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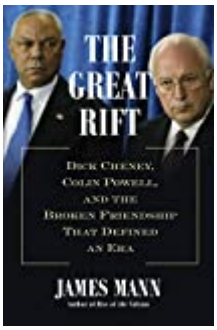


**Jim Mann.** *The Great Rift: Dick Cheney, Colin Powell, and the Broken Friendship That Defined an Era.* New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2020. x + 416 pp. $32.00, cloth, ISBN 978-1-62779-755-9.

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Colin Powell, referring to his service as then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney's chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff wrote, "We thought so much alike that, in the Tank or the Oval Office, we could finish each other's sentences" (p. 359). Years later, Ambassador Ryan Croker, then dean of the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, could barely convince the two to attend an event together to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Persian Gulf War. In *The Great Rift: Dick Cheney, Colin Powell, and the Broken Friendship That Defined an Era*, James Mann reviews how the careers, connections, and convictions of these two prominent statesmen exacerbated their differences through the changing post-Cold War security environment to divide friends.

Mann opens the book by following Cheney's and Powell's careers across multiple administrations. Cheney joined the national security establishment in 1968, serving as a postgraduate congressional fellow, and then became Donald Rumsfeld's special assistant in Richard Nixon's Office of Economic Opportunity in 1969. As Rumsfeld moved up to be Nixon's special assistant, Cheney continued as Rumsfeld's assistant in the West Wing but followed Rumsfeld to serve as his assistant on the Cost of Living Council, avoiding the political blowback that would later be associated with the Watergate scandal. When Rumsfeld returned to the White House as President Gerald Ford's chief of staff in 1974, Cheney continued as his deputy, taking his place when Rumsfeld became Ford's secretary of defense. Cheney served in Congress from 1979, joining the House Intelligence Committee in 1984. When the Senate rejected George H. W. Bush's first nominee for defense secretary, his national security advisor, Brent Scowcroft, recommended Cheney for the position. In addition to bringing Powell into the Pentagon, Cheney also brought in Paul Wolfowitz, I. Lewis (Scooter) Libby, Stephen Hadley, and Zalmay Khalilzad. These conservative advisors would also serve in the second Bush administration when Cheney, as vice president, sought to bring Rumsfeld back into the fold as the secretary of defense to

balance Powell as the secretary of state and the new national security advisor, Condoleezza Rice. Throughout his career, Cheney served in the White House across four Republican administrations.

Mann also weaves Powell's career chronologically through the pages with Cheney's career. Powell entered the army in 1958 and served two combat tours in Vietnam. Powell served as a White House fellow from 1972 to 1973 in the Office of Management and Budget under Caspar Weinberger's deputy, Frank Carlucci. When Weinberger was Ronald Reagan's secretary of defense in the early 1980s, Powell served as Weinberger's military aide. Powell later served as Reagan's national security advisor during his negotiations with Mikhail Gorbachev at the close of the Cold War. Powell served as President George H. W. Bush's chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under Cheney, where they managed to force drawdowns at the end of the Cold War and prosecuted the Persian Gulf War. Powell continued to serve into the opening months of the Clinton administration. When Cheney became President George W. Bush's vice president, he recommended that Powell serve as the secretary of state. Throughout his career, Powell served in four administrations from both parties.

Powell and Cheney enjoined many of the same connections through their careers and both preferred coordinating policy options in the background before engaging in major cabinet or security council initiatives in order to gain consensus and limit their opponents' abilities to sideline or stalemate preferred policy options. Mann claims that challenging relationships between key players in President George W. Bush's administration exacerbated differences between Powell and Cheney, despite their similar connections and management styles. Powell and Rumsfeld had never served together, resulting in a closer working relationship between Rumsfeld and Cheney than Cheney and Powell. In the second Bush administration, Wolfowitz served as Rumsfeld's deputy, Libby served as Cheney's special assistant, Hadley served as Rice's deputy, and Khalizad served as the National Security Council representative responsible for Iraq and Afghanistan. Mann asserts that Cheney's network across departments and preference for background coordination isolated Powell at the State Department in the lead-up and following the invasion of Iraq, creating fissures in their relationship.

Mann also examines how these different group dynamics in the second Bush administration brought to light different foreign policy convictions between Powell and Cheney. Following Vietnam, Powell developed a distrust for "slide-rule prodigies" that developed policies without firsthand understanding (p. 147). This drove him to develop a policy as Weinberger's aide that military forces should only be committed to achieve clear objectives with decisive force undergirded by public support. Powell consistently counseled against the use of military force as a first resort within each administration he served. Powell advocated for working with allies and international institutions whenever possible to avoid costly unilateral action. His concern for maintaining public trust also drove him to advise against enhanced interrogation techniques during the second Bush administration, which conflicted with American values and endangered American prisoners of war.

Cheney deferred military service during Vietnam and formed different convictions from the conflict. He abhorred congressional overreach, particularly the War Powers Act and the intelligence reforms during the Nixon and Ford administrations. Cheney believed the executive branch enjoyed unique powers to provide for the common defense and could apply enhanced interrogation and surveillance techniques to fight the War on Terror. As defense secretary, in conjunction with Wolfowitz, Libby, and Khalizad, he developed Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) in 1992 that sought American primacy, building a "security community" with the new democracies of the collapsing Soviet Union that would "preclude" the

domination of critical regions by hostile, non-democratic states (p. 163). Neither Powell nor the other senior leaders of the first Bush administration endorsed this plan, but Mann claims Cheney and his colleagues applied 1992 DPG concepts to drive policy during the second Bush administration to topple Iraq and undermine other "Axis of Evil" nations. Mann argues that Cheney's allies in the administration consistently outflanked and undermined Powell's arguments against the invasion of Iraq and subsequent reconstruction plans, driving a wedge between the two friends who led Powell to leave the administration during George W. Bush's second term. Bush replaced Powell with Rice, then replaced Rumsfeld with Robert Gates as public opinion turned against the war in Iraq, further isolating Cheney. Mann claims that the careers, connections, and convictions that created a close working relationship and friendship during the final years of the Cold War drove Powell and Cheney apart in a post-9/11 security environment.

Mann convincingly interweaves interviews, news articles, memoirs, and publicly released and leaked documents to form a compelling narrative about the impacts of personalities and ideologies in forming national security policy. Comparing the interactions between Gates and Rice to Powell and Rumsfeld, Mann explores how adding Rumsfeld to the Powell/Cheney relationship changed the group dynamic and may have intensified internal ideological differences. Mann also postulates that the elder Bush's consensus-building leadership style may have curbed ideological differences more than his son's style, which enabled competing perspectives throughout the policy process. As new administrations build teams to guide the nation through an ever-changing security environment, Mann provides a cautionary tale in how the same successful individuals in different group dynamics can produce synergistic successes or dysfunctional disasters.

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