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REVIEW OF BOOKS

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Meet John
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American Studies

o cers cost, not twice, but four times as much to train as ROTC scholarship o cers. Defend ers of the academies like to say that the cost di erential washes out when you consider how much longer academy graduates serve after their ve-year active duty service obligation is over. (Scholarship-funded ROTC o cers commit to four years.) e evidence on this point is in con clusive. In the past, most generals and admirals were academy grads, but that hasn't been true for quite a while. e same Tench Francis study showed that ROTC began producing more ag and general o cers (that is, admirals in the Navy and generals in the Army, Air Force,

answers to questions they've already seen won't be good officers. Life is unpredictable; battle is very unpredictable." Forget the academies' top-20 rankings among national liberal arts colleges in the annual U.S. News and World Report surveys: West Point must be doing something right to be fourth among all institutions of higher education in Rhodes scholarships since 1923 and sixth in Marshalls since 1982.

What could Ricks have been thinking when he dismissed the academy experience as being equivalent to a community college education? Cadets and midshipmen are taught by a combination of civilian faculty, nearly all of them with doctorates, and military officers, mostly captains and majors with master's degrees, company command experience, and a full-awareness of what Mullaney, a West Point grad who taught at the Naval Academy, describes as "the haunting imperative that what we fail to teach our students could kill them or those they lead." The mix is different depending on the academy: the Annapolis faculty is about 60% civilian, and the West Point and Air Force Academy faculties are about 75% military. West Point's advantage is in some ways—more Ph.D.s in the classroom and more experience for the brigade of midshipmen in dealing with civilians as authority figures—but advantage West Point and Colorado Springs in others: their teaching officers tend to go to much better schools and have much brighter futures in the Air Force and,

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