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Academy Announces 2024 Dillon Book Award Winner

Washington, D.C. – The American Academy of Diplomacy is pleased to announce that the winner of the 2024 Douglas Dillon Book Award for a Book of Distinction on the Practice of American Diplomacy is *Diplomats at War: Friendship and Betrayal on the Brink of the Vietnam Conflict* by Charles Trueheart, published by University of Virginia Press.

Diplomats at War is a work of memory hiding inside a work of history. It offers new insights into a period in US-Vietnam relations while providing a vivid portrayal of Foreign Service life, both personal and professional. Charles Trueheart has written an engrossing, well-researched, and deeply felt story that is part memoir of his time as a boy in Saigon and part nuanced historical exploration of two central American diplomats in Vietnam in the fateful year of 1963 when US-Vietnam relations lurched tragically toward an all-out war. The portraits of US Ambassador to Vietnam Frederick Notting and his Deputy Chief of Mission William Trueheart, who are also the author's godfather and father respectively, offer not just a fascinating look at a key diplomatic relationship, but also the fracturing of a personal relationship, which was later mirrored in the societal and political cleavages that the Vietnam War brought at home. Trueheart masterfully details the diplomatic intrigues, as well as the interaction between Washington and the in-country mission, as US diplomats and policymakers struggle with the challenge of how to understand the host country and deal with its autocratic leader, who appears committed to self-destruction. The book's lessons about the conduct of diplomacy and the realities and dangers of life in the Foreign Service remain highly relevant even today, and it should be viewed as a vital resource by incoming Foreign Service officers, students, and other foreign affairs practitioners.

The Academy has celebrated distinguished writing about US diplomatic efforts and achievements with its annual Douglas Dillon Book award since 1995. The 2024 Dillon Book Award will be formally presented at the Academy's Annual Awards luncheon and ceremony at the US Department of State on November 7, 2024.

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Strengthening American Diplomacy

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