



STRATEGIC CAPITAL

Newsletter of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre

Coral Bell School of Asia and Pacific Affairs

College of Asia and the Pacific

The Australian National University



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This is the first e-newsletter intended as a periodic offering from the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australia's leading university-based think tank. It is a pre-digested overview of policy-relevant research, projects, media commentary and upcoming events produced by SDSC staff. We hope you find it useful.

Professor John Blaxland, Head SDSC

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What do we do at SDSC?

In addition to teaching the Military and Defence Studies program at the Australian Command and Staff College, we offer the [Bachelor of International Security Studies](#) and the [Masters of Strategic Studies](#) at ANU's Acton campus.

Our research projects and teaching cover a wide range of strategic and defence issues in Australia and its region. Our expertise within **strategic studies** consists of three related research clusters: **Military studies, Australian defence & Asia-Pacific security.**

Register now

[War in the Sand Pit:](#)

[Perspectives and Lessons on Australia's War in Afghanistan & Iraq](#)

Monash Centre, Gallipoli Barracks, Brisbane, 12 & 13 May 2017

SDSC is co-hosting a nationally significant event from 12-13 May at Enoggera Barracks in Brisbane. This conference will review Australia's engagement with its longest military conflict to date. What happened? How well did we understand the nature of the fight? Why did Australia contribute the way it did? Were there other viable approaches? Did Australia's contribution add value to the coalitions? What lessons can be learned for the future?

Mark the date

[The Iraq War and the end of Pax Americana](#)

Sir Roland Wilson Building, 21 June 2017

The SDSC is excited to welcome Emma Sky to discuss the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the resulting disintegration into civil war and the end of the Pax Americana. Emma Sky is director of Yale's Maurice R. Greenburg World Fellows Program and a Senior Fellow at the Jackson Institute.

[SDSC War Studies Seminar](#)

Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 31 August 2017

A special War Studies Seminar remembering the 75th Anniversary of the Battle for Milne Bay.

Featured publications

[Australia's American Alliance](#)

Peter J. Dean, Stephan Frühling and Brendan Taylor (eds)

Melbourne University Press, 2016. RRP. \$16.99 - \$69.99

SDSC has published perhaps the most timely and significant work on the Australian American Alliance just in time for the new Trump administration. The Australia-United States Alliance has been critical to Australian foreign and defence policy since the ANZUS Treaty was signed in 1951. For 63 years it has been an enduring feature of Australian defence planning, yet the contemporary alliance is, arguably, in one of the more important phases of reinterpretation in its long history. While the Alliance by its very nature is a bi-lateral relationship, this book specifically focuses on Australian perspectives and policy choices, while providing context on the role of the United States in the Asia-Pacific and its position as a global power.

[The Pivot before the Pivot:](#)

[U.S. Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia](#)

Nina Silove

International Security, vol. 40 no. 4, 2016, pp. 45-88.

One of SDSC's newest scholars, Dr Nina Silove, recently published a ground-breaking article on American engagement in Asia. American critics of the Barack Obama administration's 2011 “pivot to Asia” policy claim that, despite the lofty rhetoric, the United States has pursued an anaemic strategy in Asia. Chinese critics of the pivot to Asia assert that it is a bellicose strategy aimed at containing China's rise. These two conflicting criticisms are addressed in a detailed historical narrative that traces the development and implementation of U.S. strategy, based on declassified documents, some of which have never before been made public, and extensive in-depth interviews with senior policymakers.

[A National Asset: 50 Years of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre](#)

Desmond Ball, Andrew Carr

This volume commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC). The Centre is Australia's largest body of scholars dedicated to the analysis of the use of armed force in its political context and one of the earliest generation of post-World War II research institutions on strategic affairs. The book features chapters replete with stories of university politics, internal SDSC activities, cooperation among people with different social and political values, and conflicts between others, as well as the Centre's public achievements. It also details the evolution of strategic studies in Australia and the contribution of academia and defence intellectuals to national defence policy.

[100 Days of Trump: What Should Asia Do?](#)

Brendan Taylor, Greg Fealy, David Envall, Bates Gill, Feng Zhang, Benjamin Zala, Michael Wesley, Shiro Armstrong, Anthony Bergin, David Brewster, Robin Davies, Jane Golley, Stephen Howes, Llewelyn Hughes, Frank Jotzo, Warwick McKibbin, Rory Medcalf, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Steven Rood, Matthew Sussex

Experts from SDSC and across the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific assess the impact of Trump on the Asia Pacific during the first hundred days of his Presidency – and how the region, and Australia should respond. The result is a fascinating and varied portrait of how the new administration has affected the world's most dynamic region, and how the region is likely to react.

SDSC Centre of Gravity Series

[US Congress and the Politics of Strategy](#)

Alan Tidwell

Alan Tidwell addresses the question of how the politics of US Congress shapes the development of strategy towards Asia, and how the countries affected countries can utilise this environment to influence policy. The US Pivot to Asia unfolds against the backdrop of a deeply divided Congress, not given to passing much legislation. As such, levers available to influence US Asian security strategy are few but important. Refining and sharpening those levers will figure prominently in Australia's continued success in the American capital.

[The South China Sea: Middle Power Perspectives](#)

Brendan Taylor, William T. Tow, Shafiah Muhibat, Christine Susanna Tjhin, Lee Jaehyon, Bong Youngshik Daniel

Six experts examine the South China Sea issue, and what role middle powers can play in helping ensure that the contest over disputed territory does not lead to conflict. Australian, Indonesian and South Korean strategic interests are analysed and debated.

[MANIS: Time for a new forum to sweeten regional cooperation](#)

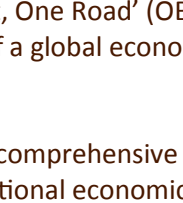
John Blaxland

SDSC Head John Blaxland proposes the establishment of a new regional cooperation forum between Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and Singapore. He highlights that the creation of such a forum can help to overcome some of the regions short and long term challenges such as illegal fisheries, natural resources, smuggling and transnational crime. This paper explores the range of existing regional forums in Southeast Asia, how each country may view such a forum, and highlights the benefits of each.

Staff Research Profile

[Dr Amy King](#)

Westpac Research Fellow ARC DECRA



Dr Amy King's research aims to understand how China shapes international economic order. Since 2013, China has launched bold new economic initiatives such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) plan. If successful, these initiatives will make China the centre of a global economic network stretching from North Africa to the South Pacific.

Dr King is pursuing a historical project that will provide the first comprehensive account of China's role in shaping the post-World War II international economic order, through the lens of the Bretton Woods and Bandung conferences, held between 1944 and 1955; and a contemporary project that will examine the economic ideas and strategies underpinning 21st century Chinese initiatives like AIIB and OBOR.

SDSC in the media

[Emeritus Professor Joan Beaumont](#)

[The fall of Singapore: the land campaign](#)

[How did they put the eagle on top of the Australian-American memorial?](#)

[Professor John Blaxland](#)

[North Korea: will nuclear weapons be used in our region?](#)

[Different Paths to a Common Goal: Enhancing Canada-Australia Collaboration in Asia](#)

[ABC News: 26 April 2017—Military contributions to North Korea](#)

[Southeast Asia matters too](#)

[BBC News: 7 April 2017—US missile strikes on Syria](#)

[Is 'Manis' the sweet deal that brings Australia and Indonesia together?](#)

[Australian military to release regular bombing reports from Iraq and Syria](#)

[Emeritus Professor Paul Dibb](#)

[A strong defence force makes sounds sense in now uncertain times](#)

[North Korea: it's not the first time Australia's been threatened with nuclear attack](#)

[Dr Bates Gill](#)

[Donald Trump's big Syria disruption was a much-needed diversion for a summit with no strategy](#)

[Rethinking Australia's Relationship with Australia](#) (with Linda Jakobson, China Matters)

[Australia must reshape links with China](#) (with Linda Jakobson, China Matters)

[The Pivot, Past and Future](#)

[Dr Russell Glenn](#)

[Ten Million is Not Enough: Coming to Grips with Megacities' Challenges and Opportunities](#)

[Professor Evelyn Goh](#)

[China's battle for influence in its region](#)

[Dr Ronald Huysen](#)

[The Korean peninsula: a cast of very jaded players](#)

[Dr Amy King](#)

[Hurting the Feelings of the Chinese People](#)

[Dr Greg Raymond](#)

[Armies overshadow naval modernization in Southeast Asia](#)

[Professor Hugh White](#)

[United States aircraft carriers are a costly gamble in the Asia-Pacific contest with China](#)

[Defence White Paper fails to deal with the strategic risks we face in the Asian century](#)