



# Modern Naval History: Debates and Prospects

By Richard Harding

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Specifically structured around research questions and avenues for further study, and providing the historical context to enable this further research, *Modern Naval History* is a key historiographical guide for students wishing to gain a deeper understanding of naval history and its contemporary relevance.

Navies play an important role in the modern world, and the globalisation of economies, cultures and societies has placed a premium on maritime communications. *Modern Naval History* demonstrates the importance of naval history today, showing its relevance to a number of disciplines and its role in understanding how navies relate to their host societies.

Richard Harding explains why naval history is still important, despite slipping from the attention of policy makers and the public since 1945, and how it can illuminate answers to questions relating to economic, diplomatic, political, social and cultural history. The book explores how naval history has informed these fields and how it can produce a richer and more informed historical understanding of navies and sea power.

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### **Review**

“Naval history has long been split between the evolving intellectual demands of academic scholarship and the pressing didactic purposes of naval education, tactical methods and strategic judgement. This elegantly argued and expertly resourced text provides practitioners and consumers with an expert guide to the ideas of the past, present-day practice and future prospects in a rapidly evolving field of study.” ?*Andrew Lambert, Kings College London, UK*

“*Debates and Prospects* sweeps confidently across the whole range and diversity of one of the liveliest areas of history today, casting light on many fascinating corners which even the experts will scarcely have heard of.” ?*Nicholas Rodger, Oxford University, UK*

“This analysis of the development of naval history is among the most sophisticated studies of historiography ever published. Not simply a study in bibliography but an investigation of the relations between navies, international affairs, and domestic institutions and societies, it probes the nature and uses of naval history over the past century and a half and assesses the influence of naval historians and their work on government policymakers. Historians will particularly value its explanation of topics needing further study and defense analysts its evaluation of the potential usefulness in understanding the role of naval forces in peacetime deterrence.” ?*James C. Bradford, Texas A&M University, USA*

“A timely and welcome overview of the trajectory of naval history over the past 130 years that focuses on major themes of contemporary interest, in particular navies and the states and societies that create and employ them, and the nexus between naval power and international relations. Harding succinctly surveys the current state of the literature and points to areas where further research is needed. An ideal starting-place for those new to the field, such as graduate students, and a valuable reference tool for seasoned practitioners.” ?*John Beeler, University of Alabama, USA*

### **About the Author**

Richard Harding is Professor of Organisational History and Head of the Department of Leadership and Development, Westminster Business School, University of Westminster, UK. He has authored and edited numerous books on naval history, was editor of the *Mariner's Mirror* (2000-2005) and Chairman of the Society for Nautical Research (2005-11). He is also a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

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