Zegart, Amy. *Spies, Lies and Algorithms*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022. 181 pages. Hardcover, $29.95.

Amy Zegart, a scholar of national security and senior fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies and Professor of Political Science at Stanford University, does not disappoint readers with her new book, *Spies Lies and Algorithms.* Zegart's book is an important contribution to social science literature. Her argument is not only sound but takes a particularly interesting perspective as she weaves together the notions of sensemaking and the Cold War world that both contributed to development of the American Intelligence Community. In short, Zegart makes a profound argument that the impact of data volume and accessibility are revolutionizing sensemaking" (p. 6).

We should look at Zegart's book with two lenses: from the perspective of the post-Cold War world, and then from the perspective of sensemaking and how this impacts the overall perspective of the American intelligence community. In the post-Cold War world, political scientists have focused on the numerous political issues between the United States and the Soviet Union—and of course, all the various political issues in between. These issues are complex and incredibly important for scholars to consider—particularly because they impact the numerous security and global issues. Taking this into account, Amy Zegart focuses on a very important security issue that highlights the need for thoughtful, philosophical discussion in her new book, *Spies, Lies and Algorithms.* She explains that the American intelligence community was essentially founded after World War II in the Cold War world—an issue that shapes the American intelligence community differently from other intelligence organizations. From the sensemaking perspective, Zegart notes that there are several influential factors that are impacting intelligence sensemaking, but also explains that there are some serious disconnects between Congressional oversight and policymaking and the American intelligence community (p. 14).

Zegart's arguments about the impact of technology in the American intelligence community is not only interesting but is particularly astute. She argues that "technological breakthroughs are transforming the threat landscape by generating new uncertainties and empowering new adversaries" (p. 4). This contributes to Zegart's interesting argument because it highlights a bit of an objective perspective that touches on the overall culture and development of the American intelligence community.

Zegart touches on important points noting that "artificial intelligence is transforming commerce and defense in ways that could destabilize social order and after the global distribution of power" (p. 2). Zegart also notes that artificial intelligence is not the only area that has been particularly influential to the political arena. Zegart also highlights that internet connectivity is "supercharging politics" (p. 2), an issue that is particularly important for countries that are not as influential in the international political arena. Within the backdrop of the multi-polar world scenario where multiple countries are competing in the international political arena, Zegart notes that the technological aspect of this is one of the key factors for international politics. Data, as such, is part of the overall mechanism for security issues. Zegart argues that "The intelligence field is leveling—and not in a good way" (p. 6). Zegart explains that because the Internet has put so much information out there, another type of race is taking place to figure out who can make sense of this information better and faster (p. 6). In essence, Zegart is noting that this information race is a serious policy consideration that scholars and security professionals should follow carefully.

Zegart's book highlights this security concern by revisiting thirty years of American security efforts. The book is broken up into several intriguing sections that include intelligence, counterintelligence, cybersecurity threats, and congressional oversight. Zegart's book is well-

inserted in the literature noting a very serious security issue that scholars and lawmakers need to be keenly aware of: the Internet, advanced technology, and accessibility to data. Zegart's arguments reside in the understanding that the post-Cold War world is focused on the multi-polar world notion that multiple countries are trying to gain power and prominence in the international political arena. Zegart's assertions should serve as a warning for national security professionals considering whether to focus on cybersecurity issues.

Spies, Lies and Algorithms is an interesting book and a great study for any student of international politics, students of sensemaking, national security, or cybersecurity.

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