of the Ian Fleming variety, which "introduced the idea that in order to protect [the necessary world unity] the world of democracy has to be constitutively split between the normal world of publicity and the clandestine world of sovereign violence" (p. 170). Nicely put.

At times, the author takes the analysis beyond the limits of the reader's patience (or at least the patience of this non-English-major reader). Do Végső's four figures "haunt the modern imagination because they are historically contingent figures produced by a set of constitutive exclusions" (p. 202)? I leave that question to others but recommend *The Naked Communist* to anyone who wants to gain an understanding of American anticommunist politics and literature of the 1950s.

American Allies in Times of War: The Great Asymmetry. By Stéfanie von Hlatky. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. 208p. $85.00.
doi:10.1017/S1537592714002060

— James Goldgeier, *American University*

When France and Germany sided with Russia against the Iraq War, it was a reminder that America's allies do not always stand by the world's preeminent military power. In this thoughtful analysis of the behavior of American allies during times of war, Stéfanie von Hlatky describes the varying behavior of Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia in response to the American-led efforts in Afghanistan and later Iraq after the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Von Hlatky provides three compelling case studies. As we know, the UK went all in on Iraq, taking the wind out of Prime Minister Tony Blair's sails at home when the war turned into a foreign policy disaster. The author has difficulty explaining the British behavior within her framework, ultimately settling on the prime minister's ability to circumvent the usual foreign policy process. She provides some interesting detail on Blair's need in the fall of 2002 for United Nations Security Council authorization to take action against Iraq, which in turn played a significant role in U.S. President George W. Bush's calculations.

Canada meanwhile opted out of Iraq. The author writes, "As long as Canada is not seen as a security liability to the United States, it can get away with a lot in Washington" (p. 15). Canada took on a major role in Afghanistan, leaving it less capable of providing troops to Iraq but also giving it more leeway. Compared to Australia, which strategically considers what it wants from the United States in exchange for support, "[w]hat is striking about the Canada-US security relationship is how each issue is managed separately. There is no overarching approach to manage the bilateral relationship" (p. 92).

In her interview with John McCallum, who served as Canadian defense minister at the time, von Hlatky learned that the United States did not make a formal request for a Canadian commitment to the Iraq War. McCallum's chief of staff, Eugene Lang, noted that the lack of such a request "caught us off guard" (p. 104). Domestically, however, the situation was perfect for the government in Ottawa: it could step up its support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and avoid sending troops to Iraq.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard, meanwhile, strongly supported the United States in both the war in Afghanistan and in the run-up to the Iraq War. In return, von Hlatky writes, Howard was able "to push for items that were high on the Australian agenda, such as the [free trade agreement], the threat of North Korea, and the reinforcement of Australia-US security ties" (p. 135).

While the author provides three excellent empirical chapters, the theoretical contribution is more limited. As with many books that started as dissertations, she cannot shake the impulse to lead us through the pro-forma limitations of realism, liberalism, and constructivism in guiding our understanding of particular foreign policy decisions. It would be wonderful if dissertation committees encouraged students for whom this exercise is not necessary to avoid it, but if they do require such a review, then university presses should insist that unless it is relevant to the argument, authors must move on to what is important for their own work. We will know that the foreign policy field has really matured when young scholars writing about decision making skip the pro forma discussion of macro-level theories and straightaway get down to the business of producing insights about individual and group behavior in the face of difficult political and policy choices.

In this case, her goal is to demonstrate that high government cohesion and strong military capabilities will lead a state to make major military contributions, whereas low government cohesion and weak military capabilities will not. However, as noted, the UK response to the Iraq War did not fit the argument, as von Hlatky's model expected a more limited contribution given the domestic

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