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Strategists Break All the Rules

Adelaido Godinez

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by

Adelaido Godinez

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by Adelaido Godinez

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Foreword

The author argues that Emory Upton's belief that politicians should leave war to the professionals has led to two assumptions that have been accepted as conventional wisdom: first, that an apolitical army represents a more professional force; and second, that the problems at the tactical and operational level were similar enough to be useful in solving problems at the strategic level. These assumptions, Godinez says, may be useful at the lower levels of war, but they have led to confusion.

First, while it is true that the Army should not be involved in the political life of our nation—Army professionals ought to be above political interference or interest—it should concern itself with the relevant and vitally important policies of our nation.

In discussing the second assumption, that tactical problem-solving skills can be used at a strategic level, the author describes the tactical and strategic philosophies of various military leaders that America has seen over the last few centuries. Drawing a distinction between tactics and strategy, demonstrating that what might work at a tactical level will not always work at a strategic level, he says that tactics, doctrine and technology have a longer lead-time than strategy; correcting a bad strategy is relatively easier—retraining an army takes years.

A successful general will understand the balance that needs to be drawn between politics and policies, as well as the relationship that must be carefully formed and maintained between tactics and strategy. He will understand that the intellectual aspect of warfare must be given attention and care if he and his men are to succeed in actual warfare. He is a lifelong learner who encourages discourse, thinks critically and creatively and deftly navigates the interaction of the various political, military, economic and social systems he encounters.



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10 January 2013

Strategists Break All the Rules

Introduction

In the May 2007 issue of *Armed Forces Journal*, then Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling, U.S. Army, asserted that a crisis existed in America's Army. "A Failure in Generalship" reopened a persistent debate within the Army about whether the Army develops and promotes strategic thinking. Yingling argued, "[O]ur generals failed to envision the conditions of future combat and prepare their forces accordingly."¹ He went on to say that despite the peacekeeping, peace enforcement and other stability-type operations over the past 20 years, the Army's leadership failed to recognize change and build institutional capacity—structurally, doctrinally or educationally. Instead, the institution largely focused on tactical scenarios that replicated high-intensity conflict and complicated operational movement and sustainment problems. Yingling suggested that the Army lacked the mental agility to recognize the difference between the wars the Army wants to fight and the wars that U.S. politicians decide to fight.

Yingling's central insight is that structure, professionalism and deliberate specialization in the Army led to a bifurcated approach to war: politicians decided on war and then left it to be won by the military experts. This divergence produced two pieces of conventional wisdom in debates about U.S. military and civilian relationships: first, that an apolitical army represented a more professional force; and second, that the problems at the tactical and operational levels were similar enough to be useful in developing strategic thinking. These assumptions resulted in what Samuel P. Huntington described as the "normal-theory" relationship between policymakers and generals.

These assumptions beg the question of how strategists in the U.S. Army have performed, if they have gotten it right and, if so, how did they get it right? This monograph will trace American strategists' performance from before the progressive era, the progressive movement from the 1860s to World War I, World War II and the Cold War and conclude with observations from the current operational environment.

The professionalization movement, initiated by Emory Upton after the Civil War and accelerated by Secretary of War Elihu Root (1905–1909), led the U.S. Army to focus too much on tactical

and operational problems and the maintenance of the institutional Army and not enough on educating officers on how to take a holistic approach to war. The professionalization of the military, accelerated during the industrial era, narrowed officers' training and education to focus on technical, tactical and operational problems. For most of the pre-Root reform era, the U.S. Army was little more than a frontier constabulary with few strategic concerns. Partly because of a long-standing American social and political distrust of a large standing Army, the only significant war functions were the requirements to raise, train and lead mass conscript or volunteer forces in the event of real war.² The irony of a small standing Army was that its size led to stronger relationships between general officers and their political masters.

Historically, the progressive era occurred as a response to industrialization just after the Civil War, from the 1860s to the early 1900s. During this period, Emory Upton developed and wrote a concept about how best to professionalize the U.S. Army, with the underlying intent to leave warfighting to professionals. Elihu Root codified many of his ideas after the failures in the Spanish–American War of 1898. The broad campaign to reform America socially, politically and economically matched Root's move to institutionalize and professionalize the Army. The Root reforms, accelerated by industrialization and technology, created a highly specialized Army that focused on gaining, maintaining and improving tactical and operational competence and cemented the fundamental assumption that an apolitical Army was more useful for the United States.

The assumption made sense for the United States but had one unfortunate result. The Army as an institution misread the nature of an apolitical force. The essence of an apolitical force should be nonpartisan—Army professionals above political interference or interest. There is a difference, however, between policy and politics. While not involving itself in the political life of the nation, the Army is vitally concerned with the policies of the nation. The discussion for which strategists must prepare is political but in the nature of policy as the object of war. The Army confused apolitical with policy in the manner addressed by Carl von Clausewitz.³

The poor performance of the War Department during the Spanish-American War stimulated the call for reform. The resulting Root reforms emphasized the need to develop a professional force prepared to fight modern war. The industrial age created more complex conditions in which the technical aspects of warfare seemed dominant. Warfare was changing and seemed to demand a greater emphasis on technical and tactical skills. Caught up in this age of reform and emphasis on professionalization, the Army groomed and promoted technically competent tacticians, assuming that genius would emerge as they entered the strategic and political realm. This resulted in general officers unprepared to conduct a meaningful conversation about how to translate political objectives into military campaigns.

As U.S. prestige and interests grew abroad, “the military profession . . . emerged in its most pure form, as a group of technically and organizationally trained experts in the management of violence.”⁴ Although successful in World War II and having carried that success to the beginning of the Korean War, the U.S. Army entered a period of relatively static strategic conditions. The specter of thermonuclear war dominated the strategic discourse. In the post-Cold War era, the Army lapsed into strategic drift as it tried to understand the requirements for limited war and eventually an all-volunteer force. Locked into the assumption of the apolitical U.S. Army, the political choice to leave Vietnam destroyed the Army's limited successes there.

At the end of the Cold War, some Army leaders recognized that a new era would require more strategic thinking. In 1989, General John R. Galvin noted the problem and asked, “How do we get as broad a leavening of strategic thinkers as possible?”⁵ Then serving as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and Commander-in-Chief, U.S. European Command, General Galvin approached the

problem from a combined educational, institutional and generalist perspective. He expected changes in the way the Army educated and promoted its officers. His comments anticipated an intellectual approach to developing strategic thinkers for the complexities of modern warfare in the post-Cold War era. General Galvin wanted the Army to change its culture and develop a structured approach to growing strategic thinkers.

Instead, the Army maintained its tactical and operational bias and chose an organizational approach that developed a specialized group of competent strategists called Functional Area 59 (FA59). Lieutenant Colonel Charles P. Moore, then serving as the Basic Strategic Arts Program director, rekindled General Galvin's essay hoping to inform both military and civilian readers that the Army's initial step to develop competent strategic thinkers was succeeding. The FA59 program attempted to solve the Army's crisis in strategic thinking and the United States' "long decline in strategic competence" by increasing the number of strategic thinkers.⁶ The Army's experience in Afghanistan, Iraq, Asia-Pacific and on the Southwest Border suggests a different perspective. Perhaps four hundred strategists serving in positions throughout the Army and the rest of the inter-agency is not enough; the real requirement for strategists does not offset the requirement for senior leaders to think strategically.

There seems to be a thread of belief from this recent analysis that the professional military educational (PME) system is ineffective in producing officers who can think critically and creatively to solve complex, ill-structured problems.⁷ The apparent difference between problem sets at the tactical level and at the strategic level requires deeper analysis. The difference appears to develop from the admixture of policy at the strategic level. The strategist's problem is the whole mess of interacting, interdependent actors, their associated agendas and the numerous resulting theories about how to achieve victory.⁸

Strategic thinking suffered long-lasting impacts from the transition of a small, cadre-like volunteer force reinforced by a quickly trained militia to a more professional Army during the progressive era. Professionalization of the Army led to a loss of strategic perspective and an inability to connect long-term strategic-political objectives to operations. The U.S. Army's continued professionalization, established during the progressive era, narrowed the perspective and resulted in officers unprepared to deal with ill-structured political-military problems by removing the political object of war from the warrior's purview.

Definitions and Concepts

An understanding of strategic thinking derives from Dr. Everett Carl Dolman's *Pure Strategy: Power and Principle in the Space and Information Age*.⁹ Dr. Leonard Wong's work reflects the same episodic developments in professionalism and helps outline how the Root reforms influenced professionalism.¹⁰ The following discussion outlines the current military definitions and why Dolman's concept of strategy provides greater utility than current military doctrine.

Defining key terms provides a useful foundation for understanding the Army's struggle with strategic thought. Arguably, strategic thinking exists beyond levels of war. Strategic thinking involves critical and creative thinking to create a theory of action around the infinite connections, their continuation and how to reshape them into a better peace. Hew Strachan argues that strategy has lost its meaning because "[t]he word 'strategy' has acquired a universality which has robbed it of meaning."¹¹ The Army defines strategy as the "art and science of developing and employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national and/or multinational objectives."¹² The Army definition illustrates logic that strategic thinking revolves around allocating resources to achieve a specific goal. Joint doctrine describes strategy in a

different way—as “a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national and/or multinational objectives.”¹³

The similarity to the definition of tactics illustrates the U.S. Army’s misunderstanding of strategic thinking. At the tactical level, “battles and engagements are planned and executed to accomplish military objectives assigned to tactical units or task forces.”¹⁴ The tautological fallacy is that tactics accomplish specific goals at a lower level by allocating resources (battles and engagements). In an effort to show a difference in planning at the various levels, doctrine states that “[a]ctivities at this level focus on the ordered arrangement and maneuver of combat elements in relation to each other and to the enemy to achieve combat objectives.”¹⁵

The problem with the U.S. military’s definitions is that they center on a circular argument of resources at any level of war instead of attempting to understand the policy objectives of war. Add in the concept of operational art as “the pursuit of the strategic objectives, in whole or in part, through the arrangement of tactical actions in time, space and purpose,” and it is easy to understand how levels of war and technology complicate strategic thinking.¹⁶ These definitions inhibit strategic thinking because they limit the Army from taking a holistic approach to war. At the tactical level, we are comfortable breaking rules to solve the problem. At the operational level, the artist is able to explain the problem and gain agreement to the right approach.¹⁷ Strategic problems are different, because they involve relationships between political objects and desired conditions. Strategy is more holistic and interdependent in nature.¹⁸

The pursuit of the political object in war often represents an ill-structured problem. Army Field Manual 5-0, *The Operations Process*, describes problems as well-structured, medium-structured or ill-structured. Well-structured problems are self-evident problems with solutions readily available. Tactics manuals, technological solutions or professionals agree on relevant solutions to well-structured or medium-structured problems.¹⁹ In contrast, ill-structured problems are interactive, “complex, nonlinear and dynamic” problems with no consensus on solutions, desired conditions, end states or achievability.²⁰

Strategic problems are the most interactive of problems because of their interdependent nature. The infinite connections and continuous reshaping require leaders to approach strategic problems from a holistic perspective. Strategic thinking and strategy are rooted in thinking about creating self-sustaining conditions from these infinite connections. Typically, for the U.S. Army, initial policy guidance “may prove insufficient to create clearly stated, decisive and attainable objectives in complex situations that involve political, social, economic and other factors.”²¹ Strategic thinking must recognize that strategic problems are inherently ill-structured because of this admixture of highly interactive systems, which produces extremely unpredictable conditions.²² Therefore, strategic thinking must include how to learn, innovate and adapt to generate a hypothesis about how to get to the political object.

Above all, strategic thinking should be useful. The Army’s PME system educates officers to succeed at the tactical and operational levels. Unfortunately, as General Galvin explained, “We need young strategists because we need senior strategists, and we need a lot because when the time comes we need *enough*.”²³ The Army’s approach to promoting the most promising grand tacticians to strategic roles expects their tactical and operational experiences to translate to effective strategic thinking. Dr. Dolman highlights the differences in the two types of thinking in his book *Pure Strategy*:

And so here is found the crucial difference between strategists and tacticians. The tactical thinker seeks an answer. And while coming to a conclusion can be the beginning of action, it is too often the end of critical thinking. The strategist will instead search for the right

question; those to which the panorama of possible answers provides insight and spurs ever more questions. No solutions are possible in this construct, only working hypotheses that the strategist knows will one day be proven false or tossed aside. Strategy is thus an unending process that can never lead to conclusion. And this is the way it should be: *continuation* is the goal of strategy—not *culmination*.²⁴

Dolman goes on to explain that military strategists must discard victory, because strategic thinking is about continuation. The outcomes of battles and campaigns anticipate victory and a clear end to campaigns. Strategic thinking seeks to create conditions and institutions that maintain a new normal because of the new political object.

Developing a holistic understanding of the environment helps develop a strategic perspective instead of an action-oriented solutions approach. Successful strategic thinking therefore requires learning, innovation and ultimately organizational adaptation because the political object shifts, the conditions change or a unique opportunity presents itself but time does not stop. Operational brilliance focuses on action to retain the initiative. The action-oriented culture remains critical to success at the operational and tactical levels, but the strategic level takes a learned, theoretical approach to problem solving.²⁵

Dr. Ronald Heifetz explains that because strategy requires testing of an unproven hypothesis, leadership must recognize the limitations of training and induce learning.²⁶ Field Manual 5-0 supports this assertion because of the ambiguity of political or military guidance. Strategic thinkers have to see the infinite connections and develop an acceptable theory that reshapes those connections to the benefit of the nation. That means more learning and more testing of that learning is required for strategists.

Also critical to this discussion are the definitions of professionalism and the professional mind. Dr. Leonard Wong wrote a useful historical view of the U.S. Army's professionalization process. Tellingly, Dr. Wong also separated the amateur U.S. Army from the professional U.S. Army by the Elihu Root reforms. Placing the Army's profession in context, Dr. Wong argued that before the Root reforms, "the Army as a profession emerged to embrace any tasks levied by the American people that necessitated the deployment of trained, disciplined manpower under austere conditions on behalf of the nation."²⁷ Although the Army existed to fight and win the nation's wars, the early Army officer understood his role in serving the political needs of the developing nation. Dr. Wong suggested that the debacle of quartermaster support during the Spanish–American War²⁸ and the industrial age led to Elihu Root's opportunity to expand the Army profession.²⁹ Revealingly, Dr. Wong concluded that the Army's profession necessarily "evolve[s] in tandem with the evolving panoply of needs that require the application of disciplined force in 'service to the American people.'"³⁰

Strategic Theory

Strategic theory provides a framework for assessing and identifying good strategists. The works of Carl von Clausewitz influence the U.S. Army's view of war in many ways. Clausewitz presents two criteria that provide structure for a narrative analysis of the following historical surveys. First, *On War* highlights the primacy of politics. Second, *On War* reveals that strategists must see problems holistically.³¹ These two criteria reflect the problems with the U.S. Army's two assumptions about developing strategic thinkers.

The Army's assumptions led to a bifurcated approach to war. The first assumption is that an apolitical army represents a more professional force. The second is that the problems at the tactical and operational levels were similar enough to be useful in developing strategic thinkers. General Galvin explains that a strategist must "develop an understanding of politics and the political process,

for the objectives of strategy and the environments in which it is formulated are political.”³² It is only then that the strategist sees the problem of war holistically.

Clausewitz was in his early twenties when he first started thinking and writing about the nature of war and the relationship between war, society and politics. With the French Revolution in full tilt, the young Prussian gained personal experience fighting the armies of revolutionary France. His experience in battle led Clausewitz to three conclusions. First, there was no standard by which to measure excellence in war. Second, it was a mistake to believe that a set of rules led to mastery in war. Third, he recognized that war appeared as a political phenomenon.³³ These three insights led Clausewitz to write a general theory of war with abstract criteria for use by contemporary and future practitioners of war.

The first criterion Clausewitz presented revolves around the primacy of politics. Through an exchange between Clausewitz and the Chief of the Prussian General Staff, Dr. Peter Paret described how strongly Clausewitz felt about the primacy of politics:

War is not an independent phenomenon, but the continuation of politics by different means. Consequently, the main lines of every major strategic plan are *largely political in nature*, and their political character increases the more the plan applies to the entire campaign and to the whole state. A war plan results directly from the political conditions of the two warring states, as well as from their relations to third powers. . . . According to this point of view, there can be no question of a *purely military* evaluation of a great strategic issue, nor of a purely military scheme to solve it.³⁴

Clausewitz believed that politics provides the rationale for war. Linking violence or threat of violence to the political objective is how strategic thinkers achieve a better peace. Although the war may end, the purpose of every military campaign ought to be to “gain leverage at the peace table.”³⁵ This discourse between Clausewitz and the Chief of the Prussian General Staff served to illustrate the relevance of the political object in war. The second useful criterion Clausewitz offered was how the strategist sees the whole problem:

. . . for it will primarily depend on such talent to illuminate the connections which link things together and to determine which among the countless concatenations of events are the essential ones.³⁶

Dr. Alan Beyerchen argued that Clausewitz’s description of war was similar to the way in which systems thinkers understand the interconnectedness of the world. Dr. Beyerchen explained that “environment itself evolves dynamically in response to the course of the war, with the changed context feeding back into the conduct of hostilities.”³⁷ Generals who attempt to understand the whole problem seek to reshape the infinite connections to test their hypotheses of what might achieve a better peace.

Clausewitz’s theory of war thus provided two useful criteria by which to evaluate strategic thinking. First, does the strategist link policy to tactical and operational objectives? Second, does the strategist’s approach seek to understand the holistic, interdependent nature of the problem? These two criteria explain how strategic thinking uses a theory for action and develops a plan of action to test the system.³⁸

Historical Survey

Using the two criteria of primacy of policy and the nature of holistic, interdependent problems, this section reviews the generals in the U.S. Army as they increasingly grew to Emory Upton’s vision of professionals through unlimited war, the progressive era, global war and limited war.

The current era of persistent conflict is too recent to provide more than a faint light to follow. This discussion reveals insight into how the most prominent generals, as strategists, tackled the changes in the environment, forcing each American officer to change the rules to reshape the connections in a more favorable way for the United States. Each strategist challenges the conventional wisdom found in the two assumptions the U.S. Army makes about the professional ethic.

An Amateur Army

Geography, humble beginnings and general isolation allowed the United States' view of war to differ from that of the Old World Europeans. The tyranny of distance and time it took to get to the New World, as well as the sparse population, enabled the United States to focus on domestic, economic, social and political issues.³⁹ Major General William F. Burns explained, "Military officers of the past were often amateurs at heart, brought up in an area of *noblesse oblige*, dedicated to military service because in their social class it was the thing to do."⁴⁰ Historically, the United States could make do with a smaller army by depending on a small cadre of forces and filling up the ranks with state militias when war interrupted the growing nation.

The Mexican–American War (1846–1848) represented this uniquely American approach to war—war as an interruption. On 4 February 1846, Colonel Zachary Taylor received orders to occupy a portion of disputed territory between Mexico and Texas.⁴¹ An expansionist, President James K. Polk guided a limited war for limited means—one that the U.S. Army appeared inadequately prepared to conduct.⁴² Unhappy with now Brevet General Taylor's performance and political aspirations and concerned with domestic political implications, President Polk assigned General Winfield Scott to take command from Taylor.⁴³

Although General Scott served as Commanding General of the United States Army, his ego often inhibited a respectful unequal dialogue with the President. According to Dr. Eliot Cohen, in an unequal dialogue about the strategic approach to "conquering a better peace" for the United States,

both sides expressed their views bluntly, indeed, sometimes offensively, and not once but repeatedly—and unequal, in that final authority of the civilian leader was unambiguous and unquestioned.⁴⁴

This understanding meant that military men carried out their political masters' desires after an often-passionate discussion of the political object. This simple constraint established the conventional wisdom and underlying assumption that the U.S. Army should function apolitically—in pursuit of the political objective but without the politics of Washington.

The unequal dialogue represented between General Scott and Secretary of War William L. Marcy illustrated that the general understood the primacy of politics and the fallacy of the Army's central assumption. The President seemed impressed that General Scott understood both the political and military objectives.⁴⁵ General Scott understood the implications of domestic politics and how those interests related to the political object of war because he was close to the President, Congress and the secretary and because of his participation in the discourse surrounding the Mexican–American War.

General Winfield Scott's campaign in 1847 against the Mexican government confirms the use of Dolman's definition and Clausewitz's criteria for limited wars toward limited objectives. Before entering the war, General Scott described America's problem as how to threaten the Mexican government in a way that would allow the United States to "conquer a peace."⁴⁶ General Scott's understanding of the context led him to a theory of victory in which, by threatening Mexico City, he could convince the Mexican government to sue for peace.

Scott's direct approach on Mexico City and the management of popular Mexican sentiment suggest an understanding of the infinite, interconnected whole problem of war.⁴⁷ Dr. Dorner explained, "We must learn in complex systems we cannot do only one thing"⁴⁸ because there are no clear rules or understanding of how the complete system interacts. General Scott implicitly understood that the war in Mexico could not focus only on the enemy's main force, the capital or the political object—they were all connected. He created a new set of rules about how to use force to achieve the political object—proving that by threatening an enemy, threatening the capture of Mexico City and respecting the populace simultaneously, he could operate deep within enemy territory and achieve a better peace for the United States.

Unlimited War

The Union policy, strategy and distributed operations during the Civil War served to put the Clausewitzian criteria to the test. According to Dr. James M. McPherson, throughout the conflict the policy seemed clear: "The question of national sovereignty over the union of all the states was non-negotiable."⁴⁹ Largely isolated from the implications of the French Revolution, the United States was spared from unlimited warfare.⁵⁰ Yet, if war was to serve policy, President Abraham Lincoln lacked an initial framework for connecting policy, strategic aims and operations. Instead, he initially deferred strategy to General-in-Chief Winfield Scott. Dr. McPherson explained:

But Scott's advanced age, poor health and lack of energy made it clear that he could not run this war. His successor, General George B. McClellan, proved an even greater disappointment to Lincoln. Nor did [Generals] Henry W. Halleck, Don Carlos Buell, John Pope, Ambrose E. Burnside, Joseph Hooker or William S. Rosecrans measure up to initial expectations.⁵¹

These U.S. Army officers struggled to understand the policy, the structure of the problem and how to create a new approach. The old rules of warfare dominated their thinking. Their experiences as grand tacticians captured their thinking, revealing that they failed because of the primary assumption of what it meant to be an apolitical army. In addition, the second assumption failed to prove the fungibility of tactical experience to deal with strategic problems. After eight generals, President Lincoln was finally able to find in General Grant a strategist who could interpret the complex systems at play among politics, strategy, operations and tactical and technological innovation.⁵²

General Grant was the first general Lincoln found who could implement his policies and develop strategies that matched those objectives. After eight weeks as commander of the entire Union force, Grant issued this order to General George G. Meade on 9 April 1865: "*Lee's* army will be your objective point. Wherever *Lee's* army goes you will go also."⁵³ Grant understood the precariousness of President Lincoln's position, politically and physically, in Washington; he also acknowledged General Lee's tendencies and the strengths of his army. Grant interpreted Lincoln's policy, and the numerous military problems, into a singular objective: the destruction of Lee's field army.⁵⁴ The old rules of limited war for limited objectives would not work.

The Civil War represented one of three unlimited wars in the history of the United States. The primacy of policy appeared more obvious because often the conflict seemed well-structured, with consensus easier to accomplish at the political level. President Lincoln's policy of preservation of the Union remained unchanged throughout the Civil War. The Confederacy sought independence. Eight generals, anchored in their preconceived notions of the use of military force, could not envision a better peace and bridge policy to effective campaigns. The Union forces represented an amateur army, without a grand strategy, prolonging a costly, bloody war until General Grant assumed command.⁵⁵

General Grant did possess an intellectual curiosity that allowed him to break past the cultural assumptions requisite for most of the U.S. Army. As J.F.C. Fuller explained,

He sees the war as a whole far more completely so than Lee ever saw it. His conceptions are simpler and less rigid; he is preeminently the grand-strategist, whilst Lee is preeminently the field strategist.⁵⁶

Grant's various experiences helped him grasp how the political, social, economic and military systems interacted.⁵⁷ Entrepreneurial and innovative, he knew that neither the President nor the Army could provide additional assets to prosecute war with the South. Instead, Grant created new opportunities because he grasped the underlying political, social and economic subsystems. His performance during the Civil War showed how strategists see more than the military problems of war, tying the political—even the presidency itself—to the military objective.

The Civil War changed the nation. A young, ambitious officer sought to change the U.S. Army based on his Civil War experiences. Colonel Emory Upton hated that the Army was unprepared for modern warfare. He confused the failure by generals from Winfield Scott to William Rosecrans to grasp the primacy of Lincoln's policies with what he assumed to be an inappropriate civilian control of war. Despite General Grant's successes, the Army lacked a framework for gathering insights about why he succeeded. In connecting policy and the engagements, President Lincoln closely monitored, controlled and designed policies and often discussed tactics, operations, and strategy with General Grant.⁵⁸ Both President Lincoln and General Grant fought through the two central assumptions to create new theories for success. Unfortunately, by the time of Elihu Root's reforms during the Progressive era, Colonel Upton's opinions had replaced the successes of the Lincoln-Grant team and cemented into conventional wisdom the assumptions of what it meant to be a professional officer.

The Progressive Era

Industrialization foreshadowed the end of American isolationism, necessitating a change in the role of the U.S. Army. Mass armies, shrinking distances, increased nationalism and the imperialist Old World hastened the need for professionalization of the force.⁵⁹ Moreover, the postbellum social and political forces resulted in state centralization that rationalized the Civil War as an unlimited war of, as Stephen Ambrose described, a "'power unrestrained' unleashed for complete 'conquest.'"⁶⁰ The broad nature of the conflict influenced the political, social and economic environments, resulting in fertile ground for rooting the conventional wisdom of a bifurcated relationship between policymaking and the Army.

Emory Upton embodied the reformation of the U.S. military policy, yet it would be a few more years before men such as John Bigelow, James Mercur and the ever-thoughtful Arthur L. Wagner would examine military strategy. The sequence in the development first of military policy and next of military strategy separated the relationship between policy and war for the Army. Among the arguments that Upton presented in *The Military Policy of the United States* was "a complete independence of the general-in-chief—and thereby the Army—from civilian control."⁶¹ Upton's goal was to create an autonomous professional Army. Unintentionally, he created an apolitical Army officer corps desirous of autonomy in operations often described as a "political-free zone" of war.⁶²

Dr. Lloyd Matthews writes,

Although considered by "the most influential writer-reformer-soldier this country has yet produced," Emory Upton's concepts completely disregard the democratic principles and civilian control of the U.S. Army.⁶³

President Lincoln's influence over every single level of war led Upton to believe that allowing amateur, uneducated civilians to control the Army was unethical. Upton discovered the German way of war and thought that their model, a professional army operating autonomously once politicians

had declared war, made more sense than the U.S. democratic model. President Lincoln's influence across every level of war during both limited and unlimited war proves that the principle of primacy of policy remains useful for the U.S. theory of war.⁶⁴ Emory Upton introduced a flawed assumption—revealed by Germany's strategic performance in two world wars—that an apolitical army meant a professional army.

Upton's desire to create a professional army based on “the old methods, when violence had been monopolized by regular armies, while civilians—including Presidents and Secretaries of War—had watched respectfully from a distance” became a tradition within the U.S. Army.⁶⁵ The unintended consequence of the Progressive era led to an Army designed to artificially separate policy from war.⁶⁶ In splitting war from policy by professionalization, Upton's design led military strategy to concern itself with organization, technology, firepower and promotions driven by bureaucratic needs above the political concerns of the nation.⁶⁷

This approach led to the first assumption of professionalizing the U.S. Army—that an apolitical officer is more professional for the republic. This concept came to mean not only that an Army officer does not get ahead of his (or her) political masters but also that officers execute political objectives. That clearly made sense to the republic, then and now. The problem with the assumption is that war is politics by other means.⁶⁸ The Army must remain nonpartisan. However, it cannot be apathetic about the discussion of the political object. The logic lacked credibility for the German army as well as the American Army.⁶⁹

The second deeply rooted assumption is that the best U.S. Army grand tacticians can convert their experiences into effective strategic thinking. However, the logic of the professional system resulted in officers with, as Ralph Peters highlighted, “identical career paths [and] interchangeable experiences and views of the world,”⁷⁰ divorced from political discourse. Army officers arrive unprepared to start a discussion about the political object. The unstated assumption that Upton brought into the professional military education system, as Lieutenant Colonel Michael H. Cody explained,

is that if officers were paragons at lower levels, they will automatically be able to meet the demands of higher levels—no matter how different such demands might be from those encountered earlier.⁷¹

The problems at the operational level and increasingly at the tactical level fit into a proven approach that allows leaders to impose rules or structure upon them, whereas, at the strategic level, the problems introduce a paradox—the higher the level the more constraints are self-imposed. War occurs because of a breakdown in the system; a strategist, as Dr. Jamshid Gharajedaghi explained, has “the opportunity to recreate the system from a clean slate.”⁷² Higher-level commands constrain lower-level commands. The admixture of policy forces the strategists to deal with problems that are wholly new and ill-structured.

Upton's model for professionalizing the U.S. Army led to converting these two assumptions into conventional wisdom. Generals Scott and Grant were able to create new solutions because they understood the primacy of policy and envisioned their respective environments as holistic, interdependent systems. Upton's transferred German approach to war left long-enduring assumptions that bifurcated the U.S. approach to war.

Global War

The disconnect between the military policy of a standing army and its purpose served to institutionalize a bureaucracy that, necessarily, struggled with the contextual goal of self-preservation and the goal of being prepared to win the full spectrum of the nation's wars.⁷³ Dr. Andrew Bacevich argued that the Root reforms “themselves were indistinguishable from the main thrust of

Progressivism.⁷⁴ The thrust of the Root reforms included a War Department General Staff system, a National Guard in being, military education and technical matters.⁷⁵ For the Army, supplanting the amateur Army with a more professional force also meant replacing the system of political–military discourse long since established by General George Washington and reinforced by Generals Scott and Grant.⁷⁶

A discussion of General George C. Marshall’s insights demonstrates what worked despite the systemic belief in those two central assumptions that stemmed from Upton’s ideas. Coming from humble beginnings, a driven, intelligent, inquisitive and pragmatic young Marshall entered the Virginia Military Institute on the cusp of the Root reforms.⁷⁷ Before his selection in 1906 to the Infantry and Cavalry School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Marshall served in independent and challenging roles across the United States and the Philippines. Dr. Forrest C. Pogue explained that Marshall’s formal and informal education taught him to apply thought to military problems in place of the traditional language of regulations.⁷⁸ He learned early on to break and rewrite rules to solve complex, ill-structured military problems.

The United States Army’s unpreparedness for war and economic mobilization exemplified the fallacy of Upton’s assumptions, in particular through careless preparations for imminent war despite the political rhetoric.⁷⁹ The immediate, the tactical and the technical problems reflected the attitude of professionalism in the War Department and its relationship with the polity. Marshall recognized these failures expressly as

the birth of an army, the procurement of materiel and detachments for its services from virtually every point in France not occupied by the enemy, and the plunging of this huge infant into the greatest battle in which American troops had ever engaged.⁸⁰

On the morning of 6 April 1917, the United States finally entered the war, with an Army unprepared. Despite the professionalization of the force, the ongoing hostilities in Mexico and the fact that World War I had begun in 1914, the Army “possessed no plan for how America might contribute to the Allies, how an expeditionary force might be organized, or even how the War Department itself might be expanded.”⁸¹ George C. Marshall faced a number of ill-structured problems in terms of logistics, force projection and relationships that the operational problems at Fort Leavenworth had failed to address in training or education. Embarrassed by the First Division’s entrance to France, Marshall recorded,

Certainly they gathered the impression that we understood nothing of the military business, since this division was supposed to be the pick of the Regular Army, and yet it looked like the rawest of territorial units.⁸²

Marshall was different, though; he seemed to grasp the idea of starting from a clean slate, ignoring every constraint, to introduce innovative solutions to problems like the St. Mihiel offensive.

However, Lieutenant Colonel Marshall revealed a flash of American ingenuity during the St. Mihiel offensive. Marshall was driven and had been well educated in General Grant’s campaigns using Captain Matthew Forney Steele’s teachings and campaign studies at Fort Leavenworth. Serving as a planner in General John J. Pershing’s First Army, Marshall invoked the image of dealing with ill-structured problems as he contemplated the repositioning of the First Army from the St. Mihiel offensive fight to the opening of the Meuse–Argonne offensive:

I remember thinking during this walk that I could not recall an incident in history where the fighting of one battle had been proceeded by the plans for a later battle to be fought by the same army on a different front, and involving the issuing of orders for the movement of troops already destined to participate in the first battle, directing their transfer to the new

field of action. There seemed no precedent for such a course, and therefore, no established method for carrying it out.⁸³

Although Marshall's problem fits somewhere between grand tactics and operational art, it highlights what strategic thinking does for an operational planner. First, Marshall searched for a historic campaign from which to draw implications. Second, finding no relevant campaigns, he recognized that he had a clean slate. There were no constraints except technological feasibility and operational viability.⁸⁴ Finally, he took a walk to mull through several iterations based on those two constraints and adopted a solution that no allied strategist had previously attempted.

The German model of a bifurcated approach to war—the model adapted by Upton and Root during the Progressive era—proved unequal to global war.⁸⁵ The recognition by Martin van Creveld that “World War I drove home the lesson that there was more to armed conflict than simply fighting in the field” remained largely unacknowledged through the 1930s.⁸⁶ The development of an operational level of war emerged from that lesson.

Naturally, in the conduct of war, bias tends to the superiority of tactics, “[w]here tactical and strategic considerations conflict [because] gaining of decision in combat is of primary importance.”⁸⁷ George C. Marshall allegedly said,

It became clear to me that at the age of 58 I would have to learn new tricks that were not taught in the military manuals or on the battlefields. I am a political soldier and will have to put my training in rapping-out orders and making snap decisions on the back burner, and have to learn the arts of persuasion and guile. I must become an expert in a whole new set of skills.⁸⁸

Marshall's sentiments illustrate the second assumption about professionalization that the U.S. Army generally failed to recognize—that the skills gained at the tactical and operational levels of war are not completely fungible at the strategic and political levels of war.⁸⁹

The generals who follow the instincts so painfully instilled in them at the tactical and operational level almost inevitably fail at the strategic level of war because they lack the ability to differentiate the constraints imposed at the lower level from those imposed on the whole problem of war. Emory Upton's professional concept—eliminating politics from the Army by professionalizing the force—continued to plague the United States and the Army beyond World War II. In a strange paradox, the success of World War II reinforced the two assumptions. Despite Marshall's sentiments of being a political general, the Army began confusing apolitical and understanding the political object of war as Clausewitz meant it.

Limited War

Limited wars demand more discourse about the aims of policy. The conventional wisdom of apolitical bias confused generals about this discourse. Instead of acknowledging the necessity of a nonpartisan force, U.S. Army professionals opted to remain apolitical in all facets. The fear of all-out nuclear war left a gap in thinking. Professionalism defined by apolitical, grand tacticians precluded discussion about bridging from the political aim to strategic action. Operational artists presented options based on technical, expert execution of strike and counterstrike. The high threshold for nuclear war left generals unprepared to deal with the reality of limited war. The doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction meant everything else in a bipolar world fit into limited war.

Upton's model of a professional Army ingrained the two assumptions with significant consequences in the Cold War era. As Colin Gray observed of this period, “Today we can review, appalled, the conduct of the nuclear arms competition in the great East–West Cold War (1947–1989).”⁹⁰

George F. Kennan's policy of containment presented many military strategists with a completely new problem.⁹¹ Kennan's "long telegram" from Moscow in 1946 cemented him as the father of containment. Henry Kissinger wrote that during the Cold War, America

engaged in an ideological, political and strategic struggle with the Soviet Union in which a two-powered world operated according to principles quite different from those of a balance-of-power system.⁹²

The assumption was that the preservation of the status quo prevented Mutually Assured Destruction.

The Army's framework for the Cold War meant wrestling with tensions of a global nature that, as Ingo Trauschweizer detailed, "demanded general-purpose forces that could be deployed to fight" anywhere in the world to deal with limited war.⁹³ *A Report to the National Security Council—NSC 68* framed the nature of the Cold War in relatively simplistic terms of "good and evil."⁹⁴ President Dwight D. Eisenhower adapted the Truman approach, focusing instead on a technological, fiscally conservative vision of war. According to then-Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the central problem facing the United States was how to make deterrence work below the threshold for thermonuclear war.⁹⁵ President Eisenhower's vision, shaped by his experiences during World War II, centered on airpower and nuclear weapons, delivered an impetus for fundamental change in the Army. The Army's operating concept developed into an acceptance that limited war would include tactical nuclear weapons as a viable alternative for landpower.⁹⁶ Fortunately, the concept was never tested.

The primacy of policy is fundamental to all wars but becomes even more critical and challenging in limited war. In this type of war, the ends, ways or means are limited, usually for political reasons rather than a lack of resources. The fear of nuclear war meant that escalation was an ever-present danger and therefore violence had to be carefully managed or controlled to avoid the obvious catastrophe of unlimited war involving nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, according to Trauschweizer, during the Cold War the Defense Department never entertained a political discourse about the meaning of limited war with policymakers. In effect, this blurred the difference between Clausewitz's meaning and the nonpartisan aspect of professionalism, locking in the first assumption as conventional wisdom.

The Army, for example, interpreted limited war by what it was not. Limited war was anything short of nuclear war. Defense Department officials, Trauschweizer argued, categorized limited war as counterinsurgency warfare; and scholars "thought in terms of a conflict such as [the] Korean War, where political objectives were limited and use of nuclear weapons was avoided."⁹⁷ The varied perceptions of limited war remained through much of the Cold War.

The different approaches that the United States adopted, including self-imposed constraints, created a period of strategic drift in which the Army struggled to find purpose. The United States was extremely powerful and wealthy, with significant conventional forces. The ideological struggle with the former Soviet Union is a category of limited wars for unlimited ends. Political discourse over strategic and operational objectives, within the context of the strategy of containment, imploded in Vietnam. Bad policies in Vietnam, built around a poor and inadequate dialogue between policymakers in Washington and generals from Washington to Vietnam, bore the fruit of bad strategy. Good operational art, good theater strategy, cannot resolve bad policy; that lesson became painfully obvious after General Creighton Abrams' all-too-late operational successes in Vietnam.

According to then-Commander in Chief, Pacific (CINCPAC) Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., General Abrams' one-war concept put "equal emphasis on military operations, improvement of RVNAF [Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces] and pacification," connecting three interconnected,

interrelated systems.⁹⁸ Moreover, Abrams seemed to understand the importance of building a shared understanding with U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Ellsworth Bunker, because he sought to form a close relationship with Bunker. Apparently, Abrams felt so strongly that he remarked, “If you can’t get along with the ambassador, there’s no sense in your being here.”⁹⁹ Clearly doing everything possible to reshape the strategy that his predecessor, General William C. Westmoreland, had pursued during the Vietnam War, Abrams focused on moving away from killing more enemy to “achieve our fundamental allied objective: an independent South Vietnam, free to determine [its] own future.”¹⁰⁰

General Abrams succeeded in developing an innovative approach because he saw the interdependence of ends, ways and means.¹⁰¹ The “one war” concept served to link the “previously fragmented approaches to combat operations, pacification and mentoring the South Vietnamese armed forces.”¹⁰² By developing a cogent and understandable desired state, General Abrams helped his staff at Military Assistance Command–Vietnam (MAC-V) to understand the nature of the enemy. Abrams understood that in war “there is more to the *problem*, there is more involved in the war, than just that [military] part.”¹⁰³ General Abrams’ holistic approach was aimed at linking political aims to operational objectives within his theater of operations; unfortunately, his operational successes came too late for Washington.

Thinking gave Abrams’ command a chance to understand the enemy and the environment from a strategic perspective. Strategic thinking helped the command to see how the various enemy systems interacted and to connect limited means to the limited objectives before the American forces left South Vietnam. General Abrams’ analysis of these systems revealed high-leverage and high-payoff systems, explained historian Lewis Sorley: “With respect to South Vietnam, the agenda grew to include pacification, expansion of territorial forces, manpower issues, economic reform, elections and refugee assistance.”¹⁰⁴ The admixture of politics makes limited wars complex, ill-structured problems. The primacy of domestic politics, despite Abrams’ operational and tactical successes, prevented the United States from winning in Vietnam. Operational success cannot overcome years of bad policy and bad strategy.

The U.S. Army’s defeat in Vietnam served as an impetus for change. The intellectual approach General Abrams fostered in MAC-V found fertile soil in future leaders such as William E. DuPuy and Donn A. Starry. General DuPuy established the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command in July 1973 to develop “new technology, new doctrine, new training, and a new sense of professionalism.”¹⁰⁵ General Starry worked alongside DuPuy to develop the “Active Defense” theory of operations from the 1976 edition of Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, and subsequent development of the “AirLand Battle” doctrine first published in 1982.¹⁰⁶ These generals distinguished their approach to warfare by challenging assumptions and developing holistic solutions while remaining nonpartisan in the political discourse. They understood Clausewitz’s meaning of the political object and remained apolitical in the right way.

General Starry, then serving as Commander, V Corps, outlined his hypothesis and subsequent examination of the Active Defense theory of operations in a memorandum to various members and stakeholders in the Army. Using Israeli experiences during the Yom Kippur War as context, General Starry explained his belief that with current doctrine, organization, technology and, in particular, tactical nuclear weapons, “we’ve probably got it pretty well wrong.”¹⁰⁷ By this point, the U.S. Army had spent nearly three decades struggling with the concept of tactical nuclear weapons. In his first year as V Corps commander, General Starry began testing his theory of victory at the tactical and operational levels of war.

General Starry’s approach illustrates strategic thinking. He clearly grasped the whole problem and began learning. He then tested various hypotheses and shared the insights gained from those

experiments across the U.S. Army. Finally, he described a new set of rules in AirLand Battle doctrine that arguably reinvented the Army. General Starry understood the primacy of policy and the natural tensions that exist among the political, military, economic and social systems.

The trends from Generals Scott, Grant, Marshall, Abrams and Starry reflect successful strategic thinking. Their commonalities embody Clausewitz's description of genius. The strategists in this historical survey created new approaches to solve unprecedented problems.¹⁰⁸ This matters at all levels of war, as General Starry pointed out, because warfare's complexity has grown exponentially. The admixture of policy changes the nature of strategic problems. Each of these generals perceived, identified and changed the rules based on his understanding of the political, strategic or operational goal.

In this era, characterized by persistent conflict, perhaps there are observations worth exploring in the current discussion of professionalism. The two assumptions still engender a vitriolic response to political discourse and the linear thinking that grand tacticians begat operational artists who begat strategists. General Abrams' performance during the Vietnam War highlights that even genius at the operational level cannot ensure winning a war. The ability to generate discourse between policy and strategy—Dr. Cohen's unequal dialogue—suggests a route to better approaches.

Conclusion

Donald A. Schoen argued that the “question of professional education needs to be turned upside down.”¹⁰⁹ The previous historical surveys reflect how professionalization, especially the two assumptions about strategic thinking, led to a bifurcated approach to war. The conventional wisdom drew from the assumptions of Upton's analysis and bias. In review, those were 1) that an apolitical army represented a more professional force and 2) that the problems at the tactical and operational level were similar enough to be useful in solving problems at the strategic level. These assumptions may be useful at the lower levels of war but become meaningless the closer one gets to policy aims because of the admixture of politics.

The U.S. Army focused on important tactical problems at the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The professionalization and specialization process unintentionally supplanted the political–military discourse established by Generals George Washington, Winfield Scott and Ulysses S. Grant. The Root reforms left a legacy that strangled strategic thinking in the Army through World War I, highlighted by the American Expeditionary Forces' (AEF's) civilian-free view of war. The U.S. Army, somewhat embarrassed by the AEF's performance during World War I, turned to the Army War College “to train officers for joint operations of the Army and Navy; and to instruct in the strategy, tactics and logistics of large operations with special reference to the world war.”¹¹⁰ The impetus for change determined by the realities of World War I forced War College students “to do their work on the basis of hypotheses.”¹¹¹ “Leavenworth was about training; the War College about education.”¹¹² The military education system helped the Army develop systems for projecting, conducting and sustaining large-scale operations because of the theoretical structure that caused General George C. Marshall so much concern.¹¹³ The military school system contributed to understanding joint operations by linking tactical art to strategy, but it was General Marshall's strategic insight and willingness to operate within the political mechanisms in Washington that proved consequential.

The strategy–tactics paradox ensures the natural tension between training officers for war and educating them in political process. Part of the problem is that strategy is more important to conduct than tactics, as Dr. Cohen asserts, “if only because the latter has to derive its meaning and purpose from the former.”¹¹⁴ Tactics, doctrine and technology have a longer lead-time than does strategy.

Correcting a bad strategy is relatively easier—retraining an army takes years. The paradox, Cohen argues, is that strategy “as currency conversion is inherently problematic.”¹¹⁵

The military school system did enable an institutionalization of education and promotion. The U.S. Army developed a “golden straitjacket” of conformity in the shadow of the atomic bomb and the real promise of decisive strategic airpower.¹¹⁶ Specialization led to career tracks that narrowed perspective for future general officers and unintentionally created what Major General Dennis Laich described as a “culture of conformity.”¹¹⁷ The Cold War, deterrence and the resumption of peacetime interservice rivalry led to a reinforcing system with promotion as the only incentive. A tactical bias developed in the Army that unintentionally led to the less intellectual, less vocal and less strategically minded officer.

The successful generals understood that military operations represented only part of the problem. War’s complexity derives from its inherent struggle between two thinking entities pursuing competing objectives. Clausewitz’s wrestling metaphor emphasizes the physical dimension while minimizing the cognitive, thinking dimension. The wrestling metaphor minimizes the complexity and interaction between competing and self-imposed systems. The successful generals grasped the primacy of policy concepts. Successful generals understood the interaction of the various political, military, economic and social systems. Thinking critically and creatively enabled these strategists to learn about these systems, recognize opportunities, innovate, communicate points of advantage and create organizational adaptations based on well-constructed hypotheses for victory. The U.S. Army did develop at least one effective strategic thinker in each generation, but General Galvin’s central question remains: “How many strategic thinkers does the Army need?”¹¹⁸

Recommendations

There are at least two relevant approaches to developing passionate, intelligent and engaged officers: the command track route and the non-command track route. The command track leverages the U.S. Army’s current tactical bias and culture. The Army has the dual responsibility of promoting the requisite tacticians needed to lead tactical commands and contributing to the political discourse on behalf of the land component. That may not be the fairest way to express the false dichotomy of serving Soldiers or promoting strategic thinking. Fundamentally, the Army must accept that the skills garnered at the tactical and operational levels do not always translate effectively at the strategic and political levels.¹¹⁹

The current incentives preclude any other route to generalship because the narrow command track will continue to provide the officers selected for strategic roles. Therefore, the Army must introduce strategy and strategic thinking earlier in an officer’s education with a curriculum structured around appropriate touchstone concepts such as campaigning, the primacy of policy, holistic thinking and innovation.

David Cloud and Greg Jaffe’s *The Fourth Star* concludes that the Army can produce one or two strategically minded officers in each generation, a theme that resonates with this analysis. Candor and the willingness to argue, debate and take intellectual risk are no longer espoused Army traits but are exactly what the future Army needs in an officer corps. The Root reforms highlighted the strategy–tactics paradox and naturally assumed risk in strategic thinking and strategy. If the Army wants to develop more strategically minded commanders, it must inculcate an intellectually “tough enough” culture.¹²⁰

Without question, the Army must maintain the functional area strategists (FA59s) as a non-command track program dedicated to building competent strategists who can deconstruct the assumptions necessary for tactical and operational professionalism. The non-command track route

seeks to develop proficiency through contact with the interagency, institutional and joint billets with a focused approach to improve holistic thinking and analysis. The logic of assignments and education should explicitly reflect the Army's need for strategic thinkers capable of mentoring, coaching and guiding senior decisionmakers.

The risk in the non-command track approach is that it goes against Army culture. Jaffe is right—the Army does not tolerate officers who are prepared to argue, debate and take intellectual risks.¹²¹ These American generals forced discourse. They accepted responsibility. They sought risks. They solved problems instead of fighting problems. The crisis in strategic thinking in the U.S. Army can best be alleviated by employing the operational methods of such leaders as Scott, Grant, Marshall and Abrams.

The most successful strategists built a holistic understanding of the problem, how and why the rules changed and the potential desired future state. The U.S. Army may not be ready to start teaching strategic thinking—especially if it means breaking conventional wisdom—because the best strategists break all the rules.

Endnotes

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- ⁶⁰ Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, p. 253.
- ⁶¹ Ambrose, *Upton and the Army*, p. 131.
- ⁶² Gray, *The Strategy Bridge*, p. 146. Justin Kelly and Mike Brennan, *Alien: How Operational Art Devoured Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2009); the authors argue that the operational level of war served to create a politics-free level of warfare.

- 63 Snider and Matthews, *The Future of the Army Profession*, p. 66.
- 64 McPherson, *Tried by War*, p. 267.
- 65 Ambrose, *Upton and the Army*, p. 134.
- 66 Paul Yingling, comment on “The Best Defense,” The Best Defense Blog, comment posted 14 February 2012, http://ricks.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/02/13/despite_the_myths_there_is_no_such_thing_as_winning_militarily_and_losing_political?page=1.
- 67 Snider and Matthews, *The Future of the Army Profession*, p. 73.
- 68 Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 87.
- 69 Harold R. Winton and David R. Mets, eds., *The Challenge of Change: Military Institutions and New Realities, 1918–1941* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), p. 64.
- 70 Ralph Peters, quoted in Lloyd Matthews, “The Uniformed Intellectual and His Place in American Arms: Part II,” *ARMY*, August 2002, p. 34.
- 71 Michael H. Cody, “Selecting and Developing the Best Leaders,” *Building and Maintaining Healthy Organizations*, ed. Lloyd J. Matthews (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Department of Command, Leadership and Management, U.S. Army War College, January 2001), p. 103, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA430598>.
- 72 Gharajedaghi, *Systems Thinking*, p. 144.
- 73 James Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), p. 349.
- 74 Andrew J. Bacevich, Jr., “Progressivism, Professionalism and Reform,” *Parameters*, vol. 9, no. 1), p. 67, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA515061>.
- 75 Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, p. 322. Bacevich, “Progressivism, Professionalism and Reform,” p. 67. Michael R. Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy: American Operational Art to 1945* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), pp. 20–22; for further inquiry into development of U.S. strategy and tactics before World War I, continue reading on p. 27.
- 76 Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, p. 292; Weigley describes this political separation as emancipation for officers, freeing them to concentrate “on things military.”
- 77 Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall, Vol. 1: Education of a General, 1880–1939*, ed. Gordon Harrison (New York: Viking Adult, 1963), pp. 40–43.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- 79 Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, p. 352; again, Weigley blames the U.S. policy, but the Army War Department cannot remain blameless.
- 80 George C. Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War, 1917–1918* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), p. 128.
- 81 *Ibid.*, p. 140.
- 82 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 83 *Ibid.*, pp. 137–138.
- 84 Gharajedaghi, *Systems Thinking*, pp. 144–145.
- 85 Winton and Mets, *The Challenge of Change*, p. xvii.
- 86 Martin L. van Creveld, *The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance* (New York: Free Press, 1990), p. 82.
- 87 Harold W. Nelson, “The Origins of Operational Art,” in *Historical Perspectives of Operational Art*, eds. Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillips (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2005), p. 340.

- 88 Colonel (Ret.) Stephen J. Gerras, Ph.D., ed., *Strategic Leadership Primer*, 3rd ed. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Department of Command, Leadership and Management, U.S. Army War College, 2010), p. 1.
- 89 Thomas Parrish, *Roosevelt and Marshall: Partners in Politics and War* (New York: William Morrow, 1989), p. 80. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge*, p. 61.
- 90 Gray, *The Strategy Bridge*, p. 253.
- 91 Richard Rumelt, *Good Strategy/Bad Strategy* (London: Profile Books, 2011), p. 82.
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- 98 Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and the Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam* (Orlando, FL: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1999), p. 18.
- 99 *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- 100 *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- 101 Cohen, *Supreme Command*, p. 20. Rumelt, *Good Strategy/Bad Strategy*, p. 92.
- 102 Sorley, *A Better War*, p. 5.
- 103 *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- 104 *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- 105 Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, p. 300.
- 106 Donn A. Starry, *Press On! Selected Works of General Donn A. Starry*, vol. II, ed. Lewis Sorley (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), p. 731. Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, p. 301.
- 107 Starry, *Press On!* p. 732.
- 108 Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, p. 138.
- 109 Donald A. Schoen, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990) p. 14.
- 110 Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy*, p. 254.
- 111 Henry G. Gole, *The Road to Rainbow: Army Planning for Global War, 1934-1940* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2003), p. 28.
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- 114 Cohen, *Supreme Command*, p. 197.
- 115 *Ibid.*, p. 135.
- 116 Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy*, p. 266.
- 117 MG (Ret.) Dennis Laich and LTC (Ret.) Mike Young, "The Million Dollar Muzzle: A Follow-up to Yingling," DefensePolicy.org, 8 August 2011, <http://www.defensepolicy.org/author/laich-young>.

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- ¹¹⁹ Dolman, *Pure Strategy*, p. 14.
- ¹²⁰ Greg Jaffe and David Cloud, *The Fourth Star: Four Generals and the Epic Struggle for the Future of the United States Army* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2010), p. 295. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge*, p. 204. Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006–2008* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009), p. 92.
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