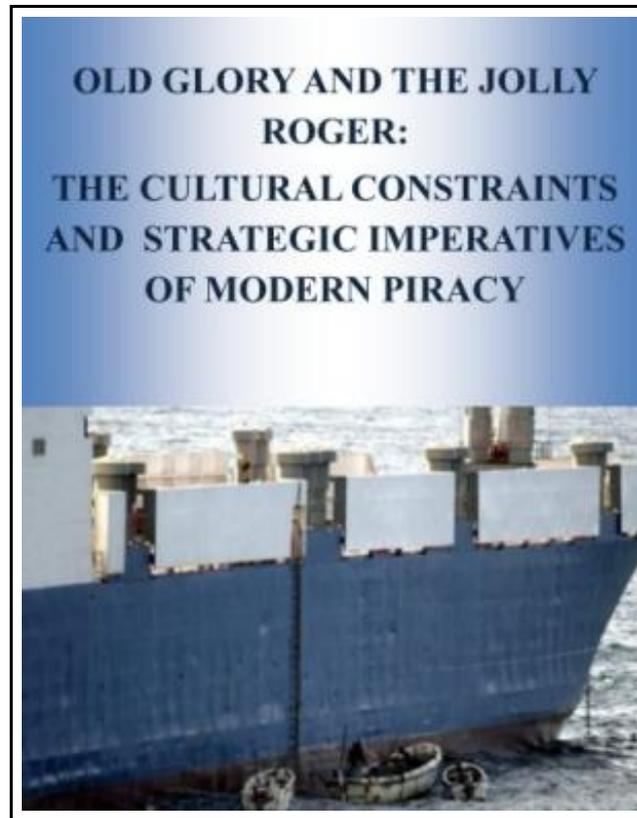


Old Glory and the Jolly Roger: The Cultural Constraints and Strategic Imperatives of Modern Piracy



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(Dr. Kayden Gerlach)

OLD GLORY AND THE JOLLY ROGER: THE CULTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES OF MODERN PIRACY



Createspace, United States, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 279 x 216 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.describes acts of piracy, puts the practice into historical perspective, and shows how a recent surge in maritime piracy incidents differs from other maritime piracy afflicting the world's oceans at the turn of the twenty-first century. This is half of the reason for writing. The second purpose for is to examine the US military response to the dramatic increase in piracy near Somalia that occurred in 2008. The thesis examines the US response through the theoretical lenses of strategic culture and structural realism. These theories seldom appear alongside each other in security studies literature; their juxtaposition explains the US behavior toward the contemporary African piracy epidemic and provides a framework for examining other national security issues. This thesis concludes that although certain national security elites push US strategic culture toward interventionist or isolationist extremes, some world events elicit foregone responses best described by the ideas of structural realism. Tacit realization by national security actors that these events exist in spite of what elite groups profess or desire in turn defines strategic culture in a fundamentally different way. Given its place in the existing world order, the United States had little choice but to respond to piracy, even though its strategic preference was to ignore the problem. The valuable lesson from piracy represents in microcosm many problems of national strategy. If US cultural preference is again at odds with a strategic imperative to use force, and elites indulge the former, the nation may forfeit its structural role as the world's existing hegemon. This is historically significant, as ceding the role of hegemon at this time would be a voluntary act, not forced by a stronger nation or...



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