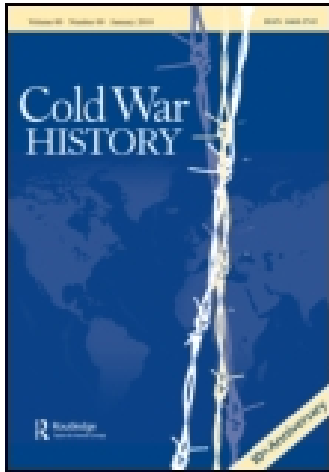


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Brent Scowcroft: Internationalism and Post-Vietnam War American Foreign Policy

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David F. Schmitz, *Brent Scowcroft: Internationalism and Post-Vietnam War American Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011), vii + 215 pp.

David F. Schmitz has written an insightful biography of Brent Scowcroft, national security advisor to presidents Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush and a leader who has remained largely behind the scenes, content to advise rather than hog the limelight, but who nonetheless has been 'at the center of debates over American foreign policy since the 1970s' (p. 197). Schmitz's book is also a good primer on United States foreign relations as Scowcroft served during two of the most important periods of the Cold War.

Schmitz showcases the many facets of Scowcroft's highly contingent career – he was a military officer, an academic, and a civil servant, who only pursued graduate study because he broke his back training to be a fighter pilot. Utilising Scowcroft's early published and unpublished writings, including his PhD dissertation on the role of Congress in foreign policy-making, Schmitz explores the principles and lessons most salient to the national security advisor. He outlines Scowcroft's worldview, highlighting his belief in American exceptionalism and his conviction that 'only the United States can exercise enlightened leadership' (p. 5). Other principles that guided Scowcroft include: an internationalist vision, a multilateral approach, a focus on stability, and caution about overselling a policy to the public. One of the book's most important contributions is demonstrating how Scowcroft's criticism of President Woodrow Wilson's quest to transform the world by promoting democracy and distaste for peace settlements dictated by victors shaped Scowcroft and Bush's decision to eschew triumphalism in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Schmitz argues against a growing body of literature portraying the first Bush administration as lacking a strategic vision for the end of the Cold War, contending that with Bush's May 1989 address in Mainz, 'A new vision of Europe was driving American policy' (p. 102). Furthermore, in contrast with Gregory Domber's recent work, he concurs with Scowcroft's assertion that the United States played 'midwife' to the transformation of Poland.³

Schmitz's book concludes on a disappointed note with Scowcroft's counsel unheeded by George W. Bush and his former National Security Council colleague Condoleezza Rice. The second Bush administration subscribed to a very different worldview than Scowcroft's internationalism, which given Bush I's electoral loss in 1992, Scowcroft had been 'unable to institutionalize' (p. 199). Therefore, Scowcroft was understandably upset with the second Bush administration's unilateral approach to foreign affairs, its poor planning for the post-war administration of Iraq, and the hubris of its worldview.

³ Gregory F. Domber, 'Skepticism and Stability: Reevaluating U.S. Policy during Poland's Democratic Transformation in 1989', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 13:3 (Summer 2011): 54.

Schmitz makes good use of records at the Gerald Ford Library, but like others beginning to work on the first Bush administration, he is stymied by the availability of records at the George Bush Library. Would the fuller release of records there change Schmitz's portrait of Scowcroft? It is unlikely, but greater access to Bush I era records could have enabled greater distance from Scowcroft's perspective. Nonetheless, this book makes many contributions to historiographical debates about the role of the United States in the world in the late and post-Cold War years.

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Anatoly Adamishin and Richard Schifter, *Human Rights, Perestroika and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), xx + 297 pp.

Conceived and written in two voices, this book belongs to the rather rare genre of joint memoirs. It is composed of seven chapters, both chronological and thematic, in which the two authors – Anatoly Adamishin, the former Soviet deputy minister, and Richard Schifter, the former US assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs – each give their testimony, perceptions, and analysis of the events in question. The book starts with a preface, also in two voices, by Mikhail Gorbachev and George Shultz.

This book can be read at three levels. First, it is the story of a fine human adventure, the deepening friendship between two men whose personal backgrounds, education, political culture, mental universe, and perceptions opposed them to each other. Propelled by Gorbachev starting in 1985 and soon implemented by the Reagan administration, the 'revolution' of the new détente gradually threw them into contact with each other and made them partners (as of April 1987): Schifter, under the authority of George Shultz, and Adamishin, under the authority of Edward Shevardnadze, worked together on the thorny issue of human rights. Due to its various components – the political use of psychiatric imprisonment, the right to emigration, the liberation of political prisoners – and due to the fact that the issue of human rights was very quickly linked to disarmament, these negotiations rapidly became perceived on both sides as a major gamble at the end of the Cold War. Thus this book describes what went on behind the scenes of the Soviet–US human rights dialogue, the various phases it traversed, and the spectacular results to which it led.

Secondly, the book offers prime testimony about the complexity of the years from 1985 to 1991. Reading Adamishin, we detect the difficulties with which the USSR was struggling at the start of the 1980s and, after the failure of the hopes born of the 20th