Present at the Creation, a Redux: The Need for Strategic Minded Joint Force Officers in a Rapidly Changing and Dynamic International Security Environment

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PRESENT AT THE CREATION, A REDUX: THE NEED FOR STRATEGIC MINDED
JOINT FORCE OFFICERS IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING AND DYNAMIC
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

PRESENT AT THE CREATION, A REDUX: THE NEED FOR STRATEGIC MINDED JOINT FORCE OFFICERS IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING AND DYNAMIC INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Thomas Joseph Snukis
Old Dominion University, 2022
Director: Dr. Regina Karp

The US Joint Force has an outstanding record over its history of superb performance at the tactical level of war. Inarguably, the United States is currently the best tactical Joint Force in the world a product of a world class tactical education, training, and development program generating and sustaining that tactical proficiency at the individual and organizational level. While tactical education and training programs have been extremely successful, the Professional Military Education (PME) responsible for developing strategic mastery has not been as highly rated. Over the past seventy-five years numerous indictments have been levied against the US PME enterprise, and its inability to produce strategic-minded officers. To operate and succeed in the international security environment, especially the rapidly changing and dynamic contemporary environment, requires much more than tactical mastery. For the Nation to remain secure and prosperous, all three levels of war, the tactical/operational/strategic, must be properly aligned. To enable this alignment and ensure the defense and promotion of US national interests, the leadership and strategic-minded thinking of Joint Force officers is essential. To develop the necessary strategic knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) of these Joint Force officers, a focused and robust (PME) enterprise is an imperative within the United States Armed Forces. Regrettably, as the Joint Force strives to create strategic-mindedness in its officer corps, it uses a system similar to that which creates tactical mastery and superb tactical performance. One key
shortfall is that the senior level PME schools conflate education with training and believe that tactical methods will generate strategic masters. This study recognizes the educational shortfalls but distinguishes that PME will not adapt and change because of inherent organizational culture attitudes. The Joint Force culture promotes officers based on tactical and operational performance, undervalues strategic-minded education, and values operational positions over educational developmental periods and time to deliberately practice strategic KSAs. The organizational culture hinders the desired strategic improvement.
Copyright, 2022, by Thomas Joseph Snukis, All Rights Reserved.
This dissertation is dedicated to the following people who have provided support and inspiration throughout this process of research, analysis, synthesis, and creation.

First and foremost, to my wife, Rosemary, who experienced every step of this intellectual journey with me. Her love, support, and sage counsel over my thirty years of active military service, during my fourteen years of service within the professional military education system at the Joint Forces Staff College, and my eight years of study, research, and writing within the Graduate Program of International Studies at Old Dominion University has been the foundation and inspiration for all I have been able to accomplish. Without her this document does not exist.

Second to my children, my son TJ, and my daughter Courtney who always knew the exact words of encouragement or tough counsel I needed to hear during the more difficult days of this intellectual process.

Thirdly to my mother, father, and brother who provided their love, support, and guidance over a lifetime and the added encouragement they provided during this specific endeavor.

Finally, to the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and guardians of the Joint Force who defend the Nation. They deserve the best strategic thinking and leadership from their officers and a Joint Force organizational culture that educates those officers to be masters at all levels of war.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Overall, I acknowledge that my thirty years of active military service in the United States Army within a variety of airborne, infantry, and ranger assignments married with my fourteen years of teaching and learning with numerous Joint Force instructors and over 1,200 high caliber Joint Force officers at the Joint Forces Staff College laid the base foundation for the research and analysis applied in this dissertation. Without this foundation and the thoughts, insights, and counsel received over the past forty-four years the following dissertation would not have been possible. However, I would also like to acknowledge and thank several people specifically who played an essential role in assisting me in the crafting of this dissertation at many points throughout the overall PhD journey.

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Moreover, I acknowledge and thank my professors many of whom I took multiple courses from. Dr. Simon Serfaty and his considerable experience and knowledge emphasized the imperative to have a highly developed “sense of the moment” and to develop the ability to
“merge the tenses” when examining domestic and foreign policy issues. He also taught me how to write better with his hands-on writing instruction and approach to higher level scholarship. His personal writing examples were extremely informative. I am very appreciative of his time, counsel, support, and well-prepared instruction. Dr. Steve Yetiv, who regrettably passed away during my academic journey, deserves special recognition for laying the conceptual and theoretical foundation for my study, research, and analysis. He was extremely rigorous in his approach, and I continue to rely on the fundamentals he established. Dr. Kurt Gaubatz, who created a functional foundation, through two excellent courses, for research methodology and the use of quantitative analysis. Dr. David Earnest and his progressive methods of instruction married with his wealth of knowledge regarding the Global Political Economy, globalization, and other associated concepts opened a whole new way for me to think about and process world affairs. Dr. David Selover and his excellent class on Economics provided me a basic understanding of economics that I had failed to gain over my many years of experience and study. And finally, Dr. Regina Karp’s instruction above and beyond her GPIS directorship bolstered my knowledge base on nuclear issues and world order. Her coverage of these topics was world class.

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NOMENCLATURE

AFSC    Armed Forces Staff College
APE    Academic Publishable Essay
ASP3    Army Strategic Planning and Policy Program
CCMD    Combatant Command
CJCS    Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff
CJCSI   Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction
FO/GO   Flag Officer/General Officer
ICP     Integrated Contingency Planning
IMF     International Monetary Fund
INSSG   Interim National Security Strategy Guidance
JAWS    Joint Advanced Warfighting School
JCWS    Joint and Combined Warfighting School
JFF     Joint Force Fundamentals
JFSC    Joint Forces Staff College
JLA     Joint Learning Area
KSA     Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
LOE     Line of Effort
NATO    North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDU     National Defense University
NDS     National Defense Strategy
OBME    Outcome Based Military Education
OPMEP  Officer Professional Military Education Policy
PME  Professional Military Education
SCD  Strategy and Campaign Design
SMJFO  Strategic-Minded Joint Force Officer
UN  United Nations
VEO  Violent Extremist Organization
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The evolving and dynamic security environment, which includes disruptive changes in the character and conduct of warfare, demands immediate changes to the identification, education, preparation, and development of our joint warfighters.

- Joint Chiefs of Staff

Most generals were promoted because they performed well in operations. They now had to shift their perspective to the strategic level and embrace skills that had played little or no role in their promotion to flag rank...their current skill set was incomplete for what lay ahead.

- Jim Mattis and Bing West

... Alphonso X, King of Spain, is quoted to the effect that if he had been present at the creation, he would have given some useful hints for the better ordering of the universe. In a sense the postwar years were a period of creation, for ordering of the universe of which I shared with others some responsibility. Moreover, the state of the world in those years and almost all that happened during them was wholly novel within the experience of those who had to deal with them.

- Dean Acheson

The United States currently operates within a global environment dramatically different from the one, which emerged with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Regrettably despite the rapidly changing and dynamic environment, the United States Government (USG) has not fully adjusted from its Cold War stance and still lacks a coherent strategic direction for this demanding security environment, its rapid evolution, and future projections. Moreover, in stark contrast with the focused strategic thinking and action immediately following World War II, the USG today, especially within the national security

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1 Drezner, Daniel W. 2009. *Avoiding trivia: the role of strategic planning in American foreign policy*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. 3 In this edited volume Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley note, “For a country that continues to enjoy an unrivaled global position [The US now again faces hard competition from a resurgent Russia and a rising China], it is both remarkable and disturbing that the United States has no truly effective strategic planning process for national security.”
enterprise, exhibits an overall lack of competent strategic thinking coupled with an inherently limiting “strategic narcissism”. The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) highlights the military’s weakness in strategic thinking, “Today, we are emerging from a period of strategic atrophy, aware that our competitive military advantage has been eroding.” Additionally, the NDS specifies shortfalls within the professional military education (PME) enterprise that contribute to the atrophy.

PME has stagnated, focused more on the accomplishment of mandatory credit at the expense of lethality and ingenuity. We will emphasize intellectual leadership and military professionalism in the art and science of warfighting, deepening our knowledge of history while embracing new technology and techniques to counter competitors… PME is to be used as a strategic asset to build trust and interoperability across the Joint Forces and with allied and partner forces.

Encouragingly, the guidance contained within the 2018 NDS firmly addresses the need to re-establish Joint Force strategic minded thinking. Regrettably, this strategic atrophy is not a recent development nor is the focused criticism of PME. This atrophy, both in strategic thinking and PME’s role in developing strategic minded thinking, started in the late-1950’s according to

\[2\] Zelikow, Phillip 2019 To Regain Policy Competence: The Software of American Public Problem-Solving. Zelikow highlights the lack of US Strategic Competence in this article. Moreover, H.R. McMaster in McMaster, H. R. 2020. Battlegrounds The Fight to Defend the Free World. New York: HarperCollins. “Shared with the national security staff my view that our strategic competence had eroded based, in part, on our narcissistic approach to foreign policy and national security. According to McMaster strategic narcissism is “the tendency to view the world only in relation to the United States and to assume that the future course of events depends primarily on US decisions or plans.15, 17.


several scholars and practitioners. Over the past sixty-five years indictments against the PME system have been recurring and with remarkably consistent negative observations. The evidence indicates that the problem with PME is not pedagogical but cultural. The critical variable points to the organizational culture and a paralyzing inability to create the change that it has identified and sought over the past seven- and one-half decades. To achieve, institutionalize, and sustain strategic minded thinking the national security enterprise must do more. It must change key aspects within the established officer career patterns to fully account for the demands levied on the system by strategic opportunities and challenges. To fully implement the necessary strategic foresight leading to thoughtful and well-anticipated foreign policy and military force application, the US national security apparatus, and for the purposes of this study the US Joint Force, must commit to an extensive study of strategic minded thinking including the methods to develop, institutionalize, and sustain that thinking within the US Government. It must reform its organizational culture, as well, to ensure that the necessary PME changes extend beyond the rhetoric contained in strategic guidance documents and become fully accepted, appreciated, and rewarded common practice.

This paper primarily focuses on the US military’s role in USG strategic thinking and the acknowledged scarcity of strategic minded officers within the current Joint Force but tangentially examines the shortage of overall USG strategic thinking drawing some insights from the entire

---

5 Masland, John W., and Laurence I. Radway. 1957. Soldiers and scholars: military education and national policy. Princeton: Princeton University Press. The views laid out by Masland and Radway highlighted that “The senior colleges have not yet fulfilled the expectations of those who have looked to them for leadership in advanced study…emphasis should be on long-range problems instead of current applications.” 469.

6 Chapter IV will describe the indictments through an analysis of a series of guidance documents, reports, studies, and literature on the subject.
US Government. Moreover, it questions why US military strategic thinking, once so effective and insightful in the decade immediately following WWII, wanes today and why many Joint Force Officer’s skills are “incomplete for what lays ahead”. 7 It examines the concept of strategy seeking resolution on the numerous definitions, and the basics and nuances to inform and guide the education of strategic minded leaders. Moreover, the study explores the changes and continuities in the dynamic international environment to better determine the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) of strategic-minded Joint Force Officers (SMJFO) generating and expanding the current list of essential KSAs. Additionally, it investigates the basics of organizational culture and the specifics of military and strategic culture to identify why cultural impediments develop, how to overcome those impediments, and to truly adapt to the current and emerging international environment. All the above intends to create, solidify, and sustain new generations of strategic minded Joint Force officers. This study contributes to the PME body of knowledge far beyond a description of past PME indictments by offering a model for strategic minded education – the seminar “Lucky 13” approach that has been student and time tested for a decade and a half. Finally, the study recommends executable basic career pathway adjustments providing Joint Force officers greater time for education, apprenticeship, deliberate practice, and vantage point opportunities to properly develop the strategic mindedness and mastery required to be efficient and effective in this turbulent international environment.

STRATEGIC MINDED JOINT FORCE OFFICER (SMJFO)

The United States military has a long-established tradition of military officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted men and women initially patterned after the British tradition but that has evolved over time to its current form. In the United States, officers take an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic. This oath entails a myriad of responsibilities. These responsibilities are too extensive to summarize here and outside the scope of this study. What this study will concentrate on and analyze in greater depth is the strategic responsibilities of an officer in the United States military, regardless of Service or core competency, and the current professional military education designed to underpin these strategic responsibilities.

What then is a strategic minded Joint Force Officer and their expected responsibilities? The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 1800.01F Officer Professional Military Education Policy identifies strategic minded Joint Force officers as “joint warfighting leaders, senior staff officers, and strategists who:

a. Discern the military dimensions of a challenge affecting national interest; frame the issue at the policy level; and recommend viable military options within the overarching frameworks of globally integrated operations.
b. Anticipate and lead rapid adaptation and innovation during a dynamic period of acceleration in the rate of change in warfare under the conditions of great power competition and disruptive technology.
c. Conduct joint warfighting, at the operational to strategic levels, as all-domain, globally integrated warfare, including the ability to integrate allied and partner contributions.
d. Are strategically minded warfighters or applied strategists who can execute and adapt strategy through campaigns and operations; and
e. Demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills, interpersonal skills, and effective written, verbal, and visual communications skills to support the development and implementation of strategies and complex operations.  

The CJCS guidance further expands the requirements for competent strategic minded Joint Force officers by defining the following Desired Leader Attributes (DLAs):

1. Understand the security environment and contributions of all instruments of national power.
2. Respond to surprise and uncertainty.
3. Recognize change and lead transitions.
4. Operate on intent through trust, empowerment, and understanding (Mission Command).
5. Make ethical decisions based on shared values of the profession of arms.
6. Think critically and strategically in applying joint warfighting principles and concepts to joint operations.  

This analysis posits that strategic mindedness contains many or all the above elements but also much more. It pursues the premise by senior military leadership that most officers lack strategic mindedness and remain mired in a tactical mindset even when circumstances clearly point to a need for strategic minded thinking. Moreover, it is essential to note that despite a predominance of those officers stuck in a tactical mindset, this lack of strategic minded thinking is not universal across the Joint Force. There are individual and organizational pockets of strategic minded brilliance resident throughout the Joint Force. Those officers and organizations habitually think and execute in a strategic minded way providing solid examples to emulate. Although John Collins and Daniel Hughes experience and research suggests a lack of strategic minded capacity

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10 Scales, Robert H. 2010. "Too Busy to Learn". Army History. (76): 29. Former Army War College Commandant, Robert Scales highlights a handful of serving officers (at the time of his article) that demonstrated strategic mindedness and a coherent strategic preparation for higher command. His examples are: General David Petraeus, Generals Peter Chiarelli, Martin Dempsey, and William Ward; Admiral James Stavrides; Lt. Gen. James Dubik. All these leaders as well as Admiral Mike Mullen, Marine General James Mattis, and Army General Stanley McChrystal “share a lifelong obsession with reading history and studying the art of war.” My experience in the Army and my experience as an Associate Professor has exposed me to a larger segment of officers who fit the Petraeus model.
in most Joint Force officers there is evidence that their observations are incomplete. For instance, I have witnessed the opposite with many of my Joint Combined Warfighting School students. Having the opportunity over fifteen years to learn with, teach and observe over 1,200 students, I get a different sense than Collins and Hughes. In my experience, the requisite intellect and curiosity exist as most already display a breadth and depth of strategic knowledge or display the will to transition from a tactical mindset to learn the requisite strategic KSAs and begin their transition to an operational/strategic mindset.  

Many clearly demonstrate strategic minded competence or begin the change process as outlined by Lewin within the ten-week Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) “Lucky 13” approach to recognize the importance of strategic minded thinking and adjust their tactical minded approach. While the JCWS students strategic minded KSAs range from well-developed to embryonic, their ability to think strategically thrives within the protective confines of the academic environment. Regrettably, overall Joint Force and National Security performance indicates that many default back to a tactical mindset when inserted back into the general population of Joint Force Officers. Why? Is it because of the curriculum? Is it because of the teaching methods? Are the educational lines of effort only a component of a larger issue? What is the main driver of this lack of strategic

---

11 Collins, John M. 2008. *Military strategy: principles, practices, and historical perspectives*. Dulles, VA: Potomac Books. Collins states that his students don’t have the capacity or strategic thought. My experience, over 15 years, of teaching senior students from across the services indicates otherwise. During their ten weeks they display or evolve into the ability to take a more strategic look at the environment.

minded thought? This analysis charges that Joint Force organizational culture is the main barrier to better strategic minded education, thought, and execution.

Fixing the guidance and direction from both the 2018 National Defense Strategy and the Chairman’s Instruction as common start points, the study seeks a deeper understanding of strategic mindedness, its component parts, and characteristics as well as its foundational KSAs. Furthermore, the analysis looks to confirm or refine the CJCS definition of strategic mindedness, to better inform overall Joint Professional Military Education Policy as well as the content and delivery of effective Joint education. Also, the study seeks to determine how strategically minded Joint Force officers can carry, sustain, and routinely apply their demonstrated strategic thinking skills from the classroom into the day-to-day activities of the Joint Force well beyond their graduation date. Ultimately, the study seeks to establish a synthesized educational and cultural approach to ensure that the Joint Force regains, routinely applies, and sustains competent strategic minded thinking, at multiple levels, guiding a more focused and efficient use of the national resources of the United States? This consideration is the essence of this examination.

Present at this new creation, albeit thirty years in the making after the end of the Cold War or sixty years in the making if considering the Masland and Radway study, this analysis posits that the entire US national security enterprise, especially the military component, must be more thoughtful in a variety of areas and subjects. Furthermore, it must culturally embrace and reward this thoughtfulness and the educational and training process required to create this thoughtfulness. For instance, the deliberate identification and analysis of national interests, the turbulence associated with the current and emerging international environment, full accounting for the rapidly evolving national security activities in the Space and Cyberspace domains, establishing national security priorities integrated across the entire USG and with our partners
and allies, exercising a more focused, comprehensive and continuous diplomatic approach while
cognizant of and fully accounting for domestic considerations throughout the policy/decision-
making process must be conscious considerations of a more strategic minded approach and
strategic educational courses. Moreover, the USG must be more strategic minded when
allocating national resources, especially the expenditure of military force, to defend or promote
US national interests. Governmental processes must facilitate effective, continuous, and
sustainable cooperative activities throughout the international environment while consistently
and thoughtfully competing at a level below armed conflict to maintain advantage over our
competitors, challengers, and adversaries. We should intervene with lethal force only when
warranted by the appropriate intensity of US interest. 13 The United States cannot continue to
squander its considerable yet finite national resources, especially its armed forces, on ill-
considered endeavors. 14 It also cannot “plunge to action” without due consideration of the future
consequences as Neustadt and May advocate. 15 Moreover, Henry Kissinger provides solid
counsel for all attempting to apply strategic minded thinking in the post-Cold War,

The precise balance between the moral and strategic elements of American foreign policy
cannot be prescribed in the abstract. But the beginning of wisdom consists of recognizing
that a balance needs to be struck. However powerful America is, no country has the
capacity to impose all its preferences on the rest of mankind: priorities must be
established…The controversy surrounding almost all American military actions in the

policy. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. 3 “We need to have a well-thought-out
game plan for engagement in the world that we adjust regularly and that has some system of
checks and balances built into it.”


decision-makers. Free Press. Neustadt and May’s classic book highlights the critical need to
overcome usual US governmental practice, which does not lead to effective decisions. They state
that:
post-Cold War period shows that a wider consensus on where America should draw the line does not yet exist. To bring it about is a major challenge to national leadership.  

Better-educated Joint Force officers operating within an organizational culture that fully appreciates and rewards strategic minded thinking, will enable the Joint Force to better discern the military dimensions of this challenge and to assist civilian decision makers on establishing practical priorities. Furthermore, SMJFOs will skillfully frame military issues at the policy level, and recommend viable military options to national security leadership all within the overarching framework of globally integrated operations, and do so at the “speed of relevance”. To fully transition from a tactical to a strategic mindset required by General and Flag officers and those that serve those officers, the Joint Force must develop a more formal and deliberate apprenticeship and deliberate practice program above and beyond the current PME enterprise that fully addresses the adjustments necessary for better strategic minded thinking.

Essential but often ignored, Sun Tzu’s ancient advice must resonate and contribute to a better future: “War is a matter of vital importance to the State; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied…Weapons are tools of ill omen. War is a grave matter; one is apprehensive lest men embark upon it without due reflection.” The current international situation dictates that the entire national security enterprise cultivates a deeper collective understanding of the strategic, operational, and tactical environment both conceptually and practically, master strategic minded knowledge, skills, and abilities, study war and the evolving environment more thoroughly, be more deliberate in


decisionmaking and be more reflective and less reactive of constant stimuli. Moreover, Joint Force Officers in conjunction with the other USG agencies must visualize and specify a common desired future akin to the thinking that led to the objectives laid out by President Truman in NSC-68 during the early years of the Cold War. 19

While Truman catalyzed strategic foresight with his guidance as evidenced in the resultant strategy contained in NSC-68, today’s national security enterprise seems to value only tactical, here, and now, thinking. 20 As Truman displayed, a strategic minded enterprise must not only stay abreast and handle the immediate situation but also cultivate foresight. Furthermore, it must value and reward thinking beyond the present. “Thinking in Time” looks to the past for knowledge to inform the present but always with an eye to the future. 21 This thinking beyond the present anticipates the future consequences of today’s decisions and actions and delivers better contextual intelligence for present day thinking. 22 Thoughtfully, the Joint Force organizational culture promotes strategic mindedness in its written directives, but regrettably the Joint Force applies strategic mindedness inconsistently in analysis and action. Moreover, it seems to reward only those who think and perform well at the tactical and operational level as indicated in the

19 Nitze, Paul Henry, and S. Nelson Drew. 1994. *NSC-68: forging the strategy of containment*. Washington, DC: National Defense University. Truman’s guidance to “Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson to “undertake a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans.”” generated the strategic thinking to ensure that the United States applied forethought to their actions within the international community.


epigraph by General Mattis. A recent Rand study, *Raising the Flag: Implications of US Military Approaches to General and Flag Officer Development* analyzes this issue in detail. The study examines:

Fundamental elements of military personnel processes in each service and across the U.S. Department of Defense and identifies common career experiences within each service in categories such as career field, years in service, commissioning source, education and training, and duty assignments. This report further examines how these professional experiences and other characteristics might influence general and flag officers’ approaches to institutional leadership and management, and the type of strategic-level advice they might provide to civilian decisionmakers.  

The Rand study reinforces General Mattis’ premise. Rand establishes a series of archetypes based on collected data that “depict the most common characteristics and experiences of G/FOs [General/Flag Officers] in each service from their respective approaches to officer development…these factors could translate to the way these archetypical G/FOs might lead and… advise senior civilian leaders.” While this analysis assesses more than General and Flag Officers, the development of this more senior collective of Joint Officers could be the best indicator to monitor, change, or confirm strategic stagnation.

Regarding the essential nature of forethought former United States Central Command Commander (USCENTCOM) Commander General Anthony Zinni USMC (RET) counseled members at the State Department to be aware of two items when employing the military,

The first is, the military people are going to want to know what is it exactly you want me to do…what is it exactly that I’m supposed to accomplish… What is it exactly? And if you don’t know, let’s sit down and work it out… The second question that has to be asked after, “What is it you want me to do? And the most important question in all these

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operations – is the “And then what?” After you get there, after you do what this guy thinks you’re going to do, after you run this air strike, after you feed five hundred thousand or two million or whatever it is, after you stabilize the area, “And then What? 25

In this rapidly changing environment, the US Joint Force must attempt to always anticipate the “…And then what?”. How does the US Joint Force institutionalize ‘the art of the long view” when pondering policy and national security decisions? 26 How does the USG and the US Joint Force shed strategic narcissism, apply a strategic minded approach to an ever-shifting international environment replete with constant challenges and fleeting opportunities and regain its strategic competence? What knowledge, skills, and attributes must strategic minded individuals possess? Does the Joint Force Military Education (JPME) enterprise adequately understand and cultivate strategic mindedness? If not what subjects and methods must JPME teach and institute to generate the needed changes? What obstacles stand in the way of change? Does the current Joint Force culture support and reward strategic mindedness? Does the Joint Force culture promote “thinking in time” or only truly value those that thrive in the tactical mindset? This paper seeks answers to the above questions, to promote a better understanding of USG thinking, policy, and decisions.

STUDY CONTEXT

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 producing a short-lived New World Order, the international security environment has been


rapidly evolving and dynamic. Several scholars and practitioners characterize this post-Cold War environment as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA). Designed to assist US National Security decision makers, the VUCA concept describes and frames the international environment providing a method to operate and strategize within this changing world. Others, while still recognizing the characteristics listed above, now also stress a re-emergent strategic power competition amongst the world’s top three geo-political heavyweights, the United States, China, and Russia. This competition further destabilizes an already turbulent international environment. As outlined in the 2018 National Defense Strategy,

We are facing increased global disorder, characterized by decline in the long-standing rules based international order-creating a security environment more complex and volatile in recent memory. Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security… The central challenge to US prosperity and security is the reemergence of long-term strategic competition by what the National Security Strategy classifies as revisionist powers.

Unlike the basic bipolarity of the Cold War, the United States must promote and defend its national interests and conduct strategic minded thinking within a different international context.

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The current environment must account for a rising China and a resurgent Russia or according to an unclassified fact sheet outlining the 2022 National Defense Strategy China as a pacing threat and Russia as an acute threat especially considering the ongoing Ukrainian Crisis. Additionally, the US must also account for numerous transnational threats and challenges, like terrorism, trafficking of humans, weapons, drugs, crime etc., the rise of non-state actors and super-empowered individuals, married with an overall weakening of the basic state structure. 30 Many stakeholders concerned with this dynamic environment and America’s role in it stress the many difficulties in crafting a coherent strategy bringing order to today’s rapidly changing world. 31

Because of the uncertainties and difficulties present, the environment demands the creation of a new future. How the United States arrives at that new future is under tight scrutiny and underlines the purpose of this paper? Like George Marshall, Dean Acheson, George Kennan, Bernard Brodie, and those “present at the creation” following World War II, current US practitioners and scholars inhabit an environment ripe with novel challenges and opportunities and must drive to create anew. To creatively design a new approach, the USG must think deeply about the environment, identify more of the environmental changes, especially those that occur at a more “subterranean level” and earn a deeper understanding of the contributing factors to US security and prosperity. 32 This deeper understanding will better inform US national security


policy and decisions. Comparable to the “strategies of containment” following World War II, this new direction should guide USG decision making for decades to come. 33

Regrettably, while the demand is high, the supply of coherent strategic thought remains wanting. As stated earlier and as evidenced below, strategic competence has eroded. David Drezner after examining US State department strategic planning opines, “Strategic planning for American Foreign policy is either dead or dying.” 34 William Martel notes, “Part of the problem seems to be the unwillingness of policymakers to adopt new forms of strategic thinking, a result perhaps, of clinging stubbornly to familiar approaches despite evidence all around us of profound uncertainties and growing disorder.” 35 The US Joint Chiefs recognize similar evidence. Highlighted in writing by recent CJCS direction and guidance, the Joint Force identifies a critical gap in strategic mindedness yet still struggles to enact substantive change to address this recognized shortfall. In practice strategic mindedness remains undervalued, unrewarded, and generally ignored over tactical thinking and performance. How does real change occur then? 36

Regrettably this call for change within the organizational culture and PME system is not new, as a host of scholars and practitioners over the past six and a half decades have recognized and highlighted the shortfalls in the PME enterprise and overall Joint Force strategic thinking. Starting in the late 1950’s, with Masland and Radway’s Soldiers and Scholars: Military


35 Martel, William Why America Needs a New Grand Strategy

Education and National Policy, through to the current Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 1800.01F Officer Professional Military Education Policy and direction document Developing Today’s Joint Officers for Tomorrow’s Ways of War: The Joint Chiefs of Staff Vision and Guidance for Professional Military Education & Talent Management, a seemingly constant call for change with little to show as a result.  

Over the past sixty-five years a series of issues have been highlighted, acknowledged, nominally addressed only to resurface in the future due to a lack of fundamental cultural change within the enterprise.

The direction and guidance, or is it just rhetoric, unbelievably, has not led to substantive change. “Too Busy to Learn” was the indictment by former US Army War College Commandant, MG Robert Scales USA (Ret) in his commentary underlining several cultural issues impeding the development of strategic minded Joint Force officers creating a learning gap.  

Joan Johnson-Freese, a respected professor at the United States Naval War College, in the Reform of Military Education: Twenty-Five Years Later stresses “overriding institutional and cultural issues that hinder the educational goals intended by Congress when it passed Goldwater-Nichols.”  

Moreover, she relates, “few of those responsible for PME (individually or collectively) have spent much time thinking about the difference between education and training. Not many have reflected on what it means “to educate” or “to be educated.” These issues are

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much more than curriculum or instructional methodology in nature, these are cultural issues that the organization confirms, and rewards as evidenced by sixty-five years of execution and experience.

Most recently former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford operating within this mutating environment similarly recognized serious shortfalls within his officer corps and his organization’s professional military education and development processes. General Dunford judged that the general population of senior military commanders and staff lacked critical thinking skills and that most did not possess the ability to precisely identify the military dimensions within a global strategic issue. Furthermore, he determined that most were incapable of skillfully breaking down these global strategic issues into their essential components, identifying and framing the real problems and then clearly describing and articulating those problems for resolution. Essentially, an inability to be strategic minded. Within this dilemma the CJCS identified a failure in imagination as the officers also lacked creative thinking skills. The former Chairman hypothesized that this lack of creativity developed because most officers were not exposed to enough differing views and perspectives over their careers or when exposed they were not empathetic to the differing perspectives. Again, an overwhelming contributing factor was their extreme focus at the tactical level of war with all its attendant responsibilities and immediate consequences, which was warranted but also limited their development for future strategic responsibilities because of the organizational propensity to overvalue and reward tactical competence. 41 When operating and making decisions in split second timeframes tactical focus is absolutely essential. Officers transitioning to increasing

41 These thoughts are paraphrased from meeting notes based on a session with the CJCS and his Joint Educational Leadership Conference in April of 2018.
levels of responsibility however must understand that they need more than tactical competence to think and lead at the operational and strategic level of war. Moreover, the organization must facilitate and reward this operational and strategic development.

As evidenced earlier, current CJCS General Mark Milley underscores his predecessors focus by specifying joint officer development as one of his five focus areas, “The future operating environment will place new demands on leaders at all levels. Our leaders must have the training, education, and experience to meet those demands.” In a more recent directive, General Milley states, “Our collective aim is the development of strategically minded joint warfighters, who think critically and can creatively apply military power to inform national strategy, conduct globally integrated operations, and fight under conditions of disruptive change.” Again, how does this direction move beyond mere words, words and needs that have been specified over sixty years, into sustained institutionalized practice and action?

The rapidly changing environment necessitates a US Joint Force and officers leading that force to adjust their current methods to keep pace with the accelerated change. Ideally, the thinking, methods, and processes would not only keep pace but would outpace the environmental demands creating a favorable future for the United States and the world. To achieve this level

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The US Joint Chiefs recognize that there is an essential need for focused education and better thinking leading to better decisionmaking as the United States competes within the international community. They counsel “There is more to sustaining a competitive advantage than acquiring hardware; we must gain and sustain an intellectual overmatch as well.” Regrettably this aspect of
of agility, the Joint Force must fully act on the strategic thinking gap. Moreover, they must recognize emerging opportunities, demands and requirements and then adapt to respond effectively and efficiently to them. Additionally, the Joint Force must develop its officers to be strategic minded, capable of thinking within the current environment, and crafting strategic direction and guidance leading the United States to a more favorable, secure, and prosperous future. Moreover, it seems that it all begins with a dramatic change in Joint Force organizational culture to not only stress the need for strategic mindedness but to foster, value, and reward foresight on par with an already highly developed tactical mindset within the organization. This inability to change Joint Force organizational culture seems to be the driving variable for Joint Force strategic thinking ineffectiveness.

This dilemma leads to the focus and specific research question of this paper, the delimitations of the study, the premise of the paper, the methodology of the study and general outline as detailed below.

**Research Question**

Why do United States Joint Force officers who generally perform well at the tactical level struggle to perform at the strategic level? What hinders their transition from highly competent tactical performers into adaptable, strategic-minded leaders?

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competition can easily get overlooked in the technology centric budget battles in Washington, DC. Just recently a move was made by the Joint Staff J-7 to stand down the Joint Combined Warfighting School to find dollars and billets for other purposes.
Delimitations

The general inability to be strategic minded regarding national security issues and the US military’s role in those issues most certainly results from a variety of factors. Like most socially complex problems, numerous interrelated variables, combine to generate the overall problem. While the primary cause or specific driver of this problem remains elusive, this study posits that Joint Force culture is the critical variable and describes the hypothesis immediately below.

Before doing that, it is important to limit the scope of the study by avoiding extensive analysis and discussion of other possible contributing variables. Several possible essential variables will purposely not be analyzed in detail. They are:

1. **The impact of civilian-military interface on strategy.** While the importance of a healthy and effective civil military relationship cannot be overstated this study will avoid extensive analysis of this variable. It is certainly Regardless of who the individuals are that the Joint Force officer must interface with regarding any given situation at the strategic level: President, Vice President, Secretary of Defense, National Security Advisor, etc., the Joint Force officer must still present best military advice. If the civilian-military (civ-mil) relationship at any given moment is weak, strong, or indifferent, the Joint Force officer must remain strategic minded, clearly discern the military components of the challenge, define, and frame the issue and recommend feasible approaches for handling the challenge. 45

2. **The level of individual Joint Officer intellect.** As you review the intellectual requirements for any position in the national security enterprise, it is obvious that you “can’t beat brains”

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as President Kennedy counseled as he was forming his national security team.\textsuperscript{46} With that in mind as you examine the full range of Joint Force officers you quickly realize that a full range of intellects result. Generally, however the intellect required to be a good strategic minded officer is not the major limitation. As Colin Gray notes,

Intellect alone is not the key to high strategic performance. It may suffice if the strategist must perform strictly as a planner, though even then an individual will need to be effective in communicating the fruits of his brilliance to others for the common good of the excellent plan. Character cannot substitute for intelligence, but neither can a high IQ stand duty for personality features necessary for leadership, if not always for command.\textsuperscript{47}

Gray further posits that an officer’s intellect is not a distinguishing factor for superior strategists. He highlights that,

The brightest students at service academies do not always make superior strategists. The most effective tactical leaders may not shine at higher levels of command… Sometimes, excellent colonels are promoted to be adequate brigadier generals, and then to be dangerously incompetent major and lieutenant generals. No less interesting, lackluster junior officers, if they can survive through the promotion process, have been known to deliver ever improving performance with each step up in rank. There is no reliable correlation, let alone certain cause and effect, between effectiveness in doing strategy tactically (if I may be excused the apparent oxymoron), and thinking, planning, and commanding tactical success for more inclusive gains. Bluntly stated, good tacticians do not always prove to be good strategists; while good strategists need not have recorded a truly glittering career at the tactical level of warfare.\textsuperscript{48}

This study accepts Colin Gray’s argument and will not examine this variable any further.


3. **The Joint Officer’s basic Service component.** As part of the recent Rand study mentioned above, *Raising the Flag: Implications of US Military Approaches to General and Flag Officer Development*, within their methodology addresses Service differences as related to how their service and experience might influence “the type of strategic-level advice they might provide to civilian decision makers”. They note minor differences between the Services, but their findings don’t indicate that this is a major variable impacting the level of strategic mindedness in an individual Service officer as he or she performs their responsibility as a Joint officer.

Despite the possible impact of the above variables and potentially innumerable other related variables this study posits that the critical variable limiting strategic mindedness and the development of strategic minded officers is Joint Force organizational culture and leads to the paper’s hypothesis listed below.

**Hypothesis**

Despite the need to constantly adapt and change PME to meet environmental pressures, the major driver behind the lack of Joint Force Officer strategic mindedness is Joint Force and US Governmental Organizational Culture. Joint force cultural issues slow, impede, block, or stop the development of strategic minded Joint Force officers. The Joint Force organizational culture generally values and rewards a tactical mindset and tactical performance over the ability to think strategically and exercise strategic foresight. This culture has a long record of reward and promotion for effective and efficient transactional officers but a strong resistance against officers

who conduct transformative thinking and provide strategic change recommendations. This tactically focused culture limits individual and collective enthusiasm to ignore bureaucratic boundaries and strive for transformative organizational change even when the environment clearly demands change. As a result, the Joint Force comfortably lives in the past ignoring or underestimating environmental changes, applies the past imprecisely and/or fails to recognize that the accelerated evolution of the environment demands forward thinking and change to just survive, let alone thrive. Moreover, the Joint Force culture also promotes a Joint Force mindset that is highly (but narrowly) developed to identify and solve tactical problems rewarding Joint Force officers for their tactical performance even when they transition to more operational and strategic positions. This restricts the ability to recognize that the rapidly evolving and dynamic international environment requires different methods of thinking, and that the hard-earned mastery of tactical cognition is not optimal when trying to be strategic minded regarding key national security issues.

**Methodology**

This dissertation uses a qualitative approach with a documentary analysis of the applicable literature regarding the concepts and practicalities surrounding strategy itself, the rapidly changing and dynamic international environment focusing on the continuities and changes impacting strategic-mindedness, the cultural impediments within the Joint Force and Joint Force PME leading to the gaps and weaknesses found within the Joint Force officer corps and their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and the basics of mastery to inform better instruction, curriculum, and career pattern. CJSI 1800.01F *Officer Military Education Policy* provides
initial guidance on the subjects to be examined, studied, and understood. From that guidance, this study examines the following topics and relevant scholarship surrounding each:

1. Globalization
2. Transnationalism, Interdependence, and Power
3. National Interests
4. Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity
5. Decisionmaking
6. Joint Officer Creative and Critical Thinking
7. The Three Levels of War
8. Change and Transitions
9. Adult Education Methods
10. Mastery

Additionally, the study supplements the insights garnered from the above documentary analysis through professional observations while teaching fifty-nine Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) courses and three Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) courses within the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia from January 2005 to the present. Throughout the past seventeen years, I taught and learned with over 1,200 students. Moreover, I have observed, interacted with, and was briefed by numerous top level US Governmental officials from multiple agencies. I have also had the opportunity to travel to, observe, and participate in professional military educational approaches in Australia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia, and the United Kingdom.

Each JCWS course was ten weeks in duration and was taught four times per year. The purpose of JCWS follows as described in its mission statement follows:
JCWS educates national security professionals to plan and execute JIIM operations. Graduates are critically thinking, operationally minded, skilled joint warfighters who can operationalize national, military, and theater security strategies into design-informed operational plans. Graduates have a primary commitment to JIIM (Joint Interagency Intergovernmental and Multinational) teamwork, attitudes, and perspectives.

Each seminar consisted of 18-20 senior military students – Navy Commanders and Captains, Air Force, Army, and Marine Lt Colonels and Colonels). Observed during seminar discourse, small group drills, practical exercises, and through individual homework submissions, these students originated from each one of the services and most were in the transition from tactical responsibilities to operational and strategic responsibilities. Formal assessments consisted of written submissions evaluating each student’s fundamental Joint Warfighting and decisionmaking knowledge, their Strategic Campaign Design understanding and creativity, and their ability to evaluate an Integrated Contingency Plan and the concepts, doctrine and environmental assumptions that underpinned the plan. Overall, the ten weeks provided insight into the student’s tactical default mechanisms, thought processes, decision-making ability, creative and critical thought and their knowledge of the Strategic environment and Joint warfighting principles.

While instructing in the JAWS program was similar in many respects to JCWS there were several differences that should be noted. First, the JAWS mission is slightly different from the JCWS mission as noted below:

JAWS produces joint operational artists fully prepared to serve as senior planners, joint leaders, and advisors at OSD, the Joint Staff, or a four-star CCMD/Sub-Unified Command. The graduates are historically informed, strategically minded, skilled joint warfighters. They are critical and creative thinkers who expertly translate strategic decisions to operational and tactical actions through design-informed operational planning.

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Second, the JAWS program is 10 months in duration allowing a deeper examination of all topics and subjects. Finally, the JAWS program requires a thesis as a core requirement of the course as the program awards a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. Overall, as an instructor for 10 months you get the opportunity to closely observe, interact, and learn with your students. A level of professional trust forms with the established teacher student relationship.

**Framework**

This short section provides a summary of the purpose of each chapter providing a roadmap of the analysis to the reader. The chapter sequence and summaries follow. Chapter I introduces the issues under investigation.

Chapter II examines the basics of strategy and strategic thinking and seeks to establish a baseline understanding of each to distill the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required by strategic minded Joint Force Officers. A wide range of literature exists regarding the basics of strategy and strategic thinking. The study analyzes this literature and creates a benchmark to compare and contrast against emerging requirements. What traditional KSAs must be retained and what must be added to handle the opportunities and demands of the current and emerging international environment. To achieve this level of understanding the chapter addresses the following:

a. Highlight basic definitions of Strategy and Strategic Thinking and then identify or synthesize definitions for use in this study.

b. Review the basics of Strategy and Strategic Thinking as laid out by the
classical strategic theorists: Sun-Tzu, Thucydides, Clausewitz, and Liddell Hart. Additionally, the Chapter analyzes several respected contemporary strategic theorists such as: Gaddis, Colin Gray, Lykee, Luttwak, Nuechterlein, Wylie, and Yarger.

c. Examine the Dimensions of Strategy.

Chapter III examines the rapidly changing environment and its basic characteristics. It looks at globalization, transnational issues, interdependence, and dynamics beyond globalization to include the effect on power relationships, economics, and military capabilities. It seeks to determine firm continuities and solid changes in the environment while avoiding “the immediate pressures or vogue of the day” to inform the curriculum for strategic minded joint force officers.56

Chapter IV examines the organizational culture of the Joint Force specifically those issues that hinder the development of strategic minded leaders. Specifically, why do some officers resist going to school, expect that school experiences should be rest periods, and that they do not require academic rigor to become better joint Force Officers.

Chapter V highlights the need to ensure effective Adult Learning Methods, a focused Strategic Minded Curriculum, and career pattern adjustments to facilitate formal and informal development as strategic minded thinkers. What methods of instruction will transition officers from a tactical mindset to a more strategic mindset? How does Joint Force PME challenge and inspire Joint officers to use their tactical mindset when appropriate and develop a strategic minded mindset over time to handle the complexity of strategic problems. Are power point presentations and structured practical exercises still effective in this new environment and in the education of strategic thinkers? This Chapter seeks answers to these vital questions.
Moreover, this chapter offers a model for strategic minded Joint Force Officer Development based on a synthesis of numerous guidance documents and recommendations over the past seventy-five years including Eisenhower’s 1947 Armed Forces Staff College guidance, Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner’s US Navy War College approach, MG Robert Scales *Too Busy To Learn* counsel, Gen David Petraeus’ *Beyond the Cloister* recommendation regarding the benefit of civilian PhD programs, the United States Army War College’s Strategic Learning Method and the Joint Combined Warfighting School’s Seminar “Lucky13” approach.

Chapter VI describes the conclusions from the research and analysis and offers a series of recommendations.

While each chapter stands on its own, the true value comes from the logic that each develops and contributes toward answering the research question and supporting the hypothesis. The introduction highlights the basic problem regarding United States Joint Force officers and their flawed performance at the strategic level despite their overall tactical mastery. What hinders the transition of these officers from highly competent tactical performers into adaptable, strategic-minded leaders? The hypothesis recognizes PME pedagogical issues but highlights that these issues have been resident across the force for decades indicating that the critical variable is the organizational culture, its mindset regarding education, and its inability to institute the change it desires because of its mindset. Reviewing the Chapter framework reveals the underlying logic of the study.

To better identify and gain deeper insight into the PME pedagogical concerns, the study first establishes a baseline for an understanding of strategy by conducting a broad examination of the concept in Chapter II. This Chapter casts a wide net to define, characterize, and establish the time-tested basics of strategy and discover the changing nature and nuances of strategy in this
rapidly changing and dynamic environment. Just to define strategy is no easy task as it means many things to many people but by looking at and processing the numerous views provides the Joint Force educator insight into the requirements for a strategic minded Joint Force officer. The basics of strategy are difficult and by layering in the emerging nuances and sophistications induced by the dynamic international environment of today creates a lengthy but very useful narrative contributing to a better understanding of strategic components and the considerable time and effort required to truly develop a strategic mindset.

Chapter III reveals numerous other knowledge requirements for a strategic minded Joint Force officer by analyzing the current environment exposing the continuities and real changes that must be processed, understood, and accounted for while defining the national security problem sets and seeking solutions.

After establishing the current KSAs for strategic mindedness, Chapter IV shifts to an analysis of organizational culture, strategic culture, and military culture to reveal the impediments to substantive change. Change that has eluded the US military for over six decades. The pedagogical requirements married with the cultural impediments demonstrates an imperative to update teaching methods and instructional material but also to institute organizational adjustments to provide sufficient time, organizational support, incentives, and focus for not only education but also mentored apprenticeship and deliberate practice.

Chapter V then scrutinizes the art and science of learning, adult learning methods, and the principles of mastery to inform an extended basic career pathway for Joint Force officers. It also describes a time tested, student effective, outcome-based model of strategic minded education, the “Lucky 13” approach that has been applied within the Joint Combined Warfighting School
for over 15 years. This model is a ready benchmark for other potential strategic minded
development programs.
CHAPTER II

STRATEGY AND THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES (KSAS) OF STRATEGIC MINDED JOINT FORCE OFFICERS

There is an intellectual no-man’s land where military and political problems meet. We have no tradition of systemic study in this area, and thus few intensively prepared experts. The military profession has traditionally depreciated the importance of strategy (where politics are important) as compared with tactics. Now we are faced with novel and baffling problems to which we try to adapt certain ready-made strategic ideas inherited from the past.

-Bernard Brodie 52

Strategy is a universal preoccupation of governments. Those responsible for the security of political units cannot opt out of it, for the threat and use of force as instruments of policy will not go away simply as a result of wishing or hoping. But to note that governments are interested in security, and hence strategy, does not get us far. Strategy itself might be characterized as a universal preoccupation, but that does not mean that it is conceived in universal terms. Whether the phenomenon is strategy or a mountain, what we see depends upon where we stand. In an operational sense strategy is more nationalistic in its nature than most other aspects of social behavior…. Strategy is a contextual phenomenon.

- Ken Booth 53

Strategy in a more or less military context has been a permanent feature of human experience. This well evidenced claim is key to understanding most aspects of our subject. We do strategy very much because we have no prudent alternative. We may do it poorly, but that is another matter. To be blunt, we do strategy because our human political condition demands it.

-Colin Gray 54

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the basics, subtleties, nuances, and sophistications of strategy and other strategic concepts, terms, and topics including the imperative for alignment of strategy with operational and tactical actions. This examination establishes a baseline understanding


identifying the vital knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to be a strategic minded Joint Force Officer (SMJFO) within the current operating environment and into the anticipated future. This baseline understanding of strategy informs the basic requirements for a strategic minded military education program.

While an extensive range of literature exists regarding all the above subjects and provides fruitful ground to explore, the wide-ranging material requires this study to selectively analyze, synthesize, and apply the overly abundant information to develop an updated and more refined list of KSAs from those already identified. US Joint Force professional military education institutions must stay abreast of the ever-changing environment and the newly generated KSAs for SMJFO education programs to remain constantly relevant. From a select series of documents, the study creates a benchmark to conduct a comparative analysis against the established characteristics of a SMJFO. What traditional KSAs must SMJFOs sustain and what enhancements must be implemented to better operate in this dynamic and rapidly changing international environment? SMJFOs must handle current demands with the “speed of relevance” and anticipate future challenges and opportunities while also designing and creating the capacity and capabilities to address these challenges efficiently and effectively at the national level. To realize this level of understanding the chapter examines the following:

a. Provide an overview of Strategy.

b. Highlight the definitions and descriptions of strategy from three classical strategic theorists, Sun Tzu, Clausewitz, and Liddell-Hart. Analyze and synthesize their insights to extract potential SMJFO KSAs for use in this study.
c. Highlight and analyze the basics, subtleties, nuances and sophistications of strategy and strategic thinking as specified by several respected contemporary strategic theorists, and several respected scholars and practical strategists.

d. Highlight the three levels of war focusing on the strategic level of war and highlighting the need for tactical action to align with operational and strategic outcomes and vice versa. Strategy falls short if tactical actions fail to achieve strategic objectives.

e. Highlight and examine the range of strategic dimensions specified by a variety of classical and contemporary theorists, scholars, and practitioners.

f. Conclude with a synthesized list of strategic minded requirements to determine a refined set of essential requirements that must be understood by strategic minded Joint Force Officers, accounted for by Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Institutions and curriculum, and taught by JPME to attain intellectual overmatch.

**STRATEGY OVERVIEW**

What is Strategy? What is strategic minded thinking and strategic decision-making and what does the strategic level of war look like? What is strategic context? Why is it important to establish this basic level of understanding? What is the opposite of strategy and why is it important to understand and guard against a lack of strategy? This section examines these questions by surveying multiple definitions and descriptions of strategy across disciplines from the military to business. The intent is not to establish a merged universal definition of strategy for application from the multitude of definitions and descriptions but to take the varied views and establish an updated and more refined list of SMJFO KSAs based on a wide-ranging survey of strategy across multiple disciplines. To develop a refined and updated list this section examines
strategy from a variety of angles, analyzes the available information, and identifies knowledge, skills, and abilities SMJFOs require. The resultant understanding from this comprehensive analysis of strategy informs the development of requirements for strategic minded Joint Force officers and those individuals and institutions that design and develop educational programs and methods for teaching these critical subjects.

As we begin our exploration of strategy it is useful to process several scholars’ insights. Arthur Lykke Jr., a respected professor at the US Army War College, warns, “there is no universal definition, nor even the approximation of a consensus. Today the term strategy is used altogether too loosely… There needs to be a general agreement on a conceptual approach to military strategy: a definition; a description of the basic elements that make up military strategy; and an analysis of how they are related.”  

Lykke recognizes the critical task of establishing a disciplined approach towards understanding strategy and strategic mindedness. This disciplined approach does not currently exist. According to Colin Gray, a highly respected and extensively published strategist and strategic scholar,

The need for strategy flows from the essentially competitive condition of all human life. While theory and practice have varied considerably with culture and other contexts, it is scarcely possible for a necessarily political human security community to avoid the stark logic of strategy. Human communities can strive to ignore the meaning of strategic logic, but there is close to being an Iron Law of strategy that will impose discipline… for present purposes, what matters most is acknowledgement of the disciplinary authority of the logic of the basic theory of strategy across time and space. No matter how contemporaries conceive of their strategic tasks, the interdependence of ends, ways and means cannot be denied and defied without repercussions.


In the Joint Force a disciplined approach toward strategy is essential as Joint Force officers and organizations must not only grasp strategy conceptually but must also effectively put strategy into practice with the understanding that, “Poor strategy is expensive, bad strategy can be lethal, while when the stakes include survival, very bad strategy is almost always fatal.” 57 The Joint Force responsibilities make the development and application of good strategy a national imperative.

Other practitioners and scholars also understand that strategy and associated concepts like strategic mindedness are generally misunderstood or misinterpreted by those chartered to implement it. John Collins emphasizes,

Definitions of strategy abound. Laymen find it the loosest sort of word, subject to wide interpretation… The term strategy originally meant “the art of generalship,” but it encompasses much more today. Strategy no longer is the exclusive preserve of the military, nor does it deal merely with armed combat. Men in mufti, as well as those in uniform, now pursue strategic matters at the national level. 58

Moreover, Ross Harrison, in his book Strategic Thinking in 3D: A Guide for National Security, Foreign Policy, and Business Professionals counsels, “The problem with defining strategy isn’t a shortage of definitions; there are many, but most are inadequate or incomplete. Anyone looking for one silver- bullet definition that accurately captures the general concept in a way that applies across disciplines will be sorely disappointed.”59 Harrison clearly identifies an acute issue with understanding strategy. He reveals that strategy means many things to many people and that it


varies greatly from discipline to discipline. Fortunately, Harrison provides insight and utility to the possible approaches for gaining better fidelity on the concept of strategy. He highlights the “simplicity and clarity” of a single definition but also recognizes that “multiple definitions provide granularity and depth.” 60 Despite his insight this dichotomy provides a dilemma for all tasked to develop and implement strategy. This is especially true for those chartered to teach strategy and support Joint Force officers strategic minded development through better education.

Where should military educational organizations focus? How should they teach this difficult subject? What characteristics are essential and how do you unpack their complexity to teach them? Once you determine the essential characteristics -- do you attempt to teach all, or must these characteristics be prioritized? Is strategy or strategic mindedness even teachable? The answer to these questions drives your educational approach or substantive educational concept examined further in Chapter V.

This study establishes a baseline by examining both the simplified definitions of strategy and the more granular across the range of history and disciplines. To generate sound thinking on this difficult concept, Harrison provides a universal definition as well as several other definitions that he likens to “looking at an object through a kaleidoscope.” All provide crucial awareness of strategy from multiple perspectives providing a deeper understanding of this tough to define concept. His recommended universal definition, which he acquires from Andrew F. Krepinevich and Barry Watts is: “Strategy is fundamentally about identifying or creating asymmetric advantages that can be exploited to help achieve one's ultimate objectives despite resource and other constraints, most importantly the opposing efforts of adversaries or competitors and the

inherent unpredictability of strategic outcomes.”61 Whether this definition is “one of the best overarching, universally applicable definitions” or not, it is useful in highlighting several areas that SMJFOs must be educated and then practiced in.62 First, to identify an asymmetric advantage SMJFOs must understand the difference between symmetry and asymmetry both in theory and practicality. Second, they must have the observation skills to identify an asymmetric advantage and then be well versed in creative thinking to generate asymmetric responses when none exist. While an understanding of these items will not necessarily produce strategic mindedness, the individual and the institution have a higher probability of thinking strategically if the officer and organization have a deep understanding of the basics and consciously apply them in context. Henry Eccles agrees, “While adherence to theory and sound principle will not guarantee success, ignorance or inadvertent violation of them will enhance the likelihood of failure. Thus, the art of war must include an intuitive understanding of theory and principle as well as a feeling for the particular circumstances that will influence application.” 63 This imperative generates the need for SMJFOs to be well grounded not only in the practicalities of a full range of subjects but also the concepts, theory, and doctrine underpinning those practicalities. Several respected strategic theorists and scholars highlight this necessity. 64


64 The importance of theory is highlighted by numerous scholars and practitioners like Clausewitz, Rosenau, Keohane and Nye and many others.
Mired in the routine combined with the occasional swirl and chaos of everyday military operations, certainly during war, but also in the never-ending requirements of operational and strategic design/planning, recurring training, equipment maintenance requirements, as well as other war readiness preparations, the tactical mindset, rightfully so, predominates. That mindset prioritizes the here and now, current practicalities, and strives for efficiency and effectiveness. The tactical mindset in war and in peace prioritizes the present over the future. The operational and strategic mindset, however, must promote a longer view within and beyond the churn and distractions of the daily in both war and peace. For instance, during World War II with progress being made but the outcome of the war still in doubt, George Marshall had the foresight to anticipate the requirement for military governments in liberated and occupied countries. He assigned and gave guidance to a two-star general to put this into action. With this action, Marshall displayed the strategic mindedness desired by today’s current Joint Force leadership. Regrettably, the tactical approach usually always dominates, and this approach generally promotes performance and practicalities over concepts, theories, and even doctrine. At the operational and strategic level, the environment provides more time and allows leaders to slow their thinking but only if educated and conditioned to do so. Daniel Kahneman recognizes and promotes the essential requirement for slow thinking in his seminal book *Thinking Fast and Slow* describing the science surrounding basic human cognition. Regrettably, the organizational culture and the education within that culture does not spend a requisite amount of time and effort highlighting the need for slow thinking and teaching it. The professional military education

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enterprise values what the culture values and generally does not deliberately prepare JFOs for the transition from a predominately tactical mindset to a more strategic mindset even though their responsibilities at a certain point in their career and responsibilities mandate it. With more time and thought space married with conscious slow thinking, Joint Force officers must consider available concepts and theories before re-creating actions others have already explored, analyzed, and found wanting. Clausewitz provides solid counsel for consideration regarding the importance of theory,

A specialist who has spent half his life trying to master every aspect of some obscure subject is surely more likely to make headway than a man who is trying to master it in a short time. Theory exists so that one need not start afresh each time sorting out the material and plowing through it but will find it ready to hand and in good order. It is meant to educate the mind of the future commander, or, more accurately, to guide him in his self-education, not to accompany him to the battlefield; just as a wise teacher guides and stimulates a young man’s intellectual development, but is careful not to lead him by the hand for the rest of his life.67

A Joint Force Officer does not value theory, concepts, and doctrine and their importance if he or she have limited or no discretionary time to study and appreciate the contributions of theory espoused by Clausewitz and others. Julian Corbett, an early 20th Century naval strategic theorist, builds on Clausewitz’s counsel. Corbett seeks a way to simplify the understanding and analysis of specific situations and problems. Corbett recognizes and promotes the foundational knowledge of relevant concepts, theories, and doctrine to be adequately prepared to address the practicalities of a given situation. Corbett relates,

The writers experience of such discussions was rich and at first hand. Clear conception of the ideas and factors involved in a war problem, and a definite exposition of the relations between them, were in his eyes the remedy for loose and purposeless discussion; and such conceptions and expositions are all we mean by the theory or the science of war. It is a process by which we coordinate our ideas, define the meaning of the words we use,

grasp the difference between essential and unessential factors, and fix and expose the fundamental data on which everyone is agreed. In this way we prepare the apparatus of practical discussion; we secure the means of arranging the factors in manageable shape, and of the deducing from them with precision and rapidity a practical course of action. Without such an apparatus no two men can even think on the same line much less can they ever hope to detach the real point of difference that divides them and isolate it for quiet solution. 68

Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye in their seminal book, *Power and Interdependence*, recognize the value and appeal of real-world examples to guide practice. They highlight, “Contemporary world politics is not a seamless web; it is a tapestry of diverse relationships. In such a world, one model cannot explain all situations. The secret of understanding lies in knowing which approach or combination of approaches to use in analyzing a situation. There will never be a substitute for careful analysis of actual situations.” They also offer, however, that theory and the understanding of theory is essential in decisionmaking especially for strategic minded thinking. They clearly promote the vital nature of theory.

Yet theory is inescapable; all empirical or practical analysis rests on it. Pragmatic policymakers might think they need pay no more heed to theoretical disputes over the nature of the world than they pay to medieval scholastic disputes over how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. Academic pens, however, leave marks in the minds of statesman with profound results for policy. Not only are “practical men who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences” unconscious captives of conceptions created by “some academic scribbler of a few years back,” but increasingly the scribblers have been playing a direct role in forming foreign policy. Inappropriate images and ill-conceived perceptions of world politics can lead directly to inappropriate or even disastrous national policies. 69

As described in the next section, one method the Joint Force employs to focus thinking and subsequent action is to allocate the thinking and action into three levels of war somewhat


simplifying a complex environment and assisting in the division of a multitude of tasks. To truly leverage all available knowledge, the Joint Force must build in strategic apprenticeship time for its officer corps.

THE THREE LEVELS OF WAR

“War is a matter of vital importance to the State; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied.” Sun Tzu’s counsel to modern warriors and statesmen is spot on. How does the national security enterprise and its Joint Force commanders and staff execute his guidance in today’s globalized world? How does the enterprise teach and thoroughly study for war and strategy? This section addresses one of the ways the US Joint military force frames professional military education for warfighting and strategy by the method it doctrinally views the environment and world affairs. The Joint Force analyzes the environment through differing perspectives by using three levels of warfare – the strategic, operational, and tactical. From a non-military assessment you can categorize the environment from the strategic or overarching, to the operational or condition setting, to the tactical or the actions that make it all happen. Simply these levels range from the more conceptual to the more concrete.

The United States Joint Force analyzes war and generates strategy using three different perspectives. Those levels of analysis, known as the levels of warfare, provide the Joint Force the ability to think of their role in time, space, and effort. These levels must align or be nested coherently to achieve desired conditions, the reason why force must be used, or risk not meeting

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the political objective. “While the various forms…of warfare are ultimately expressed in concrete military action, the three levels of warfare—strategic, operational, and tactical—link tactical actions to achievement of national objectives. There are no finite…boundaries between these levels, but they help commanders design…operations, allocate resources, and assign tasks…” 71 An understanding of each level is essential but it is imperative that the national security enterprise ensure a connection from design through execution to mission completion. Misalignment or a failure to nest the levels places the achievement of national goals at risk. Why use military force, as an instrument of power, if the “political object – the original motive for the war” is ill-defined or disconnected with the operational and tactical realities. Recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq provide stark evidence and clearly demonstrate the flawed results of misalignment through the three levels of war. A brief description of each one of the levels follows: “Strategy is a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power (Diplomatic, Information, Military, & Economic) in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater and multinational objectives. At the strategic level, a nation…determines the national… guidance that addresses strategic objectives in support of strategic end states…” 72 Practically, strategy accounts for the “ends, ways, means, and risks” to achieve national objectives. When a mismatch occurs at the strategic level because of weak strategic level thinking and application a catastrophic result can ensue such as Operation Iraqi Freedom that


does not achieve its established objectives. Stiglitz described the military operations in Iraq costing the United States approximately three trillion dollars and over 4,000 American soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and civilian workers who during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) who bequeathed the full measure of devotion to the United States as “the three trillion dollar war”. Additional costs of OIF were “58,000…wounded. One hundred thousand US soldiers…suffering from serious mental health issues [many] which will be chronic afflictions…life is actually worse for the Iraqi people… the country [is] a magnet for terrorists [and] the war has weakened our economy.” While the performance at the tactical level was sound a mismatch at the strategic and operational levels uncompromisingly reveals the vital nature of alignment across each level of war and the disastrous consequences when failing to do so. The operational level sets the conditions for the translation of strategic objectives into tactical tasks and actions. Joint military doctrine states, “The operational level links strategy and tactics by establishing operational objectives needed to achieve the military end states and strategic objectives…sequences tactical actions to achieve objectives [and focuses] at this level … [on] planning and execution of operations using operational art…to organize and employ military forces by integrating ends, ways, and means.” Moreover, Milan Vego’s counsel is useful.

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regarding the operational level of war. According to Vego, “Operational art serves both as a bridge and as an interface between these two areas of study and practice [Strategy and Tactics].” A SMJFO must bridge the two levels and interface between the two recognizing the logic or the absurdity of the strategic direction in the context of numerous variables but especially considering the established objective and the ways and means involved to achieve it. Always informed by the risk calculations. This thinking if productive should reveal the strengths and/or the weaknesses associated with the endeavor and whether we should apply US force to achieve the established goal.

Henry Kissinger further clarifies the need for sound operational thinking and an operational level of war as he looks back over history, “In the past, the major problem of strategists was to assemble a superior strength. In the contemporary period, the problem more frequently is how to discipline the available power into some relationship to the objectives likely to be in dispute.” 77 Dan Bolger criticizes recent general officer performance at both these levels and points to a shortfall in both operational and strategic performance as a contributing factor to the US weaknesses in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Accordingly, Bolger, a US Army Lieutenant General who fought and served as a general officer in both Afghanistan and Iraq, holds himself and his fellow generals and admirals accountable for the poor performance, “Our primary failing in the war involved generalship…guys like me – demonstrated poor strategic and operational leadership. For soldiers, strategy and operational art translate to “the big picture” (your goal) and “the plan” (how do you get there). We got both

wrong…” While Bolger paints a stark picture it reinforces the indictment levied by the Chairman and others in the Introduction Chapter. While most of these leaders referenced by Bolger, and Bolger himself, were honorable, thoughtful, and courageous leaders, the organizational culture bears much of the responsibility for this poor performance along several lines. Following the evidence, as we will see in Chapter IV, the shortfalls generally lie in a lack of organizational strategic mindedness resultant from the organizational cultural pitfalls and deficiencies as will be described in Chapter IV as well. The defects in strategic and operational leadership, thinking, and performance link directly to the professional military education of those officers, the organizational culture that fashioned them, and the culture that valued and continues to value and reward tactical performance over strategic minded thinking.

The tactical level, commended by Bolger for consistently high standards of performance in both Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, consists of “the employment and ordered arrangement of forces in relation to each other. The tactical level of war is where battles and engagements are planned and executed to achieve military objectives assigned to tactical units or joint task forces (JTFs).” While capability and performance at this level is highly dependent on innumerable variables – quantitative, technological, organizational, societal, and more - unless the statesmen and commanders execute proper strategic and operational leadership as noted by Bolger above, tactical success alone does not lead to operational or strategic success and certainly does not lead to the consolidation of gains hard earned by military success. Colin Gray

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echoes Bolger’s assessment, “Tactical failure typically, though not invariably, means strategic failure. But tactical success most likely will be effort wasted if it compromises victory and engagements whose winning contributes not at all positively to the course and outcome of the war at issue.” 80 In the current age without an expanded appreciation of the environment, in certain situations a level below the tactical and beyond purely military considerations, the ability to achieve “political victory from military success” is seriously degraded. 81 An essential question at the strategic level is why does the US care about this situation? Why is this situation in the United States’ vital interest or not? If it isn’t vital or existential, why are you willing to risk our most treasured resources at the tactical level – our own sons and daughters – to fight and possibly die for a less than vital interest!! While the Joint Force understands that our progeny will bequeath their full measure of devotion to the nation willingly, Joint Force leadership must ensure that the nation has thoughtfully committed them to the mission and that the use of force achieves a greater good for national security and prosperity or is honorable at the humanitarian assistance level. The use of force must be considered and approved strategically, conditions set for the use of force at the operational level, and force dispensed effectively and with minimal loss of life the tactical level. A well-functioning Joint Force aligns through all three levels of war.


81 Huntington, Samuel P. 1996. *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 88. Huntington lays out a concise and very useful explanation of military capability. “Military power has four dimensions: quantitative – the numbers of men, weapons, equipment, and resources; technological- the effectiveness and sophistication of weapons and equipment; organizational-the coherence, discipline, training, and morale of the troops and the effectiveness of command-and-control relationships; and societal- the ability and willingness of the society to apply military force effectively.”
Saskia Sassen recognizes during this current epoch another level of analysis which resides below the tactical level. These sub-tactical considerations or “subterranean trends” as described by Sassen are as important as the three levels recognized by Joint Doctrine.  

Sassen cautions that these trends are “hard to see when we think with our familiar geopolitical, economic and global markers.” Sassen generates this concept to “question familiar categories for organizing knowledge about our economies, our societies, and our interaction with the biosphere. It helps us assess whether today’s problems are extreme versions of old troubles or manifestations of something, or some things, disturbing and new.” Interestingly and useful for the SMJFO is how Sassen’s analysis reduces issues down “to their most basic elements in an effort to de-theorize them” instead of using the more traditional techniques by processing them upward. The study examines this “fourth level of war” more deeply in Chapter III. Notwithstanding, this becomes a new area of study that strategic minded officers must be aware of and study.

The US Joint Force has perfected the development of tactical skill and prowess through a coherent military education system supported by an institutionalized individual, crew, team, small unit, and large formation training system. These systems have been developed over time and develop individuals and units to a high standard across each one of the services. Tactical performance, as a result, has been outstanding throughout the decades since the end of World

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War II and most recently as described by Bolger above. Regrettably, the Joint Force is not nearly as proficient at the operational and strategic level. Combatant commands expect staff officers to arrive trained and ready prepared to excel at their responsibilities. If given tactical responsibilities within the formation most officers perform superbly. If assigned operational and strategic duties requiring a higher level of thought, knowledge, skill, and ability they are not well-prepared. “Tersely expressed, tactics and operations serve strategy, as strategy serves policy, and its policy should serve some vision of the desirable.” 86 The evidence indicates this is not occurring within the US national security enterprise on a consistent and routine basis. The indictment in the Introduction Chapter highlights this.

To further examine strategy and the strategic level of war, an examination of those many different definitions and understandings of strategy, described above, is now in order.

**STRATEGY--DEFINITIONS AND SYNTHESIS**

As we examine the available definitions of strategy and the resultant and emerging knowledge, skill, and ability requirements for strategic mindedness, it is useful to look in depth at the top two classical strategic theorists, Sun Tzu and Carl Von Clausewitz. A deeper examination of their definitions/descriptions and writings we occur later in the chapter. Why Sun Tzu and Clausewitz? While several contemporary strategic scholars and practitioners provide support for using these two, Colin Gray invests the time and analyzes each in detail concluding that both Sun Tzu and Clausewitz must be studied. Despite his recommendation to study both, he argues Clausewitz and his *On War* are the gold standard. 87 Gray relates, “So intellectually

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inescapable is Clausewitz that, in one key sense or another, modern strategic theorists are all either neo Clausewitzian, or self avowedly post Clausewitzian…” 88

Despite his advancement of Clausewitz as the gold standard, Gray certainly sees great utility in Sun Tzu as well. Although Sun Tzu does not specify a concise definition of strategy, he does provide useful insight to consider regarding the concept of strategy. He states, “Now, the supreme requirements of generalship are a clear perception, the harmony of his host, a profound strategy coupled with far reaching plans, and understanding of the seasons and an ability to examine the human factors.” 89 Moreover, he advocates “In planning, never a useless move; in strategy, no step taken in vain.” 90 While he does not provide a definition, he highlights the importance of developing and understanding strategy to formulate, guide and direct tactical actions. Without a strategy or strategic purpose, tactical proficiency alone will not prove decisive. Germany in World War II was a prime example of this dictum. Inarguably the German Army was the best tactical force mankind had seen up to that point. However, without a clear strategic aim coupled with flawed political leadership, Germany was doomed for defeat. “By the summer of 1940, after defeating France, Hitler’s Germany was master of Western Europe. What next? Manstein plaintively asks. Hitler had no long-range plans, and as a result could neither conclude peace with Britain nor invade the island.” 91 Von Manstein recognized that no matter how well Germany fought they could not win with a misguided approach at the national level. In


his book he addresses the political dimension that SMJFOs must understand. 92 Thankfully, the totalitarian nature of the German design fell short. The US design cannot meet the same fate.

Seeking a panoramic view of strategy, Clausewitz provides useful insight about strategy to potential strategic minded leaders. He simply states:

Strategy is the use of the engagement for the purpose of war. The strategist must therefore define an aim for the entire operational side of the war that will be in accordance with its purpose. In other words, he will draft the plan of the war, and the aim will determine the series of actions intended to achieve it: he will, in fact, shape the individual campaigns and, within these, decide on the individual engagements. Since most of these matters have to be based on assumptions that may not prove correct, while other more detailed orders cannot be determined in advance at all, it follows that the strategist must go on campaign himself. 93

Clausewitz specifies, as others will later in the Chapter, the most essential element of strategy – the aim, the political object, the purpose that the organization or the nation is working towards. Without direction what can be expected but failure. H.R. McMaster exposes “war without direction” and its disastrous consequences in his classic Dereliction of Duty. He reveals how the United States lacked a specified aim but once “committed to direct combat in the air against the North and on the ground in the South, [President Johnson] had no option but to continue to deepen American intervention and assume even greater responsibility for the war effort.” 94 Without an aim, “the rationale of graduated pressure, that incremental intensifications of the war were reversible and therefore could be pursued at low cost, had committed the United States to war before Johnson had given himself and the country an opportunity to decide whether that


commitment would be in the interest of the United States.” 95 As McMaster concludes, “The war in Vietnam was not lost in the field, nor was it lost on the front pages of the New York Times or on the college campuses. It was lost in Washington, D.C…” 96 A lack of a strategy with a clear aim doomed the United States to failure. If developed, nurtured, and sustained, strategic minded Joint Force leaders will better employ American resources and prevent the squandering of kinetic force in the future.

Clausewitz believes that to have the proper sense about warfighting and strategy, the SMJFO must have experience. While this is tough to argue, tactical experience alone does not create strategic mindedness. The officer must get multiple real-world repetitions at the tactical, operational, and strategic level but as stated above must be theoretically grounded as well. An understanding of concepts, theories, and doctrine creates the sound knowledge foundation that then can be further developed with apprenticeship, deliberate practice, and actual world experience in real time. While experience is of great value, real world operational and strategic experience is tough to replicate in peacetime because physically building a training experience of the appropriate scale and scope is extremely expensive and time consuming. Simulations and synthetic experiences built in a computer should help with this. JFOs learning through wartime experience, while extremely valuable, however, can potentially result in disastrous consequences if they don’t learn their lessons well. Moreover, in war most officers are in the performance zone that creates learning but with great risk and no time for immediate reflection and


experimentation. 97 It is better to have had the opportunity to be a practitioner after learning and experimenting on a whiteboard in the classroom, in a simulation exercise on a computer or on a training exercise in the physical environment after the theoretical and doctrinal knowledge foundation has been well established. Execution with real consequences should occur only after developing the requisite foundational knowledge as stated -- on paper or whiteboards, in writing or through rigorous discourse with other joint officers. 98 After attaining the knowledge an apprenticeship period or training period would then solidify that knowledge by turning it into real “capability” followed by the chance of fully testing those new skills in an active strategic environment. 99 Clausewitz recognizes and emphasizes the importance of knowledge and the strength a knowledge base provides,

Knowledge must be so absorbed into the mind that it almost ceases to exist in a separate, objective way. In almost any other art or profession a man can work with truths he has learned from musty books, but which have no life or meaning for him. Even truths that are in constant use and are always to hand may still be externals... it is never like that in war. Continual change and the need to respond to it compels the commander to carry the whole intellectual apparatus of his knowledge with him. He must always be ready to bring forth the appropriate decisions. total simulation with his mind in life, the commander’s knowledge must be transformed into a genuine capability. That is why it all seems to come so easily to men who have distinguished themselves in war, and why it is


all ascribed in natural talent. We say in order to distinguish it from the talent that has been trained and educated by reflection and study.\textsuperscript{100} Developing knowledge into “genuine capability” requires education to first lay the conceptual and theoretical foundation and then training the SMJFO to ensure that knowledge becomes “capability”. Therefore, life-long study and reflection must become a key component of a SMJFOs development. It is mandatory, however, that the study and reflection convert into skill and ability through practical repetitions and sets of repetitions to develop and solidify the skills essential for effective strategic minded thought and performance.\textsuperscript{101} The formal and informal education of all Joint Force Officers must be a conscious organizational effort built around a coherent framework with adequate resources to turn each officer into the best version of themselves possible. Intellectual overmatch is achievable, but the PME enterprise must be as conscious and adaptable with the available methods and time investment to keep pace with the rapidly changing and dynamic environment.

As the literature moves closer to the current age, we analyze one other strategic theorist and practitioner who fits in the classical category – Basil Liddell-Hart a British soldier during World War I and considered a military and strategic theorist.

Liddell Hart defines strategy as,

\begin{quote}
The art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy. For strategy is concerned not merely with the movement of forces--as its role is often defined--but with the effect. When the application of the military instrument merges in the actual fighting, the dispositions for and control of such direct action are termed
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\textsuperscript{101} Greene, Robert. 2013. \textit{Mastery}. New York: Penguin Books. Greene’s book describes the pathway to mastery which the Joint Force establishes as a goal for its officers. The Service and Joint Force program and career pathway to attain tactical mastery is unrivalled today. The transition to operational and strategic mastery requires a similar approach and time investment.
tactics. The two categories, although convenient for discussion, can never be truly divided into separate compartments because each not only influences but merges into the other. 102

Hart further highlights that,

Strategy depends for success, first and foremost, on a sound calculation in coordination of the end and the means. The end must be proportionate to the total means, and the means used in gaining each intermediate end which contributes to the ultimate must be proportional to the value and the needs of that intermediate end -- whether it be to gain an objective or to fulfill a contributory purpose. An excess may be as harmful as a deficiency. 103

As we breakdown Hart’s perspective, we understand that the use of force alone is not sufficient in and of itself. It must create an effect. The effect it creates must be anticipated and visualized prior to execution of the strategy. This visualization must account for all instruments of national power and strive for a unified effort with other USG departments and agencies, Allies, International and Non-Governmental Organizations and the private sector. We will explore the concept of power, its instruments, and impact on strategy later in the chapter but linger now on the visualization skill necessary for a SMJFO. The ability to visualize the future is essential. Sun Tzu provides the prospective SMJFO insightful counsel regarding visualization, “Thus a victorious army wins its victories before seeking battle; an army destined to defeat fights in the hope of winning.” 104 Sun Tzu’s counsel recognizes the importance of strategic design prior to committing force to promote or defend a national interest. The national security enterprise led by strategic minded Joint Force Officers must slow their decisions down, collaboratively contemplate the operation, visualize it from start to finish, recommend the utility of using force


or the benefit of achieving the desired national conditions using other instruments of power, and capture it all in a narrative aided by some sort of graphic to describe the operation to the civilian decision makers. This cannot be short changed or the nation “destined to defeat fights in the hope of winning.” As described above a “war without direction” occurs from an inability to see and communicate the desired result in the officer’s and organization’s mind’s eye. A SMJFO sees victory before beginning the operation to avoid unintended consequences and avoid defeat.

STRATEGY THROUGH THE EYES OF CONTEMPORARY STRATEGIC THEORISTS, RESPECTED STRATEGIC SCHOLARS, AND PRACTICAL STRATEGISTS

An examination of other strategic scholar practitioners like Colin Gray, John Lewis Gaddis, Aleksandr Svechin, and others provides additional definitions, descriptions, and perspectives on strategy and further insight into strategy overall.

Although he synthesizes his thoughts from Clausewitz, Colin Gray provides a more comprehensive definition than Clausewitz. Gray, who was a highly respected scholar practitioner having served in the Reagan administration as an advisor on arms control and disarmament and a prolific writer on the subject of strategy throughout his life, observes, “Strategy is the bridge that relates military power to political purpose; it is neither military power per se nor political purpose. By strategy I mean the use that is made of force and the threat of force for the ends of policy.” 105 A review of Gray’s definition uncovers several more requirements for strategic mindedness. The imperative to understand military power is evident but this vital knowledge

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component then further implies the necessity for SMJFOs to understand the general concept of power and its associated practicalities. SMJFOs must take the time to account for and clearly understand power. We examine the knowledge and educational requirements surrounding the concept of power, in general, and the specifics of military power later in this Chapter. Using Gray’s definition, the SMJFO must also cast a wider net beyond purely military considerations by understanding the political purpose which becomes central for merging the utility of military force into a means for achieving political purpose. Returning to Clausewitz, we receive even more clarity regarding the political object and the need to better understand all instruments of power,

If it is all a calculation of probabilities based on given individuals and conditions, the political object, which was the original motive, must become an essential factor in the equation... The political object—the original motive for the war—will thus determine both the military objective to be reached and the amount of effort it requires. The political object cannot, however, in itself provide the standard of measurement... We can therefore take the political object as a standard only if we think of the influence it can exert upon the forces it is meant to move. The nature of those forces therefore calls for study. 106

With his above insight Clausewitz creates several additional requirements for strategic mindedness. SMJFOs must be able to clearly see the political object, translate that object into military operational objectives and ultimately into tactical actions. From this responsibility, the SMJFO must also recognize and account for the kinetic ways which military force achieved its primary objectives and then transition away from the use of force, leveraging other instruments of power and US governmental capabilities, to bring the political object back into predominance, “consolidating combat success into political victory.” 107

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Fundamental to overall strategic success, this alignment from the strategic to the tactical and tactical to the strategic must be clearly articulated, understood and accounted for in the designs and plans of SMJFOs both in the decision to use force, the how to use that force, and then again in the decision to transition away from the use of force “once the political comes to the fore again”. General Sir Rupert Smith reinforces this essential skill requirement by observing the imperative to understand both concepts and practicalities surrounding the utility of force. Smith notes,

The Utility of Force is intended to explain how force can be used to greater utility—a conceptual and practical discussion. Indeed, I must emphasize practicalities: my service record is one of practical experience at all levels of command in a wide range of circumstances. This point is significant because alongside theory there is also a need to understand the practicalities of the use of force and the realities of operations and combat. Indeed, I have come to see that this lack of knowledge often compounds the lack of understanding of conflict: the politicians quite rightly expect the military to respond to their requirements, but too often do so without any comprehension of the practical considerations of the matter, let alone conceptual ones. If force is to continue to be used, and to have utility, this situation must change.

To ensure a better comprehension of the details and situational requirements, described by Smith above, not only requires politicians that recognize the practicalities regarding the use of force but more importantly it requires SMJFOs who not only fully understand the basic and intricate practicalities of military force but have also mastered the concepts and theories underpinning the practicalities. SMJFOs must then have the skill to easily describe their knowledge and analysis on the issue that the United States has struggled with in rent experience and that is how to end the intervention or war what she calls consolidating combat success into political victory.


understanding in plainly descriptive language for politicians to understand. A pronounced understanding of military affairs and their impact on the political object is meaningless, unless the military commander can adequately describe that understanding to the civilian decision-maker. This skill develops over time through deliberate practice and focused repetitions and sets of repetitions under nonthreatening conditions to the most stressful conditions allowable short of real combat. Effective PME can aid in this area of SMJFO development through foundational instruction focused on the concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities of the military instrument of power and by providing soft practical repetitions during well designed drills, wargaming, and classroom practical exercises. Educational emphasis, to achieve full effect, however, must be on the learning aspects and not the performance aspects. The curriculum must not conflate education with training. This conflation, as we will expose and detail in Chapter IV, has been a trend throughout the last sixty-five years of professional military education and undermines the primary purpose of education. 110

While the SMJFO must have the foundational knowledge and practiced skill to be truly effective they must also display the moral courage to do so. As Israeli General Yigal Allon advises:

Courage in the commander is a prior condition for courage in his men and for their ability to carry out orders promptly and well. It takes courage and daring to overcome the fears of battle and the trials of armed combat. The commander must also have the courage of his convictions, defining when necessary entrenched, conventional ideas. He must dare to make his views heard in front of his superiors and among his colleagues when permitted to do so, notwithstanding the contrary opinions of those he is addressing. It is incumbent upon him to take risks by seizing the initiative and adopting bold tactics when these are necessary in order to achieve the objective. He must know when the situation calls for

withdrawal of avoidance of the enemy and must be prepared to adopt such tactics without hesitation. Victory is rarely achieved without grave risk.\textsuperscript{111}

A focused professional military educational system emphasizes the benefits of disciplined dissent and educates its students in ways to disagree with superiors in an effective manner.

George Marshall demonstrates his effectiveness in several scenes from the short film \textit{George Marshall and the American Century}. \textsuperscript{112} While Marshall’s example is first rate and desirable, Allon’s guidance implies an organizational culture that embraces disciplined dissent and encourages alternative views from any sector within the organization which regrettably is not universal within the current US system. Moreover, this appeal by Allon underscores the importance of morally courageous SMJFOs willing to risk their careers to provide timely and unvarnished best advice to their military superiors and political masters. The soldier, sailor, airmen, marine, and guardian deserve this level of knowledge, skill, ability, and performance from their leadership. It is imperative that leadership provides it. It is essential that the military education system discusses, dissects, and provides examples of disciplined dissent that was accepted, applied, and resulted in a good outcome.

John Lewis Gaddis, a respected strategic scholar and former presidential advisor, provides yet another look at strategy with his definition. “By “strategy” I mean quite simply the process by which ends are related to means, intentions to capabilities, objectives to resources.”


Gaddis uses his definition to great utility in his book, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*. He counsels that leaders and staff in the national security enterprise “consciously or unconsciously” use such a process to develop and implement strategy but practitioners, scholars, and students “have paid curiously little attention to it.” Gaddis relates that it becomes extremely difficult to examine and explain the historical “mutations, incarnations, and transformations” of the strategy of containment without a baseline definition and process. This generates a requirement for all Joint Officers but specifically those striving to think strategically to have some reliable definition and process to frame and guide the science and artistry required to be strategic minded.

Looking through the eyes of our former enemy and current strategic competitor we look for insights on strategy from a different perspective. A definition or description of strategy from the former Soviet Union, Soviet General Aleksandr Svechin gives us an alternate cultural perspective on this difficult subject. Svechin explains,

Strategy is the art of combining preparations for war and the grouping of operations for achieving the goal set by the war for the armed forces. Strategy decides issues associated with the employment of the armed forces and all the resources of a country for achieving ultimate war aims. While operational art must take into account the possibilities presented by the immediate rear (front logistics), the strategist must take into account the entire rear, both his own and the enemies, represented by the state with all its economic and political capabilities. A strategist will be successful if he correctly evaluates the nature of a war, which depends on different economic, social, geographic, administrative, and technical factors.

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An analysis of Svechin’s definition of strategy reinforces Clausewitz’s requirement for first understanding, then articulating, and finally achieving the goal or “ultimate war aims” and reveals that the nature of war relies on a multitude of factors like economics, social complexities, geographic variables, administration requirements and technical issues. The SMJFO must have a working knowledge of all areas – both generally and specifically for application to actual situations.

Svechin continues,

Strategy is the art of military leaders, primarily the art of those persons called on to resolve the basic problems set forth by a wartime situation and they transmit their strategic decisions for execution by operational artists. Strategy is the art of the entire high command of an army, because not only front commanders and army commanders, but also corps commanders, would be incapable of accomplishing their operational missions if they are incapable of clear strategic thinking. Svechin like others emphasizes the artistry involved in strategy. While a systems perspective, big data, and other scientific information contribute to strategic mindedness, the SMJFO must display an artist’s creativity and rely on much more than science. Although embracing a different ideology, Svechin provides excellent counsel that SMJFOs need to understand and apply. Moreover, Svechin recognizes and emphasizes the imperative to study strategy,

The need for all commanders to study strategy follows from the fact that it should not be put off until the time of person is assigned to a critical leadership position. Strategy is a discipline in which success depends very little on the memorization of precepts issued by a school or the assimilation of logical constructs contained in textbooks on strategy…In strategy the center of gravity lies in developing an independent point of view which primarily requires careful homework. Familiarization with strategic topics must begin at the start of military service, and one must study the military historical past from the


vantage point of these topics, evaluate the military events one has personally experienced and examine the current evolution of the military profession.\footnote{Svečin, Aleksandr A. 1992. \textit{Strategy}. Minneapolis, Minn: East View Publ.76.}

Svechin encourages an early start to an officer’s strategic education. While the US career pattern does not stress strategic issues early in a junior officer’s career, positive educational adaptations over time now expose officers to strategic problems and strategic thinking in their pre-commissioning schools. Moreover, the current professional military education system provides emphasis and limited exposure to strategic issues throughout an officer’s career. Regrettably, “an independent point of view” is not actively fostered during a US officer’s tactical years in most units, formal training, and professional education. While junior officers primarily focus on the tactical for good reason, this strategic minded gap must be overcome eventually, as the officers move to positions of ever-increasing responsibility and transition to strategic level positions.

Clausewitz specifies the distinction for a better understanding within the national security enterprise,

Routine, apart from its sheer inevitability, also contains one positive advantage. Constant practice leads to \textit{brisk, precise, and reliable} leadership, reducing natural friction and easing the working of the machine. In short, routine will be more frequent and indispensable, the lower the level of action. As the level rises, its use will decrease to the point where, at the summit, it disappears completely. Consequently, it is more appropriate to tactics than the strategy.\footnote{Von Clausewitz, Carl, Michael Howard, and Peter Paret. 1984. \textit{On war}. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. 153.}

The military educational institution must lay the conceptual and theoretical foundation and preparing leaders to be agile of mind and adaptable in disposition while the military training institution provides and enforces strict processes with recommended templates to reduce tactical friction and ease execution. However, context dependent, SMJFOs must adjust their mindsets to
the level of war they are working in. This mindset regulation must be seamless, as a SMJFO must be aware of and account for the multiple levels of war, based on any given specific circumstance which can challenge their thinking at any moment. Clausewitz gives us deeper insight into this condition,

> Once an improved theory helps the study of the conduct of war, and educates the mind and judgment of senior commanders, routine methods will no longer reach so high. Those types of routine that must be considered indispensable will then at least be based on a theory rather than consist in sheer imitation. No matter how superbly a great commander operates, there is always a subjective element in his work. 121

Furthermore, it is necessarily imperative that officers headed to positions of ever-increasing responsibility fully adapt their thinking as espoused by both General Marshall and General Mattis in Chapter I. In those vital strategic positions, a tactical mindset will not suffice when the situation is strategic in nature and requires a longer-range approach. Strategic decisions will consistently test senior leader’s and SMJFO’s mental agility. “Some people live in the present, oblivious of the past and blind to the future. Some dwell in the past. Very few have the knack of applying the past to the present in ways that show them the future.” 122 Senior leaders and SMJFOs must be educated and trained to “merge the tenses” as described in the above quote. 123 Developing officers with the appropriate KSAs is no easy task but one that the organizational culture must promote, support, and institutionalize. Regrettably, the organizational culture

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rewards current results over strategic minded decisions impeding the organizations strategic long-term performance and results.

Looking to the business world for views on strategy, there is no lack of literature, podcasts, seminars, and short courses on strategy, strategic thinking, and strategic planning. While a deep dive and a comparative analysis of business strategy literature is beyond the scope of this study, it is worthwhile to briefly examine the thinking of Henry Mintzberg to get a limited view of strategy from the business world. Mintzberg, a scholar and author on business and management issues, in his classic *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning* provides several insights useful for military professionals. First Mintzberg characterizes strategy into two different categories – *intended* strategy and *realized* strategy. He distinguishes between the two because of the intended effect by management on the environment and what the environment is willing to allow. Mintzberg clarifies,

> There is a simple way to find out: just ask those people who happily describe their (realized) strategies over the past five years what their intended strategies were five years earlier. A few may claim that their intentions were realized perfectly. Suspect their honesty. A few others may claim that their realizations had nothing to do with their intentions. Suspect their behavior. Most, we proposed, will give an answer that falls between these two extremes. For, after all, perfect realization implies brilliant foresight, not to mention inflexibility, while no realization implies mindlessness. The real world inevitably involves some thinking ahead of time as well as some adaptation enroute.

Mintzberg’s description concisely captures the tension between strategy, implementation of strategy, and the outcomes. While this section has clearly demonstrated the need for strategy, strategic mindedness and strategic thinking, Mintzberg reminds all that strategy is difficult.

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Moreover, if a strategy is implemented most likely adaptations will be required to achieve desired outcomes. The environment contributes or detracts from realization. Management must be fully involved and invested to properly develop, implement, and execute a strategy because of the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity of the environment that the strategy interacts with and responds to.

Mintzberg provides solid counsel to the national security enterprise. He posits that,

…few, if any, strategies can be purely deliberate, and few can be purely emergent. One suggests no learning, the other, no control. All real-world strategies need to mix these in some way--to attempt to control without stopping the learning process. Organizations, for example, often pursue what may be called umbrella strategies: the broad outlines are deliberate while the details are allowed to emerge within them. Thus, emerging strategies are not necessarily bad and deliberate ones good; effective strategies mix these characteristics in ways that reflect the conditions at hand, notably the ability to predict as well as the need to react to unexpected events.  

While extremely limited, this survey of the business view of strategy using Mintzberg’s views and insights is extremely useful. Mintzberg clearly describes the ever-present tension resident in the environment surrounding man’s attempt to anticipate future events and develop, implement, and assess strategies to control the environment and an efficient and effective way forward.

While Eric Larrabee does not define strategy, he succinctly captures its purpose, essence in execution, and the possible deadly effects of limited or poor strategic thinking.

Strategy includes the working out of its consequences. The ranks of martial authority from multiple stars to modest chevron correspond to an ordering of reality in which plans produce orders, orders produce actions, and actions produce isolated episodes of swirling fury where the issue hangs or falls on the skill and fortitude of individual human beings, under conditions of indescribable repulsiveness and stress.


Larrabee bluntly describes the strategic context and potential results of strategy for those entrusted to develop it and execute it. Strategy has consequences for all involved and for some it involves giving the “last full measure of devotion.” Without a strategic approach combined with strategic minded actions, the existence of the Joint Force and ultimately the Nation rely on day-to-day actions with a very limited view or no view to the future. The basic US direction and guidance, specified in the Declaration of Independence and then the Constitution, aspired to more than was achievable in the current day. These documents set the course for a better future and are a shining example of good aspirational strategy and what strategy can lead to. A SMJFO must always look to the future consequences of military action and not just the immediate outcomes. Again, Clausewitz provides insightful counsel that must be inculcated through education, training, and practice regarding the utility of force,

A subject which we last considered in Section 2 now forces itself on us again, namely the political object of the war. Hitherto it had been rather overshadowed by the law of extremes, the will to overcome the enemy and make him powerless. But if this law begins to lose its force and as this determination wanes, the political aim will reassert itself. If it is all a calculation of probabilities based on given individuals and conditions, the political object, which was the original motive, must become an essential factor in the equation… The political object--the original motive for the war--will thus determine both the military objective to be reached and the amount of effort it requires.  

An understanding of the political object, as stated earlier in the Chapter, is essential. It must exist or why use force some unspecified objective. If the political object exists, it must be clearly communicated so that all elements of the national security enterprise unify their thinking and action toward the stated common national goal.


Milan Vego, a highly respected scholar on the operational level of war at the Naval War College reflects that unlike the past “Modern strategy encompasses many elements that, in terms of theory and practice, are large in their scope and complexity.”  

He defines strategy in the following manner,

In its simplest terms, strategy can be defined broadly as the process of interrelating and harmonizing the ends with the means. The articulation of national interests, objectives, policies, and the commitments linked to the use of the instruments of national power (political, diplomatic, military, economic, informational, scientific, technological, and so on) it is called national security strategy (or grand strategy) --the art and science of using the instruments of national power to attain the political ends articulated by the national or alliance/coalition's political leadership. For each instrument of national or alliance/coalition power there is also a corresponding supporting strategy… Strategy is principally concerned with determining national or coalition/alignment objectives in a single theater or multiple theaters(of war); translating national or coalition/alignment political objectives into a series of military strategic objectives; using or threatening to use one's military and non-military sources of power against a potential opponent or opponents; Improving the countries or alliance/coalitions geostrategic position; Providing a vision of the character and duration of the future war; deciding(under the guidance of policy) whether the war will be primarily offensive or defensive, or combination of the two; deciding which will be the theater of primary effort and which the theater of secondary effort; Determining the distribution of various services and their forces among several theaters; Providing strategic guidance to subordinate operational commanders; Determining the desired strategic end state; and deciding the conditions for and the timing of conflict termination.

Vego recognized the essential requirement for successful strategy but also emphasized that without a proper bridge to tactics, especially in this current era, a thorough strategy by itself will not guarantee success. He advises,

A sound and coherent strategy, in and of itself, cannot secure victory in a war, because an intermediate stage is needed to orchestrate the accomplishment of strategic objectives through the use of military and nonmilitary sources of power. Hence operational art is a critical link between policy and strategy on one hand and physical combat with tactics on the other.

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the other period. Without this link tactics cannot lead to favorable strategic results. It is critical that the operational level be properly identified; otherwise, the strategic objectives cannot be accomplished by the tactical steps. Strategy and policy provide both the framework and directions for operational planning. They determine the desired strategic end state and the military strategic objectives. The basis of all operational plans is political and military strategic objectives laid down by the national or alliance / coalition leadership.

Vego’s counsel highlights the requirement for SMJFOs to understand strategy and the tactics required to implement strategy, but they must also have a third level of understanding – the operational. The operational level of war is the glue that holds the strategy and the tactics together. According to Vego, the operational level bridges and interfaces between strategy and tactics. A proficient SMJFO must be well versed as stated earlier in all three levels of war (and a fourth level as identified by Saskia Sassen in Chapter III). Israeli Brigadier General Shimon Naveh further expands on the importance of the operational level of warfare. First, Naveh recognizes that since the eighteenth-century war has been primarily organized on two levels, “Consequently, in the course of time, strategy and tactics crystallized as unique fields of knowledge to cope with the challenges posed at each of these two levels.” Despite technological changes and changes in the conduct of war, Naveh recognizes, “the theory of war remained confined to the traditional levels of tactics and strategy, while the intermediate level was largely ignored.” While this study focuses on the strategic mindedness of Joint Force officers it is evident that a component of their strategic mindedness must be the analysis, study,


and understanding of this relatively new level of war – the operational level of war. SMJFOs must not only clearly understand this bridge from strategy and tactics, but they must also master it. Naveh expands on this requirement,

A discussion of the operational level must face the following issues: in what distinct aspects does it differ from the strategic and tactical levels? What are the criteria by which an operational problem is to be identified? How should one differentiate between the practical aspects of operational art and the cognitive aspects deriving from the operational level? And finally: what is the justification for the assertion of a distinctive operational cognition? 135

While these questions, according to Naveh, have yet to be adequately answered, they cannot be ignored when applying a strategic minded approach to military operations and the national security and prosperity of the United States. Finally, Naveh posits that the operational level conforms “in its principles and characteristics, to the universal phenomenon of systems.” 136 An understanding of systems and a systems perspective then becomes yet another key dimension of strategic minded study and practice.

Continuing to explore the multiple facets of strategy, from the Strategy and Force Planning volume produced by the Security, Strategy and Forces Faculty at the Naval War College, the following insights emerge,

Strategy, after all, is not politically expedient; It is a long-term focusing instrument that helps shape the future environment… But, if an argument could be made in defense of strategy, it would be this; in the absence of strategy, there is no clear direction for the future, and any road will take you there as you suffer through one knee-jerk reaction to crisis and change after another…. Strategy provides a systematic approach to dealing


with change, both with what should and should not remain the same. Strategy in short, is the application of available means to secure desired ends. 137

While change is constant and pervasive, as we explore in Chapter III, strategy and strategic mindedness give the Joint Force the opportunity to handle change anticipating both challenges and opportunities versus reacting to them. Without strategy as a focusing instrument as described above, the nation will squander its considerable, yet finite, resources.

An exploration of strategy is incomplete without at least a cursory examination of its opposite. This section warrants a brief investigation of the potential opposites of strategy before closing. What is the opposite of “strategy”? While strategy itself is hard to define and characterize, its opposite is just as difficult to put in a simple understandable form. Is the opposite of strategy -- short term gain, corruption, apathy, chaos, selfish consideration of oneself interests, ad hoc thinking, reaction to specific stimuli with no anticipation or a combination of all the above? 138 Indictments on Russian performance in the Ukraine invasion indicate not only a lack of strategy but the opposite of strategy. 139 The organizational culture of the military must deeply analyze the opposite of strategy. It must charter its PME institutions to teach this alternative perspective to its students, who the culture desires to be strategic minded, to assist all in better understanding strategy on the path to developing, executing, and managing strategy for


138 The idea for identifying and describing the opposite of strategy came from Dr. Austin Jersild, one of my dissertation committee members. This analysis looking at the reverse of strategy needs to be explored by SMJFOs and the PME institutions that teach strategy.

the benefit of the Joint Force and ultimately the nation. The scope for study, exploration, experimentation, and application is vast but of great utility.

While the available definitions and descriptions of strategy are innumerable, this section closes with the Joint Force description contained in Joint Doctrine Note (JDN) 2-19. This doctrinal note “emphasizes the description, preparation, production, and implementation of military strategy necessary for the Joint Staff, Services, and Combatant Commands to fulfill their responsibilities in developing military strategies that support the national strategy as developed by the administration.” 140 The description from inside the Joint Force reveals numerous areas that SMJFOs must be cognizant of and work to earn a deep understanding of. According to the doctrinal note,

The objective of strategy, in the modern sense, is to serve policy—the positions of governments and others cooperating, competing, or waging war in a complex environment. The ultimate goal of strategy is to achieve policy objectives by maintaining or modifying elements of the strategic environment to serve those interests… While military strategy is principally a function of creative art, the logic, or science, behind every strategy must be rigorous and founded upon the evidence of history; the arithmetic of available resources; a clear acknowledgment of time horizons and distances; and astute analysis of friendly, neutral, adversary, and enemy interests and will. Developing military strategy requires an understanding of facts and assumptions to inform strategic decision making. Its logic is both inductive and deductive, guiding purposeful action towards its end. 141


The SMJFO must then develop that foundational knowledge into a “capability” for application. It is not enough for a military practitioner to just develop a base of knowledge; they must also apply that knowledge to achieve better thinking leading to better decision-making. The professional military education system or attendance at applicable programs in civilian universities and programs can provide the knowledge foundation for strategic mindedness but that education must be followed by some program, training, or apprenticeship to ensure that knowledge turns into capability. Moreover, emphasis on creativity and artistry married with scientific analysis and big data, a systems perspective, guides the Joint Force officer towards strategic mindedness. “Military strategy has evolved from its narrow conception as the martial skills of military genius to a contemporary understanding involving a broader set of abilities required to employ the instruments of national power across a broad spectrum of competition and conflict in pursuit of objectives, in a transregional, all-domain, and multifunctional environment.”

The Joint Doctrine Note then lays out several areas that must be considered when devising strategy. The guidance in the note reinforces several insights garnered during the examination of other descriptions of strategy. First the note specifies,

Strategy formulation must consider the strategic environment (e.g., geography, character, and relationship of political entities and their interests, and resources) subject to norms and constants present. These factors present themselves differently in each strategic interaction and exert considerable influence on a particular strategic situation. Additionally, these factors may change during execution, necessitating revision of the strategy.


Then the Joint Doctrine establishes a simplified description of the overall aim of strategy itself that is extremely useful for the SMJFO to process and understand.

In its simplest expression, strategy determines what needs to be accomplished, the methods to accomplish it, and the resources required by those methods. A comprehensive and effective strategy answers four basic questions:

1. What are the desired ends?
2. What are the ways to get there?
3. What means or resources are available?
4. What are the risks associated with the strategy?  

While the note provides a simplified framework for consideration, mimicking Lykee’s work mentioned above, it is not a checklist for producing strategic action. As we have noticed in much of the literature regarding strategy, “Strategy is both an iterative process and a product— the reflective synergy of art and science creating a coherent bridge from the present to the future, enabling the translation of ideas into action to get what you want while addressing potential risks to the nation.”

While an examination of several definitions regarding strategy established and validated many insights for SMJFOs, the next section surveys four individuals generally recognized as practical strategists to extract even more information regarding strategic mindedness.

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STRATEGISTS

Another area to examine for inspiration and insights on the characteristics and educational needs of SMJFOs is that of strategists and those whose responsibilities fall manly in the strategic realm – Generals and Admirals. While this area is ripe for discovering insights for application it is another area that provides extensive examples, so the study limits the analysis to four US strategists: Bernard Brodie, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Brent Scowcroft. Moreover, the analysis of the strategy will not cover their full body of work but will only examine a few events that contributed to their ability to think strategically and some of their specific strategic thinking. An examination of generalship and admiralship using Eliot Cohen’s *Supreme Command* will assist in framing even more requisite KSAs for SMJFOs.

Additionally, as we begin our look in this area, we will limit the scope by looking at the work of strategists that begins following World War II. Ultimately, this is an area ripe with examples as the strategists of this era had to begin considering nuclear force for the first time. In his book *The Wizards of Armageddon* Fred Kaplan identifies Bernard Brodie as one of if not the top strategist of the first nuclear age. Brodie worked for the Navy during World War II and “was fascinated by the weapons of war, especially how they affected the tactics and strategies of those great battles on the high seas that have proved so decisive to the outcomes of war over the past few centuries.”

One of Brodie’s assignments was on the staff of Admiral Ernest J. King, Chief of Naval Operations, and the commander of all US Naval forces during World War II. Based on the experiences and knowledge gained during that assignment, Brodie wrote a guide to naval

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strategy that became a foundational textbook at the Naval War College. At 35, Brodie’s reputation as a naval strategist began to solidify.\footnote{Kaplan, Fred M. 1983. \textit{The Wizards of Armageddon}. New York: Simon and Schuster. 9.}

A glance into Brodie’s background before the war reveals an impressive array of teachers and mentors. Brodie studied under Quincy Wright at the University of Chicago. Additionally, he admired and was influenced by Jacob Viner, a respected forward-thinking economist. “From Wright, Brodie learned about the multiple causes and complexities of war. He picked up a well-blended mix of realism and idealism: a view that peace relies on more than provisions of international law, but also that, as Wright said, “opinions and ideas are an element in political power no less, and perhaps more, important than armies, economic resources and geographic position.”\footnote{Kaplan, Fred M. 1983. \textit{The Wizards of Armageddon}. New York: Simon and Schuster. 14-15.} The insights from Jacob Viner were just as powerful as those he garnered from Wright. “Power, thought Viner, could be surrendered only to something more powerful still. Governments will not lay down their swords before a world government simply out of goodwill or in the name of international cooperation. Doing so would violate their sovereign interests, and no nation could be expected to submit voluntarily to so clear a request of surrender.”\footnote{Kaplan, Fred M. 1983. \textit{The Wizards of Armageddon}. New York: Simon and Schuster. 15.}

Although Brodie benefited greatly from his Wright and Viner mentorship, he developed even more as he studied and learned under Edward Earle Mead at Princeton. Mead schooled Brodie in strategy and Brodie discovered a new layer of fidelity regarding strategy. Mead taught him that strategy is “not merely a concept of wartime but an inseparable element in statecraft at all times, that military policy must be firmly linked with national politics and foreign policy.”
Regardless, of the specific lessons that Brodie learned from his mentors, it is important to note that this period of mentorship and the time spent thinking under such powerful mentors was an essential element of Brodie’s development as a strategist. This factor must be considered as the Joint Force seeks to develop SMJFOs. Where do we find the mentors but more importantly where in an officer’s current career path do we find available and sufficient time to study under mentors in a learning zone and for an appropriate amount of time?

As we examine Bernard Brodie and focus on his development as a strategist, Brodie himself provides sound insight into strategy. While Brodie has much more to offer regarding strategy and nuclear strategy a detailed look at his work is beyond the scope of this paper. It is important though to highlight one of his chapters in his classic book *Strategy in the Missile Age* for consideration and consultation regarding SMJFO development. Contemplating Brodie’s counsel, we are reminded that “STRATEGY WEARS A DOLLAR SIGN”. ¹⁵⁰ This counsel is extremely important for SMJFOs because fiscal discipline is a vital consideration as they think about the future defense and promotion of national interests. While in the ideal or in an aspirational mindset this approach may be useful, all instruments of US national power must be aware of the cost. Donald Nuechterlein in his treatise on national interests cautions that the economic cost of intervention must be accountable for. Accordingly, Nuechterlein states,

> Few presidents are willing to send the United States forces overseas in the combat without having a reasonably clear idea of what the operation is likely to cost. American military forces, unlike those of many other countries, are highly mobile, but they are also very expensive to move and to supply… determining the financial cost of a military deployment also involves the calculation of the duration of the conflict, in this part of the equation is not always predictable. Therefore, the president must rely heavily on his military and intelligence advisers to help him estimate costs.” ¹⁵¹


Although Brodie focuses on cost considerations in another way, he firmly supports Nuechterlein’s premise that cost must be a prime consideration. Brodie looks at the cost to develop capability and the tendency to overspend due to the environment. He states, “We do not have and probably never will have enough money to buy all the things we could effectively use for our defense. The choices we have to make would be difficult and painful even if our military budget were twice what it is today. The fact that we are dealing with a lesser sum only makes the choices harder and more painful.” 152

Another strategist certainly worthy of examination is Henry Kissinger. Kissinger distinguished himself both as a scholar and a practitioner across his many decades of service and academia. A prolific writer, Kissinger published far and wide across a variety of subjects and disciplines but always had a view to the strategic consequences of history and current events and ensured that his writings examined future consequences. Kissinger’s life gives a solid glimpse into the necessary education and preparation required to become strategic minded. In Kissinger: Portrait of a Mind, Graubard examines Kissinger’s early years. Graubard starts by describing Kissinger as an individual who read history and had deep interest in the subject but not qualified or classified as a historian. Regardless, he developed a deep knowledge base relying on an aggressive study and reflection on history that he relied upon and leveraged throughout his years of dedicated service. Interestingly Kissinger initially developed his considerable knowledge not as a full-time student but as one who worked during the day in a factory and attended classes at City College in Manhattan in the evening.

Kissinger felt he spent his days in an industrial factory and his nights in an educational factory. The first provided him a modest income that he shared with his family; the

second, he and his parents assumed, would one day give him the credentials that would enable him to pursue a professional career with the possibilities of a more substantial income… Nothing that happened the Kissinger during those years encouraged him to read more widely; his historical interests were as underdeveloped when he was twenty as when he arrived in New York as a boy of fifteen.  

World War II provided Kissinger the opportunity to expand his vision and interests, but it was Kissinger who took full advantage of the opportunity of the infantry basic training experience at Camp Croft, South Carolina. “He was a solitary figure who observed and listened” These characteristics of observation and listening are essential for SMJFOs who want to expand their knowledge base and foundation for future endeavors.

After basic training, Kissinger attended Clemson College and then the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) at Lafayette College in Easton Pennsylvania. ASTP provided select individuals the opportunity to learn subjects and skills that the Army would require in the war in Europe and the Pacific. While Kissinger studied engineering and gained no knowledge of history, he gained vital insight into his own superb qualities as a student. Kissinger’s experiences at another training base, in combat, and as an instructor at the European Intelligence School at Oberammergau, after ASTP were extremely influential but he made even greater progress as a student at Harvard University after the war. At Harvard, “he was preoccupied not so much with preparing for a career as with learning how to learn. For the first time in his life, Kissinger


experienced the exhilaration that came from habitual reading and writing; he became something of a recluse.”  

While at Harvard he had the good fortune to become a mentee of William Y. Elliott who assigned his students and Kissinger a series of weekly reading and writing assignments “which ranged over vast intellectual terrain.”  

Elliott would then have discussions about the specific topics. Kissinger looked forward to the reading and writing and always pushed for more. This process demonstrated a method useful for professional military educators and Joint Force officers seeking to become more strategic minded. Kissinger read across a wide variety of topics and disciplines, wrote about what he read, reflected on the topics, and then conducted a discourse on the topics with peers, instructors, and his mentor who invested precious one on one time and attention with Kissinger to help him garner the most out of his individual study and reflection. This helped solidify Kissinger’s thinking and spurred recognition and consideration of alternative perspectives. Kissinger noted that Elliot had a “readiness to discuss any intellectual issue that Kissinger raised.” The Seminar “Lucky13” approach to strategi mindedness applies this technique within the specified limitations of the Joint Combined Warfighting School’s course objectives and desired outcomes. Chapter V describes the approach. Kissinger took full advantage of Elliot’s interest in his students and attempted to please him with his “intellectual venturesomeness.”  


Kissinger demonstrated a specific philosophy not prevalent in the academic realm at the time and is even hotly debated today – a focus more so on the human dimension of world affairs rather than the technological or “black box” offerings. In a search for certainty, Kissinger eschewed technical solutions for the socially complex issues of international relations and human interaction. Kissinger believed that the individual was the responsible agent for the outcomes in world affairs.

Reason discloses objective necessity, the inexorability of causal laws, the linkages which enable man to master his environment. They present life as a technical task and instill a manipulatory attitude. In their sphere they may achieve tremendous successes. The physicist has opened vistas of worlds which even the fatuous optimism of the late 19th century which scarcely believe. But a knowledge of objective necessity has definite limits. It is confined to a naturalistic mechanism in which the scientist does not directly participate. 160

As Kissinger progressed, he began preparation to become a professor and started his PhD dissertation studies. Kissinger, “moved rapidly toward an intensive study of international relations. In the relations between states, he believed, lay the future peace of the world and the destiny of the human race.” 161 A focused SMJFO should have a similar goal in mind – peace for the future of the world, a way to prevent conflict, or a way to return the world to a peace footing through the thoughtful application of military force and a focus and deeper understanding of the human component of war.

As Kissinger’s studies proceeded so did his strategic minded thinking. Kissinger clearly saw the relation between the instruments of national power especially the diplomatic and the military. Kissinger, “saw no way to divorce diplomacy from military policy and insisted that they

were in inextricably joined. Peace was achieved, in his mind, not by a calculated search for it, but as the necessary by-product of an international order that was stable.” 162

While Kissinger’s strategic thinking, and strategic accomplishments have been the subject of numerous books and scholarly articles, this study does not aim to examine them in detail but will highlight two critical items of importance for strategic minded Joint Force Officers chronicled in his book *Diplomacy*. First, Kissinger recognizes the importance of assumptions when attempting to anticipate the future. He features the United Kingdom and their thinking in the march to World War II. To defuse an imminent German attack on Poland the UK drafted a uni-lateral guarantee to Poland. Based on four assumptions, each of which turned out to be wrong. 163 Regardless of the outcome, Kissinger’s historical example demonstrates the importance of making assumptions to anticipate the future and the need to flex if those assumptions turn out flawed. While SMJFOs must strive to think through the assumptions they apply, they must also be flexible enough to adjust when those assumptions prove inaccurate.

Another example from Kissinger regards prioritization and establishing national priorities.

> America must be careful not to multiply moral commitments while the financial and military resources for the conduct of a global foreign policy are being curtailed. Sweeping pronouncements not matched by either the ability or the willingness to back them up diminish America's influence on all other matters as well. The precise balance between the moral and the strategic elements of American foreign policy cannot be prescribed in the abstract. But the beginning of wisdom consists of recognizing that a balance needs to be struck. However powerful America is, no country has the capacity to impose all its preferences when the rest of mankind; priorities must be established. Wherever the balance is established between values and necessity, foreign policy must begin with some definition of what constitutes a vital interest—a change in the international environment so likely to undermine the national security that it must be resisted no matter what form the threat takes or how ostensibly legitimate it appears…

The controversy surrounding almost all American military actions in the post-Cold War

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period shows that a wider consensus on where America should draw the line does not yet exist. To bring it about is a major challenge to national leadership.\textsuperscript{164}

An effective SMJFO must understand how to establish priorities. At the strategic level innumerable variables impact the environment, situation, and ultimately decisions. An SMJFO must clearly understand that the United States and the Joint Force cannot do everything, and hard choices must be made. Clear thinking reveals the essential amongst the many.

According to Charles Gati, Zbigniew Brzezinski is another strategist worthy of examination. “Zbigniew Brzezinski finds himself among fewer than a half a dozen widely acknowledged American strategic thinkers. Along with Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, and Brent Scowcroft, Brzezinski is clearly a top tier intellectual celebrity, his views on U.S. foreign policy and global affairs sought avidly by media in the United States and abroad.” \textsuperscript{165} Brzezinski, born in Poland, grew up in a family with upper class roots and diplomatic backgrounds. He experienced both Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia as an impressionable youngster, moved to Canada but ultimately ended up in the United States. His early years exposed him to a wide variety of hardships, cultural patterns, and wide-ranging experiences. This developmental period provided an excellent foundation to build upon during his academic years and ultimately assisted him during his national service. His academic background and foundation matured at Harvard University where, “His native intelligence and keen analytic facility ensured


his eventual rise into the elite in the United States, and his disciplined mind and work ethic
guaranteed he would stay there.” 166

While Brzezinski had a long and successful career with the US Government and the US
National Security enterprise, this study limits its examination of his strategic performance but
highlights two key items from his background. First, he understood that intellectual and
professional development is a lifelong process and that as he aged his knowledge, understanding,
and thinking matured greatly. Accordingly, Brzezinski,

would not claim that he understood as much at age 30 or 40 as he did at 60 or 70, or that
he does now. He wrote some things 50 years ago, as a junior member of President
Kennedy's NSC, that do not stand up particularly well against the historical record [but]
every strategic thinker has at least a few sartorial failures in his conceptual closet from
earlier times; it goes with the territory. If one does not extend oneself, one cannot be
meaningfully correct--one cannot in the sense we mean it here really be said to think at
all. Humans still grow intellectually and emotionally even in the third of their lives, and a
keen perspective that age often brings forth may still be recognized even in a society in
which respect for elders is much lacking.” 167 Brzezinski recognized that experience
married with study and reflection produced better knowledge, skills, and abilities that
could be readily apply. While experience, study, or reflection in isolation are useful, in
combination they are illuminating. Clausewitz preceded Brzezinski’s thinking by over
two centuries when he suggested, “The knowledge needed by a senior commander is
distinguished by the fact that it can only be attained by a special talent, through the
medium of reflection, study and thought: and intellectual instinct which extracts the
essence from the phenomena of life, as a bee sucks honey from a flower. In addition to
study and reflection, life itself serves as a source.” 168

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Johns Hopkins University Press. 192.

Johns Hopkins University Press. 193.

One other thought that generates from Brzezinski’s, as well as Kissinger ‘s, background and highlighted by one of Brzezinski’s friends was the notion that they were better strategic thinkers because they we foreign born versus US born.

One of Brzezinski’s friends…, Owen Harries, once quipped that if you want to be a sage observer of international politics, it is a good idea to start by not being an American, and by not being young… The opposite of arrogance is humility. Humility is a critical characteristic of a genuine strategic thinker. A genuine strategic thinker understands the satire of contingency and human affairs, the inability to vanquish structural uncertainty, and the limits of planning. Brzezinski has been categorical on this point: “global politics do not lend themselves to pat formulations and clear-cut predictions,” and he has long been a critic of abstract formal models that pretend otherwise.” 169

Whether you subscribe to Harries’ premise or not it is useful to be empathetic as a strategic minded thinker. Empathy is espoused by most designers and strategists as it is imperative to see the other side of an issue before you attempt to solve the issue. It is all part of seeking and gaining a better understanding of the environment. Whether being foreign born exposed to another culture or cultures from birth and then migrating to the United States is key or not, it is certainly extremely important to apply empathy to the environment in order to gain a deeper understanding of an issue. For instance, an overall inability to see the Vietnam War through the eyes of the Vietnamese prevented the United States from being successful in that conflict.

Richard Helms, a CIA director during the Vietnam War stated,

Vietnam was my nightmare for a good ten years… We tried every operational approach in the book, and committed our most experienced field operatives to the effort to get inside the government in Hanoi… Within the agency, our failure to penetrate the North Vietnamese government was the single most frustrating aspect of those years. We could not determine what was going on at the highest levels of Ho’s government, nor could we learn how policy was made or who was making it. At the root of this failure of intelligence was our national ignorance of Vietnamese history, society, and language… We did not choose to know, so we did not know how much we did not know. The great

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sadness… was our ignorance… which led us to mis-assess, not comprehend, and make a lot of wrong decisions. \textsuperscript{170}

Regardless of whether the foreign-born strategists were capable of more empathy or not, a lack of empathy certainly hampers the ability of SMJFOs to better understand the environment as they think through key variables to guide decision-making. Developing an empathetic outlook then becomes a key characteristic of strategic minded thinking.

The final American strategist considered by this study, and recommended by Gati above, and as recognized by Daalder and Destler as the best US National Security up through the George W. Bush administration, is Brent Scowcroft. \textsuperscript{171} Again, the interest for his study with Scowcroft as the others isn’t in his extensive national security resume but in his background and development into a strategist. What can we learn from Scowcroft’s formative years that can be applied to the development of modern day strategic minded Joint Force officers? While Scowcroft attended the United States Military Academy, graduating in June of 1947, he had no intentions at that time to be a career military officer. He projected that he would serve his mandatory military commitment of four years and return to his childhood home in Ogden, Utah and join the family business. \textsuperscript{172} Thankfully, for the US National Security enterprise, Scowcroft adjusted his career plans.

As a 2\textsuperscript{nd} Lt pilot, Scowcroft, crash landed his F-51 aircraft during a training exercise. Scowcroft almost died but despite his injuries, he recovered. During his recovery, Scowcroft was


invited to return to his alma mater to teach economics under COL Herman Beukema. Beukema, the Head of the Department of Social Sciences at the United States Military Academy, led the Army Specialized Training Program where Kissinger had furthered his intellectual development during WWII. Beukema, a forward thinking and innovative educator, “began an extensive effort to reform the education of U.S. Army officers. He wanted faculty members in the Department of Social Sciences who would broaden the cadets’ horizons and prepare them to be effective leaders under the new conditions of the postwar world.”  

As a result, Beukema wanted instructors who could serve “as role models for the cadets and inspire them” not just those who were the best academics. Scowcroft fit the description.

In preparation for his assignment as an instructor at West Point, Scowcroft attended Columbia University to study economics. Scowcroft loved the learning environment at Columbia.

For the first time, he found learning enjoyable, even fascinating. Whereas West feels weird Point had been mostly rote learning, his graduate classes challenged him to think in much broader terms and engage on a more abstract level. Scowcroft was now more mature, more motivated, more receptive to new ideas, and better able to appreciate the broader relevance of his studies… Graduate School expose Scowcroft to a sophisticated realm of ideas and a larger intellectual universe; it challenged him. What's more, his classes and teachers provided him with the tools to think about the development of the remarkable vents that the nation had just lived through: the origins and outcomes of the Second World War, the new international order arising from Bretton woods, the establishment of the United Nations, the Korean War, and the emergence of the Cold War. Especially compelling for Scowcroft was thinking about the potential for and dangers of nuclear weapons and figuring out the logic of their use. While he had always

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kept up with current events and closely followed the news, now he was learning the history and theory to make sense of it all. 175

While a student at Columbia he had the good fortune to be mentored by William T. R. Fox who advised Scowcroft on his master thesis as well. Fox was a prominent professor and was well known for coining the term superpower in his book *The Superpowers: The United States, Britain, and The Soviet Union*. Scowcroft gave great credit to Fox for shaping his strategic thinking. In an interview with Phillip Zelikow, Scowcroft acknowledged,

My guiding star was William T. R. Fox, who had a really fine strategic mind, and I was fortunate to have him to guide me. I won’t go through the list, but he’s probably the one person who stands out in my mind as having shaped the way I thought. This was the time when [Hans] Morgenthau’s epic treatise was new, and I guess I cut my teeth on realism, but with a human edge that came from Fox and some of the others. 176

Scowcroft received his degree from Columbia, returned to West Point, and excelled in his instructional duties. At West Point he served under Beukema and then Colonel George “Abe” Lincoln, who followed,

Beukema in wanting to make the Department of Social Sciences the “institutional engine” of the reform of Army education. He realized that future Army leaders needed to understand the full scope of the challenges that the United States would face when mobilizing for Total War. He saw that US Army officers would have to be capable of working in alliances with foreign military and civilian leaders, and that they had to be able to appreciate the difficulties accompanying the occupation of foreign countries and the challenges of dealing with people who espoused contrasting ideologies and differing faiths. 177


Both Beukema and Lincoln were superb mentors for Scowcroft, just as Fox had been at Columbia and while Scowcroft continued to develop his strategic mindset throughout his military career, he developed the firm foundation that shaped his strategic thinking at Columbia University and his tour of duty as an economics instructor at West Point.

Examining four of the best US strategists – Bernard Brodie, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Brent Scowcroft – highlights the importance of mentorship, the ability to read consistently and widely, the power of passion and the extensive time required to establish a knowledge foundation based on history, theories, and conceptual discourse.

**THE DIMENSIONS OF STRATEGY**

Continuing the examination into the basics, nuances, and sophistications of the concept of strategy, it is of great utility to characterize “the maze of strategic phenomena…via what Michael Howard called the dimensions of strategy.” 178 Howard identified four dimensions – the social, the logistical, the operational, and the technological. Colin Gray building on Howard’s approach to strategic complexity, describes seventeen dimensions “clustered into three categories.” 179 Identifying these dimensions will give SMJFOs additional insight into strategy and topics that must be considered when building and then applying strategic minded thinking. A simple consideration of each dimension reveals even further awareness into strategy and the subjects required in a strategic-minded educational program.


First to identify the dimensions we highlight Gray’s three categories. The first category *People and Politics* encompasses the following dimensions: People, Society, Culture, Politics, Ethics. His second category *Preparation for War* includes: Economics and Logistics, Organization (including defense and force planning), Military Administration (including recruitment, training, and most aspects of military armament), Information and Intelligence, Strategic Theory and Doctrine, and Technology. Gray terms his final category *War Proper* and places the following dimensions in this category: Military operations, Command (political and military), Geography, Friction (including chance and uncertainty), the Adversary, and Time.

Second as we break down each of the dimensions, further aspects of strategy appear and must be accounted for in strategic-minded education and thinking. Clearly the dimensions, revealed in Gray’s first category *People and Politics*, underline the importance of the human element in strategy and the critical aspects of human interaction. While the intricacies of Society, Culture, Politics, and Ethics are not easy subjects to master, they must be included in all calculations and considerations regarding strategy. These dimensions figure in the strategic minded analysis of the environment especially when seeking to strip the environmental noise away to determine the relevant signals.

Within Gray’s second category *Preparation for War* more familiar military subjects emerge. Again, however, the basics, let alone the nuances and sophistications of these areas in

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both a general and specific way, require years and in some instances decades of study, reflection, mentorship, deliberate practice, and practical experience to truly master. While the Joint Force organization accounts for this by developing core specialties in each of the services, the SMJFO, and certainly Admirals and Generals, must develop a working knowledge of all these subjects. They must develop the art of asking good questions to ensure that each of these subjects receive the scrutiny required for the leaders and staff to offer “clear eyed appraisals” of the complex social issues encountered daily within the national security enterprise and the Joint Force.

Gray’s third category *War Proper* provides insight into Military Operations, Command, Geography, Friction, Chance, and Uncertainty, Adversary, and Time. 183 The Joint Force and the PME enterprise must cover and emphasize each of these subjects to meet the guidance promulgated in the 2018 National Defense Strategy Executive Summary. This knowledge and the skills associated with them are non-negotiable as officers prepare to design, plan, prepare, execute, and assess military operations in support of national policy.

**STRATEGY AND POWER**

As the examination of Strategy in this Chapter heads towards its conclusion, this study addresses one final aspect of strategy and that is the concept of power. Power is ubiquitous in all aspects of world affairs and is a key component of strategy. It is not easily understood and as with strategy, itself, it is difficult to find one universally relevant definition for power. As Joseph Nye relates, “Any attempt to develop a single index of power is doomed to fail because power depends upon human relationships that vary in different contexts.” 184 Power’s dependence on

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human relationships generates complexity and within this complexity is where SMJFOs must bring their creative and critical thinking skills to bear on current operations and the anticipated future. While the liberal theorists believe in an ideal world making power immaterial, the evidence in real time suggests that the agents in world affairs are less than ideal for any number of reasons. Moreover, not all states are good states. Additionally, the current era of globalization has created a whole new set of super-empowered individuals and non-state actors who daily threaten international stability. Chapter III examines fragile, failing, and failed states and globalization in more detail to better inform strategic mindedness and strategic minded education. While the study will not conduct a comprehensive examination, it will consider several views on power to establish the position that power is a key component of strategy and must be comprehensively studied and considered by those strategic minded Joint Force officers as they approach the strategic level of war and attempt to anticipate future national security requirements.

Although many definitions and concepts exist surrounding power, the study starts by considering John Mearsheimer’s basic thoughts on power as laid out in his The Strategy of Great Power Politics. Mearsheimer establishes the value of power in the international environment highlighting “... calculations about power lie at the heart of how states think about the world around them. Power is the currency of great power politics; the states compete for it among themselves. What money is to economics, power is to international relations.” Mearsheimer recognizes the importance of power and its role in state behavior. He also notes, “there is


considerable disagreement about what power is and how to measure it.” 187 With that he emphasizes,

States have two kinds of power: latent power and military power. These two forms of power are closely related but not synonymous, because they are derived from different kinds of assets. Latent power refers to the socioeconomic ingredients that go into building military power; it is largely based on a state’s wealth and the overall size of its population… In international politics, however, states effective power is ultimately a function of its military forces and how they compare with the military forces of rival states. 188

While many strategic scholars and practitioners, like Mearsheimer, still see military power as decisively important in the current age, other scholars and practitioners have recognized that power is decaying, and that military power “delivers less than it once did.” 189 Moses Naim posits, “In geopolitics, small players—whether “minor” countries or nonstate entities—have acquired new opportunities to veto, interfere in, redirect, and generally stymie the concerted efforts of “big powers” and multilateral organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF).” 190 This is a critical factor in world affairs for those who wish to be strategic minded as the number of stakeholders and actors capable, of making a positive or negative impact, has risen exponentially. A SMJFO must clearly understand the traditional aspects of power but must also be aware of and savvy to the changes in the environment that decays traditional power. Naim cautions, “the implications of the decay of power are momentous and manifold. But it will be impossible to distill them and integrate them into the world view in the mindsets of decision


makers—in people’s homes, in presidential palaces or in boardrooms—unless we create a different conversation that takes into account what is happening to power.” 191 This different conversation hinges on the KSAs of strategic minded thinkers and the organizational culture that produces those strategic leaders and conversations regarding the changes present in the environment and the method to handle those changes. SMJFOs must drive these different conversations. Chapter III explores continuities and change in greater detail.

Hans Morgenthau, an American political scientist, avoids equations but presents a simple definition of power and then describes several elements of national power. “Power, according to Morgenthau in Politics among Nations, is man’s control over the minds and actions of other men.” 192 With the state as the primary actor (which is now under assault by the effects of globalization), in Morgenthau’s view, the state’s ability to achieve this control relies on the states’ power attributes. His assessment identifies eight key elements that comprise national power. Those elements are: “geography, natural resources, industrial capacity, military preparedness, population, national character, national morale and diplomacy.” 193 Morgenthau’s analysis values both tangible and intangible elements recognizing that power cannot be calculated using only metrics. He understands that a nation or “micropower” for that matter, requires more than physical resources to generate and wield power. The Ukraine crisis is a case in point. The Russian’s underestimated the will of Ukraine. Morgenthau though, as does the current international community, clearly grasps that without considerable resources to defend or


promote them, national character and morale can ring hollow against a determined opponent with greater power resources therefore the US and international resource support for the Ukrainians.

Attempting to measure power to guide national security decision-making, Ray Cline, a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Cold War analyst devised a formula for calculating national power. Cline’s purpose was to, “assess the power of nations in the international context as a basis for planning American defense and foreign policy.” 194 Framing power conceptually, Cline developed the following equation: \( Pp = (C+E+M) \times (S+W) \) where \( Pp \) = Perceived Power, \( C = \) Critical Mass, \( E = \) Economic Capability, \( M = \) Military Capability, \( S = \) National Strategy and \( W = \) Will. 195 Simon Serfaty in *A World Recast: An American Moment in A Post-Western Order* also develops an equation to measure power with similar power attributes to Cline; however, he made several changes to mitigate several flaws in Cline’s formula. First, in Cline’s formula, a nation could have a zero in any of the major categories but be numerically superior in other categories and still be viewed as overall powerful because Cline’s formula was additive. He did multiply the basic attributes with strategy and national will, but his protocol made it difficult to score zero in this area. Serfaty’s formula, which was similar in some respects to Cline, is \( Pp = (M \times F \times E) \times I \) where \( M \) is critical mass (based on statistics from the CIA *World Factbook*), \( E \) is economic power (based on an Indian economic study using four broad variables: government revenues, foreign currency reserves, export of goods and services, and human capitol), and \( F \) is

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force (based on the Global Firepower Index of military strength).\textsuperscript{196} I is for the Intangibles with a subjective value over 1 or under 1.\textsuperscript{197} Serfaty’s formula is multiplicative and if a nation scores zero in any one category it drops its overall power ranking to zero. Serfaty still recognizes the United States as the only complete power in the world, based on its - “economic, military, diplomatic, ideological, technological, and cultural” attributes.\textsuperscript{198} These are just two ways to think about the details of national power. Again, this study does not look to examine these equations in detail but to underline the imperative for SMJFOs to be aware of and account for the thinking surrounding power – a key component within strategy and of which strategy is a vital component of as well. They are inextricably linked. A SMJFO must study each in depth to gain an understanding that can then be applied.

One scholar-practitioner that cannot be excluded when analyzing power is Joseph Nye. Over his illustrative career in the national security enterprise and as a scholar, Nye has experienced power in action and has written extensively on the concept of power. Nye starts his power scholarship with a simple definition from the dictionary, “power is the capacity to do things and in social situations to affect others to get the outcomes we want.”\textsuperscript{199} Nye realizes that this basic definition lacks utility for application. Taking a narrative approach to provide more

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\item \textsuperscript{197} Serfaty, Simon. 2015. \textit{A Post Western World Advanced Seminar Lecture}. 10 September 2015. Old Dominion University. During this advanced seminar, Dr. Serfaty expands upon his power formula that appears in \textit{A World Recast: An American Moment In A Post-Western Order}.
\item \textsuperscript{199} Nye, Joseph S. 2011. \textit{The future of power}. New York: PublicAffairs. 6.
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granularity to the concept of power, Nye defines it in terms of foreign policy. Several fundamental thoughts emerge from this discussion. Power, in many instances, depends on what the competitor or threat thinks. Nye cautions “actions often have powerful unintended consequences, but from a policy point of view we are interested in the ability to produce preferred outcomes” 200 To generate preferred outcomes, the thoughtful use of power in context is required informing the practitioner, “who gets what, how, where, and when.” 201

As Nye develops his concept of power he specifies – a behavioral or relational approach and a resource approach. Behavioral definitions assess the use of power after the action. A resource definition relies on the available resources that can produce outcomes. Nye acknowledges population, territory, natural resources, economic strength, military force, and social stability as key dimensions that impact power. Nye identifies the utility of the resource definition as, “it makes power appear to be concrete, measurable, and predictable – a guide to action” for the analyst and practitioner. 202 Nye, however, acknowledges a severe issue with this definition, when he cautions “[those] best endowed with power [resources] do not always get the outcomes they want.” 203 Power in action personifies the characteristics of both definitions as world affairs involves behavior and resources. Nye introduces a series of descriptive terms – hard, soft, and smart power – to account for the reality of world affairs. Both definitions then are useful for understanding and implementing power in specific situations.

SMJFOs must be capable of understanding Nye’s descriptive terms of power. Hard power is straightforward and easy to recognize and use. Nye defines hard power as the “ability to get desired outcomes through coercion and payment.” Soft power, in Nye’s view, is also defined in a simplified manner but is much more difficult to target and control. Nye defines soft power as “the ability to affect others through the cooptive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes.” Soft power often reflects the intangibles highlighted by others. Soft power includes ideas, culture, media, as well as perceptions of national philosophies, ideals, and the application of hard power in support of national interests. Soft power has real effect, especially in today’s compressed and highly interconnected environment, but the effect is difficult to see and control. The immediate impacts of a military missile strike (a use of hard power) are easy to see and assess while the longer-term impact on the population may not manifest immediately or be easily seen. With soft power it may be impossible to see the immediate effects as well as the longer-term effects. Regardless, soft power must be used and analyzed throughout the course of any application of hard power. It is especially imperative considering the speed, flow, and access of information in today’s globalized environment. Applying soft and hard power or hard and soft power in combination in context to produce effective strategies becomes smart power in Nye’s view.

Nye stresses to all that smart power must be thought through and worked for. It does not emerge automatically because a nation possesses large quantities of hard and soft power. Smart power only presents when practitioners understand “the full range of power resources and
[recognize] the problems of combining them effectively in various contexts.” 207 Contextual intelligence combined with a “fuller understanding of the types and uses of power” becomes the first step in developing smart power strategies. This is no easy task but for our purposes leads to our next section on military power. Certainly, a better understanding of the current era of globalization, as we will examine more in Chapter III, and its effects will lead to a better application of military power for US national security decision-makers.

**Military Power**

To apply military force with nuance and sophistication, the United States security apparatus and strategic thinking Joint Force officers must think beyond pure numbers of men, weapons, ammunition, and equipment and a reliance on a doctrine of superior firepower. While strength hinges on numerical superiority to a degree, it must be complemented with good leadership, organization, training, morale, and nested inside of a coherent strategy to specify several intangible attributes.

To compare power relationships, Samuel Huntington builds a conceptual model to guide the analysis. First, he emphasizes several attributes of state power like territory and population, economics, and military capability. To comprehensively account for military power, he assesses military capability through a quantitative and a qualitative lens. Huntington identifies four critical dimensions to guide comparison of military capabilities. The four dimensions are: quantitative, technological, organizational, and societal. Using this model generates a better overall picture of military strength. His definition of each follows:

1. *Quantitative* – the numbers of men, weapons, equipment, and resources
2. *Technological* - the effectiveness and sophistication of weapons and equipment

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3. *Organizational* - the coherence, discipline, training, and morale of the troops and the effectiveness of command-and-control relationship
4. *Societal* - the ability and willingness of the society to apply military force effectively.  

A deep understanding of the above dimensions married with coherent strategic direction directing acquisition, sustainment, and application of the above dimensions leading to the defense and promotion of national interests is imperative to US national security efficacy.

Another method to categorize and generate a finer grained look at military capability is outlined by Rosa Brooks in *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness.* Despite our unrivaled superior military capability, unmatched military strength does not necessarily guarantee success as it had in the past. Brooks, as McMaster specifies in his discussion of continuities in Chapter III, understands that military capability must be applied in concert with a solid strategic approach as well as other instruments of national power. Moreover, military capability must ultimately create military effectiveness, which she defines as “the degree to which the military exhibits four crucial attributes: integration, responsiveness, skill, and quality.”  

1. *Integration,* or the ability to ensure consistency in military activity, create synergies within and across levels of military activity, and avoid counterproductive actions
2. *Responsiveness,* which is the degree to which a state accommodates both internal and external constraints and opportunities in preparing itself for armed conflict
3. *Skill,* including the capacity to ensure military personnel are motivated and prepared to execute tasks on the battlefield
4. *Quality,* or the capacity of the state to supply itself with essential weapons and equipment. The more a military exhibits these attributes, the more capable it is at generating military power.  

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The US demonstrated the skill and quality at the tactical level in both OEF and OIF but struggled with integration from the tactical through the strategic level and lacked responsiveness in fully recognizing and then adapting to the environment as it has changed since the end of the Cold War.

Ultimately military capability, to be truly effective, must be applied in concert with a solid strategic approach. In the absence of strategic direction, basic US military power can still accomplish a great deal but most likely at greater cost – blood, sweat, tears, and dollars. SMJFOs support national objectives with greater effectiveness and efficiency through better applied thinking. They can only achieve better performance with the relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through focused and well-designed educational, training, and apprenticeship programs.

**CONCLUSION AND A REFINED SET OF SMJFO KSAs**

An examination of strategy and numerous strategic concepts and terms, leads to several conclusions regarding the requirements and attributes specified by the CJCS for strategic minded Joint Force Officers.

Strategy as a concept is not well defined and is used sloppily across multiple disciplines. Lykke stresses the requirement for a more focused approach regarding strategy in the military. He recommends an initiative to develop an accepted definition, prescribe the basic elements of strategy, and an analysis to determine how they are inter-related. Currently, this disciplined approach toward strategy does not exist within the national security with numerous negative
consequences. The Joint Force must be more proactive in fully defining strategy and its basic elements. Joint Doctrine Note 2-19 catalyzes the discourse.

Colin Gray reinforces the importance of Lykee’s charge with the following caution, “No matter how contemporaries conceive of their strategic tasks, the interdependence of ends, ways and means cannot be denied and defied without repercussions.” 211 Moreover, Gray contributes to the solution by offer a set of strategic dimensions patterned on Michael Howard’s scholarship. Basic Joint Force responsibilities drive the better understanding of, development of, and execution of good strategy in concert with the other instruments of national power a national imperative. Harrison also provides insight and utility to the possible approaches for gaining better fidelity on the concept of strategy. He highlights the “simplicity and clarity” of a single definition but also recognizes that “multiple definitions provide granularity and depth.” 212

Some military educational organizations must focus on the strategic level and create new approaches for teaching this difficult yet vital subject? Distilling the essential characteristics, basic elements, and dimensions before attempting to cover the entire subject of strategy to highlight the complexity of strategy is a possible way to begin to lay better SMJFO strategic knowledge foundations. Instructional priorities must be established, due to the innumerable elements of strategy, but as we will see in Chapter IV, according to Gray and others strategy is teachable.

Observation is a skill that must be addressed in detail for SMJFO to better understand the basics as well as the nuances and sophistications of the international environment. SMJFOs must

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then be well versed in creative thinking to generate responses to current and future challenges and opportunities when history provides limited insight or faced with novel problems for the first time without historical examples to draw on. Additionally, to generate this creative thought, SMJFOs must have a conceptual, theoretical, and doctrine knowledge base to draw on. As stated above, Henry Eccles agrees, “While adherence to theory and sound principle will not guarantee success, ignorance or inadvertent violation of them will enhance the likelihood of failure. Thus, the art of war must include an intuitive understanding of theory and principle as well as a feeling for the particular circumstances that will influence application.” 213 Clausewitz, Corbett, Keohane and Nye all provide solid evidence for the value of understanding of concepts, theories, and doctrine but married with experience as well. SMJFOs must respect the value of experience but must discern the difference between tactical, operational, and strategic experience and not conflate them. A tactical master does not become a strategic master with promotion and a change from tactical responsibilities to strategic responsibilities, however, education, deliberate practice, and experience over a similar timeframe will generate that strategic mastery.

As seen, especially through recent US history, the tactical mindset, rightfully so, predominates over the strategic mindset because of the urgency of the day-to-day workings of the national security enterprise. Despite the precedence shown to tactical thinking, the Joint Force at the strategic level must realize that this environment provides more time and allows leaders to slow their thinking but only if educated and conditioned to do so. Kahneman provides insight into the value of slowing thinking down under certain conditions and the consequences of

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applying tactical thinking (fast thinking) to strategic situations which require more deliberate thinking (slow thinking). This skill must be developed, practiced, and applied to receive the full effect.

Another element that emerged during our examination of strategy was the requirement for SMJFOs to develop a deep understanding of the three levels of war. A sense of seamless integration between the levels must be the goal. The ability to move from the strategic through the operational to the tactical and back and forth at will. Strategy has consequences and a name, and a face reside at the cutting edge of those consequences. While all know that the military is a tough profession with, in some cases, extreme consequences, those entrusted to apply military force must think through the action to the best of their ability. Picture your own sons and daughters, our most treasured resources, at the execution end of your thinking. The ability to move conceptually through the multiple levels of war must be fostered over an entire career, evaluating the differences between each and the different responsibilities constantly. To be successful an alignment between the three levels must be achieved. Weak performance results when you do not align as Stiglitz points out in the three trillion-dollar war.

Today’s environment, with globalization, the diffusion of power, and transnational challenges, creates an additional level to account for, a sub-tactical level. Sassen highlights the emergence of subterranean trends and Rosenau identifies the emergence and importance of the micro world along with the already recognized macro world. This distinction generates additional requirements for SMJFOs to understand much more and observe even more in the international environment.

Sun Tzu directs a SMJFO to maximize his or her effort in both planning and strategy. Use your thinking skills to ensure that all actions achieve the intended outcomes. The SMJFO
must seek effectiveness and efficiency. To achieve efficacy, the SMJFO must demand an aim from the decisionmakers or design an aim in the absence of direction and assist the thinking of the decisionmakers. To fully understand the value of a specified aim or strategic objective, a SMJFO must understand how to develop knowledge into capability as espoused by Clausewitz.

While striving to better understand strategy, a SMJFO must recognize and also develop a systems perspective of the environment to compliment the artistry required to handle the social complexity. An understanding of systems and a systems perspective then becomes a key dimension of strategic minded study and practice. From JDN 2-19, the SMJFO understands that military strategy is a function of creative art, have a basic logic to underpin it, and use available science to flesh out as much detail as possible. The history behind an issue, the math and physics associated with available resources, and an understanding of the time available or time required, become vital for a SMJFO to think deeply about strategic issues. Developing military strategy requires an understanding of facts and assumptions to inform strategic decision making. Its logic is both inductive and deductive, guiding purposeful action towards its end. 214

Education is necessary to build foundational knowledge for strategic mindedness, but the evidence indicates that education must be followed by training, programs, and apprenticeship to ensure that knowledge turns into capability. Time becomes a critical element to effective development as well. You cannot rush the time required to develop true mastery as the study reveals in Chapter V. This can be difficult to recognize because tactical mastery develops along an accepted time tested organizationally accepted career path. To get an equivalent pattern for

strategic mastery will require an addition of developmental time to the currently accepted career patterns as we will explore more deeply in Chapter V.

Specifically, within the foundational education of SMJFOs, the examination of strategy demonstrates a need to emphasize creativity and artistry married with scientific analysis, big data, and a systems perspective of the environment. Additionally, the value of dedicated mentorship as seen in the examples of Brodie, Kissinger, Brzezinski, and Scowcroft must also become an integrated component of a comprehensive strategic minded development program. Several other characteristics of a true SMJFO become evident through the above examination of strategy. Brodie highlights the need for fiscal responsibility. Neustadt and May provide strong evidence for a deep understanding of history.

An analysis of Kissinger as a strategic minded exemplar highlights the requirement to account for the interrelationship between all instruments of national power and the importance of assumptions when attempting to anticipate the future. Through Kissinger’s academic preparation under Elliot, we see the utility of reading, writing about the reading and then discussing and debating the elements found within a reading. Kissinger exemplifies the best of strategic mindedness.

Summarizing this extensive Chapter with numerous conclusions, reveals that the scale and scope of strategy and strategic thinking reaches far and wide across the international environment. For an individual and consequently an organization to perform well at the strategic level, applying the extensive concept of strategy and strategic thinking, requires comprehension of a wide range of subjects just to be aware of the basics. Strategic proficiency requires a broad and deep foundation of knowledge that even a genius cannot attain in a ten-month educational experience. The “Petraeus” model, a civilian PhD experience as laid out in Chapter IV, may
provide the knowledge foundation but even that model has its critics who believe it is not long enough. Moreover, to move beyond basic proficiency to strategic mastery demands even more time and deliberate practice as espoused by Ericsson and others. Analyzing the concept of strategy, its associated terms, and basic components offers the strategic educator and those who desire strategic mindedness within their organization, a glimpse into the complexity of just understanding strategy let alone the knowledge, skills, and abilities to develop and apply it to an ever-changing environment. A deeper look into the international environment in Chapter III seeking to identify and better understand the changes and continuities in world affairs layers yet another set of requirements on the professional military education system and those aspiring to be effective strategic thinkers and leaders.

Finally, after the above examination of the basics, subtleties, nuances, and sophistications of strategy and other strategic concepts, terms, and topics including the imperative for alignment of strategy with operational and tactical actions and establishing a baseline understanding identifying the vital knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to be a strategic minded Joint Force Officer (SMJFO) within the current operating environment and into the anticipated future, this Chapter concludes that the guidance outlined in the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 1800.01F Officer Professional Military Education Policy is adequate as written for basic guidance. The analysis of the contemporary strategic environment contained in Chapter III may alter this assessment. Regardless, the conclusions from Chapter II and Chapter


III will add fidelity for the CJCS and PME decision-makers to develop better strategic minded educational programs and career pathway adjustments. Chapter V describes that additional fidelity and employs it within the “Lucky 13” strategic minded educational approach.
CHAPTER III

CONTINUITIES AND CHANGES WITHIN THE TURBULENT AND EVOLVING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON STRATEGIC MINDEDNESS

Our country requires warfighting leaders and staff officers capable of waging war and leading in a dynamic, globally integrated environment. We cannot simply rely upon mass or the best technology. In the future, that technology may be in the hands of our opponents. Our job is to learn how to apply our capabilities better and more creatively.

Joint Chiefs of Staff

The strategic environment consists of a variety of national, international, and global factors that affect the decisions of senior civilian and military leaders with respect to the employment of US instruments of national power in peace and periods of conflict. The strategic environment is uncertain, contested, complex, and can change rapidly, requiring military leaders to maintain persistent military engagement with multinational partners... The strategic environment is fluid, with continually changing alliances, partnerships, and national and transnational threats that rapidly emerge, disaggregate, and reemerge. While it is impossible to predict precisely how challenges will emerge and what form they might take, we can expect that uncertainty, ambiguity, and surprise will persist.

Joint Chiefs of Staff

The news on the state of the world is both good and bad. Each day brings word of a world inching slowly toward sanity even as it moves toward breakdown. And not only do these integrative and disintegrative events occur simultaneously but more often than not they are also causally related. More than that, the causal links tend to cumulate and generate a momentum such that every integrative increment tends to give rise to a disintegrative increment and vice versa. The intertwining of the good and the bad, the global and the local, the public and the private, the coherent and incoherent – to mention only a few of the interactive polarities that dominate world affairs – is a central theme.

James Rosenau

INTRODUCTION

As most scholars and practitioners acknowledge, the international security environment and “world affairs” in general have dramatically changed since the end of the Cold War. 217 As

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the Joint Chiefs of Staff note in the epigraph above, the United States Joint Force requires “warfighting leaders and staff officers” capable of operating in this significantly different, ever-changing international environment. Robert Cooper acknowledges the changes and strongly recommends a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the environment to generate and enable better strategic thought. “Understanding the kind of world, we live in is important. The costs of intellectual errors in foreign affairs are enormous. Wars are sometimes fought by mistake… Clarity of thought is a contribution to peace.”

So, what exactly are the changes the US Government must account for and furthermore what are the continuities that must not be overlooked or neglected while processing the changes. This chapter seeks to establish a baseline of continuities and changes for the overall study to inform the emerging requirements for strategic minded joint force officers (SMJFOs) and those chartered to design professional military education for those officers.

The US National Security enterprise recognizes the massive global shifts and changing dynamics domestically and within the international environment and realize, as George Kennan discovered following WWII with the world on the verge of the Cold War,

Much depends on the health and vigor of our own society. World communism is like a malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue. This is the point at which domestic and foreign policies meet. Every courageous and incisive measure to solve internal problems of our own society, to improve self-confidence, discipline, morale, and community spirit of our own people, is a diplomatic victory over Moscow worth a thousand diplomatic notes and joint communiques. If we cannot abandon fatalism and understanding that is useful for this study. He advises,” it is sheer craziness to dare to understand world affairs. There are so many collective actors-state, international organizations, transnational associations, social movements, and sub national groups-and billions of individuals each with different histories, capabilities, and goals, interacting to create historical patterns that are always susceptible to change. Put more simply, world affairs are pervaded with endless details-far more than one can hope to comprehend in their entirety.”

indifference in face of deficiencies of our own society, Moscow will profit—Moscow cannot help profiting by them in its foreign policies. 219

As discovered before following World War II, the United States must remain strong domestically today. Thankfully our National Security enterprise understands the need for domestic strength and unity and the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (INSSG) prioritizes this imperative,

Our world is at an inflection point. Global dynamics have shifted. New crises demand our attention. And in this moment of accelerating global challenges — from the pandemic to the climate crisis to nuclear proliferation to the fourth industrial revolution — one thing is certain: we will only succeed in advancing American interests and upholding our universal values by working in common cause with our closest allies and partners, and by renewing our own enduring sources of national strength. 220

To achieve this domestic stability the US must do more that talk about it, coherent policies and a focused strategy must be developed, operationalized, and put into action. Overall, the nation must rediscover our founding national values, enacting and executing policies that help reunite our domestic agenda and strengthen our resolve and resiliency. An inability to ease our domestic challenges portends a decline in US global leadership status. A world without American leadership would be even more dangerous than the one that currently exists. Without a US led international environment, the consequences for those nations who disdain or oppose authoritarian governments, like the Ukrainians, could be disastrous. 221 The United States must ensure that it properly frames and addresses its domestic challenges to recreate the unity required.

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to operate effectively and efficiently on the international stage. Richard Haass thoughtfully notes “foreign policy begins at home” and by extension you can deduce that strategy begins at home as well. 222 This view clearly establishes the need for strategic minded Joint Force officers (SMJFOs) who understand and account for domestic issues in their thinking. While this study explores the numerous reports and literature that indicts professional military education over the past sixty-fiver years more closely in Chapter IV, in one of those documents The System for Educating Military Officers in the US, Donald Bletz in a chapter entitled, The Modern Major General, provides counsel regarding the essentiality of the military professional having a deep understanding of the domestic affairs of the nation,

It is important that our modern Major General understand the constitutional and historical underpinnings of U S civil military relations… in a democratic society such as ours, one responsibility of the military professional is to develop understanding of the society he serves… it is essential that the professional understand his society because that is the very source of the strength of the profession… The military professional cannot serve a society effectively if he is not aware of its strengths and its weaknesses, its fears and its aspirations. He needs intelligently to be aware of the major social and political issues in the nation. He needs to know something about the problems of poverty, urbanization, pollution, education, minorities, the role of women, youth, law and order, and inflation, to name but a few. By the same token, he must understand the political process he is sworn to defend. 223

While an understanding of the domestic challenges remains essential, the United States and its strategic minded Joint Force Officers must be adaptable as well. Moreover, if the USG neglects to change or fails to adjust deliberately to the major changes present in the security environment the United States will most likely decline relatively and absolutely risks losing its current global

222 See Haass, Richard N. 2013. Foreign policy begins at home the case for putting America's house in order. New York: Basic Books. For a full description of the importance of domestic strength for foreign policy to be effective.

leadership position. Additionally, if the US adapts its approach to account for the easily visible changes in world affairs but fails to recognize and respond to the more nuanced and subtle variations around the globe, US global standing could still be at risk. A lack of focused strategic thinking and action leading to a loss of leadership stature significantly impacts the security and prosperity of the United States and other like-minded nations producing untold consequences.

Niall Ferguson amongst others argues that despite its flaws “there seems to be no better alternative” than the United States to lead the international order. \(^{224}\) Additionally, Walter Russell Mead notes,

> On the whole, I think that the aims and methods of American foreign policy, while sometimes mistaken and often questionable, are reasonably consistent with the happiness and advancement of humanity as a whole. I am less sure of this than I am of another truth: that the destruction of the American system in the world would lead to far more misery and danger than we now see, and that the fall of American power would be a catastrophe not only for Americans but for millions and billions who live beyond our frontiers, including many of those who hate us and would destroy us if they could. \(^{225}\)

Urgently then, the United States must adjust its stance and respond to this “uncertain, contested, complex,” and rapidly changing environment or risk being surpassed by authoritarian nations like China.

Ideally, the United States strikes the correct balance between cooperation and competition. The USG seeks cooperation with China, Russia, and others when they comply with accepted international rule sets and compete with them “below the level of armed conflict” when they apply their authoritarian methods while ignoring established international norms. The


decision to use force to defend or promote US national interests becomes more imminent based on the methods China, Russia or others use to flaunt international norms. For instance, the Russian invasion of the Ukraine, deserves extremely close consideration regarding the use of US military force to defend the sovereignty of like-minded nations. The United States then strategically must anticipate and shape an environment more conducive to US ideals and the protection of those striving to implement similar ideals. To avoid decline and anticipate the future, the United States, and its national security agents, specifically its Joint Force officers must become and remain more strategic minded thinking beyond the present anticipating the future consequences of action or a lack thereof.

Gaining a deeper understanding of the environment to shape problem formulation and problem framing and then guide the development of coherent governmental action becomes essential to all in the national security enterprise. Regrettably, as stated in the introduction chapter clarity of US strategic thought remains elusive in this current epoch. While almost thirty years have elapsed since the end of the Cold War, the United States still lacks a guiding strategy, displays strategic narcissism and overall, in practice, demonstrates strategic lethargy. Despite numerous continuities in the global system which must be tackled, the many, varied, and rapid changes clearly demand a different overall approach. Recent US Strategic Direction and Guidance provides some evidence of better strategic thinking and encourages optimism, but coherent action must result from that direction – “In foreign policy and national security, just as in domestic policy we have to chart a new course.”

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While the environment urgently calls for adaptation, the United States lacks the urgency to adapt in a timely manner. If the United States and the US Joint Force doesn’t adapt and change, the nation will continue to squander its considerable, yet finite, resources and long-established advantages in the international system. At some point in time, if China continues to rise, and the United States flat lines or declines outright, the United States loses its competitive advantage and operates within an international system lacking its former power predominance. China marks that year as 2049. This condition allows China and its authoritarian methods the opportunity to gain control and power over a confused globalized environment. Or it allows Russia to bully its neighbors with military attacks or threaten those that oppose their predatory policies. While Russia has kinetically demonstrated the threat it poses to stability, China clearly demonstrates a potential major threat to the international security order but at present is more subtle in its approach. Regrettably, the many fragile, failing, and failed states around the globe seem to welcome the extreme order that an authoritarian regime imposes despite the eventual, long-term, and overbearing cost to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” Freedom takes a back seat to economic prosperity in many nations especially those where corrupt national leadership profit at the expense of their populace. The number of nations that have signed on for the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which includes several NATO allies, demonstrates the appeal of China’s approach and a distinct lack of foresight by many nations. The United


228 Xi Jinping developed the Two Centenaries which is a set of goals for China. Within the centenary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 2049, China will be a "strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious, and modern socialist country."

States must remain the global leader as we are the best alternative, lead by domestic example, and be the best option for international leadership today and into the future.

This chapter examines multiple sources to determine what has remained the same – the continuities and what is different – the changes. To do that the chapter addresses the following:

a. Highlight the rapidly changing and dynamic international environment and its basic characteristics using key US Strategic Guidance and Direction documents. What is the sense of the moment that informs our strategic thinking identifying essential continuities and changes? 230

b. Highlight and analyze the continuities of war.

c. Focus on and analyze three specific areas of international interest: State-building, Globalization, and the Dynamics beyond Globalization. The analysis includes the effect these subjects exert on power relationships, economics, and military capabilities.

d. From the above analysis determine firm continuities and solid changes in “world affairs” while avoiding “the immediate pressures or vogue of the day” to inform the teaching and curriculum for strategic minded joint force officers (SMJFOs). 231

Moreover, this analysis seeks to identify areas within the Joint Force that require

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230 Sense of the moment is a technique used by Dr. Simon Serfaty during his instruction in the Graduate Program International Studies at Old Dominion. Dr. Serfaty would clearly identify, from his perspective, what the current environment looked like to guide his instruction by looking back at the environment with a projection to the future. He promoted the student practitioner to “merge the tenses” – look to the past to inform the present with an ever-active eye to the future. Dr. Serfaty’s counsel has been very useful in application while learning with joint Force officers at the Joint Forces Staff College.

cultural changes taking full advantage of continuities while also gaining maximum advantage through recognition and action on the substantive changes taking place in domestic and world affairs.

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TODAY’S ENVIRONMENT – A SENSE OF THE MOMENT

As individuals, groups, tribes, organizations, and nations move through time living and operating within their respective local environments, while also knowingly or unknowingly members of a larger international environment, they experience circumstances that remain the same or similar and simultaneously experience distinct changes in the environment. The ability to account for the similarities, the continuities, and to recognize and adapt to the variations, the changes, becomes a vital component of their life. If the continuities cannot be distinguished from the changes, and they fail to adapt or adapt too slowly to the changes, their survival or existence may be in jeopardy. Bernard Brodie notes this dilemma when he highlights Comte’s remark from 1914, “it is the old that prevents us from recognizing the new.”

For the purposes of this study, gaining a deep understanding of the environment that helps define and frame problems and guide the development of coherent governmental action becomes essential to all in the national security enterprise. Disappointingly, as stated in the introduction section clarity of US strategic thought remains elusive in this current epoch. While almost thirty years have elapsed since the end of the Cold War, the United States, still lacks a clearly understood and universally promulgated guiding strategy (like the Strategies of

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Containment following WWII), demonstrates and encourages strategic narcissism and overall is strategically lethargic. This is not a recipe for efficient and effective action and overall strategic success. The United States must adapt.

Despite numerous continuities in the global system, the many, varied, and rapid changes demand a different approach. Recent US Strategic Direction and Guidance provides some evidence of better strategic thinking and encourages optimism, but coherent action must result from that direction – “In foreign policy and national security, just as in domestic policy we have to chart a new course a new course.” What is that new course?

The United States Joint Chiefs of Staff also emphasize the dangers inherent with the environmental changes and recognize an urgent need to develop “intellectual overmatch” in concert with technological and other qualitative improvements to sustain the United States Joint Force competitive advantage in world affairs. To achieve intellectual overmatch, they specify that one Desired Leader Attribute (DLA) of a strategic minded Joint Force officer must be the ability to, “Understand the security environment and contributions of all instruments of national power.” As a result, what educational modifications must ensue to guarantee the development of Joint Force Officers? What obstacles impede these adjustments and transformations? What


must the Joint Force understand about the international security environment and how will the environment inform them?

A first step in gaining clarity of strategic thought and of developing strategic minded Joint Force officers certainly must include a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the environment as Cooper advises above. First the United States and the Joint Force must recognize, understand, account for, and then adapt to the environment’s basics, sophistications, nuances, transformations, revolutions, and mutations to enhance prospects for leading and thriving within the resultant complexity and ambiguity. As LTG David Barno USA (ret) and Dr. Nora Bensahel note, “Adaptability, therefore, is a crucial task for any organization – military and civilian, private sector and public sector alike. The environment in which every human enterprise operates is always changing, often in completely unpredictable and unexpected ways.”

To be adaptable, the Joint Force and USG must strive to earn and sustain a deeper understanding of the environment in all its uncertainty and ambiguity. The Joint Force must consistently, consciously, and comprehensively examine the environment, seek to recognize, understand, and synthesize the changes and then most importantly account for them in their strategic design, plans, and actions.

The US National Security enterprise must adapt. What does this entail? What has stayed the same? What are the changes in the environment? How have these continuities and changes strengthened or diffused basic national power characteristics? How have they altered the overall application of the instruments of national power, specifically the use of joint military force? Have these new dynamics simplified or added complexity to basic power interactions? What do

these environmental changes portend for the United States military and the Nation as a whole? How does it impact those attempting to strategically view the environment and America’s role in it? What must strategic minded Joint Forces Officers understand about the “dynamic, globally integrated environment” to produce the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to operate efficiently and effectively in this environment as senior Joint Force leadership desires and needs? What requirements does this changed environment generate for Joint Professional Military Education? Are these requirements recognizable? What changes in subjects, method, and approach to military education does this emerging environment dictate? Will traditional methods continue to serve professional development well or must refinements or whole scale change be implemented?

While the US Joint Chiefs recognize and specify needed change to professional military education to handle the increased and evolving environmental turbulence, that change has yet to take place or is taking place slowly. Unbelievably, this has been a constant recurring trend within the Joint Force over time, certainly since the end of World War II as sixty-five years of studies and focused literature reveal regarding the pitfalls of military education. What impedes this educational transformation and what other adjustments must be institutionalized to better adapt to the changing environment? The organizational culture is the culprit. What changes then in the organizational culture must occur to recognize, implement, and institutionalize these educational adjustments? This study addresses both issues in more detail in Chapters IV and V but first looks more closely and attempts to better understand what exactly is going on within the environment identifying both the continuities and the changes.

A logical place to begin to find both the continuities and changes resident in world affairs resides within the United States Strategic Direction and Guidance documents. The next section
reviews, analyzes, and synthesizes two of those USG strategic documents to acquire insights into the requirements for both SMJFOs and the institutions that design curriculum for and teach those officers. It also should inform the organizational culture to the changing requirements associated with both.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND GUIDANCE

Doctrinally the Joint Force recommends a methodology to develop operational and strategic designs for current, crisis and contingency activities. A key element of that methodology is understanding the available strategic direction and guidance. For this study we will focus on two of those key documents. They are: The March 2021 Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, and the unclassified Executive Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy.

Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (INSSG)

While this is the first time a new Presidential administration has issued interim guidance and an expectation exists that the full National Security Strategy will be issued some time in 2022, this guidance is extremely useful because it clearly specifies the areas, topics, and factors that this administration deem important for US national security. An examination of the document’s elements reveals continuities and changes that strategic minded Joint Force Officers (JFOs) must be foundational versed in, maintain constant vigilance on, and uncover the relationships, connections, and interrelationships between. We analyze the document and highlight those areas deemed essential. With an analysis of these factors, we then link other
traditional and contemporary thinking to generate a baseline of important global factors that JFOs must comprehend and subsequently develop the skills and abilities to master.

The INSSG guidance is straightforward and immediately identifies a national need to be proactive not reactive to the opportunities and dilemmas currently present and anticipated in the international security environment.

This moment calls upon us to lean forward, not shrink back – to boldly engage the world to keep Americans safe, prosperous, and free. It requires a new and broader understanding of national security, one that recognizes that our role in the world depends upon our strength and vitality here at home. It demands creative approaches that draw on all the sources of our national power: our diversity, vibrant economy, dynamic civil society, and innovative technological base, enduring democratic values, broad and deep network of partnerships and alliances, and the world’s most powerful military. 237

The above paragraph from the INSSG identifies several fundamental areas that strategic minded Joint Force Officers must be well grounded and practiced in. First there is a call to view the international security environment with fresh eyes, recognize the need to lead and not withdraw from world affairs and accept that national security relies on more than military strength and capability. From an instructional perspective, a lesson can be drawn from the instructional approach of Josef Albers, an artist from Germany, brought in to teach at Black Mountain College in North Carolina back in the 1930’s to 1950’s. 238 Asked what his goal was, Albers stated “to open eyes…to direct eyes in observation – know what you are seeing and know why you are seeing this…” 239 SMJFOs must keep their eyes open to remain aware of the continuities but also


to clearly see the multitude of changes taking place. Walter Russell Mead emphasizes this necessity as well. He trumpets the requirement for well-rounded individuals when handling American foreign policy when he notes,

American foreign policy may be the most complex subject in the world. Economics, political science, history and the philosophy of history, culture, religion, the nature of human nature: American foreign policy touches on them all… we live in a world of specialists, but American foreign policy demands generalists. American national strategy tries to integrate economics, politics, military studies, and many other subjects to create and support an international system. ²⁴⁰

The INSSG recognizes and Mead amplifies that to be strategic minded and think strategically, Joint Force Officers must be foundationally sound in much more than military related subjects, they must realize that “our strength and vitality” demands creativity and a whole of government and American society approach. Regrettably, creativity and the ability to appreciate differing perspectives is not a common competency among most Joint Officers according to the Joint Chiefs. This is not catastrophic, however, as Dr. Linda Elder and Dr. Richard Paul posit creativity can be cultivated regardless of whether an individual is born with such talents. They counsel,

Without the analytical tools of critical thinking (tools that enable a thinker to plumb the structure of knowledge), one will have a limited grasp of any given field of knowledge as a system of thought. Without a grasp of the structure of knowledge and its systemic functions, one will have difficulty transferring knowledge from one context to another… But no matter what our raw capacity at birth, that capacity must be cultivated overtime if we are to reach our potential. Creativity requires the expansive empowerment of sound critical thought. Critical thought requires the will to create and improve. ²⁴¹

Creative thinking must become a dedicated subject within the Joint Professional Development


system. The Joint Force can cultivate the creativity required to generate intellectual overmatch, but the Joint Force Education system must change at certain levels and Joint Force culture must support that change and fully adapt to ensure overmatch. Currently creativity is discussed but not examined and explored conceptually and practically in most Joint Force curriculums.  

The INSSG then highlights several global factors and challenges viewed by some as “non-traditional” threats to security but that have produced instability and a lack of security throughout the globe. Some of these factors are changes in the environment and some are continuities that gained greater visibility and precedence when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Regardless of the re-emergence of strategic competition these areas cannot be ignored and must be accounted for to fully secure the American population and others around the globe. The INSSG stresses several of these key areas that warrant attention and highlights the requirement for cooperation with others to solve.

Pandemics and other biological risks, the escalating climate crisis, cyber and digital threats, international economic disruptions, protracted humanitarian crises, violent extremism and terrorism, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction all pose profound and, in some cases, existential dangers. None can be effectively addressed by one nation acting alone. And none can be effectively addressed with the United States on the sidelines.

While these threats are not as dominate as a potential conventional war against a geo-political strategic competitor, they potentially over time morph into survival type national interests. Regardless of the level of intensity, these are issues that can negatively change the strategic landscape. While JFOs would rather devote most of their time, energy, and thinking towards a

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242 Over seventeen years of direct personal observation from within the Joint Forces Staff College and one of its component schools the Joint and Combined Warfighting School.

potential global war, amongst geo-political heavyweights like China and Russia, or against rogue regimes like Iran and North Korea, the Joint Force must have a cadre of strategic minded officers with a foundational understanding of “non-traditional” threats and the concepts surrounding these issues.

The INSSG then features the consequences of weaponizing information in an age where information is ubiquitous, immediate, and travels rapidly and widely.\textsuperscript{244} The guidance reveals that, “Anti-democratic forces use misinformation, disinformation, and weaponized corruption to exploit perceived weaknesses and sow division within and among free nations, erode existing international rules, and promote alternative models of authoritarian governance.” \textsuperscript{245} This adversarial use of information changes every aspect of life but especially the conduct of war.

P.W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking in \textit{Like War: The Weaponization of Social Media} expand on the subject and provide the following caution,

> Social media had changed not just the message, but the dynamics of conflict. How information was being accessed, manipulated, and spread had taken on new power. Who was involved in the fight, where they were located, and even how they achieved victory had been twisted and transformed? Indeed, if what was online could swing the course of a battle-or eliminate the need for battle entirely-what exactly, could be considered “war” at all. \textsuperscript{246}

If the USG and the Joint Force fail to adapt and understand the impact and effect of these weaponized words and perceptions, the utility of America’s military effectiveness may be further diluted. Again, Singer and Brooking provide sound input to help the force adapt to different

\textsuperscript{244} United States, and Joseph R. Biden. 2021. \textit{The interim national security strategic guidance of the United States of America}. [Washington]: Executive Office of the President. 7.


forms of force and power. “But in the space of a decade, social media has changed all that. Attacking an adversary’s most important center of gravity—the spirit of its people—no longer requires massive bombing runs or reams of propaganda all it takes is a smart phone and a few idle seconds and anyone can do it.” 247 While the Joint Force considers information as an instrument of national power and includes it in Joint Doctrine as one of seven essential Joint Functions, instruction on the use and counter-use of this “weapon” has been limited overall. Weaponized social media is a hard change that certainly must garner better attention in formal professional development settings and absolutely in practice.

The INSSG further recognizes a need to “contend with the reality that the distribution of power across the world is changing, creating new threats.” 248 While the guidance then specifically addresses China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea, this analysis lingers on the basics of power and the distribution of power. The guidance emphasizes an essential requirement to study and understand the concept of power and its changing nature. Moises Naim describes this diffusion of power in his book, *The End of Power*,

> Power is spreading, and long established, big players are increasingly being challenged by newer and smaller ones. And those who have power are more constrained in ways they can use it... Even as rival states, companies, political parties, social movements, and institutions or individual leaders fight for power as they have done throughout the ages, power itself-- what they are fighting so desperately to get and keep-- is slipping away. Power is decaying. 249

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As an essential component of strategy, Chapter II addressed power and the diffusion of national power in greater detail and acknowledged it as a required SMJFO subject.

Additionally, the INSSG clearly recognizes, accepts, and retains a focus on the many fragile, failing, failed, and collapsed states that populate the international security environment. Despite the rise of China, the resurgence, and aggressive actions of Russia this international problem set of struggling states cannot be ignored. These flawed states demonstrate a propensity to provide safe have and sanctuary for many terrorist groups and hostile non-state actors and align with authoritarian governments if not properly educated and treated. Nation-building and gray zone operations remain crucial tasks within the US National Security enterprise yet many in the Defense Department and Joint Force want to ignore that requirement. “We also face challenges within countries whose governance is fragile, and from influential non-state actors that have the ability to disrupt American interests. Terrorism and violent extremism, both domestic and international, remain significant threats.” 250 While the government certainly cannot ignore these issues, SMJFOs cannot bypass the requirement to understand the concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities regarding failed states and only focus on the renewed emphasis on great power competition or the more accepted Department of Defense label – strategic competition. 251 The section labeled FRAGILE, FAILING, FAILED, and COLLAPSED STATES addresses this specific topic in more detail.

Another ongoing and powerful change recognized within the INSSG is the ongoing technological revolution and its impact on all aspects of life. It is imperative to acknowledge the


ubiquity of developing technology yet not fall victim to its promise of fully replacing the human in the loop or the lure of making decisions exclusively through big data and algorithms. The INSSG draws attention to this dilemma by counseling,

Finally, **running beneath many of these broad trends is a revolution in technology that poses both peril and promise.** The world’s leading powers are racing to develop and deploy emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing, that could shape everything from the economic and military balance among states to the future of work, wealth, and inequality within them. The future potential is enormous: advances in clean energy technologies are essential to slowing climate change; Biotechnology could unlock cures for disease; next generation telecommunications (5G) infrastructure will set the stage for huge advances in commerce and access to information rapid changes in technology will shape every aspect of our lives and our national interests, but the direction and consequences of the technical revolution remain unsettled. emerging technologies remain largely ungoverned by laws or norms designed to center rights and democratic values, foster cooperation, establish guardrails against misuse or malign action, and reduce uncertainty and manage the risk that competition will lead to conflict. 252

While technology is absolutely a key driver of change and for change, the United States Joint Force cannot overlook other equally important factors during this “inflection point” and vital discourse about the future direction of world affairs. 253

The INSSG describes numerous continuities that deserve attention when designing the educational programs for strategic minded individuals and strategic thinking. The first continuity highlighted in this Interim National Strategic Security Guidance stresses the enduring understanding within the USG that the United States will continue to lead and sustain a stable and open international system favorable to all nations, but the United States cannot do it all

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alone. The United States must, “reinvigorate and modernize our alliances and partnerships around the world.” No easy task, the United States must cultivate and foster these relationships at multiple levels. SMJFOs must be cognizant of the importance of our allies and partners and seek opportunities to solidify these relationships whenever possible. Moreover, as counseled by Robert McNamara-- Be Prepared to Reexamine Your Reasoning. McNamara recognized that if your national actions diverged from the thinking and approach of other like-minded nations, you must re-examine, slow things down and seek to gain a deeper understanding of the situation and the environment. Embedded in this continuity is the persistent characteristic that the United States vital national interests are, “inextricably bound to the fortunes of our closest neighbors in the Americas, we will expand our engagement and partnerships throughout the Western Hemisphere—and especially with Canada and Mexico—based on principles of mutual respect and equality and a commitment to economic prosperity, security, human rights, and dignity.”

Another key continuity includes the ironclad US commitment to Israel’s security. SMJFOs must seek to understand the history surrounding this guarantee to Israel. To merge the


tenses, an understanding of the past and its impact on today’s environment but with an eye to the future, and the setting of conditions for a peaceful and stable future is essential.

As the United States and its Joint Force designs, plans, prepares, executes, and assesses, across a range of crucial issues--from climate change to global health, peace and security, humanitarian response, revitalizing democracy and human rights, digital connectivity and technology governance, sustainable and inclusive development, and forced displacement and migration--effective global cooperation and institutional reform require America to resume leadership role in multilateral operations.” 259

A solid relationship with the United Nations and other international organizations remains indispensable for the defense and promotion of US national security interests.

The INSSG stresses the continuity and imperative to maintain US Special Operations Forces capable of responding at a moment’s notice to flashpoints anywhere in the world. They must be always trained and ready to respond to crisis situations and to counterterrorism and unconventional warfare missions. 260 Finally, another substantial continuity remains the “existential threat posed by nuclear weapons”. This continuity receives deeper treatment in the analysis of the National Defense Strategy which follows below.

**Executive Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy**

The National Defense Strategy of the United States published in 2018 is a classified document. For this study, we will break down several of the numerous continuities and changes highlighted in the unclassified executive summary of that document seeking insights and

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direction applicable to SMJFOs for deeper understanding and practical application in their thinking. We will first focus on continuities and then key changes.

Right up front the strategy emphasizes a basic continuity – the need to accomplish the Department of Defense’s enduring mission. The DoD provides, “Combat - credible military forces needed to deter war and protect the security of our nation. Should deterrence fail, the joint forces prepared to win. Reinforcing America’s traditional tools of diplomacy, the department provides military options to ensure the president and our diplomats negotiate from a position of strength.”  

From this fundamental enduring mission, the SMJFO contributes by first understanding the theory of deterrence and its conventional and nuclear practicalities and then ensuring that the Joint Force has the capabilities and the wherewithal to handle both conventional and nuclear deterrence. The strategic minded officer must also understand war and all its complexities. He or she, as counselled by Clausewitz must, “establish by that test the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.”  

Seemingly simple tasks the above responsibilities require years of study and experience to master.

Another continuity to contend with is the “reemergence of long-term, strategic competition... it is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model--gaining veto authority over other nations economic, diplomatic, and

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security decisions.” 263 Obviously, this reemergence generates a renewed interest and concern regarding these two geo-political heavyweights. The SMJFO must recalibrate his thinking to ensure that the rise of China and the resurgence and aggressiveness of Russia receive the attention necessary as strategic competition renews in earnest. The Ukraine crisis reminds us of the danger present. Moreover, while these countries demand focused attention and thinking, the SMJFO cannot ignore the multitude of other continuities and changes in world affairs. The SMJFO must be agile of mind.

The return of the other geo-political heavyweights on the world stage also reignites the importance of nuclear thinking and nuclear modernization. An arena that many officers neglected for decades or pushed to the deepest recesses of their minds must now share time and space in their thinking and development. We seek an understanding like Eisenhower had during the first nuclear age, “we must not destroy what we are attempting to defend.” 264 Eisenhower clearly understood war, nuclear weapons, and objectives. He realized in the nuclear age the objective must be more refined than merely winning, “because a victory gained without regard to costs and effects, especially in the nuclear age, could be as devastating as defeat.” 265 The Joint Force must be prepared for not only the threat manifested by the Russian invasion of the Ukraine and that posed by China but also remain aware of “Rogue regimes, such as Iran and North Korea


as they “continue to seek out or develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD) – nuclear, chemical, and biological--as well as long range missile capabilities and, in some cases, proliferate these capabilities to malign actors as demonstrated by Iranian ballistic missile exports.” 266

Another critical continuity but one the US Joint Force and the USG has yet to master is department and agency integration within the United States Government.267 The ability to employ all instruments of national power to defend and promote the national interests of the United States endures as an essential task yet the United States has not performed well in this area. While this continues to be a weak spot in both planning and execution, interagency cooperation must be prioritized and concentrated on in a more systematic way. Organizational cultures must be overcome and adjusted to instill the imperative of institutionalized cooperation and collaboration regarding national security challenges amongst US departments and agencies. We cannot continue to lag in this area. A requirement for decades, especially since 9/11, effectiveness in this sector remains elusive. Much relies on individuals to change the culture and emphasize the essential nature and power of collaboration as the United States operates in an ever more difficult international environment. SMJFOs can assist in developing methods, processes, structures, and relationships to streamline the interface between the Joint Force and other USG departments and agencies to better serve the national security interests of the United States. While this synergy is certainly achievable, it requires a better understanding of the


inherent capabilities and capacity of each agency and an organizational drive to forge and sustain relationships between the agencies. This occurs initially through individual relationships and trust, building to institutional practice that the organizational culture accepts and implements seamlessly before becoming an inherent part of the culture. A truly strategic minded officer will clearly realize this and inherently include interagency relationship building as part of his basic responsibilities.

Another critical continuity highlighted by the Defense Strategy is the continuing requirement for combat readiness or the preparation for war. 268 The ability to counter the reemergence of strategic competition and the activities resulting from that competition while still capable of global crisis response requires trained, ready, and educated forces that understand and can execute their martial responsibilities but in a way that facilitates the prudent consolidation of gains afterward – unlike the Iraq and Afghanistan examples. This is no easy venture to develop. It is even that much harder to sustain. SMJFOs must not seek shortcuts in preparation. Strategic minded thinking is hard work, and a deep understanding of the environment is hard earned. Moreover, the current and future environment demand a new way of war. 269 PME institutions must provide the educational foundation to create that new way of war for SMJFOs as they prepare their minds to think through the intricacies of peace, the conditions leading to war, war itself, and the consolidation of gains resulting from the war.


In wartime, the fully mobilized Joint Force will be capable of defeating aggression by a
major power, deterring opportunistic aggression elsewhere; and disrupting imminent
terrorist and WMD threats. During peace or in war, the Joint Force will turn nuclear and
non-nuclear strategic attacks and defend the homeland. To support these missions, the
Joint Force must gain and maintain information superiority; and develop, strengthen, and
sustain US security relationships.  

Another essential continuity identified by the 2018 Defense Strategy is the essential
nature of alliances, partnerships, and good solid working relationships with like-minded nations
across the globe. The strategy states,

Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to our strategy, providing a
durable, asymmetric strategic advantage that no competitor or rival can match. This
approach has served the United States well, in peace and war, for the past 75 years. Our
allies and partners came to our aid after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and have contributed
to every major US led military engagement since. Every day, our allies and partners join
us in defending freedom, deterring war, and maintaining the rules which underwrite a
free and open international order.  

One final essential continuity contained in the 2018 Defense Strategy – Build a More
Lethal Force -- also generates a requirement for urgent change to the organizational culture. A
component within the continuity is the ever-present need to “cultivate workforce talent.” An
enduring requirement in most large organizations, it is especially important within the
Department of Defense and the Joint Force as stated in the guidance, “recruiting, developing and

270 United States. 2018. *Summary of the 2018 national defense strategy of the United States of
America: sharpening the American military’s competitive edge.* 

271 United States. 2018. *Summary of the 2018 national defense strategy of the United States of
America: sharpening the American military’s competitive edge.* 

272 United States. 2018. *Summary of the 2018 national defense strategy of the United States of
America: sharpening the American military’s competitive edge.* 
retaining a high-quality military and civilian workforce is essential for warfighting success.\textsuperscript{273} Regrettably the strategy also indict Professional Military Education within the work force development portfolio.

PME has stagnated, focused more on the accomplishment of mandatory credit at the expense of lethality and ingenuity. We will emphasize intellectual leadership and military professionalism in the art and science of warfighting, deepening our knowledge of history while embracing new technology and techniques to counter competitors… PME is to be used as a strategic asset to build trust and interoperability across the joint forces and with allied and partner forces.\textsuperscript{274}

While there is certainly space for substantial pedagogical improvement within the PME enterprise, that enterprise is adversely impacted and constrained by an organizational culture that values a tactical mindset over strategic thinking even when the context warrants strategic thinking. The organizational culture extols the benefits of and promotes education but does not support education with its execution practices and firmly believes the force and individuals are too busy to learn. Moreover, in this age the services do not assign their most promising officers or those destined for promotion to flag or general officer to instructor/professor positions at the strategic level schools. By not prioritizing education in execution, the Joint Force and the Nation suffer the two-fold adverse effect, subpar instruction and lost developmental opportunities, described in more detail in Chapter IV.

The National Defense Strategy also provides insight into the KSAs required for strategic mindedness and guidance for Joint Force PME curriculum by describing key environmental


changes. The first of those essential changes is -- *challenges to the US military advantage*.

“Today, every domain is contested—air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace… we face an ever more lethal and disruptive battlefield, combined across domains, and conducted at increasing speed and reach—from close combat, throughout overseas theaters, and reaching to our homeland.”  

These contested domains stress the force in ways they did not encounter since operations during the Cold War. Christian Brose highlights the contested nature of a future engagement with revisionist powers. In his book *Kill Chain*, he describes a general scheme of conflict during an engagement with China to answer Senator John McCain’s question, “What would happen if the US military was called upon to fight China in the next few years.”

Brose posited,

> Many of the US ships, submarines, fighter jets, bomber aircraft, additional munitions, and other systems that are needed to fight would not be near the war when it started but would be thousands of miles away in the United States. They would come under immediate attack once they began their multiweek mobilization across the planet. Cyberattacks would grind down the logistical movement of U.S. forces into combat. The defenseless cargo ships and aircraft that would ferry much of the force across the Pacific would be attacked every step of the way. Satellites on which US forces depend for intelligence, communications, and global positioning would be blinded by lasers, shut down by high energy jammers, or shot out of orbit altogether by anti-satellite missiles. The command-and-control networks that manage the flow of critical information to US forces in combat would be broken apart and shattered by electronic attacks, cyberattacks, and missiles. Many US forces would be rendered deaf, dumb, and blind.

> While these attacks were underway, America’s forward bases in places like Japan and Guam would be inundated with waves of precise ballistic and cruise missiles. The few defenses those bases have would quickly be overwhelmed by the sheer volume of weapons coming at them, with many leaking through. Those bases would have no defense against Chinese hypersonic weapons, which can maneuver unpredictably, fly at five times the speed of sound, and strike their targets within minutes of being launched. As all of these missiles slammed into US bases, they would destroy fighter jets and other...

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http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo91947. 3.

aircraft on the ground before US pilots could even get them airborne. They would crater runways, blow up operation centers and fuel storage tanks, render those US forward bases inoperable. If any aircraft did manage to escape the Chinese missiles, it would be forced to relocate to another base in the region, which itself would come under attack. It would look like a US evacuation.277

While Brose’s narrative continues, the extensive segment above forcefully illustrates the need to plan and prepare for contested domains. Breaching these contested domains demands an approach to war different from the last several decades of US combat experience. Whether Brose’s potential scenario becomes reality or not is debatable, but it serves to generate requirements for SMJFOs and their education. From this point forward, the Joint Force and its officers must account for all five warfighting domains and cannot be mired in history focusing only on the three – air, sea, and land – that almost all Joint Force officers have exclusive experience with. Each of the domains must command equal footing because each generates different dilemmas for the Joint Force as Brose highlights. Additionally, Brose’s narrative stresses the need for innovation and creative thinking to develop new ways and methods to address these potential threats. This future, as described by Brose, clearly reinforces the vital requirement for SMJFOs to effortlessly think both critically and creatively.

The Defense Strategy also easily recognizes the impact of the technology transformation impacting the entire world to include both the good and bad resultant consequences.

The security environment is also affected by rapid technological advancements and the changing character of war. The drive to develop new technologies is relentless, expanding to more actors with lower barriers of entry, and moving at accelerating speed. New technologies include advanced computing, big data analytics, artificial intelligence, autonomy, robotics, directed energy, hypersonics, and biotechnology—the very technologies that ensure we will be able to fight and win the wars of the future. New commercial technology will change society and, ultimately, the character of war. The fact that many technological developments will come from the commercial sector means that

state competitors and non-state actors will also have access to them, a fact that risks eroding the conventional overmatch to which our Nation has grown accustomed. \textsuperscript{278}

The Joint Force must remain alert to these new technologies, meld them into a new US way of war, determine who has these technologies and knows how to use them operationally, be creative in developing countermeasures, and actively seek to educate the force on the nuances and sophistications involved with this proliferating technology without overestimating or underestimating the impact of these technologies in the current and future battlespace.

While the state still retains its predominant spot in world affairs, the strategy unmistakably recognizes that non-state actors, and other micropowers have, “found ways to undermine, fencing, or thwart the mega players, the large bureaucratic organizations that previously controlled their fields.” \textsuperscript{279} The Defense Strategy counsels, “States are the principal actors on the global stage, but non state actors also threaten the security environment with increasingly sophisticated capabilities. Terrorists, transnational criminal organizations, cyber hackers, and other malicious non state actors have transformed global affairs with increased capabilities of mass disruption.” \textsuperscript{280} This change in world affairs requires SMJFOs to expand the range of agents that must be accounted for when striving to understand the width and depth of the strategic environment. Strategy and strategic thinking are not only about extensive scale and scope but now attention and resources must go to and account for micro forces in the


environment because of their ability to “wear down, impede, undermine, sabotage, and outflank the mega players in ways that the latter, for all their vast resources, find themselves ill equipped and ill-prepared to resist. And the effectiveness of these techniques to destabilize and displays entrenched behemoths means that power is becoming easier to disrupt and harder to consolidate.” 281

These factors contribute to the fact that we no longer have sanctuary in our own country. The Joint Force must be more aware of routine actions within the United States that in times past were protected by two great oceans. Competitors can now disrupt in a major way on American soil. The strategy cautions,

America is a target, whether from terrorists seeking to attack our citizens; malicious cyber activity against personal, commercial or government infrastructure; or political and information subversion. New threats to commercial and military uses of space are emerging, while increasing digital connectivity of all aspects of life, business, government, and military creates significant vulnerabilities. During conflict, attacks against our critical defense, government, and economic infrastructure must be anticipated. 282

To deploy worldwide, US SMJFOs must first protect the homeland, the American way of life, and its critical infrastructure that the Joint Force relies on to accomplish its military tasks and objectives.

Finally, the Defense Strategy seeks changes in mindset, lethality, capabilities, and concepts. The thinking underpinning the strategy realizes that substantive changes cannot be merely talked about but must be implemented and accepted as a new way of American military thought and war. An emphasis on the intellectual development of the Joint Force and its personnel recognizes that the current and future environment requires a “Joint Force [that] will


have to outthink, outmaneuver, out partner, and out innovate revisionist powers, rogue regimes, terrorists, and other threat actors.”  

To outthink our strategic competitors, require SMJFOs that are fully conscious of their own thinking and thought processes. They must understand the difference between their fast thinking or intuition, built on thousands of hours of tactical repetitions, and develop a slower method of thinking through those strategic issues that they have less experience with but feel compelled to think through using their tactical mindset. Daniel Kahneman in his classic *Thinking Fast and Slow* recognizes this instinctive search for an answer in these complex environments. He cautions,

The spontaneous search for an intuitive solution sometimes fails --neither an expert solution nor a heuristic Answer comes to mind. In such cases we often find ourselves switching to a slower, more deliberate and effortful form of thinking. This is the slow thinking of the title. Fast thinking includes both variants of intuitive thought--the expert and the heuristic--as well as the entirely automatic mental activities of perception and memory, the operations that enable you to know there is a lamp on your desk or retrieve the name of the capital of Russia... the distinction between fast and slow thinking has been explored by many psychologists over the last 25 years. For reason this that I explained more fully in the next chapter, I describe mental life by the metaphor of two agents, called system one and system 2, which respectively produce fast and slow thinking.  

Kahneman then further defines for the Joint Force educator and SMJFO System 1 and System 2 thinking,

- **System 1** operates automatically and quickly, with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control.
- **System 2** allocated attention to the effortful mental activities that demanded, including complex computations. The operations of system two are often associated with the subjective experience of agency, choice, and concentration.

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To be truly strategic minded the organization and the individual must be aware of the thinking they are employing and ensure they use the right system in the right context. Fast thinking in a situation calling for slow thinking can be disastrous.

Additionally, the National Defense strategy stresses, “The nation must field sufficient, capable forces to defeat enemies and achieve sustainable outcomes that protect the American people and our vital interests. Our aim is a Joint Force that possesses decisive advantages for any likely conflict, while remaining proficient across the entire spectrum of conflict.” 286 This study asks how PME assists in these tasks and how does the education of Joint Force officers contribute to the accomplishment of the above changes. As stated earlier the strategy acknowledges that education must change and continuously change to meet the demands of the environment. What the strategy fails to specify is that the organizational culture and mindset must undergo substantive change to truly achieve and sustain the desired modifications. The organizational mindset, or the “artifacts” as characterized by Edgar Schein and examined more closely in Chapter IV, must change to fully understand and implement the adjustments needed and desired within the culture. 287 As Schein emphasizes, “Once a set of shared assumptions has come to be taken for granted, it determines much of the group's behavior, and the rules and


norms are taught to newcomers in a socialization process that is itself a reflection of culture.”

The strategy captures this essential task when it emphasizes,

Modernization is not defined solely by hardware; it requires change in the ways we organize and employ forces. We must anticipate the implications of new technologies on the battlefield, rigorously define the military problems anticipated in future conflict, and foster a culture of experimentation and calculated risk taking. We must anticipate how competitors and adversaries will employ new operational concepts and technologies to attempt to defeat us, while developing operational concepts to sharpen our competitive advantages and enhance our lethality.”

As specified, organizational culture must advance in multiple areas to achieve the desired capabilities and the capacity to respond to the challenges posed by the rapidly changing international environment.

Secretary of Defense Mattis concludes the strategy with the following guidance and direction. The strategy “establishes my intent. We must use creative approaches, make sustained investment, and be disciplined in execution to field the Joint Force fit for our time, one that can compete, deter, and win in this increasingly complex security environment.” The Secretary is a scholar-practitioner, who studied and practiced the art of war over a lifetime, understanding the nuances and sophistications of war but also mastering the fundamentals and principles with a deep appreciation and respect for the continuities.

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Continuities of War

The current international environment is dynamic and challenging and is ever changing. Despite the changes the environment also reflects numerous continuities that SMJFOs must remain alert to, process, and account for within their thinking. While there are innumerable continuities in world affairs, this study focuses and prioritizes the continuities of war in addition to the other continuities highlighted in USG strategic direction and guidance. Also, though there may be numerous sources to explore the continuities of war, two seasoned warrior scholars set the foundation for this analysis: LTG James M. Dubik USA (retired) and LTG H.R. McMaster USA (retired).

First, we examine Dubik’s views, and the answer to his insightful question -- Has Warfare Changed?292 He easily answers his own question with a decisive yes. “The conduct of war has always changed, sometimes dramatically, depending upon the tools at any given historical period… the flow of changes in the conduct of war and the relationship of technology to those changes as well documented.”293 Technology certainly has a changing effect on war as the INSSG points out; however, LTG Dubik distinguishes between the conduct of war and its nature. “Not only are the conduct and nature of war different, but also the former is ever changing while the latter is not; further, the difference has important practical consequences.”294


LTG Dubik posits that once the fighting starts, the continuities of war drive the fighting, the nature, and the outcome. In his view those continuities are:

1. Wars causes lie in the human heart.
2. War is the realm of reason and emotion.
3. War is the clash of wills.
4. War is inherently ambiguous.
5. War is about using force or threatening to use it.
6. War updates: It does not replace.
7. War is an extension of politics.
8. War has its own logic: cyclic and paradoxical.
9. War hides in the corners of collective memory.
10. War has two basic forms: exhaustion and decision. 295

If you accept Dubik’s list at face value, each of the above should be described in greater detail to draw out specific requirements for SMJFOs. While the study has no reason to dispute LTG Dubik’s conclusion, it will identify and analyze LTG McMaster’s recommendations instead as McMaster simplifies Dubik’s list by focusing on only four continuities seeking to highlight the essential.

LTG H.R. McMaster during a lecture to the Joint Combined Warfighting School and in a Military Review article highlights a critical task, increased strategic thinking, for the current post 9/11 environment. He cautions that despite the many acknowledged changes, the Joint Force and Americans in general, overemphasize change and tend to neglect continuities. McMaster advised that the SMJFO, to be strategically effective, must seek a balance between continuity and change and not overlook or disregard the continuities of war. To that end, he described the following four continuities for Joint Force consideration:

1. War is an extension of politics.
2. War is human.
3. War is uncertain.

4. War is a contest of wills. McMaster notes that these continuities are obviously not new to Joint warfighting professionals but stressed that with the focus on change and specific changing conditions, Joint Force students and practitioners must remain fully mindful of these four essential continuities. Abandoning the continuities to chase the changes places the Joint Force and the Nation in jeopardy.

An analysis of the McMaster’s four continuities reveals several topics and areas that SMJFOs must continue to study, experience, and reflect on. As war remains an extension of politics all in the Joint Force must be aware of US foreign policy and the system of decisionmaking within the US national security enterprise. McMaster recognized this requirement years earlier when he was a young Army major and penned his seminal work Dereliction of Duty. In the preface of that book, he provided an essential insight,

I discovered that the military's role in Vietnam decision making was little understood and largely overlooked. By law the Joint Chiefs of Staff were the “principal military advisers to the president, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.” That was not the role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) during the escalation of the Vietnam War period it became clear to me that I would need to understand the role of the president, his principal civilian advisors, and the JCS in the decision-making process.

McMaster, H.R. 2015. “Continuity and Change: The Army Operating Concept and Clear Thinking about Future War.” Military Review, March 1. https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,uid&db=edsgao&AN=edsgcl.409236041&site=eds-live&scope=site, and during a recurring series of lectures to the Joint and Combined Warfighting School from Academic Year 2014-2016. LTG McMaster also highlighted four fallacies of future war along with the four continuities. Those fallacies were: the Vampire Fallacy, the Zero dark Thirty Fallacy, The Mutual of Omaha Wild Kingdom Fallacy, and the RSVP Fallacy. Each of the fallacies address some misconception or misbelief about how the United States and the Joint Force approach the future of war and why the fallacy should be avoided. McMaster has been and remains dedicated to the importance of professional military education and has been a consistent recurring senior leader mentor for JCWS senior seminars (senior 0-5 and 0-6 officers from each service) especially during the COVID restrained period.

This level of understanding generates a whole host of requirements for those who truly want and need to understand McMaster’s first continuity -- “War is an extension of Politics”.

It is not enough to just parrot the phrase which has its roots from Clausewitz’s writings. True SMJFOs must clearly understand the Title 10 responsibilities of the key stakeholders and assist them in meeting their responsibilities. They must understand the role and function of the National Security Council and be cognizant of how they support the national security decisionmaking process.\(^{298}\) They must distinctly understand US foreign policy and account for the continuities resident in that realm. Walter Russell Mead handles these continuities well as he lays out four basic schools of US foreign policy and their recurrent nature.\(^{299}\) To connect military success with political victory it is vital that the SMJFO spend time studying and reflecting on this continuity. McMaster then stresses another continuity – “War is human”.

While the importance of humans is evident in every endeavor, humans remain especially vital in strategy and war. Many wish to remove the individual, small team, the individual impact in large organizations, or the impact of a single leader from the strategic equation when analyzing the environment. They believe that the structure, bureaucracy, or government politics

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is the key determinant in the outcome of events. James Rosenau highlights an alternative approach and in his view an approach more relevant to the current state of world affairs. He notes,

Both singly and collectively, in short, individuals have become increasingly central to the course of events. Observers who seek to make sense of the world scene cannot ignore them: the question becomes not one of how to integrate agents and structures into one coherent account, but how it could ever be possible to consider methodological individualism or methodological structuralism as viable alternatives.  

McMaster stresses that humans in the loop remain a constant necessity, a continuity, at least for the foreseeable future. He strenuously notes – “you won’t get understanding from a sensor.”  

Avoiding or underestimating the human dimension during OEF and OIF proved to be disastrous. McMaster lectured that “unless you address the time-tested human emotions – Fear, Honor, Interest—you are headed for failure.”

McMaster’s lecture continued to lay out two more continuities in war. The third continuity he addressed was – “War is uncertain” A key characteristic of current world affairs, McMaster recognizes that this uncertainty has been and will be a constant feature in war despite the technological revolution highlighted above in the INSSG and National Defense Strategy and the benefit of increased technology to aid the warfighter’s understanding. Increased and accelerated delivery of information may mitigate but will not erase uncertainty. LTG McMaster

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relays that “conflict evolves in ways that you have not planned for.” He highlights Clausewitz’s counsel on uncertainty, advises SMJFOs to account for uncertainly and include it into their decision-making process. Clausewitz reveals, “four elements make up the climate of war: danger, exertion, uncertainty, and chance. If we consider them together, it becomes evident how much fortitude of mind and character are needed to make progress in these impeding elements with safety and success.” Clausewitz expands on the variability surrounding uncertainty. “Circumstances vary so enormously in war, and are so indefinable, that a vast array of factors has to be appreciated--mostly in the light of probabilities alone.” Moreover, Clausewitz advocates, “finally, the general unreliability of all information presents a special problem in war: all action takes place, so to speak, in a kind of twilight, which, like fog or moonlight, often tends to make things seem grotesque and larger than they really are.” McMaster clearly understands Clausewitz’s counsel and translates it into direction to prepare SMJFOs for the surprises that accompany an uncertain environment. Colin Gray solidifies McMaster’s position regarding the always present uncertainties and potential surprises. Gray relates,

By definition, the enemy control surprise. He has the initiative. If this were not so, the invention question would not be surprises. However, we, not the enemy, control the consequences of surprise… it must follow that the defense community has no practical


choice other than to accept that surprise happens; It is a condition of national security. This is not a feature unique to the contemporary world. 307

A thoughtful Joint Force alert and aware of the environmental uncertainty will strive to mitigate the inherent insecurity in world affairs. The Joint Force and SMJFO conscious thoughtfulness are imperative to national survival. Clausewitz, Gray and McMaster provide guidance and direction to inform that thoughtfulness.

The fourth continuity highlighted by LTG McMaster is – “War is a contest of wills.” Examining this continuity, he begins by recognizing that a coherent war strategy establishes goals and objectives to direct all US governmental effort. The ensuing competition with the enemy then becomes a contest of wills with an overall objective of winning. Winning requires, “a rational determination to achieve a sustainable outcome, usually a political outcome, consistent with vital interests.” 308 The strategy must fuel and sustain the will of the people, the government, and the force to overcome, outlast, or dominate the competition. Winning requires more than the military and its unwavering will. LTG McMaster advises, “Winning in war, of course, is not a military only task. Achieving sustainable outcomes consistent with vital interests is an inherently civil-military task that requires integrated planning and execution of political, diplomatic, military, economic, informational, intelligence, and, increasingly, law enforcement


and rule of law efforts.” This contest of wills remains a continuity in the “rapidly changing and dynamic” environment today and must be understood prior, during, and after any war, conflict, or intervention the US undertakes or is forced into. The will of the people, the government and the Joint Force must be aligned and sustained to achieve the stated objectives when using military force defending or promoting national interests.

As world affairs reveals changes and displays continuities, a continuous presence since 1648 has been the nation-state. Regrettably, not all nation-states, over time, have been effective contributors to the international environment. The next section addresses the issues that a SMJFO must be cognizant of when accounting for those states that fall short of being sound contributors to world affairs and generate instability across the globe and without outside intervention display little prospect for improvement.

**Fragile, Failing, Failed, and Collapsed States**

Numerous fragile, failing, and failed states populate today’s international environment. These nations deteriorated over time or never fully developed for a variety of reasons and now create a range of challenges for the international community. A SMJFO must understand that despite the focus on strategic competition, these states still exist and pose significant issues to the security and prosperity of the United States and its allies. Robert Rotberg has studied these weak states deeply and understands the threats they pose. His analysis recognizes that international organizations and the more developed national powers, like the United States, often “find

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themselves sucked disconcertingly into a maelstrom of anomic internal conflict and messy humanitarian relief” due to the poor performance and considerable flaws of these weak and failing states. Moreover, he counsels that the international community must seek “to understand the nature of weak states, to strengthen those poised on the abyss of failure and to restore the functionality of failed states” in order to preserve the international norms of stability and predictability amongst the community of nations. Rotberg prioritizes this breakdown of states and the subsequent restoration of these states as amongst “the urgent policy questions of the twenty-first century.” Despite the overall emphasis and focus on strategic competition both the INSSG and the 2018 National Defense Strategy still highlight this critical issue of failing states. SMJFOs cannot neglect this overarching problem yet I have heard on numerous occasions in the classroom that the Joint Force no longer needs to focus on these issues.

Francis Fukuyama further reinforces Rotberg’s argument and affirms the importance of the state-building dilemma. He clearly sees the importance of this sector in the international environment. Fukuyama posits that the significance of this problem set results “because weak or failed states are the source of many of the world’s most serious problems, from poverty to AIDS


313 Multiple classroom discussions since the publishing of the 2018 National Defense Strategy and rightful promotion of strategic competition as a priority have generated student comments indicating that the United States has no interest or requirement to engage with the remaining worldwide state-building challenge despite the dangers posed by this critical issue.
to drugs to terrorism.”  

However, he cautions that despite our wealth of knowledge regarding the intricacies of state-building “there is a great deal we don’t know, particularly about how to transfer strong institutions to developing countries.” While this issue must be addressed, Fukuyama fully recognizes that intervention for good intentions within another national system while potentially beneficial could possibly limit the growth of that state and ultimately make the situation worse. Moreover, he stresses

For the post-September 11 period, the chief issue for global politics will not be how to cut back on stateness but how to build it up. For individual societies and for the global community, the withering away of the state is not a prelude to utopia but to disaster. A critical issue facing poor countries that blocks their possibilities for economic development is their inadequate level of institutional development. They do not need extensive states, but they do need strong and effective ones within the limited scope of necessary state functions… In the international system, stateness has been under attack and eroded de facto for a variety of reasons. States throughout the less developed world are weak, and the end of the Cold War led to the emergence of a band of failed and troubled states from Europe to South Asia. These weak states have posed threats to international order because they are the source of conflict and grave abuses of human rights and because they have become potential breeding grounds for a new kind of terrorism that can reach into the developed world. Strengthening these states through various forms of nation building is a task that has become vital to international security but is one that few developed countries have mastered. Learning to do state building better is thus central to the future of world order.

SMJFOs must remained attuned to this continuing international challenge despite the overwhelming attention and focus now being emphasized regarding strategic competition.

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Dan Bolger USA (retired) in his book *Savage Peace* recognized this same issue following the fall of the Berlin wall and subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union,

> It wasn’t supposed to turn out this way. When the Berlin Wall crashed down in November 1989, many imagined that World Peace had finally arrived. Yet it wasn't the dawn of global concord glowing at the horizon, but the blaze of internecine conflagration as long suppressed tribal hatreds flared to the surface. Around the globe, third world countries lurched into revolution. America responded. Now these sad circumstances have become our problems, each with its price tag - blood treasure and prestige. Where will it all lead.\(^ {318}\)

It has all led to today. With a return to strategic competition, these issues remain but are masked by the urgency of nation versus nation competition amongst geo-political heavyweights like the United States, China, and Russia as well as rogue regimes like Iran and North Korea.

Bolger further clarifies the situation that emerged at the end of the Cold War,

> Fueled by entrenched economic disparities, long suppressed hatreds and old feuds burst up to the surface. The tense but definite borders of the Cold War gave way to waves of seemingly unlicensed violence. Much as we condemned the iron and bamboo curtains, they and their heavy-handed masters kept many awful trends in check. Now most of the walls are down, and America is discovering that often, when you’re the only builder left, floods are worse than dams.\(^ {319}\)

Regrettably, in the current international environment the definite borders of the Cold War no longer exist. The SMJFO of today must not only account for the tense strategic competition but must also be aware of the “floods” of instability present without the “dams” to hold back the severe consequences poised by these fragile, failing, and failed states. No easy venture.

> Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart reinforce the severity of the trend, “This problem-the failed state- is at the heart of a worldwide systemic crisis that constitutes the most serious


challenge to global stability in the new millennium.”  

Additionally, they firmly believe that policymakers, national security practitioners, and the private sector must mitigate, slow, and reverse state failure to ensure the future security, prosperity, and well-being of the international community. “Accordingly, solutions to our current problems of insecurity, poverty, and a lack of growth all converge on the need for a state-building project.”  

While the most serious challenge may no longer be the failed state as described by Ghani and Lockhart since the return of strategic competition, it still exists and will certainly be a variable that cannot be dismissed in contemporary world affairs.

Moreover, since the end of the Cold War, the US emerged with an unprecedented level of power. What was done with that power involved the military through and through when they embarked on an unprecedented level of military engagement throughout the world as, “the United States, used the formidable power with which it emerged from the conflict with the Soviet Union in a distinctive and unprecedented way.”

Michael Mandelbaum in Mission Failure: America and he World in the Post-Cold War Era states, “The main focus of American foreign policy shifted from war to governance, from what other governments did beyond their borders to what they did and how they were organized within them.” He further notes that the

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military interventions that upheld those policies all “had a common feature. They all failed.”

To be truly strategic minded the SMJFO educational program cannot neglect this period of American history and cannot wisely contend that the United States faces no impact by this continuing international challenge.

Globalization

Globalization, like the ubiquitous fragile, failing, and failed state dilemma discussed above, is another all-encompassing critical trend in world affairs that must be examined to define updated KSA characteristics for SMJFOs. Moreover, globalization, just like the concepts of strategy and power examined in Chapter II, signifies many things to many people. Although a thoroughly contested subject, it is essential that the National Security enterprise first develop a basic understanding of the numerous facets of globalization and then a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding, including a look back at the history of globalization to guide and direct foreign policy and military actions.

Where does one begin to define this pervasive concept and wide-ranging process? Zygmunt Bauman, a respected Polish sociologist, in Globalization: The Human Consequences provides a baseline to consider. He recognizes the wide-ranging presence of the globalization process but also reveals the polarizing aspects of the process. Bauman specifies that globalization for some is “what we are bound to do if we wish to be happy; for others ‘globalization’ is the cause of our unhappiness.” Moreover, he emphasizes the ‘time/space compression’ aspect of today’s globalization and how it “encapsulates the on-going multi-faceted transformation of the

parameters of the human condition.” 325 How does the Joint Force and National Security enterprise design, plan, prepare, execute, and assess at the strategic level to comprehend the globalizing process and how to think and operate within this transforming human condition?

Jan Aart Scholte, Faculty Chair in Peace and Development at the School of Global Studies at the University of Gothenberg, provides supporting evidence to the difficulty of grasping globalization, in his critical introduction to globalization, stressing that globalization is most certainly a contested subject and that the relevant arguments encompass the “starting premises regarding the definition, measurement, chronology, and explanation of globalization.”

To assist our understanding, Scholte critiques four definitions and offers a fifth for consideration. Scholte describes globalization “as the spread of transplanetary…particularly supraterritorial connections between people…reducing barriers to…transworld social contacts.”

Moreover, he identifies “a shift in the nature of social space which contrasts with the presumed continuity… in the underlying continuity of social geography” resident in the other definitions.328 Using Scholte’s definition and description of globalization allows the Joint Force to better understand that the current strategic environment is a shifting social space which the Joint Force operates within. Consequently, the Joint Force must educate, train, and condition its individuals and organizations to observe, understand, and conduct operations in a more precise


and nuanced way to account for this new globalized environment and to be fully aware of its shifting character.

To further set the condition, for a deeper understanding of this process, Thomas Friedman recognizes the history of the process and identifies three great eras of globalization. Globalization 1.0 which “…lasted from 1492- when Columbus set sail, opening trade between the Old World and the New World – until around 1800…It shrunk the world from a size large to a size medium.” 329 The element of change, the dynamic force that was valued most during this era generating globalizing effects was “how much brawn – how much muscle, how much horsepower, wind power, or later, steam power-your country had and how creatively you could deploy it.” 330 In this era the key questions according to Friedman were “Where does my country fit into global competition and opportunities? How can I go global and collaborate with others through my country?” 331 Globalization 2.0 according to Friedman “lasted roughly from 1800 to 2000, interrupted by the Great Depression and World Wars I and II…shrunk the world from a size medium to a size small.” 332 The essential dynamic driving global integration at this time “was multinational companies. These multinationals went global for markets and labor, spearheaded first by the expansion of the Dutch and English joint –stock companies and the


Industrial revolution.” These earlier periods confirm that globalization is not a new phenomenon, had a huge impact on world affairs, followed a path to get to where we are currently, and without the preceding eras, globalization, and its effects most likely present differently today. The history of Globalization provides more evidence that SMJFOs must recognize time as a stream as counselled by Neustadt and May’s approach in their classic Thinking in Time. SMJFOs must develop an ability to “merge the tenses” as Simon Serfaty advocates, the past of Globalization certainly matters and the utility of “path dependence” is essential for SMJFOs to fully understand the complexities resident in the environment from the international to the local. SMJFOs must hone the ability to think through time advocated in different ways by Neustadt, May, and Serfaty. To see time as a stream, Neustadt and May recognize,

Thinking of time in such a way appears from our examples to have three components. One is recognition that the future has no place to come from but the past, hence the past has predictive value. Another element is recognition that what matters for the future in the present is departures from the past, alterations, changes, which prospectively or actually divert familiar flows from accustomed channels, thus affecting that predictive value and much else besides. A third component is continuous comparison, an almost constant oscillation from present to future to past and back, heedful of perspective change, concern to expedite, limit, guide, counter, or accept it as the fruits of such comparison suggest.

Serfaty emphasizes that to “merge the tenses” an understanding of the present deriving from the past that captures the key trends and detailed narratives in a concise “Sense of the Moment” is a

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prerequisite to anticipating the future as this method provides a common start point for problem identification and solution options. 336 Friedman practices this as he described the earlier eras of Globalization before he addresses the current era and potential future.

Friedman continues by describing Globalization 3.0, the current era, which starts around the turn of the millennium. This era shrinks the world “from a size small to a size tiny…and the dynamic force in Globalization 3.0 –the force that gives it its unique character- is the newfound power for *individuals* to collaborate and compete globally.” 337 Other significant differences resident in the 3.0 era is that it will be “much more diverse – non-Western [Rise of the Rest], non-white-group of individuals” than past eras. 338 Consequently, many more participate in and affect the globalization process. Regrettably, many more now have the potential to negatively impact the process or be negatively impacted by globalization. Several scholars and practitioners examine and analyze these negative impacts providing insights and observations that SMJFOs must account for as they think through the use of force in a globalized world. Thomas Barnett, in *The Pentagon’s New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-First Century* addresses the negative dynamics of globalization. He features the danger of disconnectedness and highlights that the “shift in the nature of social space” enables prosperity and development but can also create

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336 Serfaty, Simon. 2014-2018. Graduate Program International Studies. Norfolk, Va. Old Dominion University. Professor Serfaty emphasized merging the tenses and developing a sense of the moment concepts in all his foreign policy courses. These concepts are useful for Joint Force officers to understand and apply.


violence that now can move more freely and indiscriminately.\textsuperscript{339} Barnett cautioned, “I found myself instinctively exploring the seam between war and peace, locating it first in US military crisis responses and then America's foreign aid, and finally focusing on its leading edge--the spread of the global economy itself… Our shared goal was to explore how globalization is remaking the global security environment--in other words, the Pentagon's new map.” \textsuperscript{340} This negative side to globalization requires further exploration and characterization garnering a better understanding to help guide US national security operations in the globalized environment. Stanford scholar, James Rosenau analyzes these dynamics beyond globalization or “distant proximities. The next section analyzes the distant proximities through Rosenau’s writings and “the expulsions” of globalization as described by Columbia scholar, Saskia Sassen, and her scholarship.

**DYNAMICS BEYOND GLOBALIZATION**

Although Scholte’s definition and description of globalization has utility, James Rosenau, a globally renowned American political scientist, and international affairs scholar, provides sound and hard-hitting guidance regarding globalization as an organizational concept. Rosenau recommends “the best way to grasp world affairs today… requires viewing them as an endless series of distant proximities in which the forces pressing for greater globalization and those


inducing greater localization interactively play themselves out.”

Rosenau further recommends,

…that a secure grasp of world affairs requires…forming a habit of pausing to assess any distant proximities that may underlie or flow from the situations one is interested. In so doing, however, one quickly discovers that distant proximities are not simple interrelationships, readily discernible and easily understood. Distant proximities encompass the tensions between core and periphery, between national and transnational systems, between communitarianism and cosmopolitanism, between cultures and subcultures, between states and markets, between urban and rural, between coherence and incoherence, between integration and disintegration, between decentralization and centralization, between universalism and particularism, between pace and space, between the global and the local— to note only the more conspicuous links between opposites that presently underlie the course of events and the development or decline of institutions. And all these tensions are marked by numerous variants; they take different forms in different parts of the world, and different countries, and different markets, and different communities, and different professions, and in different cyberspaces, with the result that there is enormous diversity in the way people experience the distant proximities of which their lives are composed. Whatever the diversity, however, locating distant proximities at the center of our perspectives on politics enables us to avoid the disciplinary trap of maintaining an analytic separation between foreign and domestic politics, as is the case when international politics and comparative politics are treated as different fields of inquiry, with each holding constant and dynamics at work in the other.

No simple relationship, Rosenau fully recognizes “[world affairs] are rooted in complexity, in complementary as well as competitive processes.”

Rosenau’s analysis further reveals that to better understand world affairs, the Joint Force and the SMJFO must analyze “the phenomena viewed as distant and those considered proximate before assessing how the tensions resulting from their interaction play out in diverse contexts.”

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Rosenau describes these dynamics as distant proximities and captures the friction between globalizing forces and localizing forces with the “… label “fragmegration” which is intended to suggest the pervasive interaction between fragmenting and integrating dynamics unfolding at every level of community.”  

Within Rosenau’s concept of fragmegration he recognizes and emphasizes the changes in the environment vital to processing and understanding the strategic relationships leading to coherent and productive tactical action. He uncovers a blurring between the macro and micro elements in the strategic realm.

Different types of micro and macro inputs serve to highlight where the dynamics of change originate and are predominant. The impetus for change can originate or be sustained at either level, but the causal flows between the two are not necessarily balanced. One predominates by initiating, and the other follows even as the two flows become inextricably intertwined in subsequent interaction sequences. The presumption that people and collectivities shape each other highlights a central problem: while some analysts might agree that the flow between the two levels is central to how collectivities sustain themselves through time and how people shape and are shaped by macro structures, the interactions across the levels have been largely taken for granted and in one oft-cited case, assessed to be beyond systematic comprehension. Thus, probing micro-initiated inputs takes analysis into unexplored territory. We do not have any viable IR theory that anticipates how individuals will vary in response to varying macro inputs or how the structures and policies of macro collectivities might be undermined, redirected, sustained, or otherwise affected by new patterns at the micro level.

Without a deep understanding of the practical paradoxes present in the environment beyond globalization, seemingly productive US intervention and tactical actions may result in a less


346 Rosenau, James N. 2003. Distant proximities: dynamics beyond globalization. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 23. Moreover, Rosenau devotes two chapters to an explanation of the micro and the macro interaction which is imperative for a SMJFO to account for during this current epoch. Strategy now entails more than the macro dynamics present in world affairs and strategic minded officers must also account for the twelve micro worlds that Rosenau identifies.
secure and prosperous environment for the United States, its Allies, and the affected nations. SMJFOs must be aware of these dynamics as described by Rosenau.

Other notable analyses that examine and highlight these extreme exclusions are Saskia Sassen’s 2014 book *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*, Joseph Stiglitz’s 2002 *Globalization and its Discontents* and Dani Rodrik’s 2011 *The Globalization Paradox*. All three are more skeptical about the positive effects of globalization and focus on the negative aspects of globalization, in more illustrative detail, than Thomas Friedman. While Friedman accentuates the positive and is an advocate for globalization, Rosenau, Sassen, Stiglitz and Rodrik recognize the negative dynamics that occur within and from globalization and are more measured about the utility of a globalized international environment.

Effective military operations conducted in a globalized environment, therefore, require the force to slow down, recognize and assess distant proximities, and understand complex adaptive systems and their specific characteristics. The dismal performance in both OIF and OEF indicates that the military, at least at the upper levels of command, have struggled with these distant proximities at multiple levels. How should the Joint Force handle the transplanetary forces described by Scholte? Does the Joint Force even recognize and fully understand these forces? Performance and outcomes in two recent operations (Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom) indicates that it does not. 347 A better understanding of general systems and complex adaptive systems appears to be one way that SMJFOs can contribute to better strategic and operational designs and plans that should at a minimum provide the Joint Force and National...

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Security leadership a greater appreciation for the challenges and pitfalls of operating in a complex globalized environment.

**Conclusion**

How does today’s rapidly changing and dynamic environment inform this study? What insights do we gain from an examination of two US Strategic guidance and direction documents? What continuities and changes do we recognize from the analysis of those documents? Are the continuities essential to understand and apply? Will the changes be lasting, or will they dissipate quickly? What do SMJFOs need to know from this volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous international environment? How does the rapidly changing and dynamic environment inform military education? What new subjects or concepts should we apply to the military educational enterprise? One item that emerges from all the literature and discussion and is abundantly clear – change is constant. In this hyper information age change can be extremely rapid and almost mutant. Situations can flare up quickly and can metastasize like out-of-control cancer cells.

David Barno and Nora Bensahel highlight this rapid change and provide further advice, “Furthermore, we are living in a time of exponential change, unfolding at unprecedented speeds. Different authors offer different explanations for why this is happening, but they almost all agree that the combination of rapid technological advances, globalization, increased connectivity, and urbanization is reshaping our world in profound ways.”

By extension they posit, “In such a complex world where changes can occur at light speed, the ability of the US military to predict the size, scope and character of the next war will

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remain extraordinarily difficult.” 349 This emphasizes the essential need for better-educated Joint Force Officers to meet the challenges and opportunities produced by the rapid changes. Moreover, those officers must understand the concept of change itself to better underpin their understanding of “world affairs”. Why do humans change? Why do organizations change? How do they change? How does change become institutionalized? How do you recognize change especially when it is subtle, hidden or deceptively guarded? JFOs should be better educated, more strategic minded and possess “anxious foresight” or foreknowledge. 350 The Joint Force must adapt with the changes and not get stuck or wedded to outmoded and legacy thinking that has long been surpassed by the speed of change. This is easy to talk about but exceptionally hard to implement.

Concretely then SMJFOs must study and understand change. How do they recognize change? How do they evaluate it as positive or negative? How do they accelerate and generate positive change? How do they mitigate, eliminate, slow, or disrupt negative change? Sassen implores us to look at subterranean trends. 351 Zinni highlights the subterranean trends and classifies them as the “Fire Beneath the Sand”. 352 Rosenau evaluates world affairs strategically and recognizes both the macro and micro components that Sassen and Zinni describe in detail. 353


To process all of this requires strategy and strategic mindedness to not only account for the macro scale and scope of world affairs but also to study and process the impact of individual humans and non-state actors as counselled by Rosenau. This additional inclusiveness and micro scale understanding, in and of itself, is a big change that must be emphasized and taught. Are we teaching the right things? Are we teaching using the correct methods? Are we really educating or are we attempting to train? What makes our instructors capable of instructing our students? Do we have the right instructors? How do these questions get answered? Chapter IV and Chapter V synthesize Chapter’s II and III seeking to provide answers for these critical questions.

Summarizing the conclusions from this chapter reveals an extensive reach of knowledge required to be truly strategic minded combined with a wide range of skills and abilities. While the knowledge and skills are almost infinite in scope, this Chapter synthesizes those KSAs into five broad categories that must be taught to Joint Force officers and that those aspiring SMJFOs must be well versed in to be effective. Those categories are: Thinking, Understanding, Creating, Adapting, Describing. While distinct in their own way there is a blurring between the five categories as each are interrelated and share elements. There is no need to be pedantic with these categories but to appreciate the complexity of the environment with its continuities and changes, embrace it, and value the parsimony in organizing around just five categories instead of the innumerable categories required to get more fidelity but increasing the complexity of the ordering. An educational approach must expose the complexity of the environment yet organize the material in a simpler manner so that it is understandable alerting the students to their own strengths and weakness. This then provides the students the knowledge base for continuous development and adaptation and gives them the tools to process the unique situations they are
bound to encounter especially in the future. In conclusion a description of each one of the
categories follows from a combination of the material:

1. **Thinking**: Continuities and changes in today’s turbulent international environment
require educational programs that teach SMJFOs how to think not what to think.
SMJFOs must consciously think through their thinking identifying the consequences of
their recommendations, decisions, and actions. Aligning with Robert Cooper, the Joint
Force must encourage, promote and reward “clarity of thought” as the efficacy of Joint
Force thinking is a “contribution to peace”.

SMJFOs must think both critically and creatively as espoused by Elder and Paul.
Critical thought requires the will to create and improve. As a result, creative thinking
must become a dedicated subject within the Joint Professional Development system. The
Joint Force can cultivate the creativity required to generate intellectual overmatch, but the
Joint Force Education system must change at multiple levels and Joint Force culture must
support that change and fully adapt to ensure overmatch through effective creative
thinking. Currently creativity is a Joint Force educational topic but rarely examined
substantively or explored in depth conceptually and practically in most Joint Force
curriculums. Additionally, SMJFOs must be cognizant of, think through, examine, and
understand the basics, the nuances and sophistications of the international environment
including “non-traditional” threats, gray zone operations, and hybrid operations as
specified by both the INSSG and the NDS. While the majority of the Joint Force can
focus on the high-risk stakes of strategic competition, the Joint Force must retain and
foster a cadre of strategic thinkers who remain proficient in “non-traditional” threats and
the concepts surrounding these issues. While the consequences of ill-preparedness for
strategic competition can be catastrophic, ignoring or mishandling “non-traditional” issues can be just as tragic over a longer timeframe. Prevention of a “non-traditional” threat gaining momentum through evolution or mutation is an important piece of our overall security and prosperity because of the potential deleterious effects of lesser included threats to the Nation. Good thinking guards against this.

Inextricably linked to understanding all elements within the environment is the requirement for SMJFOs to think through and understand the concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities regarding failed states and only focus on the renewed emphasis on strategic competition. SMJFOs cannot bypass this critical international issue as counselled by Fukuyama, Rotberg, Schadlow and others and only focus on the strategic competitors or the rogue regimes.

SMJFOs must ensure that the powerful effect of information must now be thought of with the same intensity as the other Joint Force functions of movement and maneuver, intelligence, protection, fires, sustainment, and C2. The SMJFO think about and must understand the nuances and sophistications that the competitors and threats apply to weaponizing information and social media to prevent or mitigate the consequences of this new form of warfare. This adversarial use of information changes every aspect of life but especially the conduct of war as described by Singer. With the reinvigoration of strategic competition, the SMJFO must study, think through and discourse on the theories of deterrence, proliferation, and arms control and its conventional and nuclear practicalities to keep pace with strategic competitors. Moreover, SMJFOs must lead the way on current and future nuclear thinking and modernization of nuclear forces, C2, and capabilities.

Logically flowing from the re-emergence of strategic competition, SMJFOs must think
more about and better understand China and Russia. SMJFOs must assist in the thinking regarding evolving, revolutionary, and different approaches to war based on the last several decades of US combat experience as described by Brose and McFate. Using creative thinking SMJFOs must contribute to innovation and assist in the development of a new way of American military thought and war.

Changes in the turbulent international environment require SMJFOs to increase the range of agents under consideration when thinking about the breadth and depth of the strategic environment. Strategy and strategic thinking are now not only about extensive scale and scope, but critical thinking and resources must account for the pervasive micro forces in the environment. They have displayed an ability to “wear down, impede, undermine, sabotage, and outflank the mega players in ways that the latter, for all their vast resources, find themselves ill equipped and ill-prepared to resist.”

The US National Security enterprise can ill afford to underestimate threats of this nature.

2. Understanding: A primary task of the Joint Force, the PME institutions, and Joint Force officers is to understand world affairs and all their associated complexities. This is an ever present, ongoing, and difficult task. Critical in this understanding is the ability to identify and understand the key strategic direction and guidance documents from the current administration back to and including the Nation’s founding documents. Related to this skill is the ability to understand the key concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities surrounding power, globalization, war, and other vital national security topics.

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Continuities and changes in today’s turbulent international environment require that SMJFOs have a clear understanding of the domestic environment accounting for a variety of variables such as ‘poverty, urbanization, pollution, climate change, education, race etc.’ as McMaster and others recommend. To do this SMJFOs must constantly seek to gain a deeper understanding of the strategic, operational, tactical, and subterranean environment (as recommended by Sassen). This understanding must include a nuanced understanding of the international security environment and capabilities, capacities, and contributions of not only the military instrument of power but also the diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power as specified by the national strategic guidance and direction documents. Continuities and changes in today’s turbulent international environment require SMJFOs that clearly understand cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and conflict as designated by the National Defense Strategy.

SMJFOs must account for Naim’s counsel in *The End of Power* that “the distribution of power across the world is changing, creating new threats.” This leads to the requirement for SMJFOs to better understand the basics of power, the specifics of the military, and how both have become diffused in this current age. PME must ensure that it teaches it’s more senior students the foundational knowledge regarding power and military power as laid out by Mearsheimer, Serfaty, Cline, Huntington, and Brooks in Chapter II. In accordance with national strategic guidance and direction, SMJFOs must continue to study, analyze, and better understand rogue regimes, such as Iran and North Korea, as well as those forces driving the proliferation of global terrorism. As a continuity, SMJFOs must continue to strive for a broader and deeper understanding of
war and all its complexities. All in the Joint Force must be aware of US foreign policy and the system of decisionmaking within the US national security enterprise but especially SMJFOs as they seek to align the three levels of warfare with the political object as emphasized by Clausewitz and McMaster.

SMJFOs must retain a deep understanding of humans, in general, and the time-tested human emotions – Fear, Honor, Interest. Unable to process and keep abreast of the human element will predestine the Joint Force and the Nation for failure. SMJFOs must understand that despite the focus on strategic competition, fragile, failing, and failed states still exist, pose significant issues to the security and prosperity of the United States and its allies, and unlike an earlier time in our history are not being suppressed by the greater forces of the Cold War. This leads to a need to better understand these weak states and their impact on the functioning core of contributing nations to the order and security of the world.

SMJFOs must understand the integrating and fragmenting forces of a key trend in world affairs – globalization and consequently, assist the Joint Force in educating, training, and conditioning its individuals and organizations to observe, understand, and conduct operations in a more precise and nuanced way accounting for this new globalized environment and conscious of its shifting character and its distant proximities as described by Rosenau.

3. **Creating:** As counselled by Walter Russell Mead, SMJFOs must be foundationally sound in much more than military related subjects, they must realize that “our strength and vitality” demands creativity and a whole of government and American society approach. Moreover, as recognized in the national strategic direction and guidance
documents, continuities and changes in today’s turbulent international environment 
require SMJFO’s to assist in charting a new course for the Joint Force and the Nation as 
specified in the INSSG. To meet the INSSG guidance, SMJFOs must use all available 
resources but especially their thinking and understanding, as described above, to be 
primarily proactive, creating new pathways for security and prosperity and not reactive 
to the opportunities and dilemmas. This requires creative approaches by SMJFOs that 
value collaboration amongst the services, engenders interagency cooperation and 
prioritizes and concentrates on vital USG interests in a more systematic way generating 
more coherent USG approaches to the current and future challenges and opportunities. 
SMJFOs must contribute to the cultural adjustments needed to be more inclusive, 
recognize the essential nature and power of collaboration, and create the conditions to 
collaborate within the Joint Force, with other USG agencies, with the international 
community and the private sector to promote and defend the security and prosperity of 
the United States. This collaboration and interagency cooperation require a better 
understanding of the inherent capabilities and capacity of each partner and a drive to 
create and sustain relationships between partners now and not only in a crisis. As the US 
learned during OIF and OEF you can’t surge trust. The NDS emphasizes that preparation 
for war must be ongoing and recurring. Despite current job responsibilities rooted in the 
present condition, SMJFOs must take no shortcuts and be ready for those future 
conditions that most do not recognize. SMJOs must be actively involved in the “Joint 
Force [that] will have to outthink, outmaneuver, out partner, and out innovate revisionist 
powers, rogue regimes, terrorists, and other threat actors” as outlined within the National
Defense Strategy creating new ways of fighting, winning, and ending wars in this rapidly changing environment.

While SMJFOs must lead innovation and creative endeavors within the Joint Force they must do so by being grounded in the fundamentals with a deep appreciation and respect for the continuities as both Dubik and McMaster described. A SMJFO must develop the ability to visualize as most items predominate in their thinking involve an anticipation of the future. This ability to visualize a possible future or outcome is vital to the creativity required in the Joint Force. Clausewitz observes that “a vast array of factors [must] be appreciated--mostly in the light of probabilities alone.” A creative thought process helps in calculating the potential probabilities.

Finally, to create something, it is imperative for SMJFOs to have a highly developed sense of the moment that clearly recognizes the trends and the patterns referenced by Neustadt, May, and Serfaty to “see time as a stream” and “merge the tenses.” This allows a common starting point and a clear path to creating desired conditions.

4. **Adapting:** Continuities and changes in today’s turbulent international environment require SSMJFOs to identify, study, analyze, and strive to understand the continuities and anticipate and understand the changes. With that they must demonstrate an ability to adapt to the emerging trends, as espoused by Barno and Bensahel in Chapter II, and not get stuck in a different age or context. To do that they must understand the old but cannot let the old impede a clear view of the new. Moreover, and especially in this current age of rapid change, the Joint Force cannot allow the new to completely overwhelm and distract the organization so that the Joint Force discounts the old. To
properly adapt, a balance must be found between old and new and what is really changing, what has remained the same, and an avoidance of chasing fleeting fads that take complex issues and provide cognitive relief to the force through a catchy phrase or buzz word.

5. **Describing:** Continuities and changes in today’s turbulent international environment require SMJFOs that recognize, understand, and promote, the views from the strategic guidance documents. To do this they must be able to describe their understanding verbally and in writing. While the category above, understanding, is essential, if the Joint Force and its officers are unable to describe their hard-earned understanding to the civilian decisionmakers, their understanding will not have its full and necessary impact. Military officers, required to give best military advice to US National Security Decision-makers, cannot do that effectively if they cannot easily describe their understanding so that others see what they see.

Niall Ferguson, and Walter Russell Mead posit that, despite internal problems and flaws, the United States remains the best choice to lead within the international community. The international leadership role and responsibilities must be understood, studied, and operationalized by strategic minded leaders who must be capable of describing the military’s role and responsibilities with other instruments of national power. Moreover, the SMJFO must understand how to prioritize as recommended by Kissinger and be aware of the failures of our engagement efforts as highlighted by Mandelbaum using multiple methods to describe how they see the current environment from past events and how this translates to future activities in defending and promoting US national interests.
To fully adapt SMJFOs must be conscious of change, and all associated with adapting to
the rapid environmental changes as concisely recommended by Barno and Bensahel. To be
adaptable, led by SMJFOs, the Joint Force must strive to earn and sustain a deeper understanding
of the environment in all its uncertainty and ambiguity. The Joint Force must consistently,
consciously, and comprehensively examine the environment, seek to recognize, understand, and
synthesize the changes and then most importantly account for them in their strategic design,
plans, and actions. Strategic minded thinking is hard work, and a deep understanding of the
environment is hard earned. SMJFOs must view the international security environment with
fresh eyes, recognize the need to lead and not withdraw from world affairs and accept that
national security relies on more than military strength and capability. SMJFOs must continue to
account for the changes brought about by the technological revolution, its impact on all aspects
of life, but especially its impacts on war and the Joint Force. SMJFOs must remain aware of the
value of Allies, Coalitions and Partnerships as specified within our strategic guidance documents
and by our political and military leadership. partnerships and alliances – and the methods to
sustain them and generate them when required. In the context of these relationships but in other
things as well, the SMJFO must recognize changes in relationships over time and not take for
granted our closest partners while seeking to enhance other relationships. The SMJFO must
provide sound advice regarding our international relationships. SMJFOs must stay vigilant and
recognize both the subtle and stunning emerging “challenges to the US military advantage”. An
element of this must be the thoughtful application of warfighting capability to the areas now
contested by the threats improving and, in some cases, revolutionizing military capability like
hypersonics. SMJFOs must recognize and account for the new warfighting domains – cyberspace
and space. SMJFOs must anticipate attacks against our critical defense, government, and
economic infrastructure. The homeland can no longer be thought of as an impenetrable sanctuary as US force generates, readies for deployment, and deploys for American bases and transportation platforms.

The change associated with Globalization has been exponential. The compression of time, space, and distance made possible by the speed, availability, and volume of information has had a profound effect on world affairs. Many have benefitted but others have been excluded. The gap between the haves and the have nots is growing. Additionally, some of the changes have created a diffusion in national power, according to Naim, and enhanced the power of individuals and non-state actors producing an even more disordered and turbulent international environment.

The United States [and in general the West] are associated with the discontents of globalization and have been targeted as a result. SMJFOs must promote changes in the organizational culture that fosters Joint education changes and clears the path for substantive change that then binds with the culture to ensure a continuity of deep strategic minded thinking as promoted by Schein and others in Chapter IV. These organizational changes must foster the development of the intellectual overmatch envision in US strategic direction and guidance. Overall, we seek, SMFO officer’s capable thinking, understanding the environment and other key elements, capable of describing their understanding to others in writing and verbally, creating from their minds eye, and adapting with the environment as the environment changes in some areas and remains the same in others.
CHAPTER IV

TOO BUSY TO LEARN: CULTURAL IMPEDIMENTS TO ADVANCED MILITARY INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGIC MINDED THINKING

Our culture has changed to value and solely reward men and women of action. Just like its British antecedents, the personnel system rewards active service, not demonstrated intellectual merit. Spend too much time thinking and reflecting and the reward system denies promotion and opportunities to command... This bias toward action has caused our learning system to atrophy and become obsolescent.

MG Robert Scales

War colleges are part of the Professional Military Education (PME) system, a large complex of institutions... While each institution has a distinct personality, and individual strengths and weaknesses, all suffer to varying degrees from overriding institutional and cultural issues that hindered the educational goals intended by Congress when it passed Goldwater- Nichols.

Joan Johnson-Freese

Culture is both a dynamic phenomenon that surrounds us at all times, being constantly enacted and created by our interactions with others and shaped by leadership behavior, in a set of structures, routines, rules, and norms that guide and constrain behavior. When one brings culture to the level of the organization and even down to groups within the organization, one could see clearly how culture is created, embedded, evolved, and ultimately manipulated, and, at the same time, how culture constrains stabilizes and provides structure and meaning to the group members.

Edgar Schein

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the organizational culture of the Joint Force focusing on those issues that hinder the development of strategic minded leaders. Despite the current Joint Force educational direction and guidance that promotes Joint Force professional military education and extols the need to better educate Joint Force officers, the system never completes the desired fundamental change. As highlighted in the chapter epigraphs, the limiting factor is the Joint Force culture itself. While education, educational methods, and curriculum require constant refinement and adjustment, and at times full scale transformation, the organizational culture
stifles tangible change. Unbelievably, the military organizational culture has blocked educational change since the late 1950’s as we will describe below. Specifically, the organizational culture promotes many hostile attitudes towards education resulting in some officers resisting or avoiding educational opportunities, expecting that educational experiences should primarily be rest periods, disdaining academic rigor, longing to return to the Force, or thinking exclusively about their next position and the short-term benefits of education therefore gaining little for the future from their formal military education as a result. Moreover, this is the same organizational culture that generally disdains educational assignments as key developmental assignments. Instead, the culture and individuals within the culture regard education as a check in the block statutory requirement especially concerning joint education. This creates a rush to return to the performance zone of their current or next assignment following their educational period.\(^{355}\) This present-day day focused mindset limits intellectual growth and the broadening and deepening of the individual’s knowledge foundation, hindering Joint Force officer future abilities. These Joint Force officers hamper their ability to anticipate the future because they have a limited intellectual base to rely on when confronted with strategic issues requiring anticipation and visualization of the future.

The current policies of the Joint Force and the Services regarding education have atrophied from the staff and manning policies of the US military organization prior to World War II. The Service policies, during the inter-war years, fostered the development of high caliber

\(^{355}\) Briceño, Eduardo, 2016. “How to get better at the things you care about,” filmed November 2016 in Manhattan Beach. TEDx video, 11:13, [https://www.ted.com/talks/eduardo_briceno_how_to_get_better_at_the_things_you_care_about?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/eduardo_briceno_how_to_get_better_at_the_things_you_care_about?language=en) In Chapter V, Briceño describes two zones, the learning zone and the performance zone. Each are important but during education the learning zone should be prioritized.
officers. Those officers with potential for future promotion and ever-increasing responsibilities spent considerable time in the academic arena sharpening their thinking by thinking deeply about the problems of the past, the current day, and the future and instructing others. As an example, while the US Army was recognized as a third-tier military organization pre-World War II and ranked seventeenth in the world based on size, “the United States was not totally unprepared.” 356

Henry Gole’s analysis in *The Road to Rainbow: Army Planning for Global War 1934-1940* highlights the important role professional military education rendered in keeping the United States competitive early in the war. Education in the inter-war period developed foundationally strong and thoughtful officers with advanced thinking and planning skills that contributed greatly to the war effort evidenced as the US military expanded and matured. These advanced skills, amongst other critical variables, ultimately led the Allies to victory in World War II. Gole states,

> The US Army entered the war with a nucleus of professional officers schooled in analytic thinking and keenly aware of the political component of strategic planning… The Army's school system was key in preparing those who would lead the crusade. The Army was resource poor in an isolationist country, but it invested its limited resources and energy in education, training, studies, and planning… [Regarding the US Army War College] It was the one place where you could sit down and think.357

Additionally, in the period between the World Wars, the Navy and the Marine Corps also valued education and cultivated and rewarded innovative thinking about warfare, strategy, and the concepts required to execute them. 358 Moreover, instructor assignments at the War College were

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considered developmental and career enhancing, not career ending or sunset assignments, therefore highly desired and competed for. Assignments within the professional military education enterprise strengthened not only the individual officer but also fueled the success and development of the Force. Educational assignments today lack the same prestige and value within organizationally accepted career pathways. For example, “At the U.S. Marine Corps Staff College, those selected for a faculty assignment referred to themselves as “children of a lesser God.” The situation in other U.S. military colleges is hardly any better; in some, so small is a difference between instructors and students that they can hardly be told apart. Thus, the future [is] being sacrificed for the present.”

To better understand these cultural shortfalls, this chapter examines and addresses the following:

a. The basics of Organizational Culture combined with an exploration of why substantive change is difficult to enact within the Joint Force.

b. Highlights and analyzes strategic direction and guidance, studies, editorials, and other literature regarding United States professional military education post World War II. The section emphasizes the recurring demands for Professional Military Educational reform from the late 1950’s with the Radway and Masland study, till the current day with the

359 Gole, Henry G. 2003. The road to rainbow: army planning for global war, 1934-1940. Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press. 47. An example was Army War College Commandant Gen George S. Simmonds -- former chief of the army’s war plans division and future assistant chief of staff under MacArthur.

unprecedented 2018 National Defense Strategy indictments on military education and the changes recommended by the 2020 Officer Professional Military Education Policy.

c. Identifies and highlights the difference between education and training and why a general lack of understanding of each lead to subpar Joint Officer intellectual development.

d. Identify the factors that lead officers to believe they are “too busy to learn.” Why we shortcut education and neglect building a solid foundation at the operational/strategic level because of the overwhelming burden and attention to day-to-day requirements? Moreover, why many officers seek rest rather than rigor during their educational time and how organizational culture contributes to and supports built-in student attitudes that undermine learning?

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

As we continue to analyze the educational requirements, methods, and the recurring shortfalls associated with the US professional military education enterprise, we first examine the concept of organizational culture and leadership. A prudent starting point begins with Edgar Schein and his seminal work *Organizational Culture and Leadership* to establish the vital role that culture has on organizations and the leadership within those organizations. Schein highlights,

Culture at the national level is more important than ever in helping us to understand intergroup conflict. As it turns out, culture is essential to understanding intergroup conflict at the organizational level as well… In an age which leadership is touted over and over again as a critical variable in defining the success or failure of organizations, it becomes all the more important to look at the other side of the leadership coin--how leaders create culture and how culture defines and creates leaders.\(^{361}\)

While it is informative to understand how leaders create culture, this examination focuses on the established culture that defines and creates leaders. The organizational culture that clearly recognizes the imperative to improve the educational methods of the organization yet fails to fully enact, enforce, and sustain substantive change. Despite the recognition of an educational system well overdue for improvement, the Joint Force consistently fails to correct the recognized shortfalls and institutionalize the changes to ensure intellectual overmatch against US strategic competitors and enemies. This say-do paradox baffles all observers because of the critical importance of intellectual overmatch especially in the current international environment.

Puzzling is the long-standing call to adapt Joint Force education contrasted with little or no actual modification to demonstrate action. How does the Joint Force adopt new methods and stimulate requirements into cultural necessities? Schein recognizes that,

> The culture now defines leadership. But as the group runs into adaptive difficulties, as its environment changes to the point where some of its assumptions are no longer valid, leadership comes into play once more. Leadership is now the ability to step outside the culture that created the leader and to the start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive. The ability to perceive the limitations of one's own culture and to evolve the culture adaptively is the essence and ultimate challenge of leadership.  

Schein also provides practical advice to promote and enact cultural change. He counsels that the leaders of the organization “must understand the dynamics of culture” to change the culture they themselves professionally developed within, shaped them into the leaders they are today, and that they helped build. Obviously, no easy task to enact desired change, or the recurring

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indictments consistently levied on military education over the past sixty-five years would have been fully addressed, managed, and strengthened over that same period. Disappointingly, the Joint Force has failed to mitigate those clearly identified weaknesses with adaptation, innovation, and substantive change.

While the study avoids an extensive examination of Schein’s writing, it does investigate some of the basic aspects and the reasons military organizational culture recognizes the vital need for better educated strategic-minded Joint Force Officers yet does not fully enact the necessary changes to achieve what it desires. Effective professional military education that carves out the time to think and think deeply is an easy investment for the security and prosperity of the United States, as evidenced in the period prior to World War II, yet the Joint Force culture cannot get beyond valuing day-to-day performance and the rewards and prestige associated with that performance. Schein provides insight into this inconsistency and barrier to intellectual overmatch,

Basic assumptions, in the sense in which I want to define that concept, had become so taken for granted that one finds little variation within a social unit. This degree of consensus results from repeated success in implementing certain beliefs and values, as previously described. In fact, if a basic assumption comes to be strongly held in a group, members will find behavior based on any other premise inconceivable… Basic assumptions, like theories in use, tend to be non-confrontable and non-debatable, and hence are extremely difficult to change period to learn something new in this realm requires us to resurrect, reexamine, and possibly change some of the more stable portions of our cognitive structure-- a process that Arygis and others have called “double loop learning,” or “frame breaking”… such learning is intrinsically difficult because the reexamination of basic assumptions temporarily destabilize our cognitive and interpersonal world, releasing large quantities of basic anxiety. 364

Interestingly the basic assumptions in play here are not assumptions and facts regarding the changing international environment, the increasing threat associated with strategic competition, or the need to develop intellectual overmatch to keep pace with these spiraling dangers but the basic assumptions associated with an officer’s performance, promotion potential, and the organizationally accepted career path to promotion. Over many years the embedded Joint Force culture designated and proofed a generally acknowledged and scripted path to promotion. This scripted path values preparation for tactical performance and execution of tactical responsibilities over the necessary and generally recognized time investment, education, reflection, and study required for better performance regarding strategic thinking and performance at the strategic level. It is this accepted promotion path that makes it difficult to overcome the negative or neutral organizational viewpoint regarding the importance of and lengthy time necessary for education and mastery. Moreover, the organization, bound by the culturally accepted paths to success - defined as promotion, overlooks, neglects, or undervalues the time and effort required, above the basic educational timeline, to transition from tactical mastery to strategic mastery.

Ericsson and Greene promote an apprenticeship stage and deliberate practice for a period of somewhere between six to ten years to achieve true mastery of a subject. Why would the time required be drastically shorter to achieve strategic mastery within the Joint Force? It seems like it would take even more time to develop strategic minded masters, yet we thrust our newly promoted Flag and General officers into strategic positions with limited consideration of generally accepted mastery timelines. The study explores Ericsson and Greene’s insights more in

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the next Chapter and recommends adding an apprenticeship stage as officers transition from a
tactical mindset to a more strategic mindset around the 18–22-year mark in their careers. This
apprenticeship could even occur earlier in an officer’s development but must be carefully
managed to ensure that they achieve tactical mastery before proceeding.

Schein recognizes the difficulty in changing these tightly held assumptions no matter the
organization and situation under consideration. He counsels, “If assumptions such as these
operate only in an individual and represent her idiosyncratic experience, they can be corrected
more easily because the person will detect that she is alone in holding a given assumption. The
power of culture comes about through the fact that the assumptions are shared and, therefore,
mutually reinforced.” 366 The assumptions regarding how to get promoted have been mutually
reinforced over the last six and a half decades as General Mattis stated in an epigraph in the
Introduction Chapter and as MG Scales notes in the first epigraph in this chapter. Specifying
Mattis and Scales views again, Mattis states “Most generals were promoted because they
performed well in operations. They now had to shift their perspective to the strategic level and
embrace skills that had played little or no role in their promotion to flag rank…their current skill
set was incomplete for what lay ahead.” 367 Whereas Scales states,

Our culture has changed to value and solely reward men and women of action. Just like
its British antecedents, the personnel system rewards active service, not demonstrated
intellectual merit. Spend too much time thinking and reflecting and the reward system
denies promotion and opportunities to command… This bias toward action has caused
our learning system to atrophy and become obsolescent.368

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This organizational bias to action and preference for tactical mastery must be mitigated at some point as an officer develops along the currently accepted promotion path or the Joint Force will continue to promote tactical mastery over strategic mastery and never converge on its stated goal of intellectual overmatch. A bias for action and tactical mastery should not be bypassed or abandoned, however, as the Joint Force still desires and requires officers who excel in operations and are tactical masters. At a certain point in their career, however, and that point will be different for different officers, officers must transition from a tactical mindset to an operational and strategic mindset to better fulfill their assigned responsibilities and future higher-level command and staff responsibilities. When this point arrives, the Joint Force wants and needs these officers to be strategic masters but has not adequately set the conditions or invested fully in their strategic development as the professional military development system and organizational culture consciously and rigorously did during their tactical development. Additionally, for all, even those who are at the tactical level, the Joint Force desires all officers to be more strategic minded as they approach their daily responsibilities. Joint Force officers cannot overlook the immediate consequences of their split-second decisions, or they or their unit may not survive to operate another day, but they also must be more strategic minded even within the tactical realm when time and circumstances permit or dictate. This requires a longer view of those tactical decisions peering into the potential waves of consequences associated with them.

Schein also explores the turbulence that exists when operating on different time horizons. He notes that, “these cultural assumptions about time dominate daily thinking and activity to the

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point where a US manager may have a hard time imagining the alternative a long-range planning
process such as would be typical in some Japanese industries.” 370 Schein mentored some
companies where they operated by “the assumption that only the present counts.” 371 Moreover,
Schein defines time into two categories. He sees time as both monochronic and polychronic.
Monochronic controls basic human activities and polychronic “time assumptions are more
effective for building relationships and for solving complex problems where information is
widely scattered and highly interactive so that all channels must be kept open at all times.” 372
Schein’s description captures the differences between tactical and operational/strategic time
horizons. He highlights the different thinking required within these different time horizons when
he details,

Planning time seeks closure; Development time is open ended and can extend far into the
future. Managers and scientists operating in terms of these two types of time can work
together and even influence each other’s concepts, but they must first understand the
differences in each other's assumptions… Time horizons differ not only by function and
occupation but by rank. The higher the rank, the longer the time horizon over which a
manager has discretion…373

Schein provides the military a window into the imperative for better professional military
education. These time differences must be clearly understood as the Joint Force seeks alignment
across the different time horizons and activities of the three levels of war – tactical, operational,

370 Schein, Edgar H. 2004. Organizational culture and leadership. San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-
Bass. 153.

371 Schein, Edgar H. 2004. Organizational culture and leadership. San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-
Bass. 152.

372 Schein, Edgar H. 2004. Organizational culture and leadership. San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-
Bass. 156.

373 Schein, Edgar H. 2004. Organizational culture and leadership. San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-
Bass. 157-159.
and strategic, as outlined in Chapter II, as well as a fourth level, sub tactical or subterranean, as described in Chapter III. To handle this difficult task, the Joint Force must heavily invest in the development of the Joint Force officer’s mind, to a precise condition, facilitating individual commanders and staff seamless movement between the levels of war from the strategic to the tactical or from the tactical to the strategic. A tactical only mindset will never recognize that when the “law of extremes…begins to lose its force and as this determination wanes, the political aim will reassert itself.” 374 The SMJFO must clearly recognize and connect the extremes of war and the use of force with the political object. Clausewitz provides solid counsel for officer development in this regard, “We see, therefore, that war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, the continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means… The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.” 375 Regrettably, recent US history regarding the operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq delivers evidence that our Joint Force officers, as well as other elements of the US National Security enterprise failed to keep this principle in view throughout the two decades of war and unquestionably when attempting to end each conflict.

While Schein examines organizational culture in general, Mansoor and Murray in an edited volume, The Culture of Military Organizations, address both the positive and negative aspects associated with culture within military organizations. They propose that

Culture has an enormous influence on military organizations and institutions and their success or failure in the ultimate arbitration of war…Except in unique circumstances-in the initial founding of an organization when it undergoes severe trauma-culture grows


slowly overtime, embedding itself so deeply into its processes that members often act unconsciously according to its dictates. This may have positive benefits… But culture may also have negative consequences, especially when it locks an organization into dated and inappropriate ways of operating…\textsuperscript{376}

The above accurately describes the conditions surrounding professional military education. The need for updated, refined, lengthier, and more rigorous professional military education is obvious and has been obvious since the late 1950’s as we will see later in this Chapter, yet the organization has been unable to construct the necessary changes hampered by the associated cultural assumptions.

Mansoor and Murray believe that culture may be the most important variable in military effectiveness or ineffectiveness among all the many factors involved in military power.\textsuperscript{377} Huntington and Brooks in Chapter II highlighted several factors of military power and addressed organizational issues as a vital variable but did not highlight the nuances and impact of an embedded organizational culture despite the essential nature of culture as specified by Mansoor and Murray. Wong and Gerras, in the Mansoor and Murray’s volume, reinforce this position. They posit that, “A military culture provides the underlying foundation for decisions and strategy, planning, organization, training, and operations.”\textsuperscript{378} Working with this proposition how will the current Joint Force leadership change to generate the much needed, and desired intellectual overmatch to operate in today’s rapidly changing and dynamic international

\textsuperscript{376} Mansoor, Peter R., and Williamson Murray. 2019. \textit{The culture of military organizations}. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 1.

\textsuperscript{377} Mansoor, Peter R., and Williamson Murray. 2019. \textit{The culture of military organizations}. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 3.

\textsuperscript{378} Mansoor, Peter R., and Williamson Murray. 2019. \textit{The culture of military organizations}. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 17.
environment confidently, efficiently, and effectively. The answer lies within the organizational culture and leadership within that culture. Chapter V offers some structural change recommendations that spark organizational and cultural adaptation over time to better handle the stresses and strains of the environment before a “severe trauma” necessitates change in extremis under intense pressure.

John Kuehn, from the US. Army Command and Staff College, provides evidence that military leaders can overcome the overwhelming centripetal force of organizational culture with his chapter in Mansoor and Murray’s book but require a distinctive leader to do it. In *US Navy Cultural Transformations, 1945 -1947: The Jury is Still Out*, Kuehn points to the Zumwalt Revolution and the Turner Revolution at the Naval War College (NWC) as two prime examples where forward-thinking leaders from within the culture can establish initiatives that can change the culture. According to Kuehn, Zumwalt “was “deep selected” over thirty-three other admirals and “began a program of reforms that shook the Navy to its core and caused a counterrevolution a few years later period nonetheless, his reforms had a lasting impact on the Navy, both in the officer corps, but more important, also among the enlisted rates, civilian dependents, and chief petty officers.” 379 While it is not the intent of this study to probe all Zumwalt’s initiatives and analyze his methods, it is important to note that organizational change from within the culture is possible and achievable, however, the right leader must emerge from within the culture. For those officers aspiring to higher level positions of ever-increasing responsibility, they must clearly understand that implementing change is difficult, within their limited or expanded sphere of influence, whether to stay ahead of the rapidly changing environment, just to keep pace with

the environment, or even when change is imperative for survival. Regardless of the conditions, the centripetal force of organizational culture is exceedingly strong for all the reasons provided by Schein above. Leaders of distinction must develop and then promote necessary change within the culture that created and promoted them. Again, vital but very difficult to achieve although not impossible. In the Navy example, they deep selected and supported the correct leader to drive and implement their needed change. Moreover, Zumwalt then selected the right leader to transform military education at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

Admiral Stansfield Turner “turned what had become a ticket punching and moribund program into the intellectual center of the Navy once again.” While Turner’s curriculum changes held and generally remain today, his insightful approach to educational content was overturned by subsequent leaders. The next section below addresses the Turner Initiatives as well as other calls for educational reform in greater depth.

Overall, culture and the development of an organizational culture reflects the sustained application of actions, programs, and thinking that has generally generated success over the years, decades, and centuries. Unfortunately, the environment that created these actions may change over time generating a need for the culture to adapt. Mansoor and Murray conclude:

Military organizations have good reasons for their conservative natures. Changing proven warfighting methods and reliable technology is risky business, in a business where failure can have catastrophic consequences - not just profit and loss, but death and destruction… Militaries that have innovative, risk-taking cultures are therefore rare (albeit be it not


unknown, as several examples from this volume illustrate), which makes rapid change difficult even when faced with the audit of combat. But organizations must change, or they will die; probably not in peacetime, when the penalties for failure to innovate are absent, but most certainly in war when faced with existential crises.  

Organizational culture, regarding professional military education, now must change. While calls for change to PME, as the study describes in the next section, have been an ever-present variable in the military over the past seventy-five years, the Joint Force and the Nation has weathered the adverse effects of failing to change. As Barno, Bensahel, Mansoor, and Murray and others have cautioned, a failure to adapt, at some point, will eventually prove disastrous for the Nation. The next section highlights the consistent recurring calls for PME change and notes the recurring similarities between the frequent indictments across the decades. What needs to change is clear and straightforward. Why substantive change does not take place is much more nuanced and obscure.

DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN – RECURRING CALLS FOR CHANGE WITHIN PME

Within the United States system of professional military education, a long record of reports, studies, and journal articles on professional military education exist. Disappointingly, much of this literature indicts the professional military educational system in some way or another. The indictments are somewhat varied but similar and consistent across the decades. The curriculum doesn’t reflect Joint Force requirements. The teaching methods are not progressive enough. The services are not sending the right population of students to school. Students don’t want to attend school and when they do, they treat the school period as an opportunity to rest

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from the pace, tempo, and demands of operational assignments. The system conflates training with education. Civilian education is better, and we should substitute civilian led education for military education. Regardless of the specific indictments, all these reports clearly articulate the need for change, provide solid recommendations, and plainly describe the consequences of stagnation, yet year after year, decade after decade, substantive change remains elusive. Despite these similar and recurring pronouncements and some initial adoption of new programs, no real substantive institutional change endures. This obviously exposes an organizational cultural barrier to fully understanding the requirements for professional military education and an inability for the organization to fundamentally change. An examination of several of these reports and documents shed light on the reasons this change does not occur despite senior leadership and outside examiners continuing recognition and expression of the need. This study highlights various reports, studies, articles, and commentaries relating this recurring appeal for substantive change within PME for the Force. These numerous indictments span from 1947 to the current day and the chronological list below catalogs several of the key documents tasked to scrutinize professional military education or provide guidance to military educators:

1. 1948 – Eisenhower’s Opening Exercises Address to the Armed Forces Staff College (AFSC) Class 3
2. 1957 -- Soldiers and Scholars: Military Education and National Policy
3. 1967-- Morris Study
4. 1974 --Turner Initiative
5. 1975 -- Clements Committee Report
6. 1976 -- The System for Educating Military Officers in the US
7. 1986 -- Goldwater – Nichols
8. 1987 -- Dougherty Board - senior military schools review board report
9. 1987 - Rostow and Endicott Report -The Teaching of Strategy and Foreign Policy at the Senior War Colleges: A Personal Assessment
10. 1988 - Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Education System 1943 to 1946
12. 2003 - Independent Study of Joint Officer Management and Joint Professional Military Education
While the above list is not all inclusive, it is representative of the issues detected over time within the professional military education system and shows the cyclic and recurrent nature of the criticisms. The next section analyzes a select few of these documents to identify factors for Joint Force leadership to reconsider regarding PME reform and transformation.

United States Professional Military Education Strategic Direction and Guidance, Studies, Editorials, and Other Literature

A deeper analysis of selected documents, from the list above, regarding US professional military education reveals that while professional military education certainly needs to adjust, refine, and in some instances outright change, the major obstacle to that adjustment resides in the organizational culture. This becomes evident as this study consolidates the recurring guidance and calls for change over the past seventy-five years, exposing a series of persistent trends and themes across time. These trends are spotlighted on a recurring basis, yet the organizational culture fails to change, or the Joint Force would not repeatedly experience and feature the same
shortfalls. Working from *Eisenhower’s Opening Exercises Address to AFSC (Armed Forces Staff College) Class 3* in 1948 to the most recent guidance from the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, the study examines select documents from above, synthesizes the analysis, and describes the recurring themes that must be substantively addressed before the Joint Force and the Nation experience a severe trauma forcing modifications to the American way of life let alone professional military education and organizational culture.

**Eisenhower’s Opening Exercises Address to the Armed Forces Staff College (AFSC) Class 3**

Beginning with Eisenhower’s guidance, the emergent trends regarding PME easily reveal themselves. On 2 February 1948, General of the Army, Dwight D. Eisenhower addressed Class 3 at the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia. Eisenhower along with Admiral Chester Nimitz had created the Armed Force Staff College to sustain and promote the United States Joint Warfighting skills achieved by necessity during World War II. Despite several integration issues throughout the war, Joint Warfighting was generally extremely successful ultimately posing multiple dilemmas to the Axis as the US matured as a fighting force and mastered service integration, or jointness, over the course of the war. During his address, Eisenhower provided superb counsel along several lines of thought that remain relevant but, in some cases, forgotten or not in practice today. This study posits that Eisenhower’s strategic guidance and direction for professional military education described during his address to Class 3 must be revived and fully implemented to meet the strategic minded requirements for intellectual overmatch against our current strategic competitors. Timeworn but sound and prescient guidance to meet today’s challenges.
Upfront, Eisenhower congratulates the students for their selection and the opportunities afforded by their attendance. He emphasizes, “Not only do you get the opportunity of thinking of your profession, but you are given the opportunity to think about it on its widest terms.”  

He then highlights the purpose of the school and the importance of Joint warfare for the future. He believes, “the school itself is an exemplification of the truism that there no longer exists any separate land, air and sea warfare. It is all one.”

Eisenhower then underlines the thinking required for the Joint Force to be successful in the demanding international environment of his time which extends to the complexity of today’s environment. He encourages the Joint Force officer to employ creative and critical thought, to foster and engage his or her available imagination and to contest the organizationally imposed limitations of culture and hierarchy, “In every direction I would urge that you allow your imaginations to take full sway and to see whether or not your ideas cannot be expanded or exemplified, and don’t draw back because of some fancy tradition or because of what some “brass hat” might possibly say.”

Eisenhower then implores the students of Class 3 and by extension future classes of the Joint Forces Staff College,

What I am trying to say is that in every single thing we try to do, let us think of the United States of America and let us forget narrow personalities and service viewpoints and put our minds together on that job. If this school does nothing more than to convince everyone of you that comes here that, that is the thing for which we must struggle the rest

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of his life, then, if it has done nothing more, it will have achieved not only its purpose but a very, very great objective. 387

Eisenhower’s guidance describes the desired outcome that current Joint Force leadership seeks today as well; the thoughtful consideration by each service of the goals of the United States not just what is good for the separate Services in isolation from the goals and interests of the Nation as a whole.

Moreover, Eisenhower absolutely understood that knowledge in isolation or of no utility was not a viable objective for professional military education. He advised the individual and the Joint Force, “mere knowledge itself is probably the least of the valuable factors that you will apply in war. Knowledge can be gotten many places, but good sense and breadth of view are the things for which we are striving.” 388 How does the professional military enterprise nurture the strategic minded and thinking Joint Force officer and organization to apply a wider and deeper view of warfighting and world affairs; officers and organizations who see and act beyond the views of the “ordinary man” and visualize elements others don’t realize or think about and “wins its victories before seeking battle.” 389


Soldiers And Scholars: Military Education and National Policy

As the United States exited the aftermath of World War II and entered the apprehension and dangers of the Cold War with the Soviet Union and its satellites, the practitioners and scholars of the US National Security enterprise recognized that the responsibilities entrusted to the military had to expand and mature to meet the increased threat.

Under present conditions at home and abroad, it is obviously not enough for the armed forces to provide good soldiers, sailors, and airmen, and the leaders necessary to command them in battle. Today many of these leaders are called upon to work closely with foreign affairs experts, industrial managers, scientists, labor leaders, and educators. They participate in the drafting and promotion of legislation, in the preparation of a national budget, and in the determination of the American position on a wide variety of foreign policy issues. They are required to understand, to communicate with, and to evaluate the judgment of political leaders, officials of other executive agencies, and countless specialists; they must make sound judgments themselves on matters which affect a wide variety of civilian concerns. They are called upon to evaluate the motivations and capabilities of foreign nations and to estimate the effects of American action or inaction upon these nations. And above all, the new role of military leaders requires of them a heightened awareness of the principles of our democratic society. 390

Despite the reputation of Eisenhower and the success of the military during World War II and the danger inherent in this new international environment generating increased requirements on military officers, indications surfaced within ten years that Eisenhower’s guidance was not adhered to by the professional military education enterprise.

Based upon alarming informal assessments of world affairs and the professional military education enterprise, in the mid-1950s, John Masland and Laurence Radway professors of Government at Dartmouth College undertook a project to study military education, “with an emphasis upon the preparation of career officers for positions involving participation in the

formulation of national policy.” 391 Masland and Radway perceived increased attention on national security from multiple outside arenas of the defense sector, the military, and civil military scholars following World War II and in the early years of the Cold War. Examining that increased attention, they felt that professional military education was underappreciated for its importance and more importantly its flaws. They noted,

Military affairs, civil military relations, and defense policy have been receiving the increasing attention of scholars and informed observers. As we have reflected on this interest, we have noted that one important aspect has been largely neglected, namely the problem of higher education in the armed forces, much of which is designed to prepare senior officers for precisely those roles in which their decisions are of greatest interest to civilian authorities. 392

Their study examined the responsibilities of the officer corps in the late 1950’s and posited that those responsibilities had expanded greatly and realized that as officers progressed through the ranks they became,

increasingly concerned with international affairs, that is to say, with the premises of military policy, with the purposes for which and the terms on which military forces will be deployed. They have moved upstream toward the fountain springs of national policy. Second, their support functions—supply, finance, research and development, public relations, manpower management, and the like—have grown more numerous, difficult, and important… Both developments have complicated the task of military education.393

A similar dilemma remains today and in the view of some have increased even further. While the majority of an officer’s career is spent at the tactical level, where an officer must excel to


promote to higher levels, at a certain point the officer begins to operate at the advanced levels of war. Unfortunately, the skills developed by the officer over a basic career timeline don’t directly translate to those needed for operational and strategic responsibilities as recognized by current professionals like Mattis, Scales, and others like Masland and Radway’s above description. The organizational culture recognizes the need for an expanded knowledge foundation and skill base yet do not reflect that need in military educational programs or basic career pathways.

Masland and Radway draw on guidance from Eisenhower to reinforce their conclusions. They highlight Eisenhower’s assessment that officers must not only confidently grasp the technical issues of their epoch and position responsibilities, but they must also “have a firm grasp of the particular role of a military establishment within the framework of our government in a democratic society. They must be aware of the major problems of the nation which they are dedicated to serve and understand the relationship between military preparedness and all the other elements which are also part of the fabric of real national security.” 394 They also emphasize Eisenhower’s declaration regarding the importance of service integration, termed jointness in the current era, and the imperative to understand and implement.

Masland and Radway recognized that military officers, despite the acute need for specialization, also have a compelling need to comprehend the big picture or as Clausewitz describes the ability to see the whole. The big picture according to Clausewitz is essential especially “in war more than in any other subject we must begin by looking at the nature of the whole; for here more than elsewhere the part in the whole must always be thought of together.”

Masland and Radway specify that the ability to see the big picture and the knowledge to
underpin it,

Is imperative at the very highest reaches of any organization… Without it the military
officer cannot assist so effectively in the solution of national security problems. For this
is the skill that enables him to ask relevant questions, to expose flaws in plans, to see the
relevance of apparently insignificant bits of information acquired in the past, to determine
whether two recommendations are fully compatible, and to perceive not only the intended
consequences of policy but the undesired consequence is that may ensue. It helps him
anticipate how others may react to what he proposes. It provides clues as to when to

Overall, Masland and Radway’s evaluation of professional military education in the United
States was not favorable. They concluded that “military education does not make a very
substantial contribution to the preparation of officers for policy roles…[and] military education
can and should be better.”\footnote{Masland, John W., and Laurence I. Radway. 1961. \textit{Soldiers and scholars: Military education and national policy: (2. print.)}. Princeton, N.J.: Univ. Press. 502-503.} They posit that a drive to conformity is one of the key pitfalls of
the military education system. They caution that military leaders, at a certain level, cannot be

Is not easy for the head to challenge the heart. It is not enough simply to announce or
decree that school solutions are out of order or that complete freedom of expression
prevails. There must be forceful and continuous challenge of basic assumptions… [they]
conclude that if schools are to serve as built-in devices to counter conformity, they in turn
need some kind of devil's advocate in residence who can challenge prevailing doctrine

forcefully but intelligently. This might be one of the functions of advanced study and research. 399

In conclusion Masland and Radway offer that beyond the push for conformity, professional military education falls short in several other ways. Despite the success of service integration in World War II, there was a default back to service parochialism. Evidenced acutely by the “the intangibles—the traditions, slogans, and unwritten customs—[that] are of more significance than the formal programs.” 400 Moreover, they see the principle of civilian supremacy as a limiting factor. While a key feature of our American system, Masland and Radway believe,

more is required than mere acceptance of the principle of subordination to civilian authority. Officers have a positive or affirmative duty to contribute their best judgments to the decisions in which they participate. We identified this as an important element of creative service and noted that it raised difficult problems of application. Military schools, particularly the senior colleges, might devote more attention to these problems, including relationships of officers to appointed civilians, to elected officials, and to the public. There is a need for deeper understanding of the ideals underlying American democratic society, and more candid discussion of tension points and areas of controversy. Such discussion is needed to balance the thorough consideration of organizational and institutional relationships. 401

Rightfully, the more effective strategic minded military leader, understands all the above and develops the means to provide best advice within the framework of the American system. Disciplined dissent versus subversive disobedience is the goal. Additionally, Masland and

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Radway identified the disruptive conflation of education with training. They emphasized the importance of both education and training but specified that while, there is no fixed line between training and education, there certainly is a vast difference between training thousands of troops and military maneuvers or producing a highly skilled bomber crew and cultivating those habits of mind that make an officer an effective representative of his service in high level policy negotiations. The failure to appreciate fully these differences is reflected in such features of military education as excessively rigid and standardized curricula, preoccupation with form and technique rather than with content and purpose, and ceaseless tinkering with the organization of the program… The schools would profit from a less tense approach to officer education. They might take a lesson from operating officials in their own services. Some officers have a curiously ambiguous attitude toward officer education, particularly at the advanced levels. They are for it. Yet they insist that it is the man who counts, not his formal schooling.402

This conflation of education with training inherently favors current performance over a longer-term view of the environment versus an investment in the future through education. This valuation of training over education creates a Joint Force that dominates at the tactical level but struggles strategically. While the immediate return on investment through education may be minimal, the longer-term value will be well worth the upfront investment. If a war or intervention is delayed, ended early, ended with a solid consolidation of gains, or is prevented altogether, the cost of the PME that shaped the individuals and organizations responsible for the successful strategic framework and execution will have been paid for multiple times over by the wages saved in just several days of the war. A war prevented by better strategic thinking will fund PME for generations. Masland and Radway opine, “despite or perhaps because of some inner misgivings about the value of education, the military usually take a very inflexible attitude toward it.” 403 Finally, regarding the conflation of education and training, they note the dangers


of blurring education and training and its impact on the forward thinking necessary to advance the United States military into the future. They suggest that,

the training approach to officer education shows insufficient understanding and respect for truly intellectual enterprise. In spite of their notable achievements, American military schools have not furnished intellectual leadership in the investigation of military subjects. As we pointed out earlier, they are not pushing out the frontiers of knowledge in their professional field; they are not making notable contributions to advance study and research. Principal analysts and writers on military affairs today are civilians. The war colleges rely on these civilians to lecture to their students on various subjects of military strategy. Where are the successors to Luce, Mahan, and Upton? 404

While the Joint Force benefits from some really great work regarding the future of warfare from civilians outside the military, the Joint Force would be even stronger if it leveraged the available creative and critical thinking always resident within the Force but under-utilized or appreciated. Forward-thinking Joint Force leaders are usually too buried under the burden of current operations to carve out time to think let alone time to think, write, and create. While the Joint Force and Services have had some excellent books and path finding doctrinal changes created by military members during their active-duty service, the examples are few and far between. A strategic apprenticeship program with built in thinking and writing opportunities needs to become part of newly accepted career pathways for our Joint Force officers who display the potential for deep thinking and innovation. While some of these will certainly be officers with potential for Flag and General officer, it can also include others who will just be excellent strategic thinkers and advisors at all levels of the US Government. These extended periods to think and write should produce better concepts and thinking about the future of warfare.

Masland and Radway concluded that,

There are enough unresolved problems of professional military education to warrant attention from the highest authority of the United States. In the normal course of events, they are not likely to receive such attention because more dramatic and immediately urgent issues constantly dominate appointment calendars and committee agenda in the upper reaches of our government. In order to secure action of the kind we believe necessary we recommend the appointment by the president of a special commission on the education of American military officers.\textsuperscript{405}

They also recognized that although the problems and issues had been identified from many different sectors, the programs to solve these problems had not been designed and implemented. Their purpose for the commission was “to break through the obstacles to change by dramatizing the importance of the major issues, by providing an overall rather than a partial approach to those issues, and, above all, by assuring that necessary reforms are given proper consideration by the responsible authorities of our government.” \textsuperscript{406} They also emphasized an additional task for the commission to “establish the highest standards for the selection of commandants, faculties, and students. More important, it should formulate proposals designed to ensure that these standards are respected by the services. It should also define the responsibility of the senior colleges to advance the frontiers of thought by study and publication.” \textsuperscript{407}

While Masland and Radway’s report is over sixty-five years old it captures the ills of today’s issues clearly and concisely as we analyze several more recent documents.


Clements Committee Report

The Clements Committee studied the Senior Service Colleges and developed a series of conclusions and initiatives published in several memorandums. The memorandums summarized the Committee’s views regarding the highest levels of professional military education. A critical conclusion of the Committee is that a high-quality educational program focused on developing executive competence and Defense matters among the top officers from each service in the grades of Lieutenant Colonel/commander and Colonel/captain is vital to the long-term National Defense effort. In fact, the need for such a program has grown as the complexity of management and leadership in our Defense establishment has increased. At the same time, it is inescapable fact that the defense budget—and consequently the monies available for education—will continue to be constrained and scrutinized in the years ahead.

The Committee conducted a comprehensive examination of the senior service schools and generated a series of useful recommendations. They felt that a common core group of subjects should be taught at the different service schools and that the common core should comprise about one third of the instructional time. They felt the common core should address Department of Defense decision-making and component relationships. Moreover, the common core should address the formulation of national security policy formulation, management skills and the domestic and international environments. Interestingly this recommendation was ignored and change in this area had to wait until the Goldwater-Nichols Act ten years later. Regardless, the

408 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified].

409 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified].
current environment requires that current PME address all the subjects recommended by the
Clements Committee.410

This Committee also levied similar indictments as previous studies regarding faculty and
students. Regardless, this study again demonstrates that while investigation of PME occurs on a
recurring basis with subsequent recommendations the time, supervision, and money to
substantively change does not result.

The System For Educating Military Officers in the US

This edited volume addressed the system of education for military officers in 1976
because military education had again “become a subject of intense interest and concern at all
levels of government.” 411 Unbelievably, Lawrence Korb the editor of this volume noted that the
issue of military education was not new and reached back to the Masland and Radway report to
highlight his view. He counselled that there had been other calls throughout the previous two
decades for analysis of the professional military education system accompanied by calls for
reform.

In 1956, John Masland and Laurence Radway argued that the system of professional
military education in this country had enough unresolved problems to warrant the
creation of a presidential commission. At that time, their call went unheeded, but in 1964,
President Lyndon Johnson did direct then Secretary of Defense McNamara to review the
educational systems and major schools within the Armed Services and the opportunities
offered to those in uniform for continued education for the purpose of broadening and

410 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on
professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board);
the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report);
the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified].
3-5.

Studies. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh. i.
strengthening the educational system in the Department of Defense. Because of the war in Vietnam, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara was unable to undertake such a sweeping study. However, in 1967, assistant Secretary of Defense for manpower affairs, Thomas Morris, did complete a study which laid down objectives for officer education. However, it was not until the beginning of this decade that the subject of military education became an area of intense and continuing interest. 412

Korb’s edited volume proceeds to examine professional military education from multiple angles. He captures the immense cost of the enterprise but does not highlight the cost as an investment in the future. Every action in the Joint Force cannot only be measured by its immediate return on investment. This lack of foresight hampers the case for sustaining and even increasing investment and overcoming the negative mentality regarding PME investment as identified in the Clements Committee report. 413 He highlights the “profound, rapid, and unprecedented changes” in the international environment and the vital requirement for a robust military education system to keep pace with these changes. Ultimately, the general thrust throughout Korb’s volume is that the military education system requires change to better meet the national security needs of the United States. He notes, “the military educational system must prepare the officer to cope with the different demands that the changed environment will make on his profession. Therefore, it is quite logical to scrutinize the system to see if it has made the necessary adaptation and is thus capable of preparing the military leaders for the world in the 1980s.” 414 Korb also recognizes that as an officer’s responsibilities change over time “some thirty or so years later-- the tasks that


he can logically be called upon to perform change.” 415 He highlights the inherently different and more varied tasks that higher ranking officers must perform and that these tasks require a deeper understanding “of the nature of military force and its utility, application, and management in the overall domestic and international environments.” 416

Within Korb’s edited volume, Donald Bletz, a US Army War College instructor, concentrates on “What is the role of military force likely to be? What will the US military profession likely be called upon to do? And what sort of world will it be called upon to do it in? What sort of military professional will be needed to carry it out?” 417 Bletz borrows the title of his chapter in Korb’s book The Modern Major General from a song in Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Pirates of Penzance opera. He updates and seeks to answer what the Major General of 1980 should be able to do. His counsel was useful then and remains useful now. Bletz identifies several KSAs of importance. He recognizes that we expect our strategic minded leaders “to be educated so that they can range beyond their narrow technical military proficiency into other areas.” 418 This places a requirement on the formal professional military education system drive this type of thinking. Moreover, he advocates that “… in a democratic society such as ours, one responsibility of the military professional is to develop understanding of the society he serves…”


it is essential that the professional understand his society because that is the very source of the strength of the profession.”  419 This requirement is one that should be addressed early and often throughout an officer’s development but certainly must be refined to a finer level of fidelity as an officer moves from tactical responsibilities to the more strategic. Additionally, Bletz emphasizes

The military professional cannot serve a society effectively if he is not aware of its strengths and its weaknesses, its fears, and its aspirations. He needs intelligently to be aware of the major social and political issues in the nation. He needs to know something about the problems of poverty, urbanization, pollution, education, minorities, the role of women, youth, law and order, and inflation, to name but a few. By the same token, he must understand the political process he is sworn to defend.  420

Bletz describes the need for an officer that grasps much more than the military responsibilities entrusted to him, he must be clearly aware of the domestic context in which he is tasked to execute his responsibilities as “the modern Major General must fully understand that military force has no meaning as an end in itself but takes on “legitimacy” only in the context of the political objective it is intended to achieve.”  421

Finally, Bletz encourages the development of the modern Major General to achieve a deep understanding of the strategic environment, “to the extent anyone can understand it” and to comprehend “that this is not the same world in which he served as a junior officer a decade or so ago. He must realize that the threat is no longer so clear and so precise, that the perceptions of the American people have changed considerably in recent years and that the legitimacy of


military force is no longer to be taken for granted.” 422 Bletz in conclusion references a book *The Generals* and summarizes the book to draw out the essence and imperative of continued development.

By way of oversimplification, the book describes a group of highly competent and selective individuals who got where they are because they did well those things, they were called upon to do. For the most part, they are not thinkers or innovators, but doers. They are not general and flag officers because they necessarily possess the education, training experience, and intellect to perform those tasks that they are likely to be called upon to perform but because they possessed the necessary education, training, experience, and intellect to successfully perform those tasks that they were called to perform in the past.423

Regrettably, this indictment remains accurate forty-six years later as described in a similar current day indictment from General Mattis earlier in this study. Why do these shortfalls continue to transpire within the Joint Force as they were detected decades ago? This strongly indicates that while there are educational issues; the lack of action is an organizational deficiency.

The culture recognizes the weaknesses but does not take substantive measures to implement, sustain, and institutionalize reform.

As knowledge obsolescence drives the private sector to continuously upgrade the educational levels of its managers through equivalent educational and developmental programs, so must the Department of Defense continue this deliberate process. The categorical nature of the professionalism demanded by the “unlimited liability” clause in the officer’s contract is a central reality. Those who would compare military and civilian educational needs and systems must be ever mindful of this fact. The future viability of our national military power is dependent upon the continued development of that professionalism and, thus, the institutions which foster it.424


The above observation, by Rose and Dougherty in their chapter, *The System and the Challenges: An Overview* clearly describes the need to consciously upgrade the intellectual levels of our Joint Force Officers by upgrading our education and educational systems. This is an imperative for the future health of the Joint Force. Rose and Dougherty stress

the challenge then is clear. Manifold factors compound and intensify the problem of continuing the thoughtful and purposeful development of the officer corps of the Services. Knowledge obsolescence at an increasing rate, rapidly changing social patterns, and an increasingly sophisticated work environment demand that even more careful attention be devoted to the professional development and educational preparation of the officer of the future.  

They further caution, “the present rate of knowledge obsolescence and the continuing and increased need for professional development has invalidated the concept of “completed” education. The process is never ending… education and development becomes a continuum more approximating need…”  

A prime example of this came to light recently in a seminar mentor session with a retired senior defense official, who relayed counsel he had received about a serving four-star general from another four-star general. “That individual stopped learning years ago.” The defense official emphasized the extreme danger in this. He emphasized that the general, under indictment, had stopped learning and therefore was not effective anymore as he relied on knowledge and skills built at a different time, under a different context, and most likely at the tactical level of war. He noted that the General’s strategic KSAs had not adjusted to


his responsibilities and were not well developed at the exact time the Joint Force and Nation needed them to be. While this is just one data point, it is one data point too many. As Masland and Radway noted in 1956 PME can and must be better. Twenty years between Masland and Radway’s study allowed plenty of time to incorporate substantive change if the organizational culture would promote it instead of impeding change.

Finally, a chapter by Lyman Kirkpatrick, Jr. entitled The War Colleges: Education for What?, provides vital insights to consider when looking to inspire strategic minded education and thinking across the Joint Force. Kirkpatrick examines the innovations and ideas instituted at the US Naval War College that began under the leadership of Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner in 1971-1972. Turner’s changes were “so drastic as to initially produce an unprecedented amount of opposition, yet, at the same time, stimulating valuable discussion and re-examination of the purpose and methodology of the war colleges.” Turner’s first order of change was to reduce the use of lectures as a primary means of instruction. He sought to balance passive learning techniques with more active engagement by the students. “Seminars based upon intensive readings became the educational base and other changes in subject and methodology were made, including examinations in the assignment of grades… The resident faculty of the college was enlarged, and a small number of the civilian faculty were given tenure.”

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method is like the method experienced by Kissinger and Scowcroft during their development and explained in Chapter II. Grading generated a level of rigor not previously experienced because of the gentlemanly nature of the previous instruction.

Turner’s approach was to develop a program “providing a course of instruction tailored to the long-term professional needs of military officers at a mid-career point.” Turner’s concept was designed to produce forward thinking strategic minded leaders just as the CJCS desires for today’s and tomorrow’s environment. Turner clearly describes his concept,

If the military profession is to remain vital and continue to grow and adapt, we must develop rigorous, imaginative thinkers. Our final and complete supremacy at sea in World War Two, followed by the lack of opposition at sea in Korea and Vietnam, encouraged intellectual complacency and indifference in some fundamental areas of the naval profession. As a result, for example, most of today’s influential thinking on strategic deterrence and strategic arms limitations come from civilians, with only modest input from naval officers. Another example of the lack of rigorous thinking is our approach to naval presence. Despite the Navy’s increasingly important role in peacetime deterrence, there is no body of doctrine or writing on how to accomplish this deterrent mission. The lack of serious, original thinking in this and other areas, such as our lack of precision and definition of military missions, is costing us dearly in terms of duplicatory preparations or lack of preparation. The profession needs the kind of intellectual probing for which we are encouraging our students to prepare.

Kirkpatrick sees many of the changes implemented by Turner as “similar to those suggested by Masland and Radway two decades earlier.” Kirkpatrick after describing Turner’s initiatives, asks a powerful question, “Will the Navy, or, more important, will the Joint Chiefs of Staff encourage the type of intellectual probing and innovative thinking that is suggested [by Turner]? 

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Although Turner’s successor Vice Admiral Julien LeBourgeois sustained Turner’s initiatives, most were overturned after his departure. Even more disappointing, as the subsequent sections will expose, the answer to Kirkpatrick’s question remains no even considering the rapidly changing and dynamic environment of today. While visionaries like Turner encourage today’s innovators, the innovation must first start within the organizational culture and then move to the PME enterprise to affect true substantive and enduring change.

**Goldwater–Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of October 4, 1986**

The Goldwater-Nichols Act, passed in October 1986 during the Reagan administration, was legislation enacted to remove interservice rivalry. This action in and of itself is hard evidence that the strong organizational culture of the Services prevented implementation and sustainment of Eisenhower’s prescient guidance to Class 3 of the Armed Forces Staff College. Eisenhower experienced the benefits of jointness during World War II and with Admiral Nimitz designed the Armed Forces Staff College to sustain that jointness beyond the World War into the future. As Eisenhower directed, “let us forget narrow personalities and service viewpoints.” Unfortunately, as confirmed by the purpose and necessity of this Act, the Services defaulted back to their “narrow personalities and service viewpoints” absent a severe crisis. This inability to change within the Services extended to their professional military education enterprise as well. Language within the Goldwater-Nichols Act highlighted the need for improvement within PME.

...the current PME system should be improved to meet the country’s needs of today and tomorrow... PME, therefore, must remain dynamic. It must respond to present needs and consistently anticipate those of the future. It must continuously evolve in order to imbue

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service members with the intellectual agility to assume expanded roles and to perform new missions in an ever dynamic and increasingly complicated security environment. Regrettably, almost four decades after Eisenhower’s call for sustained jointness, legislation was required to enforce interservice cooperation and a dynamic PME system capable of creating intellectual overmatch. Again, this legislation provides stark evidence that while the Joint Force and Service organizational culture clearly recognizes the need for cutting edge intellectual development, the entrenched artifacts of the culture impede educational progress and the necessary strategic development of Joint Force officers. Remarkably, the Joint Force, the Department of Defense and the Nation have weathered the negative effects of a lack of strategic minded officers to date but the dangerous environmental conditions portend a day in the future where the outcomes may reveal a catastrophic result without the mitigation of conscious change in the culture, educational approach, and career pathways of the Joint Force officers.

**Dougherty Board - Senior Military Schools Review Board Report**

The Dougherty board, a Senior Military Schools Review Board on Joint Professional Military Education, led by retired US Air Force General Russell E. Dougherty, conducted an independent review of “Intermediate and Senior-level Professional Military Education (PME) to include an examination of curriculum, student body, faculty, and lecture programs.” While the Board’s focus was on the integration of Joint education throughout the Department of

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437 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. *3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report*. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified].
Defense their observations, insights, conclusions, and recommendations covered a variety of topics associated with education in general as well. Many of their recommendations remain relevant in the current epoch. Several noteworthy board recommendations:

1. The need for joint education is not limited to the joint specialist or an officer assigned to any joint duty. In fact, all military officers need a thorough grounding and joint matters and a better understanding of jointness.

2. An adequate joint education is as much a product of environment as of curriculum. An appropriate mix of students from each of the services and adequate representation from each of the services on the faculties playing important role in joint education period unfortunately, many PME schools do not that have sufficient representation in their faculties and student bodies.

3. The JCS should insist that all the schools stress individual communication skills in their curriculum. To function in a joint environment, an officer must be able to write effectively and to present his argument orderly in a logical manner. Program should be established to evaluate the communication skills of entering students and provide improvement for officers with recognized communications deficiencies. Writing programs should specifically address joint matters. 438

While focused on the joint aspects of professional military education, the Dougherty board emphasized that this specific area of education required focused attention and a great deal of work to modify Service education to incorporate joint topics. Another key area that has been a theme over the years recognized by this board as well was the vital need that “all schools stress individual communication skills in their curricula.” 439

438 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. iii-vi.

439 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. 21.
Another in a decade’s long indictment of PME, the Dougherty board recognizes that all officers must be joint and strategic minded, that the composition of the students and the educational environment itself is critical for fundamental intellectual development, and that no matter how well an officer understands his or her environment, they must have the individual communication skills to adequately describe their understanding to a variety of audiences especially the civilian decisionmakers. This skill must be taught and honed through many deliberate repetitions and sets of repetitions. Focused PME must incorporate communication throughout their curriculum.

Rostow and Endicott Report - The Teaching Of Strategy and Foreign Policy at the Senior War Colleges: A Personal Assessment

In February of 1986, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Fred Ikle requested that Eugene Rostow, a renowned scholar, and diplomatic practitioner assess the “teaching of strategy and foreign policy at the senior war colleges.” Rostow’s general conclusions were that the war colleges were instrumental in the formation of general and flag officers as well as career ambassadors. Moreover, first class teaching of strategy and foreign policy should be a major component of the curriculum and they assessed that the instruction in the above topics ranged from adequate to outstanding. They did note that “instruction at a consistent level of excellence is beyond what the colleges can achieve without strong support from the Department of Defense,

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440 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Rostow -Endicott report. 3.
the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the military services.” 441 Rostow and his collaborator Dr. John Endicott, the Director of the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, judged that regrettably,

The Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of staff, and the military services are not taking the senior war colleges seriously enough as resources of primary significance to the national security… it should be made clear from the outset that raising the quality of the faculties and of the educational programs in strategy and foreign policy will require increases in faculty size and certain other increases in cost. 442

The Rostow-Endicott assessment made several other key observations. They saw a need to be strategic minded along two different lines of effort.

Those responsible for making national security policy decisions and their advisors should therefore be educated to think strategically in both senses of the word: that is, to think not only about how to win battles, campaigns, or wars most efficiently, but also about which wars or political-military campaigns the United States should undertake in order to protect its national security. 443

This assessment is just one more assessment, in a series of assessments and reports across decades, that acknowledges the importance of strategic minded capability. In this instance they

441 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Rostow-Endicott report.4.

442 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Rostow-Endicott report.4.

443 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Rostow-Endicott report.5.
see the value in not only how to execute military operations and campaigns but also the much more difficult task, in some respects, of whether the United States should seek to achieve national objectives in specific circumstances using lethal force versus the less destructive instruments of power.

Moreover, Rostow and Endicott acknowledged the importance of a highly enlightened faculty, the need to have more stable and longer tours for academic leadership, specifically the commandants and the deans, and the imperative to balance faculty-student contact time with individual reading, writing reflection and study. The report goes through an extensive explanation on why senior leaders need to understand foreign policy and strive to gain a deeper understanding of the complex concept of strategy: its concepts, theories, and practicalities.

Finally, they heavily endorse a practical knowledge of history,

It is our conviction that the first problem of our security policy, today and for the foreseeable future, is intellectual and character, and that intellectual analysis, strategic judgment, and a feel for history are as important to the future of our armed forces as morale, will, and leadership. For officers and civil servants selected for a year at a senior military college, the goal of the program should be an educational experience which would permit a responsive student to absorb as his own General Marhalls comment in a speech at Princeton on 22 February 1947: “One usually emerges from an intimate understanding of the past, with its lessons and its wisdom, with convictions which put fire in the soul. I doubt seriously whether a man can think with full wisdom and with deep

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444 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Rostow-Endicott report.6-7.

445 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. 3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Rostow-Endicott report.9-11.
convictions regarding certain of the basic international issues of today who is not at least reviewed in his mind the period of the Peloponnesian War and the fall of Athens.” 446

The Rostow-Endicott assessment of the senior war colleges in 1986 highlights many of the same PME issues from decades past. Why do these issues continue to gather attention but never get resolved? The evidence is overwhelmingly pointing towards an organizational cultural weakness.

**Teaching, Learning, and Leading: The New Mandate**

Within Anthony McIvor’s edited book, *Rethinking the Principles of War*, BG Paula Risher examines professional military education and the teaching, learning, and leading activities expected within the enterprise. She clearly understands the type of leaders that the PME enterprise seeks to develop and identifies several attributes required to execute military responsibilities offering a new mandate to the Joint Force. 447 Her mandate confirms that PME must change to meet the current demands of 2005 (and the future) echoing the Masland and Radway assessment published almost fifty years ago. She recognizes that a shift in learning and thinking needs to take place, “at the mid-career point, a shift to higher order learning begins. Students are challenged to analyze, evaluate, and create while becoming metacognitive (e.g., to become aware of their own thought processes, to think about thinking). Teaching the art and science of leadership becomes a deliberate, focused effort and professional military education

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446 Dougherty, Russell E., Eugene V. Rostow, and John E. Endicott. 1987. *3 reports on professional military education: senior military schools review board report (Dougherty Board); the teaching of strategy and foreign policy at senior war colleges (The Rostow--Endicott report); the Clements Committee report*. [Place of publication not identified]: [publisher not identified]. Rostow-Endicott report.20.

447 McIvor, Anthony. 2005. *Rethinking the principles of war*. Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute. 244. Risher highlights the following as some of the key attributes required by military leadership. Military leaders must be “Agile, Adaptive, Self-directed, Self-aware, Culturally facile, Moral, Technologically and tactically proficient.”
(PME) institutions become the venue of choice.” She counsels that the serious responsibilities placed on our Joint Force leaders requires them to be at their cognitive best overmatching strategic competitors and aggressive opponents intellectually as well as physically, technologically, and qualitatively. “It’s not about equipment. It is about intellect; It’s about judgment; It’s about the development of leaders and soldiers. You have got to make that intellectual transformation before you can make the visible transformation.” She also understands that this intellectual overmatch is required at multiple levels within the Force and not just at the Flag and General officer level. BG Risher also acknowledges significant organizational aversion to increasing educational seat time in the Joint Force yet believes that “more nuanced and sophisticated leader development” is imperative at multiple levels in the Joint Force. She recommends increased higher-level learning for senior leader development but recognizes that,

Increasing higher-order learning for more nuanced and sophisticated leader development must not rest on adding more hours, reading more books, writing more papers. It is not about accreditation or graduate degree programs. It must come from fundamental changes in our philosophy and practice of education, not just in courses with “leadership” in the title, but across the curriculum.

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BG Risher’s recommendation addresses a fundamental issue with the professional military education system and its lack of an approach or a clearly articulated substantive concept for strategic minded learning. The study devotes a section in Chapter V to describe the basics of an educational approach or a substantive concept as endorsed by Risher and recommends career pathway adjustments to build in more time for intellectual development and the deliberate practice of strategic minded thinking.

Risher’s chapter not only identifies problems within the PME enterprise, but she also offers a solution to the issues. While Risher appreciates the constant flux in education and understands the cultural obstacles to achieving change, she offers “three powerful vectors in education today [that] represent a radical departure from this ineffective manner of teaching and learning.” 452 The three interrelated vectors are: Constructivism, Brain Research, and Self-Direction. 453 A brief explanation of the three is in order and inform the seminar “Lucky 13” approach outlined in Chapter V which is offered to the Joint Force as an initial model for strategic minded education.

First, Risher advises that the basics of constructivism and their application open a clearer pathway to increase student learning. She sees,

Constructivist teachers strive to help students create knowledge and meaning, to make sense of their world. The uniqueness of each student, their skills, talents, and multiple intelligences (not just IQ), is recognized and valued. Students are expected to play an active role in their own learning. Students are challenged not just to understand the content of the lesson but also to extrapolate it to their real world. The social context of both learning and the application of that learning are recognized and integral to the


teaching process. Students are challenged to be metacognitive. The role of the teacher shifts from being “sage on the stage” to “guide on the side.”

This constructivist approach shows great utility at all levels of education but is truly needed for our Joint Force officers to break away from their potentially stultifying tactical mindset when tasked with strategic responsibilities. Regrettably, the Joint Force culture resists this type of approach. Students after experiencing the “Lucky 13” approach which mimics a constructivist approach generate evidence supporting the utility of this type of approach. One student from JCWS 21-1 championed his experience and noted how the course helped him create knowledge.

I appreciated [the] approach of the senior seminar “Lucky 13,” as [it] empowered and challenged us to explore the space, think outside the box, [and] don’t be afraid to tackle the tough, nasty wicked problems, but go out, LEAD, make the tough call, make decisions (with the right information), and make a difference. I have learned and grown so much while being in this 10-week course, and I am grateful and extremely blessed to be a part of seminar “Lucky 13.”

While only one example from over 1200 students. This type of comment has been a trend when describing the “Lucky 13” approach since 2010.

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456 See the Joint Combined Warfighting Faculty Survey Reports for Dave Diorio, Tony Feagin, Dan McCauley, and Tom Snukis from AY 2010 to the present as well as a review of the Joint and Combined Warfighting School End of Class Reports for Seminar “Lucky 13”. Those reports consistently praise the approach and the instruction conducted in that Seminar over the past twelve years. Another representative comment from the End of Class Report for JCWS Course 18-3 was “Adult learning model, case studies, and international students. Ability to have candid conversations with peers. Adaptive approach of Seminar 13 to provide relevancy to an otherwise stagnant curriculum. Ability to pursue operational design of relevant topics.” Is again just one of many positive comments that demonstrate that Joint Force students are challenged in an adaptive adult learning environment they respond with their best.
Risher’s second vector *Brain Research* focuses on the intellectual body of knowledge regarding how the human brain works. While this field of study is embryonic, at best, Risher advocates that Effective teachers guide with deliberateness the mental processes associated with learning, from perception to attention, to working or short-term memory, and finally to long-term memory through the linking of new learning with something that is personally meaningful… Novelty, intensity, and movement get our attention, but only meaning and emotion strongly influence whether that attention endures. 457

Risher’s recommended approach only works if you have a well-educated, experienced and strategic minded faculty, a faculty that studies the basics and nuances of thinking and decision making and a faculty that can guide their students through that process. Faculty must be familiar, with Tim Brown, Doerner, Elder and Paul, Atul Gawande, Gladwell, Kahneman, Gary Klein, Neustadt and May, Nye and many others who have spent considerable time analyzing the concepts, theories and practicalities of human thinking and decision-making, and be able to teach this expert thinking on thinking. 458 Moreover, the faculty must be able to model those processes in the classroom, and ultimately allow their students to experience that a strategic level of


thinking through an immersive curriculum that allows the students a safe space to change their mindset from a comfortable tactical focus to a more uncomfortable strategic focus. The Joint Force faculty must create Schoomaker’s Zone of Discomfort to catalyze change and growth. No easy venture especially when also needing to overcome the prevalent cultural attitudes toward education.

Risher’s third vector Self-Direction focuses on the students and their primary role in their own learning as adults in the PME enterprise. At this stage of life, the student must earn his or her own understanding. The teacher still plays a very active and important role but the role is much different than a primary school teacher or even an undergraduate professor at a university. Risher advises,

Learning situations are constructed to give students the opportunity to reflect on their learning, to become aware of their own personality and individuality. Students are challenged to be self-directed… When confronted with complex, ambiguous, and intellectually demanding tasks, self-directed people exhibit the dispositions and habits of mind required to be self-managing, self-monitoring, and self-modifying. They control their first impulse for action and delay premature conclusions. They think about their own thinking, behaviors, biases, and beliefs as well as about the effects that such processes and states of mind have on others and on the environment. They can change themselves. Development of capabilities for self-directedness enables individuals not only to continue their intellectual growth beyond their formal education but also to advance the nature and quality of their life pursuits.459

Risher’s counsel above is valuable and of great utility in the realm of strategic minded education and learning on multiple levels. First, she recommends that students at this level must understand that their learning is their own. An instructor cannot give understanding to a student or order him to see something. The student must earn it. Moreover, Risher notes outside of their tactical mindset and situations, strategic minded students must be self-managing, self-monitoring, and

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self-modifying. These are vital responsibilities to learn and grow beyond the tactical as the environment and problems at this level are more vague, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. To properly analyze and think through these more complex issues, the student must learn to be more aware of his or her thinking and slow the thinking down as recommended by Kahneman. Risher fully believes students can change and become more strategic minded, but it absolutely requires an academic environment that fosters this. I have personally observed this change over the past decade and a half. Unfortunately, the organization is not currently designed to sustain these changes. As of 2022, the Joint Force remains incapable of institutionalizing an environment like Risher describes for over seventy-five years.

Insights garnered from analyzing the best practices and methodologies of adult learning laid out in a Chapter V section, fully reinforce Risher’s recommendations and educational approach.

**Beyond the Cloister**

This article from one of the most accomplished Joint leaders in the past two decades, General David Petraeus, describes the importance of professional military education and the imperative to broaden a soldier’s views at all levels. Petraeus counsels,

> the most powerful tool any soldier carries is not his weapon but his mind. these days, and for the days ahead as far as we can see, what soldiers at all ranks no is liable to be at least as important to their success as to what they could physically do. Some key questions before the US military in changing times therefore must be: How do we define the best military education for the US armed forces, and what are the best ways to impart that education?

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Petraeus recognizes professional military education as a very broad and complex subject and levies no specific indictments to the current system, but instead focuses on the utility of attending civilian graduate school programs. Though he recognizes the need to be competent in basic warfighting skills, he strongly endorses the advantages of civilian graduate education. He posits that the benefits are considerable. He firmly believes that there are at least six reasons that civilian graduate schooling is valuable for military officers. According to Petraeus they are:

1. The tour at a civilian graduate school takes military officers out of their intellectual comfort zones.
2. The second benefit comes from living outside the military cloister with an opportunity to have a different cultural experience.
3. A graduate school program provides the officer greater intellectual capital and provides knowledge an officer can draw on later in his or her career.
4. A fourth benefit is that it helps officers to develop and refine their communication skills.
5. Moreover, graduate school sets the conditions for officers to improve their critical thinking skills. While they learn from books and professors they also learn through discourse with their fellow students. A benefit in a civilian institution is the wider variety of views different from the somewhat insular views within a military school where officers are very similar to each other. Officers should be repeatedly challenged.
6. A sixth way grad school produces better military officers is that it typically imparts a degree of intellectual humility. Grad school forces a person to redefine upward one’s own internal standards of excellence.  

Although Petraeus levies no specific indictment, his six reasons that graduate schooling is valuable for military officers strongly implies a shortfall in military education that only civilian graduate education can cure.

A basic examination of Petraeus’ six reasons demonstrates that military PME can achieve most of what Petraeus extols but the organizational culture must implement and enforce the educational transformation. PME regardless of where and at what level should take an officer out

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of his or her comfort zone. Again, organizational culture impedes this type of rigor because of the entry attitude of most that PME is a rest period from the pace and rigor of everyday service. While graduate school is a good option, PME must also generate a comparable learning environment that takes the student out of his or her comfort zone. The international environment and an officer’s grave responsibilities warrants Schoomakers’ call for putting Joint warriors into the zone of discomfort not just when they attend civilian graduate school but whenever they are in a learning zone. Rest and recovery is still within reach even in a rigorous academic program if the burden of command and every day responsibilities are removed when a student is in school. Unfortunately, at least in the JCWS ten-week program, many come to the program still shouldering much of the burden from their home assignments. That condition is not optimal for either learning or performance, but it demonstrates the point that MG Scales will make in the next section that our officers are “too busy to learn.” A basic recommendation that will emerge in Chapter V and be restated in Chapter VI is that the organizational culture must design new career pathways that at specific times in an officer’s career removes the busyness so that they can focus and develop the strategic knowledge base and strategic skills necessary for the latter stages of their careers. Most PME does not remove the officer from the protective cloister of the military environment but some like the National Defense University programs provide a more varied joint and interagency environment to learn in.

While I am certain graduate school provides a solid knowledge base and intellectual capital to draw on as Petraeus states, PME can and must provide a parallel knowledge base and

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generate the intellectual capital that students can draw on based on the effectiveness of the program. Two recent student comments from among many describing the benefits of the “Lucky 13” approach capture the effectiveness of laying a solid knowledge foundation and generating intellectual capital. A student from JCWS 21-2 assessing the course and instruction stated:

Creates an adult learning focused environment that empowered me to take on intellectual challenges and expand my capabilities. I have never encountered an instructor in any forum who placed so much emphasis on creativity and personal analysis. This was a unique and valuable experience because I was constantly encouraged to think beyond doctrine and apply my own judgment and reason.  

Another student from JCWS 21-4 stated this course gave us the “Ability to bring all knowledge gained to bear, using case studies to demonstrate design thinking, and providing a place to truly engage in learning.” While this most likely is not a unique comment from all the courses in the PME enterprise, each higher-level course must ensure that their programs generate feedback corresponding to these comments on a routine basis. PME must be as good or better than that in the civilian sector.

Petraeus also highlights the ability of civilian graduate schools to improve students’ communication skills and critical thinking. Again, these are two tasks that PME must rigorously promote as well. From JCWS 21-3 a student assessed the course and instruction as doing “a tremendous job of challenging the way that students think…less concerned about the "right answer" and more concerned with how you got there. Really well done.” Moreover, a student

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from JCWS 21-4 stated that the “Lucky 13” approach and instructors, “set the environment for the seminar to present and facilitate healthy discourse. It was refreshing to hear differing points of view that challenge our assumptions… [the instruction has done] more to make me think critically than anybody I think I have learned from.” This is what the CJCS desires his PME enterprise to achieve. It can be done but in practice it must have a supporting organizational culture. The effectiveness of the “Lucky 13” model and others like it remain under scrutiny and in some cases active assault because of a perception of non-conformity.

**Too Busy to Learn**

A powerful commentary by former Army War College Commandant, MG Robert Scales, indicts the formidable military organizational culture and its strong bias toward action. Scales cautions that the force is “an institution too busy to learn” which could prove disastrous over time. 466 Scales bottom-line supposition underscores the premise of this study. “The truth is, PME reform is not a pedagogical problem. It is a personnel problem that can be addressed only by changing the militaries reward system to favor those with the intellectual right stuff.” 467 He notes that “the evidence is disturbing throughout the services, officers are avoiding attendance in schools, and school lengths are being shortened. The Army’s full-term staff college is now attended by fewer and fewer officers. The best and brightest are avoiding the war colleges in favor of service in Iraq and Afghanistan… Most disturbing is the disappearance of experienced officers as instructors.” 468 Scales knows that this shortsighted view of education and

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development, in favor of near-term service, damages the fabric of the future force and in and of itself is not a sustainable approach.

Despite the experiential benefits of combat action and service in a combat zone, the US builds its officer corps for longer duration service and utility at multiple levels of war. The Joint Force cannot approach officer development with the narrow blinders of current performance and current service exclusively. As valuable as combat experience is, it does not prepare an officer for the multitude of tasks and responsibilities he or she will face and respond to in the later years of their career. Scales easily recognizes this from his extensive experience in combat and academia. He fully recognizes the need for officers to be tactically sound and experienced but also strategic minded.

Scales highlights that despite the negative trends “the growing intellectual backlog is not causing much of a stir in the halls of power.”469 Accurate in 2010, Scales indictment and the indictments of others like Joan Johnson Freese, albeit taking ten or more years to sink in, made a difference as demonstrated in the 2020 PME guidance documents from the Chairmen’s office. Regrettably, these documents parrot Eisenhower’s and others from over the years. Strong words. Clear guidance but little to no substantive action. Encouragingly though there is a stir in the halls of power and Chapter V offers ways to turn that stir into fundamental and lasting initiatives within existing formal programs.

Scales describes an atrophying schoolhouse and underlines those past attempts at PME reform failed because they were driven by “academics who focus reform on curricula and hiring

He easily notes that the solution resides within the organizational culture and “can only be addressed by changing the military’s reward system to favor those with the intellectual right stuff.” While Scales assessment holds merit, there are other factors within the culture that must be adjusted to truly achieve substantive PME change. Scales offers five areas that will support the necessary change. First, he offers the Petraeus model of strategic development for positions of increased responsibility. “This includes attendance at a top tier civilian Graduate School to study history or social and behavioral science followed by a teaching assignment at a service academy.” Interestingly numerous successful strategic minded leaders followed this model and “shared a lifelong obsession with reading history and studying the art of war.”

Scales defining indictment manifests itself in his final recommendation and demonstrates the ever-present grip that Joint Force organizational culture has on PME reform. Scales recommends, “the fight to inculcate jointness within the services warns that real PME reform can only happened through the blunt instrument of legislative action.” While Scales may be accurate the Joint Force has the guidance reaching back to General Eisenhower and the evidence as presented since the Masland an Radway study to the grave warnings offered by the rapidly changing and dynamic environment to apply best judgement and make the changes without all the baggage that goes with legislative action.

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**Professors in the Colonel's World**

While some may see Daniel Hughes’ indictment as one from a disgruntled professor who lacks an understanding of the Air Force organizational culture, therefore not having a contextual view of the artifacts of the organizational culture, this study seeks Hughes’ views because he provides an unvarnished critical view into the cultural impediments to better strategic minded development, even if that view is extreme and potentially biased.

His first observation, consistent with Masland and Radway’s view from 1957, is that the Air Force makes minimal investment into the military faculty at the Air War College and that there is only a small intellectual foundational gap between faculty and student. Certainly not enough to make the student’s experience worthwhile. The evidence supports his claim. Hughes believes that Air Force instructors, the colonels as he terms them,

may be effective officers, but that is not why they are on the faculty. Doers rather than thinkers, they are practical people who have succeeded in numerous military assignments. The services do not assign them to the air war college because they are particularly suited to academic work. Indeed, most do not perform much traditional academic work. Many are of average intellect and have substantial weaknesses in speaking and writing. Most are quietly and some even openly, contemptuous of intellectuals and regard them as guilty of the egregious offense of being “liberal” …

Hughes expands his view emphasizing most do not possess doctoral degrees, rarely publish, seldom lecture, and that their assignment to the Air War College is not welcome and certainly is not career enhancing. His experience demonstrates that most are at the end of their careers and

The Air Force considers these officers unsuitable for further promotion and has not elevated a single one of them to Brigadier General in at least the last 18 years, and probably longer. Many colonels try to avoid service at the Air War College and at the Air University generally. Most regard an ROTC assignment as a better way to end their careers, an attitude enshrined in the fact that there is a competitive selection board for

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assignment to ROTC duty but not to the Air War College…The Air Force routinely sends colonels who are out of favor to ride out their final years at the Air War College. 475 Hughes also highlights that college management, representative of the organizational culture, “is impervious to the extent to which these colonels undermine the cultural and intellectual diversity of the faculties in these schools but welcomes them because they are easily controlled and are fully socialized into the military approach to education and training.” 476

Hughes also observed that the student body demonstrated an aversion to attending the Air War College. His informal study based on his extensive observations was that at least, “50 percent of them have no interest in attendance and would not attend if they could otherwise be certain of advancement to colonel [98 percent being promoted with attendance and limited promotion potential without attendance.]” 477

Hughes strongest indictment focuses in on the educational expectations. Hughes and his other civilian counterparts seek to generate the rigor they experienced in their advanced educational programs whereas the students and military faculty favored an approach that “demands answers rather than unresolved difficult questions. Reductionism becomes a staple of the student approach, while the professors attempt to teach the complexity of international relations, of strategic issues, and of other related subjects.” 478 Hughes and his fellow professors’


educational approach is what the Chairman seeks and espouses in his guidance, yet the organizational culture generally avoids this type of rigor or downright undermines it because of its conflation of training and education and its desire for certainty. “…students and colonels have a tendency to stress what they need to know in an immediately practical sense, while the professors are more interested in how to think about issues of policy, strategy, and so forth.”

Hughes then addresses the cultural proclivity to value standardization over innovation, creative methods and subjects driving the core courses to remain “at a uniformly low level in approach and content.” This drive for uniformity results for a variety of reasons but must be overcome to move an officer to a strategic level of thinking and action. Every problem in the international environment does not have just one solution or an easy answer to it. SMJFOs must be comfortable with complexity to achieve intellectual overmatch and that level of adaptability and comfort with ambiguity must first occur in the classroom if it is to manifest itself in practice under practical circumstances. Hughes then directly highlights the Air Force’s training to educate approach. He feels that most of the colonels “embrace standardization, since most cannot design courses on their own. Most have great difficulty in creating individual class periods, let alone entire courses. A real revolution in military education and official outlooks toward the expected outcomes would be necessary to change this standardized approach.”

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Hughes indictment concludes with a section on anti-intellectualism. He posits that most of the professors at the Air War College teach “in and overtly anti-intellectual environment that reinforces the basic tendencies of the students to disparage all but practical experience. The generals in charge of the Air War College and Air University frequently directly contribute to this poisoned atmosphere.” Moreover, he hypothesizes that “the general officer corps of the Air Force is aggressively anti-intellectual in many of its presentations at the Air War College.” If even only a small portion of Hughes Air War College indictments are accurate, the organizational culture of the Air Force is a huge impediment to achieving intellectual overmatch. This attitude that develops from within the culture must be mitigated and eliminated to ensure a more strategic minded approach to the rapidly changing and dynamic international environment. While practical experience is extremely important, we have seen in both Chapter II and III the symbiotic relationship between concepts, theories, doctrine, and practice. One must not be overvalued at the expense of the others.

The Reform of Military Education: Twenty-Five Years Later

An excellent description on the state of professional military education twenty-five years after the passing of the Goldwater-Nichols Act comes from Joan Johnson-Freese. Johnson-Freese, a respected and long-time professor at the US Naval War College, provides a focused look at PME by reflecting on her experiences. She begins her examination of PME with an observation and two insightful questions, “Twenty-five years after Goldwater-Nichols, the U.S.

military operates in perhaps the most complex environment it has ever faced. But was the
Goldwater-Nichols mandate and the push for better military education successful? And if not,
what might be done?” 483

Johnson-Freese reexamines the objectives of Goldwater-Nichols regarding PME and
finds that even after twenty-five years a series of issues remain. She emphasizes the conflation of
training and education that remains a critical issue since the 1957 Masland and Radway study.
According to Johnson-Freese,

Neither the Joint Staff responsible for PME, nor the individual military services, have
seriously tackled what education for intellectual agility, as opposed to training, would
entail. This is not surprising, because few of those responsible for PME (individually or
collectively) have spent much time thinking about the difference between education and
training. Not many have reflected on what it means “to educate” or “to be educated.”
Many received their undergraduate degrees in engineering, a discipline where rules,
checklists, and clear, right and wrong answers prevail. They then went on to successful
careers where risk-adverse answers to their bosses’ questions are standard, and the same
kinds of checklists for flights, ships and reactors apply. Such personnel are well trained,
but that is not the same thing as being well educated. Unfortunately, training and
education are seen by the military bureaucracy as almost synonymous. 484

She accurately points out that training and education are vastly different and well-trained does
not equal well-educated and vice versa. Moreover, she clearly distinguishes between the two.

“Education, then as now, requires thinking and reflection, which takes time. Training has right
and wrong answers which allow immediate progress measurement; education is incremental and
involves grappling with ambiguity.” 485


484 Johnson-Freese, Joan. 2012. "The Reform of Military Education: Twenty-Five Years
Later". Orbis. 56 (1): 137.

485 Johnson-Freese, Joan. 2012. "The Reform of Military Education: Twenty-Five Years
Johnson – Freese also highlights the long-standing issue regarding military faculty and the slight, if any, difference between a military instructor and military student. She notes that the Navy, in her experience, believes every officer is capable of being a teacher based on the nature of their overall job responsibilities. She underlines that most officers,

confidently enter their classrooms, though sometimes with little knowledge about the subject they will teach, but often fully willing to voice strong views on substantive and educational topics. This attitude that “accomplished leaders can do anything” pervades PME institutions where credibility as an “expert” on a subject is often attained by simply declaring oneself to be an expert. (Civilian faculty are just as guilty of this, if not more so, but the basic problem is that the institutions allow it.) The black and white world of military officers, where achievement is measured on a daily basis and nobody questions authority, is completely different from the cultural milieu of their academic colleagues.  

This hierarchy and deference to rank within the classroom, in Freese’s view, hinders fruitful discourse thereby limiting development.

Johnson-Freese seeking to generate a productive education for officers moving from tactical to strategic responsibilities, sees the cultural differences between civilian academics and military instructors as problematic for the resultant education. The use of time for preparation differs with military officers being in meetings, collective class preparation, and by providing students’ constant unlimited access. The academics spent their valuable preparation time by individual preparation, scheduled open door time with students, maintaining a recurring research agenda, and prepping for new lectures and other educational items that would enhance learning.

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Moreover, Johnson-Freese saw a distinct difference in how they both approached basic instruction. “Academics plan their work in year or longer blocks, and advocate a broader, open-ended, cumulative educational model. Conversely, the views on education by active-duty and retired military faculty lean toward a training-like model, using daily critiques, right and wrong answers, metrics, and a requirement to learn a limited amount of material only once.”

Johnson-Freese also indicts the administrative oversight of PME as laid out in the Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) as a limiting factor to sound educational standards. She sees the OPMEP as a checklist, “like the ones that get a ship underway or launch an air assault. The checklist includes common educational standards, a taxonomy of desired learning achievements, learning objectives, learning areas, requirements for faculty and student percentages from the different services, and other ‘guidelines,’ all of which perpetuate a ‘training’ versus ‘education’ approach.” The Joint Force cannot allow a purely liberal approach to PME because of the seriousness of the military profession and some need to ensure the proper subjects are being taught and to an acceptable standard in some sort of a repeatable pattern but it must also create an educational environment that does not checklist or template strategic minded education. The skills necessary for critical and creative thinking don’t emerge from standardized power point instructional decks.

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Johnson-Freese highlights MG Scales indictment from above on the deterioration on the importance and value of PME by the services. Freese supplements Scales frustration by relaying her experience with Navy students. She emphasizes that Navy students regularly report that they were discouraged from attending a war college in residence by their detailers or superiors and warned that to do so would be detrimental to their careers. To say that this disdain for education among their superiors affects student attitudes would be understatement. Additionally, students are frequently told by their personnel officers and leadership that a year at the war college is a year to reconnect with families and relax. Rarely is it characterized as a year of rigorous study. 491

These are not pedagogical problems; this is an organizational problem that must be overcome if the Joint Force ever hopes to create strategic minded thinking and intellectual overmatch to scale.

Johnson-Freese also notes that senior officers repeatedly discredit the value of reading. Additionally, she experienced students only interested in topics and subjects with immediate career assignment payoff. 492 As the other issues she considers this student attitude reflective of the career pathway norms and the reward systems in place for key assignments and promotions. Another critical indictment levied by Johnson-Freese concerns the curriculum. Her view supports the views of the others referenced that while the general categories of subjects have great utility the way they get translated into curriculum for execution varies widely across the Joint Force. Johnson-Frees counsels,

Execution varies significantly as well: some schools and departments use a single teacher in the classroom for each course, others use team teaching where the course teaching load is shared, and others use team teaching with a post command military moderator and civilian academic in the classroom for each session. The balance between large lectures


and seminar discussions also varies, as does the reading load. Reading assignments range from about 80 pages per night, to other cases where there are a dozen or more readings per session, sometimes in excess of 300 pages, which the students—and worse, some faculty—often admit they do not fully read. 493

Execution does not need to be standardized across the Joint Force but as Chapter V highlights, the education must model the best of adult learning methods, teach appropriate subjects with the correct mix of theories, concepts, doctrine, and practicalities to provide the required knowledge base to develop the necessary skills and abilities for strategic mindedness.

Johnson-Freese concludes with a series of hard-hitting recommendations. Most of these recommendations address the organizational culture and how cultural attitudes undermine the necessary intellectual growth and rigor. 494

2018 National Defense Strategy Executive Summary

Chapter III covered the 2018 National Defense Strategy in detail including the indictment on professional military education. While there is no need to restate the indictment from the NDS laid out in Chapter III, it is prudent to note that the shortfalls in PME have the attention at the highest levels in the Department of Defense. Hopefully the NDS indictment of the PME shortfalls demonstrating attention at the highest levels begins to generate actual critical change.

Encouragingly the DoD started that change in 2019 to reform PME by beginning a program called the Strategic Thinker Program or STP. Going outside of the organizational culture DoD, “in response to decades of dissatisfaction with professional military education—


especially, its inability to produce strategists.” DoD instituted STP in 2019 through Johns Hopkins University. 495

The program has “four essential components: 1) intense, year-long, Oxford tutorial-style seminars that are part of 2) a civilian policy-focused education graduate program. The seminars inform 3) a pair of wargames that highlight the strategic challenges that belligerents face in wartime; and 4) the program’s culminating experiential learning experience: an international staff ride designed to make the academic discussions come to life.” 496 Current PME can achieve much of what the Strategic Thinker Program is doing outside the culture if the organizational culture enforced the guidance that is already available.

Paula Thornhill, a retired Air Force Brigadier General and adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins, states,

As a teacher and observer, I have found that the Strategic Thinkers Program stands out as the Defense Department’s most rigorous and rewarding military education program. If DOD can protect STP while using lessons gleaned from it to reform professional military education more broadly, PME schools might, at last, turn away from teaching to a minimal standard, and start offering the demanding education students deserve. With the Strategic Thinkers Program at least now a beacon exists for other PME institutions to follow. 497


Chapter V lays out a model, “The Lucky 13” approach that could benchmark a strategic thinking education approach within the Joint Force. The evidence demonstrates that no matter how good an educational program is, adequate time must be allotted for apprenticeship with mentors and deliberate practice of the necessary strategic minded skills.

While the Strategic Thinker’s Program is an encouraging step forward, much more must be instituted within DoD and the Joint Force to overcome seventy-five years of organizational cultural inertia.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 1800.01f Officer Professional Military Education Policy

While we covered the essence of the CJCSI in the Introduction Chapter, it is useful to highlight several additional items from this guidance. First the instruction has a vision that aligns both PME and the Joint Force talent management system. It seeks leaders “who are skilled in the art of war and the practical and ethical application of military power. The intent is the development of strategically minded joint war fighters who think critically and can creatively apply military power to inform national strategy, conduct globally integrated operations, and fight under conditions of disruptive change.” 498 Moreover, the guidance establishes the requirement to “maintain a rigorous joint learning environment designed to promote a theoretical

and practical in depth understanding of jointness and evolving areas of interest.” Thankfully this guidance promotes a vital aspect of strategic minded development but continues to fall short in execution. The Joint Force has solid direction. Now it must implement, reinforce, and sustain that direction for true change to take place.

EDUCATION VERSUS TRAINING

One of the key themes throughout the years was the indictment that professional military educational organizations tend to conflate education with training. While it has already been addressed above, it is extremely important to differentiate between the two so that substantive change can take place. For this change to occur the institution must clearly understand the difference and guardedly avoid conflation to better educate Joint Force Officers. Cynthia Watson, a long-time professor at the National Defense University recognizes the difference and the imperative to execute each differently since they both serve different purposes.

Professional military education is not the same as training or general education. Professional military education targets the fields which are crucial to the officer’s specific rise to the upper ranks of service. While training is to convey a technical skill useful in accomplishing a particular task, education is intended to convey a thought process that can be applied in multiple circumstances. The PME system through which US officers pass has the goal of educating its students to apply their analyses through a series of possible applications.500


Watson further defines education as a process that “conveys general bodies of knowledge and develops habits of mind applicable to a broad spectrum of endeavors.” 501 These definitions highlight the future focus of education. On the other side, Watson further defines training as activities that prepare “individuals to perform duties.” 502

General Stanley McChrystal, a respected military commander, special operator, and leadership expert, simplifies the difference in his definition to ensure that individuals and especially organizations understand the distinction between the two. “This is the difference between education and training. Medical school is education, first aid is training. Education requires fundamental understanding, which can be used to grasp and respond to a nearly infinite variety of threats; training involves singular actions, which are useful only against the anticipated challenges. Education is resilient, training is robust.” 503 Comprehension of this distinction is essential to creating effective and efficient educational programs to develop our JFOs for future and strategic challenges.

**STRATEGIC CULTURE**

After examining the basics behind organizational culture and how it impacts decision-making, and the multiple calls for the reform of professional military education, exploration of


the root causes and drivers of this seventy-five-year recurring call for better professional military education warrants a closer look at the Joint Force strategic culture behind the educational programs. This examination must not only analyze how the force thinks about and prioritizes strategic thinking but also how it promotes education for strategic purposes and then how it executes the education to produce strategic minded Joint Force officers. Colin Gray cautions, “no one and no institution can operate beyond culture… [the environment requires] an essential unity to all strategic experience.” 504 What prevents the Joint Force from making substantive change over an extended period of over seventy-five years? Gray argues, “Culture embraces both ideas and behavior and…it is inescapable: one cannot sensibly contrast culturalist with other approaches to politics or strategy, because all human beings are culturally educated or programmed. So, all strategic behavior is cultural behavior.” 505 Building on Gray’s argument it follows that the recognition of educational reform results from the organizational assessment of the environment, analysis of JFO KSAs, and a realization that a gap exists between performance and how an officer is educated in strategic minded thinking. Regrettably, the same organizational culture and leadership espousing this over seven and a half decades cannot create substantive institutional change within the educational system, organizational conduct, and standard officer career pathways to set the conditions for better strategic thinking and execution. Alarmingly today’s environment compels change just to meet basic requirements, while disappointedly, the strategic culture does not enact or enforce the changes required to meet those basic requirements let alone outpace them. The United States cannot wait for a cataclysmic event to generate the momentum for change. The writing has been on the wall for decades, regarding education, and


the time is now that organizational leadership displays the discipline to effect and institutionalize change prior to a large-scale existential crisis which will necessitate change just to survive. The Joint Force must change now to prepare for future crises or better yet avoid potential crises through a generation of Joint Force officers armed with intellectual overmatch against their strategic competitors. Peter Mansoor and Williamson Murray provide corroborating insight regarding the extreme importance of culture.

Culture has an enormous influence on military organizations and their success or failure in war. Cultural biases often result in unstated assumptions that have a deep impact on the making of strategy, operational planning, doctrinal creation, and the organization and training of armed forces. Except in unique circumstances culture grows slowly, embedding so deeply that members often act unconsciously according to its dictates. Of all the factors that are involved in military effectiveness, culture is perhaps the most important. Yet it is also remains the most difficult to describe and understand, because it entails so many external factors that impinge, warp, and distort its formation in continuity. 506

The beauty and pain of organizational culture is its lasting impact on an organization’s thinking and actions. It becomes culture because it has served the organization well over time.

Regrettably, while continuities exist and changes occur, and in this current epoch the environmental changes occur rapidly as described in Chapter III, the US National Security enterprise is extremely bureaucratic and resistant to change. While it is useful, in general, to be steadfast, the organization must realize when tradition and standard procedures are counterproductive and destructive. An agile mindset is an essential precondition for anxious foresight and substantive change to meet or stay ahead of environmental changes. 507 Agility is


vital. An agile organization recognizes change and adjusts their methods to handle the challenges and opportunities of that change. The US military establishment has had an inside view of the environmental changes since the 50’s, fully recognizing them, but ultimately resisting their own recommended initiatives to effect basic change because of the baked in biases of the organizational culture. Despite the recognition of a rapidly changing and dynamic environment, the organizational cultural and leadership are paralyzed when it comes to the organizational changes needed to stay in front of the environmental changes or just keep pace. True change demands recognition, new methods to address the changes, disciplined leadership, and focused execution to implement and sustain the modifications despite the cultural pressure to stay the course or be resolute. Chapter V provides an approach to overcome the organizational resistance to real change in the PME enterprise and how career pathway adjustments could possibly alleviate the career time constraints regarding performance and learning.

CONCLUSION

An examination of PME guidance, studies, and literature over the course of the past 75 years reveals numerous recurring shortfalls with little to no organizational and structural change to fundamentally address the problems. Over the 75 years strategic direction and guidance have identified and highlighted the trends but the organization then failed to adjust. Schein, Mansoor, and Murray provide insight into why organizational change is so difficult and that organizations are so resistant to change even when they recognize that change is necessary. Starting with Eisenhower’s 1947 guidance to Class 3 of the Armed Forces Staff College, we see what senior leaders seek from the organization’s professional military education program. We then see from the Masland and Radway study to the most recent guidance from the Chairmen Joint Chiefs of
Staff that the military education system has not overcome the cultural impediments and is still seeking to fully enact Eisenhower’s philosophy. The following trends emerged from the recurring reports and articles:

- An Affinity to Conformity
- An Absence of the Necessary Amount of Time for Education and Deliberate Practice
- A Misunderstanding of the Basics and Nuances of Education and Training
- A Conflation of Training and Education Creating Suboptimal Officer Development
- PME Generally Lacks an Emphasis on Thinking and Thinking about Thinking
- A Lack of Rigor and Learning outside the Comfort Zone
- A Lack of Intellectual Leadership in the Investigation of Military Subjects
- Little to No Difference between Instructor and Student Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Experience
- Too Busy to Learn
- Time to Learn versus Time to Rest and Recover

The constant environmental pressure warrants and justifies refined and/or transformed professional military education as evidenced by the recurring appeals for reform. While some things change and others remain constant, education must adapt to the ever-changing environment and the context of the times. What is frustrating is not the call for updated curriculum, improved teaching methods and approaches, or the need to better understand the changes and continuities, but the continuous need to make these appeals on a recurring basis because of the cultural resistance to develop a more substantive approach to education. While we have not had an existential crisis, yet, because of the organization’s inability to change and adapt, the trajectory of the environmental strategic competition challenges may lead us there at some
point in the future. The professional military educational system must change overriding entrenched policies, assignment processes, rewards, and internal cultural attitude. We need an organization that can take the direction and guidance and promote, support, and implement it as required.
CHAPTER V

MASTERING STRATEGIC MINDEDNESS: A MODEL FOR STRATEGIC MINDED PME CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY AND DESIGNING CAREER PATHWAYS FOR STRATEGIC APPRENTICESHIP

Appropriate talent is needed at all levels... For those who have excelled in the highest positions... the demands for intellectual and moral powers are vastly greater.

-Von Clausewitz

We imagine that creativity and brilliance just appear out of nowhere, the fruit of natural talent, or perhaps of a good mood, or an alignment of the stars. Would be an immense help to clear up the mystery—to name this feeling of power, to examine its roots, to define the kind of intelligence that leads to it, and to understand how it can be manufactured and maintained. Let us call this sensation mastery - the feeling that we have a greater command of reality, other people, and ourselves.

-Robert Greene

The development of genuine expertise requires struggle, sacrifice, and honest, often painful self-assessment. There are no shortcuts. It will take you at least a decade to achieve expertise...by engaging in “deliberate” practice—practice that focuses on tasks beyond your current level of competence and comfort. You will need a well-informed coach...to guide you through deliberate practice [and] to help you learn how to coach yourself.

-K. Anders Ericsson

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the requirement to consider the art and science of learning, refine current teaching methodologies by applying effective adult learning methods, model a focused strategic minded educational approach, and design, implement and institutionalize career pattern adjustments to facilitate and solidify formal and informal professional development to meet the requirements desired by the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff. These requirements promote the development of strategic minded joint force officers (SMJFOs) and contribute to substantive change to attain and sustain institutional intellectual overmatch against our strategic competitors.

What specifically must be reinforced, enhanced, added, and emphasized to provide the educational foundation for SMJFOs? What career path adjustments must the Joint Force
implement to “unfreeze”, “change” and “freeze” the desired institutional change. Analysis presented in Chapter II, Chapter III, and Chapter IV provides some insight to answering this question and informs the Seminar “Lucky13” approach detailed below. Additionally, the professional military education enterprise must be proactive, not reactive, or as stated in the 2018 National Defense Strategy must avoid or overcome the specified stagnation, to evolve or enact radical change leading to better methods and curriculum to advance Joint Force intellectual overmatch within world affairs. What methods of instruction and instructional approach catalyze the transition of officers from a tactical mindset to a more strategic mindset? The Seminar “Lucky 13” approach provides some resolution. Created within a segment of professional military education, specifically the Joint Combined Warfighting School in Norfolk, Va., and executed for over a decade, the “Lucky 13” approach offers a model and one perspective to address this significant Joint Force officer transition from tactical mindedness to strategic mindedness. Despite the proven utility of the “Lucky 13” educational approach, within the Joint and Combined Warfighting School mission, much more must be adopted and institutionalized by the Joint Force organizational culture to fully meet the acute and pacing challenges of the current international environment and implement changes to effectively operate and overcome the ever-expanding requirements for the future. How does Joint Force PME challenge, educate, and

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509 The approach has been praised and extolled for over a decade in Joint and Combined Warfighting School end of course and individual “Lucky 13” instructor student surveys. The approach works yet has never been formally recognized by the organizational culture. Unbelievably, on occasion the instructors were reprimanded for their innovative and focused approach. The drive for conformity and the need to conflate education with training has been
inspire Joint officers to use their tactical mindset, when appropriate, and recognize when that mindset is not sufficient or inappropriate for the problems at hand or anticipated. Moreover, how does the Joint Force develop officers with a utilitarian strategic minded thought process – a mindset conditioned to handle the complexity of strategic problems and avoid an automatic default to tactical methods but that applies tactical thinking when required. Are power point presentations, structured practical exercises, and auditorium style lectures still effective in this new environment or is there scope and necessity to be more immersive and active with instructional methods? Do current and slow evolving Joint Force education methods facilitate the education of strategic thinkers, or must the Joint Force implement radical adjustments to current methods? Do the methods enhance education at “the speed of relevance”? Or does the Joint Force educational enterprise just need to be more aware of the concepts and theories that underpin effective adult learning, better understanding “how adults learn” and “teaching smart people to learn” and marry these techniques with subjects that address the basics and subtleties of strategy and account for the changes and continuities in the international environment? 510 Does Joint Force subject material and curriculums meet the Learning Standards Design, as described by Drago-Severson, or must they be updated and overhauled relying on analysis like that in Chapter II, III and IV? 511 What must adjust based on the typical career patterns of our culturally overwhelming. The guidance promotes one approach, and the organizational culture promotes and enforces another. In many instances they are in direct contradiction.


Joint Force officers to better prepare the officers for the challenge of ever-increasing responsibility and designing, planning, preparing, executing, and assessing Joint Force operations and campaigns within a strategic context? Should career pathways be lengthened to provide sufficient strategic minded development time and refined methods? This Chapter seeks to synthesize the previous four chapters and propose answers to these vital questions.

Moreover this Chapter offers a model for strategic minded Joint Force Officer Development based on a fusion of numerous recommendations, insights, and senior leader guidance over the past seventy-five years ranging from Eisenhower’s 1948 Armed Forces Staff College guidance, Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner’s US Navy War College approach, MG Robert Scales *Too Busy To Learn* counsel, Joan Johnson Freese’s advice, BG Paula Risher’s recommendations, Gen David Petraeus’ *Beyond the Cloister* proposal on the benefit of civilian PhD programs, the United States Army’s Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program (ASP3), to the Joint Combined Warfighting School’s Seminar “Lucky 13” approach. It also proposes the concept of a Strategic Minded Mentored Apprenticeship Gap period or periods within a JFOs basic career pattern to inculcate and/or accelerate strategic minded thinking and the strategic development of our prospective senior officers (0-6 and above) providing additional and more focused educational and vantage point experiences for a larger number of officers.  

To develop the above the Chapter examines the following:

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512 During a phone call with Gen David Petraeus, he talked about the value of a vantage point experience. He defined a vantage point experience as an opportunity to work a position that gave the individual a view into the basics, nuances, and sophistications of a key leader within the national security enterprise. For instance, an aide to camp or an executive assistant position to an influential general or admiral would be considered a vantage point experience.
a. Explore the art and science of learning seeking best practices to educate our Joint Force officers to a high standard striving for intellectual overmatch and strategic mindedness on a consistent and recurring basis. Within this section, examine and analyze the best of Adult Learning Methodologies seeking insights to better design professional military education. Additionally, to make SMJFOs more conscious of their thinking, they must have a conceptual foundation in thinking. Examine several practical concepts to generate a better approach to the teaching of strategic minded thinking skills. Also, in this section distinguish the difference between the Learning Zone and the Performance Zone and the need to balance for the development of Joint Force practitioners.

b. Explore the essentials of mastering knowledge turning it into capability and the methods available to achieve mastery of strategic mindedness and the strategic level of war.

c. Describe the “Lucky 13” approach to JPME which defines a refined substantive concept for JPME reflecting the Chairman’s guidelines outlined in the Officer Professional Military Education Policy, established dimensions of strategy, the continuities, and changes in world affairs, and addresses the cultural pitfalls that creates a “too busy to learn” mentality.

d. Design a better-informed career pattern and a mentored apprenticeship gap period that removes the domineering business and other organizational cultural impediments to transitioning from a tactical mindset to a strategic mindset. This design sets enhanced conditions for better strategic thinking in the Joint Force leading to mastery of strategic thinking.
THE ART AND SCIENCE OF LEARNING

As we look to develop a model for strategic minded thinking, we must consider both the art and the science of learning, the basic characteristics of adult learning methodologies, and insights into basic and strategic thinking. Both art and science must be considered, analyzed, understood, and implemented to generate the best education for our perspective strategic minded officers and senior leaders. Josh Waitzkin in *The Art of Learning* \(^{513}\) lays out several considerations for those developing curriculum and approaches for strategic minded learning. Additionally, Linda Elder and Richard Paul propose the idea of a substantive approach or substantive concept to education that we address in a later section within this chapter. \(^ {514}\) Moreover, Jane Vella specifies twelve principles for effective adult learning that must figure into any educational program for adult learners. \(^ {515}\) The substantive educational concept must explicitly specify the ends that the Joint Force seeks to achieve with their specialized educational programs and the ways to achieve those ends. Regrettably as discussed in Chapter IV most professional military education institutions lack a substantive concept. Unbelievably, despite recurring senior leader direction and guidance, multiple studies, and reports and cyclic indictments on the professional military education system and hence the overall purpose of this study, the Joint Force remains unclear on what to implement. Additionally in this Chapter, we

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examine numerous other scholars and practitioners’ views and insights on learning, adult learning, and the best methods to master desired knowledge, skills, and abilities.

**The Art of Learning**

Excellent insight into the art of learning can be gleaned from an examination of Josh Waitzkin, his story, and his techniques. While Waitzkin bases his book *The Art of Learning: An Inner Journey to Optimal Performance* on his own personal experiential insights, the lessons therein are extremely useful for application to the professional military education system, as he models the characteristics of a master learner as espoused by K. Anders Ericsson and Ericsson’s experimental studies evaluating expert performance.  

Waitzkin establishes several themes throughout his self-reflective book. Those themes describe his development as a world class chess player and then into a world champion martial artist. He lays out the principles he applied in his quest and journey to mastering those disciplines. Overall, his premise is that with the right approach any subject or discipline can be mastered by mostly everyone through time, focus, deliberate practice, discipline, and a deep understanding of the basics, the foundational principles and knowledge, that underpin the subject or discipline in question.  

This bodes well for our Joint Force and supports Colin Gray’s claim, “Education in strategy is feasible and important. Few are the would-be strategists who are beyond improvement by some formal education…the strategist will perform better for today if

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he has mastered and can employ strategy’s general theory.” 518 Moreover, Robert Greene posits that there, “is a simple process that leads to mastery – one that is accessible to all of us.” 519

As Waitzkin begins his assessment of his own learning process through the lens of chess and the martial arts he immediately recognizes the strong correlation between mastery and the deep study of the basics, techniques, concepts, theories, and principles until they become integrated into the unconscious. 520 Clausewitz highlights this process and establishes that all, to be effective, must turn “knowledge into capability”. 521 Clausewitz advocates that the commander or strategic minded staff officer, “must always be ready to bring forth the appropriate decision. By total assimilation with his mind and life, the commander’s knowledge must be transformed into a genuine capability.” 522 In his chosen disciplines, Waitzkin strives to turn his knowledge into capability and through a well-crafted program and many hours of mentored deliberate practice, he achieves this. He recognizes and applies the learning principles of first understanding the basics, then establish a strong foundation, and finally rely upon that tough preparatory work during life while reinforcing the foundational throughout. Waitzkin pursues this daily. He employs this during his instruction and training. Whenever, he created an


idea about anything he would test it against his instructor or mentor. Invariably, that individual, more experienced and knowledgeable, at the time, than Waitzkin, would disagree with his conclusions. Building on that, Waitzkin responded by thinking and reflecting on this updated information. “The need for precision forced me to think about these ideas more concretely. I had to come to a deeper sense of concepts like essence, quality, principle, intuition, and wisdom in order to understand my own experience, let alone have any chance of communicating it.”

This type of development took time, focus, and deliberate practice. He also recognized that to instruct someone in the subjects you have a deep understanding of you must bring all that you have relegated to the unconscious forward to your consciousness breaking it down into manageable and understandable segments. This insight translates well to Joint Force instructors. The subject of Joint Warfighting exists in multiple domains across several levels of war with an infinite number of variables to contend with generating a dilemma for instructors. How do you break something as complex as Joint Warfighting into “manageable and understandable segments”? This becomes the art of Joint Force educational design and instruction. An art that must be mastered so that Joint Force officers as students can subsequently understand and then master their art. Hubbard reinforces Waitzkin’s view and provides insight to the Joint Force instructor. When instructing, “Present... in its simplest form (but not necessarily its most elementary) [and] present each step of the subject in its most fundamental form with minimal material derived therefrom by the instructor. [Moreover] coax into action the student’s mind to derive and establish all data which can be derived from axioms or theories.”

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Waitzkin describes the challenge of writing a chess book for beginners. “In order to write for beginners, I had to break down my chess knowledge incrementally, whereas for years I had been cultivating a seamless integration of the critical information.” 525 We recommend this technique of breaking knowledge into understandable segments but not losing sight of the big picture below within the “Lucky 13” approach to all instructors and especially those seeking to instill strategic mindedness. Complimentary to this was Waitzkin’s love of study, training, and reflection. This motivation becomes a key goal in the “Lucky 13” approach – the inspiration of students to re-ignite or fuel their curiosity and regenerate or sustain a passion for learning and creating. As one student reflected in his assessment of the course after spending ten weeks learning within the “Lucky 13” approach, this course “exceeds the capability of most to challenge our thoughts and assumptions and instill confidence in our independent thinking and design processes. I’ve bought and read more books in the last 10 weeks due to [the course] inspiration than I have in the last 5 years” 526 Admittedly, the student must have a fertile mind to cultivate but my experience over seventeen years of instructing senior Joint Force 05 and 06 officers is that most possess fertile minds, even if they have been fallow for years, aggressively seeking improvement and growth to supplement their considerable experience and tactical mastery when given the time and opportunity. The individual student referenced above also produced, individually, the best preparatory study for the final operational design assessment that I had seen or have seen in 17 years of instruction. Currently a senior commander in the United


526 JCWS Faculty Ratings Survey Assessment from an anonymous student from Seminar Lucky 13 JCWS 17-3, August 25, 2017.
States Navy, his comments above reflect the imperative for an instructional approach to inspire the student to accept responsibility for his or her own learning. The “Lucky 13” approach does that.

Waitzkin’s chess knowledge and skill development benefited from a dedicated coach, a mentor. His mentor had greater knowledge and experience than Waitzkin and had the ability to slow Waitzkin’s decision making process down and make Waitzkin conscious of his choices.

Bruce slowed me down by asking questions. Whenever I made an important decision, good or bad, he would ask me to explain my thought process. Were there other ways to accomplish the same aim? Had I looked for my opponents’ threats? Did I consider a different order of operations?... when I made a bad move, Bruce asked me what my idea was and then helped me discover how I could have approached the decision-making process differently. Much of the time in our lessons was spent in silence, with us both thinking. Bruce did not want to feed me information, but to help my mind carve itself into maturity. Overtime, in his coaxing, humorous, and understandably firm manner, Bruce gave me a foundation of critical chess principles and a systematic understanding of analysis and calculation. 527

To foster learning and passion, Waitzkin’s parents and mentor initially shielded him from competition. While it is difficult to compare a seasoned Joint Force officer to a child chess player, the learning and passion in many fades as they transition from a tactical mastery and mindset to the more deliberate strategic mindset and strategic level responsibilities. They have worked long and hard to achieve their tactical mastery and feel that that hard-earned knowledge and extensively practiced skill should directly transfer to their strategic responsibilities. Unfortunately, the tactical knowledge and skills do not easily transfer and in some instances may impede a strategic approach to higher level problem sets.

Additionally, this transition happens after many years of service, hard training, and education all while being buried under the weight of the always important day to day

responsibilities in an organization entrusted with the security and prosperity of the Nation. Also, this adjustment takes place with individuals recognized throughout the organization as highly successful. Argyris explains the pitfalls associated with this below. Many feel they are already prepared because of their extensive development to date. Regrettably, it is quite the opposite as strategic responsibilities and requirements are different. This then suggests the utility of and vital need for a second strategic level developmental period for Joint Force officers that provides relief from the daily crush of tasks and responsibilities in the US national security enterprise. Despite their overall maturity and tactical mastery, the child like nature of Joint Force officers basic strategic KSAs must be fully recognized, and adequate time built into an officer’s career pathway to initially develop without the pressure of competition. They must be allowed repetitions in the learning and performance zones without real world ramifications. They must be given the time to develop so that ultimately, their strategic KSAs withstand, support, and thrive in strategic competition, potentially during the ultimate strategic competition of war. If Joint Force officers are going to effectively transition to the strategic level of war and lead our Joint Force with distinction, they must be afforded a more conscious and coherent strategic developmental period.

Another relevant technique for Joint Force officers and Joint educators emerges when analyzing Waitzkin’s development program as he progressed through the chess ranks. According to Waitzkin, “we plunged deep into the heart of the art, analyzing complex middlegame and end game positions, studying the classics, developing my technical understanding. We started doing arduous visualization work, playing blindfold chess games, and working through long variations
in our heads, without moving the pieces.” 528 Waitzkin and his mentor practiced chess the way Joint Doctrine recommends Joint Force Commander’s think through the design process when approaching the application of Joint Force. The doctrine highlights the need to visualize “relevant geopolitical, geo-economic, and cultural factors in the region; an evaluation of major strategic and operational challenges facing the CCMD [Combatant Command]; an analysis of known or anticipated opportunities the CCMD can leverage; and an assessment of risks inherent in the OE [Operational Environment].” 529 This visualization is imperative as Commanders attempt to anticipate future requirements. Visualization and visualization techniques must be taught and emphasized during a SMJFOs education and practiced during SMJFO training and apprenticeship. The ability to visualize, however, does not emerge unless the Joint Officer has the requisite foundational strategic knowledge, which requires significant time and effort to build, and experience to create mental images of the complex and in many cases unique situations they will encounter in actual operations. Visualization does become “capability” unless it is first taught and then deliberately practiced.

Waitzkin again reveals a technique for developing this visualization skill and the knowledge necessary to underpin it.

Layer by layer we built up my knowledge and my understanding of how to transform axioms into fuel for creative insight. Then we turned to rook endings, bishop endings, knight endings, spending hundreds of hours… exploring the operating principles behind positions that I might never see again. This method of study gave me a feeling for the beautiful subtleties of each chess piece, because in relatively clear-cut positions I can focus on what was essential. I was also gradually internalizing a marvelous methodology


of learning—the play between knowledge, intuition, and creativity. From both educational and technical perspectives, I learned from the foundation up.\textsuperscript{530}

Layer by layer, Waitzkin developed the knowledge, skill, and ability to compete with his opponents on many different levels. The Joint Force builds tactical mastery in a similar and very effective way through multiple tactical assignments, education, training, and considerable time. Thousands of hours of deliberate practice over many years. For the Joint Force, the Waitzkin and tactical development examples underscore the importance of many hours of deliberate practice, the need to internalize tactical principles, and the ability to master knowledge and skills over an extended period. As an officer transitions from the tactical to the strategic level, the organization believes, despite contradictory evidence, that the time and knowledge spent to develop tactical mastery easily translates to the strategic level. Unfortunately, it does not. Amazingly, the strategic development of Joint Force officers, despite its extreme importance for our Joint Force and Nation, does not receive the same attention, coherent approach, and time investment to KSA creation as the tactical. Regrettably, strategic performance and outcomes reflect this disparity. Strategic leaders also require numerous hours of deliberate practice, the need to internalize the principles of war and joint operations, the need to appreciate and account for domestic considerations and the ability to explore the nuances and subtleties present in the five warfighting domains and across the four levels of war as well as so much more. Astonishingly, when was the last time, within the current career path, a potential flag or general officer consciously spent hundreds of hours in deliberate strategic minded practice with the primary

objective of learning and away from the no-fail performance zone of real-world responsibilities? The answer we will discover below is rarely if ever once a certain rank is attained.

Another key characteristic of Waitzkin’s approach was the imperative to focus – focused study and reflection, focused practice, focused preparation, and focused execution. Waitzkin describes his growth in this area as follows, “As I struggled for a more precise grasp of my own learning process, I was forced to retrace my steps and remember what had been internalized and forgotten. In both my chess and martial arts lives, there is a method of study that has been critical to my growth. I sometimes refer to it as the study of numbers to leave numbers, or form to leave form.” 531 SMJFOs must strive to achieve an even greater level of precision, than that described by Waitzkin, in developing their own KSAs over time. They must develop a broad and deep knowledge foundation and practiced skills to apply that knowledge. These KSAs must function under a wide range of conditions from routine to extreme and they must become integral to their intellect and cease to be thought of consciously. SMJFOs must create knowledge as capability as described by Clausewitz.

Another area that informs the art and science of learning resides in the best practices of adult learning. The study examines some of the best practices outlining adult learning methodologies and seeks to leverage insights from those methodologies to inform the “Lucky 13” approach to strategic minded education outlined below.

Adult Learning Methodologies

As we seek to develop a model for strategic minded education for the Joint Force, you must ensure that you first understand basic learning concepts and adult learning methodologies to educate strategic minded students. The goal of the “Lucky 13” approach is to provide absolutely the best adult education within the Joint Force. The target audience in the Joint Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) are Joint Force officers with on average between ten to twenty-five years of active service across multiple services with varied core competencies. The “Lucky 13” approach, developed within JCWS, evolved within one the school’s senior seminars. These seminars were distinctive in that they were filled primarily with post command 0-5’s and 0-6 Joint Force officers versus junior 0-4’s and 05’s. While all JCWS students deserve the optimal adult learning experience to transition from a tactical to a strategic mindset, the senior seminar students were more proximate to serving in those positions and absolutely must be educated forward to develop KSAs for the future and not back to develop KSAs for the past, present or near term. Education versus training as described by Watson in Chapter IV.

Professional military education designers must precisely apply specific adult methodologies,

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532 For those unfamiliar with these designations 0-4’s are Lieutenant Commanders in the Navy and Coast Guard and Majors in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Space Force. 05’s are Commanders in the Navy and Coast Guard and Lieutenant Colonels in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Space Force. 06’s are Captains in the Navy and Coast Guard and Colonels in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Space Force.

533 Over my seventeen years as an instructor at JFSC, numerous students were promoted to Flag or General officer immediately following JCWS attendance. Additionally, over the many years many have risen to the highest level of the US National Security enterprise. These positions range from National Security Advisor, Combatant Commander, Vice Chief Naval Operations, Director of the Joint Staff to Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations Low Intensity Conflict. Just to name a few. Many are currently on track to the same of similar positions of increased responsibility.
within their educational approach to be truly cutting edge and effective for their target audience. This requires a precise appreciation for the individual’s respective needs balanced against the needs of the seminar as a whole.

Dr. Richard Paul and Dr. Linda Elder, who head the Foundation for Critical Thinking, provide a solid starting point for this examination. Elder and Paul produced a series of pamphlets that explain a variety of subjects dealing with critical and creative thinking. Additionally, they examine methods facilitating the teaching of those subjects. In *On How to Improve Student Learning: 30 Practical Ideas*, they lay out a series of recommendations focused on generating effective education. While this study recognizes utility within all 30 of their ideas, the study specifically highlights twenty-two ideas. These twenty-two are listed below:

1. Design instructions so that our typical day students take ownership of the content through guided activities involving reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
2. Teach students how to assess their reading.
3. Teach students how to assess their writing.
4. Teach students how to assess their speaking.
5. Teach students how to assess their listening.
6. Design tests with the improvement of student thinking in mind.
7. Make the coursework intensive for the students.
8. Use engaged lecture—when you do lecture.
9. Give students a thorough orientation to the course.
10. Develop a syllabus that highlights your expectations for the students.
11. Explain the key concept of the course explicitly during the first couple of class meetings.
12. Discuss class time as a time in which students will practice thinking within the content using the fundamental concepts and principles of the field. Make the point that the content of the course is a system of interconnected ideas.
13. Present yourself as a coach who designs activities that enable students to learn.
14. Encourage students to think about their thinking—in model how you want them to do this.
15. Encourage students to think of content as a form of thinking.
16. Relate content whenever possible to issues and problems and practical situations in the lives of the students.
17. Use tactics that encourage active learning.
18. Routinely ask questions that probe student understanding of the content.
19. Model skilled thinking for your students.
20. Cultivate important intellectual traits and instruction.
22. Systematically question students using a Socratic approach.  

As you think through each of the above items, it becomes apparent that adult learning has a distinctly different purpose for a distinctly different audience. While the study does not address each of these twenty-two items in detail, several deserve further analysis and explanation. Examining items number 2 through 5, it is evident that adult learning requires a deeper look into reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. How does a strategic leader effectively communicate his or her understanding is a crucial KSA? Eliot Cohen in his book Supreme Command highlights how the civilian leadership he studied on a highly skilled military commander who was usually in the shadows. Cohen notes the common features of these strategic military advisors, “they were highly intelligent, even bookish; highly literate, [and] able to communicate clearly in writing…”  

The Joint Educational system strives to facilitate the development of the strategic military leader as described by Cohen. At this stage of their careers and as they prepare for strategic level responsibilities, it is essential that the new wave of strategic leaders possess the tools to assess their own skills, especially their study, reflection, learning and communication skills, compare them to the basic standards and seek expert form. With their extended time in service, they have received hours of instruction and practice in basic communication skills but now need to take

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stock of how effective they are for their current and future responsibilities. An effective strategic
minded education approach must provide time for students to reflect and assess themselves. With
this development in mind, Elder and Paul advocate in numbers 13-19 above, the essential nature
of an instructor who reinforces the student’s self-reflection by being a coach who provides
feedback to the individual, encourages the student to consciously think about thinking, asks
effective questions, and models “skilled thinking for your students.” 537 These are not nice to
have qualifications. These are mandatory qualifications that all instructors must possess. The
Joint Force must prioritize instructor positions and avoid the indictment highlighted by Masland
and Radway that the difference between instructor and student is negligible.

Unbelievably, as this study nears completion, the organizational culture just decided to
eliminate the practice of separating senior 0-5’s and 0-6s from their more junior newly promoted
0-4s and 0-5s. The Joint and Combined Warfighting School will now blend the senior students
together with the more junior officers to better meet administrative requirements. While this
method will work, it is sub-optimal and illustrates a departure from accepted adult learning
principles. Moreover, part of the reasoning for this change, resulted from a qualified instructor
manning shortfall. While this administrative decision mitigates the effects of an instructor
manning and quality shortfall it weakens the Joint Force overall and by extension the Nation by
providing its more senior leaders a sub-optimal learning experience at a critical career transition
point. This example clearly indicates that, at least in this one instance, the indictments from the
late 1950’s continue to haunt today’s Joint Force educators with potentially less than ideal results

guide for those who teach on how to improve student learning: 30 practical ideas. Dillon Beach,
Calif: Foundation for Critical Thinking.
for the students. Policies like this are not the way to achieve intellectual overmatch. Increased throughput, focused on quantity, but with potentially less quality instruction and educational experience increases future risk against the acute and pacing threat. The CJCS must mitigate decisions like this by fully manning instructor positions with some of the best officers the Joint Force has to offer. Officers with potential for promotion and increased responsibility not officers as described by Hughes in Chapter IV. If the Joint Force desires an adaptable and vibrant PME enterprise, it must heavily invest in the institutions that provide that education.

Other observations, insights, and recommendations emerge from a wide range of scholars and practitioners regarding adult learning. Widely recognized throughout the educational enterprise, in general, is that adults learn differently and have a different purpose for learning than children, teens, and young adults. Drago-Severson, an associate professor of education leadership and adult learning and leadership at Columbia University, is one who grasps the difference. She designs learning experiences for adults and fully recognizes that,

…professional learning as opportunities for adults to learn and grow is essential and that our understanding of how adults learn is an essential component of this pressing goal. Doing this work--shaping learning and growth-enhancing conditions in professional learning--will help us meet the adaptive challenges we encounter every day. This holds the promise of helping us to increase our personal and organizational capacities and resources… how can we best design learning environments that are supportive of growth. I define growth as increases in our cognitive, emotional, or affective, intrapersonal (the way the self relates to the self) and interpersonal (the way the self relates to others) capacities to better manage leading, teaching, learning, and living. 538

This concept of growth captures one of the primary reasons for professional military education. PME exists to sustain strength, overcome weaknesses, and catalyze growth in the Joint Officer Corps. At a certain period in an officer’s career pattern, that growth becomes the development

from a tactical minded master to a strategic minded master. Since we have determined that strategic mindedness requires different knowledge, skills, and abilities, education at this stage of a Joint Force officers’ career must be distinctive to inculcate the difference and generate changes in mindset and foresight to handle those changes. This change requires an officer to depart his or her well-developed comfort zone and enter the “zone of discomfort” as Schoomaker describes, “‘You're not learning unless you're operating in the zone of discomfort.’” 539 Schoomaker, a former Combatant Commander and Army Chief of Staff, further elaborates, “In the past, you were measured on how you complied with doctrine and used it to organize and accomplish your objectives. Today, we’re designing… scenarios that put people in a continual zone of discomfort...that’s where we want them. That’s how you stretch yourself.” 540 Again, leadership recognizes the need to be better and the requirement to upgrade PME, but the culture continues to dampen and in some cases block substantive change. Intellectual overmatch is hard earned, and the organizational culture must establish the conditions for its future leaders to enter the zone of discomfort but to learn in safety not to perform with fear of failure.

Drago-Severson recommends a Learning Designs standard to achieve the best adult education possible. 541 She advocates three strands within this design standard, “apply learning


theories, research and models; select learning designs; and promote active engagement.”  

These strands show great promise for generating better strategic minded Joint Force education and in some instances are being applied across the Joint Force to great effect. Each of these strands contributes significantly to adult professional development. As stated, several times in Chapter II and III, theories, concepts and doctrine are extremely important to understand, as practitioners think about, develop, and implement strategy. Joint Force leaders must appreciate the conceptual underpinnings surrounding the current environmental changes and continuities to understand the environmental dynamics, define specific problems in the environment, and develop appropriate solutions efficiently and effectively. Chris Argyis, the James Bryant Conant Professor at Harvard Business School, builds on Drago-Severson’s first strand - apply learning theories, research, and models. He counsels that a basic dilemma exists. While “success in the marketplace depends on learning... most people don't know how to learn.”  

Aware of and conversant in the concepts and theories of adult education generates a better environment to produce organizational change and learn. Arygis extends his thinking and advises,

But if learning is to persist, managers and employees must also look inward. They need to reflect critically on their own behavior, identify the ways they often inadvertently contribute to the organization's problems, and then change how they act. In particular, they must learn how the very way they go about defining and solving problems can be a source of problems in its own right.

Arygis identifies the impact of organizational culture in his statement.

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To critically reflect, a knowledge foundation of best adult learning practices must baseline that critical thought. What is best practice and how does the leader implement it in their own organization? Without knowledge of the basics and sophistications of adult learning, the individual and the organization remain stagnant because,

many professionals are almost always successful at what they do, they rarely experience failure. And because they have rarely failed, they have never learned how to learn from failure. So, whenever their single loop learning strategies go wrong, they become defensive, screen out criticism, and put the “blame” on anyone and everyone but themselves. In short, their ability to learn shuts down precisely at the moment they need it the most. The leaders can fight this behavior by having a deeper theoretical understanding of how learning and change take place.  

A lack of understanding regarding the theories of adult learning and change dynamics describes one of the key issues within the Joint Force. Successful leaders get promoted based on performance but as Mattis highlights the performance evaluated is at a tactical or operational level. Unfortunately, that performance alone does not guarantee strategic mindedness and effective leadership at the strategic level. If the organization fully embraces this paradox, they will create an institutional path to overcome the shortfall. A way to achieve this is to better understand the concepts underpinning adult learning and change for our senior leaders.

Drago-Severson’s second strand - select learning designs – has three fundamental ideas embedded in it. First, she highlights the need to tie adult education and development directly to student outcomes. The Chairman’s current military education policy positively addresses this


educational fundamental and promotes outcomes based military education (OBME). The guidance uses the American Association of School Administrators’ definition verbatim, 

**Outcome-Based Education** means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens. The keys to having an outcome-based system are: 1) Developing a clear set of learning outcomes around which all of the system's components can be focused. 2) Establishing the conditions and opportunities within the system that enable and encourage all students to achieve those essential outcomes. 547

Further guidance in the OPMEP, establishes six general Joint Learning Areas (JLA) to allow the PME institutions to develop specific JPME Program Learning Outcomes. The general Joint Learning Areas are:

- JLA 1 – Strategic Thinking and Communication
- JLA 2 – The Profession of Arms
- JLA 3 – The Continuum of Competition, Conflict, and War
- JLA 4 – The Security Environment
- JLA 5 – Strategy and Joint Planning
- JLA 6 – Globally Integrated Operations. 548

While this guidance has significant utility, its effectiveness is only realized through the development of viable Program Learning Outcomes throughout the JPME enterprise and more importantly focused and sustained execution, recognized and implemented by the organizational culture, to achieve the outcomes desired.

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Second, Drago-Severson promotes learning designs that allow adult learners to experience the concepts, theories, models, and processes they are learning about. This is problematic for most strategic level processes as it is too time consuming and too costly to replicate these processes for education and training requirements. Regardless, you can get passive repetitions by immersing adult learners using analogous examples, case studies, or studying the examples of the great Captains. These immersive techniques must place the individual learner into the processes, so they get a sense of the difficulty and the sophisticated actions involved to drive strategic action and to get a useful glance into strategy in action. One of the critical components of the “Lucky 13” approach is consistent high level immersive learning. The “Lucky 13” approach is effective at “unfreezing” and “changing” student thinking but to “re-freeze” the changes achieved through education requires a time intensive and mentored apprenticeship period of at least six to ten years depending on the specific individual.

Thinking through Drago-Severson’s third fundamental supporting her second learning strand, the Joint Force education enterprise must develop methods to ensure that the SMJFO clearly understands the doctrinal and other available processes for critical and creative thinking and can implement them in practice under a variety of conditions. This is a multi-step process in and of itself. First, a firm knowledge base must be established through focused education. Second, the Joint Force officer must turn that knowledge into capability, or skills, that can be applied across a wide spectrum of environments and situations including across the three levels of war and within each of the five warfighting domains. Third, the Joint Force officer must be

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allowed the time and performance latitude to deliberately practice these skills without fear of failure. Think back to Waitzkin’s practice sessions without competition discussed above. The “Lucky 13” approach can begin the transition to establish the required knowledge base and provide passive repetitions of the processes through its immersive educational methods, but real skill development and deliberate practice must occur in a dedicated training and apprenticeship environment.

“The third strand [of Drago-Severson’s] Learning Designs standard speaks to the importance of giving adults choice in their learning and to the power of working collaboratively with others.” 551 The “Lucky 13” approach actively applies this strand while teaching senior students in the Joint Combined Warfighting School. The approach remains true to the school mission and the basic curricular framework but ensures that student feedback is solicited throughout and that within the frame of the specified program learning outcomes (PLOs) students have choice in the day-to-day instruction through their active discourse. This is a refined way to instruct as the students, as adult learners, and experienced Joint warfighters, normally have a clear view of their future needs. While a basic framework is required, “The schools would profit from a less tense approach to officer education [and] the process of advanced education ought to be approached in a more relaxed manner. This means simply that one should not get too doctrinaire over particular curricular designs or methods of instruction.” 552


An examination of Chapter 1 *Twelve Principles for Effective Adult Learning* in Jane Vella’s book *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach the Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults* provides a solid conceptual foundation for informing the design of a sound adult education program. Vella, the founder of Dialogue Education and Global Learning Partners, Inc., establishes twelve principles to generate effective dialogue in the classroom. Those principles are:

- *Needs assessment*: participation of the learners in naming what is to be learned.
- *Safety* in the environment and the process. We create a context for learning. That context can be made safe.
- *Sound relationships* between teacher and learner and among learners
- *Sequence* of content and *reinforcement*.
- *Praxis*: action with reflection or learning by doing.
- *Respect for learners as decision makers*.
- *Ideas, feelings, and actions*: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of learning.
- *Immediacy* of the learning.
- *Clear roles and role development*.
- *Teamwork* and use of small groups.
- *Engagement* of the learners in what they are learning.
- *Accountability*: how do they know they know?  

The “Lucky 13” approach for developing strategic minded leaders accounts for all of Vella’s 12 principles and much more. The approach respects the best concepts of adult learning and recognizes the importance of not only understanding these concepts but ensuring they are employed and consistently applied from class to class with full awareness that each group of students despite many similarities will be completely different and the instruction must flex to account for the differences.

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Analyzing Vella’s principles reveals several themes. First, the teacher and students are both key to effectiveness in adult learning. The responsibility for learning is not one way in an adult learning environment. Both teacher and student must be intimately involved in establishing the context for learning. Do the learners really know what they need? If they are stuck in a tactical mindset, it may be difficult, even impossible, for the student to recognize the requirements for strategic mindedness. This possibility drives the requirement for the teacher to create the proper conditions for learning as described by Vella. Second, to meet this first theme, the school and the individual teacher must create the proper context for learning. The classroom must be a safe learning environment by fully involving the students in their own learning. Effective student involvement results when the teachers clearly establish the specific purpose of the course and its intended effect on the student. Moreover, the teacher must show genuine empathy for the student’s aspirations, goals, and future. Teachers must be “all in” and the students must clearly recognize the commitment and passion. Understanding the students deeply, learning with them, respecting the decisions they make for their own learning and creating conditions for them to be fully involved in all aspects of the learning program is imperative for an adult learning program to be truly effective. Finally, while it is crucial that each student learns the items he or she needs for their specific development, it is incumbent that the learning is generated through teamwork and collaboration. Warfighting is a collective endeavor and professional military education requires teamwork and collaboration to fully achieve the necessary standard for strategic success.

While there is an abundance of literature on adult learning and adult learning methodologies, the select research and analysis in this section provides several essential themes for application in the “Lucky 13” strategic minded education model. Those basic themes are
adult education is essential for continuous growth, adult education is different than basic primary and secondary education, the methodologies to teach adults must be different to be effective, the importance of feedback, mentoring as an expanded form of instruction as we saw in Chapter II with the Kissinger, Brzezinski and Scowcroft examples, and active adult engagement in the design and execution of their own adult education is vital. Elder and Paul’s 30 Practical Ideas for improving student learning, married with Drago-Severson’s Learning Design Strands, Vella’s Twelve Principles for Effective Adult Learning, and Chris Arygis’ How Smart People Learn all provide essential elements to the Joint Force for consideration and application from the analysis. The “Lucky 13” model, within the organizational culture and limitations that it is executed in, applies most of the recommendations and principles of adult learning designers, scholars, and practitioners. Based on its application of adult learning principles, the “Lucky 13” approach could serve as an emergent example of a better strategic minded learning design for Joint Force consideration and possible application. The approach also seeks to create a focused learning zone with safe and appropriate performance to generate even better learning as described below by Briceño.

Another area worthy of consideration regarding the art and science of learning is Eduardo Briceno’s concept of learning and performance zones.\(^{554}\) According to Briceño,

The learning zone is when our goal is to improve. Then we do activities designed for improvement, concentrating on what we haven’t mastered yet, which means we have to expect to make mistakes, knowing that we will learn from them. That is very different from what we do when we’re in our performance zone, which is when our goal is to do

something as best as we can, to execute. Then we concentrate on what we have already mastered, and we try to minimize mistakes. 555

This is an extremely important distinction to account for in a substantive concept for education as it consciously separates learning and performance to avoid the blurring of the two that occurs in many military educational facilities. The blurring of these zones leads to the negative conflation of education and training. To avoid this long-standing shortfall, the educational facilities must draw a hard line between the desired learning outcomes leading to performance outcomes. Education for education purposes alone is a luxury that professional military education cannot afford. As specified earlier, based on the significant impact of the professional military on the defense and promotion of national interests in securing the nation, all education must be translated into genuine security capability at some point in the officer’s career path.

The outcome may not be immediate with education and the study, reflection, and discourse conducted in the learning zone but once that knowledge foundation is constructed it can and should then be applied in the performance zone. Without the knowledge foundation and deliberate practice performance suffers or does not achieve the highest possible standard. The perspective promoted in this study is that full-fledge performance starts in an apprenticeship period and performance during this time develops, with limited real-world consequences, under the watchful eye of a mentor. As the officer progresses through education and apprenticeships, he or she are then re-inserted into the day-to-day pressures of real-world engagement and

operations but at a higher level of qualification and performance approaching strategic minded mastery.

The current Joint Officer must be provided opportunities in his or her career path to fully develop strategic mastery if the Joint Force wants to develop intellectual overmatch against the Nation’s strategic competitors. The next section examines the concept of mastery to develop insights for better educating and training Joint Force officers for the varied and complex demands of the future.

ACHIEVING MASTERY: APPRENTICESHIP AND DELIBERATE PRACTICE

While there is a wealth of literature available on the subject of mastery and peak performance, this study relies primarily on the work of Robert Greene and Anders Ericsson. Greene’s book *Mastery* lays out several key principles surrounding the concept of mastery that the Joint Force must apply in the development of SMJFOs and strategic thinking Flag and General officers. The path to strategic mastery comes with a considerable initial investment in an officer’s strategic education, training, and apprenticeship above and beyond the already massive investment to develop tactical mastery. This investment may or may not return immediate dividends but if executed well will generate a substantial return in the future security and prosperity of the United States. In discussing World War II, General George Marshall lamented that billions of dollars were spent because of the war but the Nation and the Force would not spend millions to prevent it. A similar case can be made today for investing millions for an

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updated professional military education and development program, including an extended career path, to gain and solidify the required knowledge from education turning it into genuine capability through a strategic training and apprenticeship program. How does the Joint Force begin to implement something like this? The US Army’s Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program (ASP3) is a program to benchmark from. ASP 3 is a multi-year program preparing officers for strategic planning positions and future senior leader responsibilities “through a combination of practical experience, professional military education and a doctoral degree from a university in a field of study related to strategy.” 557 The ASP3 pilot program began in August 2012 and continues today. According to the description of ASP3 on the Army’s website, the ASP 3 is important because,

ASP3 graduates have skills, education and experience that make them valuable as Army senior leaders and strategic planners. The combination of civilian and professional education is intended to prepare graduates to serve as strategic planners within the planning or policy staff at combatant, sub-unified, theater, multinational, and Army commands; Headquarters, Department of the Army; Joint Staff; Office of the Secretary of Defense; Department of State; intelligence community; or National Security Council. 558

The ASP3 program reflects a step towards answering the longstanding indictments on professional military education from multiple angles as it consciously seeks to develop strategic thinking senior leaders and strategic planners. While the program has merit and should be included in a more strategic minded Joint education approach more must be considered and implemented to fully set the conditions for longer term SMJFO growth and development. A basic analysis of the concept of mastery provides insight into the greater investment required for effective strategic minded performance. Extensive investments in time, money, education,

557 United States Army https://www.army.mil/standto/archive/2015/04/21/

558 United States Army https://www.army.mil/standto/archive/2015/04/21/
mentored apprenticeship, and vantage point opportunities are required to truly master strategic thinking in the stressful environments of today and the even more dynamic environments anticipated in the future.

Robert Greene’s description of mastery provides insight to guide the Joint Force and the development of a Strategic Mastery program,

We imagine that creativity and brilliance just appear out of nowhere, the fruit of natural talent, or perhaps of a good mood, or an alignment of the stars. It would be an immense help to clear up the mystery—to name this feeling of power, to examine its roots, to define the kind of intelligence that leads to it, and to understand how it can be manufactured and maintained. Let us call this sensation mastery—the feeling that we have a greater command of reality, other people, and ourselves. Although it might be something we experience for only a short while, for others—Masters of their field—it becomes their way of life, their way of seeing the world. (Such Masters include Leonardo da Vinci, Napoleon Bonaparte, Charles Darwin, Thomas Edison, and Martha Graham, among many others.) And at the root of this power is a simple process that leads to mastery—one that is accessible to all of us.  

Greene recognizes that mastery is not magic and that the recognized masters in the world, regardless of the field or discipline, were not born masters. He emphasizes that there is a process leading to mastery that is available to all and if understood and applied will lead to mastery.

Greene then provides an overview of the process, the path leading to mastery, by providing a descriptive narrative of the process explaining the stages of development. Greene describes three distinct phases in his process leading to mastery. His three phases within his mastery process are: Apprenticeship, Creative Active, and Mastery. Greene’s explanation provides the Joint Force much to consider as it strives to develop SMJFOs and strategic masters.

In the first phase, we stand on the outside of our field, learning as much as we can of the basic elements and rules. We have only a partial picture of the field and so our powers are limited. In the second phase, through much practice and immersion, we see into the inside of the machinery, how things connect with one another, and thus gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. With this comes a new power the ability to

experiment and creatively play with the elements involved. In the third phase, our degree of knowledge, experience, and focus is so deep that we can now see the whole picture with complete clarity. We have access to the heart of life--to human nature and natural phenomena. That is why the artwork of masters touches us to the core; The artist has captured something of the essence of reality. That is why the brilliant scientists can uncover a new law of physics, and the inventor or entrepreneur can hit upon something no one else has imagined.  

Greene breaks down the path to mastery and gives the PME institution much to think about and apply, not just in the classroom but what must occur outside the classroom once the strategic minded student establishes his or her strategic knowledge foundation. How does the Joint Force and Joint Force students then turn that knowledge into practical capability? Greene’s three phases are one way.

Greene begins by describing the ideal apprenticeship. He advises that,

after your formal education, you enter the most critical phase in your life--a second, practical education known as The Apprenticeship. Every time you change careers or acquire new skills, you reenter this phase of life. The dangers are many…In the process you will master the necessary skills, discipline your mind, and transform yourself into an independent thinker, prepared for the creative challenges on the way to mastery.  

Greene further describes the Apprenticeship Phase and divides it into three different streps. He labels the steps as follows: “Deep Observation (The Passive Mode), Skills Acquisition (The Practice Mode), and Experimentation (The Active Mode).  

Applied to the CJCS desire to create strategic masters, Greene’s three steps of apprenticeship reveals that although established Joint Force officers have mastered the tactical level much more observation, practice, and experimentation must take place to become a strategic master.

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Greene recognizes that “when you enter… a new environment, you move into a world with its own rules, procedures, and social dynamic… so your task upon entering this world is to observe and absorb its reality as deeply as possible.” 563 From a Joint Force perspective movement from the tactical to the strategic constitutes a new environment as described in Chapter II and III. This generates the need to closely observe the national security environment from a new perspective. How does the prospective strategic minded Joint Force officer accomplish this if buried in day-to-day taskers, meetings, and short fuse no fail suspense’s? The career pathway must allow for apprenticeship and Greene’s three steps. Critical in this first step and vital for a developing SMJFO is “first, knowing your environment inside and out will help you in navigating it and avoiding costly mistakes… second, the ability to observe any unfamiliar environment will become a critical lifelong skill you will develop the habit of stealing your ego and looking outward instead of inward.” While the Joint Force is too busy to learn it is most certainly too busy to observe in its current career structure.

Greene’s second step in apprenticeship calls for Skills Acquisition, the practice mode. 564 He counsels that this is the most fundamental aspect of apprenticeship and most time consuming. Every human activity, endeavor, or career path involves the mastering of skills. In some fields, it is direct and obvious, like operating a tool or machine or creating something physical. In others it is more of a mix of the physical and mental, such as the observing and collecting of specimens for Charles Darwin. And still others, the skills are more nebulous, such as handling people or researching and organizing information. As much as possible, you want to reduce these skills to something simple and essential-- the core of what you need to get good at, skills that can be practiced… If one added up the time that apprentices ended up working directly [on skills] it would amount to more than 10,000 hours. 565


Current Joint Force officer career pathways do not afford the 10,000-hour requirement espoused by Greene and others. Moreover, and more damaging, pockets of Joint Force leadership do not value strategic education and development and recommended against it as seen in Chapter IV. One high quality strategic thinking student, who earned a PhD through the ASP3 program, from JCWS 22-2 stated he was told he was “bucking the system” and was hurting his chances for 0-6 level command by going through the ASP3 program. Despite the recognized utility of the Petraeus model, he put his future at risk from a organizational culture perspective. Thankfully, his tactical performance was so respectable that he was able to overcome the baked in cultural biases. I would wager that he will be a much better strategic minded leader because of his ASP3 experience but regrettably will not achieve his full potential without some sort of apprenticeship program to master the nebulous strategic thinking skills desired by Joint Force leadership.

Greene then posits that an apprentice, as he or she gains practical skills and assurance in their performance, must “make the move to a more active mode of experimentation.” He believes that this manifests in taking on more responsibility and doing work “that exposes you to the criticism of peers and even the public. Point of this is to gauge your progress and whether there are still gaps in your knowledge. You are observing yourself in action and seeing how you respond to the judgments of others.” Greene concludes his description of the apprenticeship phase with superb advice for all but especially Joint Force officers.

… The human brain is asked to do and handle more than ever before. We are dealing with several fields of knowledge constantly intersecting with our own, and all of this chaos is exponentially increased by the information available through technology. What this means is that all of us must possess different forms of knowledge and an array of skills in different fields, and have minds that are capable of organizing large amounts of

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information. The future belongs to those who learn more skills and combine them in creative ways. And the process of learning skills, no matter how virtual, remains the same.  

Greene then goes on to describe the second level of the mastery process what he terms the Creative Active. After you have accumulated more skills and attained a new level of self-confidence in your knowledge and skill, Greene believes that your mind will want to become more active, seeking to use this knowledge in ways that are more suited to your inclinations. What will impede this natural creative dynamic from flourishing is not a lack of talent, but your attitude… You must experiment and look at problems from all possible angles. As your thinking grows more fluid your mind will become increasingly dimensional, seeing more and more aspects of reality. In the end, you will turn against the very rules you have internalized, shaping and reforming them to suit your spirit.

Aspirationally, this mirrors the type of officer and Joint Force that the Chairman seeks to build. Greene sees individuals who retain their childhood curiosity but supplement it with their years of experience, intellectual development, and skill acquisition. “This leads to high-level creativity. Although they have profound knowledge of a subject, their minds remain open to alternative ways of seeing and approaching problems. They are able to ask the kinds of simple questions that most people pass over, but they have the rigor and discipline to follow their investigations all the way to the end.”

To adapt in this rapidly changing, dynamic and dangerous environment, SMJFOs must have a deep understanding of a variety of subjects coupled with the skills and the wherewithal to apply them in context.

Lastly, Greene acknowledges that over time mastery gives a new sense of ordering reality. “Through such intense immersion over many years we come to internalize and gain and

intuitive feel for the complicated components of our field. When we fuse this intuitive feel with rational processes, we expand our minds to the outer limits of our potential and are able to see into the secret core of life itself.”

Greene then provides sage wisdom for all seeking mastery but especially, the Joint Force and the Joint Force PME enterprise chartered to generate this higher-level of learning.

The key, then, to attaining this higher level of intelligence is to make our years of study qualitatively rich. We don't simply absorb information -- we internalize it and make it our own by finding some way to put this knowledge to practical use. We look for connections between the various elements we are learning, hidden laws that we can perceive in the apprenticeship phase. If we experience any failures or setbacks, we do not quickly forget them because they offend our self-esteem. Instead, we reflect on them deeply, trying to figure out what went wrong and discern whether there are any patterns to our mistakes. As we progress, we start to question some of the assumptions and conventions we have learned along the way. Soon, we begin to experiment and become increasingly active.

CJCS guidance seeks this level of mastery within the Joint Force. To achieve it change must be enacted within the culture. Upfront investments must be made. We must invest heavily in one of the continuities of war -humans. The Joint Force must be patient. Extend educational timelines to build the proper knowledge foundation. Extend career pathways to allow for skill development. Promote the value of this intellectual development and reward those who consciously transition from a tactical mindset to strategic minded thinking. As Cooper described in a previous Chapter, “Clarity of thought is a contribution to peace.” To achieve that clarity is of great utility to the Joint Force and the Nation.

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Achieving Mastery – Basic Timelines

As designated by Greene and made popular by Malcolm Gladwell, in his book, *Blink*, mastery requires upwards of 10,000 hours of deliberate practice to achieve. Anders Ericsson, a human performance expert and author, is more precise when evaluating the 10,000 hour “rule”. He highlights that the rule, as stated, is not accurate in many ways but is in one very important way described by Gladwell. Ericsson notes that the number may vary from field to field and that in the studies he conducted, and references 10000 hours is only an average. Additionally, in some references, there was no distinction between deliberate practice and similar activities that could be labeled practice. Another issue that Ericsson specifies is that the 10000-hour rule implies that “almost anyone can become an expert in a given field by putting in ten thousand hours of practice.” 573 Ericsson emphasized that nothing in his study implies this. Ericsson states that “Gladwell did get one thing right, and is worth repeating because it is crucial: becoming accomplished in any field in which there is a well-established history of people working to become experts requires a tremendous amount of effort exerted over many years. It may not require exactly ten thousand hours, but it will require a lot.” 574 For the Joint Force to create SMJFOs and strategic mastery the number of hours may not be ten thousand, but it will certainly be a lot and many more than the current career pathways and development programs allow for. This must change. Joint Force leadership must recognize, account for, and facilitate the Force to become proficient and masters in this vital level of war.


Using the well-known 10000 hours, fully realizing it may be somewhat less or even more, gives the Joint Force an idea of the extra time required to create strategic mindedness. The strategic mastery time calculations below are based on Ericsson’s concept of deliberate practice and the number of hours required to master a skill or set of skills. Calculations are made by applying several different assumptions the below calculations give you an estimate of the additional time required to transition from tactical to strategic mastery.

The first assumption is that the individual officer starts from a zero baseline regarding strategic experience. With strategic experience already in an officer’s portfolio, you could assume some knowledge and skill depending on the individual and the number of deliberate repetitions, the number of passive repetitions through exposure, and the quality of the strategic exposure. Secondly, we assume the officer will only practice 46 weeks out of the year. This accounts for holidays and 4 weeks of leave. Obviously, someone could practice every week during the year, but the more probable schedule will most likely be something even less than the assumed 46 weeks. The third assumption accounts for how many days a week the officer will practice. The first set of calculations will be based on the officer practicing 5 days per week. The second set of calculations results when an officer practices 6 days a week. Moreover, the calculations also assume four hours of deliberate practice per day. This number accounts for the ideal number of practice hours described by Ericsson. Finally, after the basic calculations we will show a series of calculations assuming the officer can achieve a flow state during some of the practice sessions as hypothesized by Csikszentmihalyi, Ericsson, and Waitzkin.

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If we assume an officer practicing 5 days a week for 4 hours a day of deliberate practice that officer logs 20 hours per week of deliberate practice. 20 hours per week multiplied by 46 weeks equals 920 hours per year. 10000 hours divided by 920 hours per year equals approximately 10 years and 09 months to achieve strategic mastery.

If we assume the officer practices 6 days a week, we can cut down the time requirements for mastery by almost 18 months. 4 hours of deliberate practice for 6 days a week equals 24 hours per week of deliberate practice. 24 hours per week multiplied by 46 weeks equals 1104 hours per year. 10000 hours divided by 1104 hours per year equals approximately 9 years and 06 months to achieve operational and strategic mastery.

What if the officer can practice while in a flow state? In a flow state (no easy task to achieve but doable), theoretically the officer will be able to accomplish up to five times more than in a normal state. If we assume the officer can achieve flow at least two days a week and he is five times more efficient during those two days, the time to attain mastery decreases significantly. The calculations below demonstrate the possible timeline when a flow state is included: 4 hours of deliberate practice while in a normal state for 3 days a week equals 12 hours per week of deliberate practice. 4 hours of deliberate practice while in a flow state for 2 days per week equals 40 hours per week of deliberate practice. Adding the deliberate practice totals together equals 52 hours of deliberate practice per week. 52 hours per week multiplied by 46

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. 1991. *Flow: the psychology of optimal experience*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers. As described by Csikszentmihalyi an individual in a flow state can be up to five times more productive. Theoretically, something you typically require five hours to accomplish, you could achieve in one hour.
weeks equals 2444 hours per year. 10000 hours divided by 2444 hours per year equals approximately 4 years and 1 month to achieve mastery while in the flow state two days per week. Where does an officer find any of the time described above to achieve strategic mastery? This study recommends alternative career pathways to generate time for knowledge production, skill development and deliberate practice. These alternative career pathways seek to remove the busyness and to formally generate favorable and culturally acceptable and promoted conditions and extended time frames for study, reflection, and deliberate practice.

THE “LUCKY 13” APPROACH: A SUBSTANTIVE EDUCATIONAL CONCEPT FOR DELIVERING STRATEGIC MINDED EDUCATION

General Overview

While the study does not offer a full-scale curriculum or specific syllabus for strategic minded thinking, the “Lucky 13” model, does propose a generalized substantive educational concept, or in Joint Force doctrinal terms an approach, for consideration and benchmarking to build other strategic minded modules or full programs.

An approach as defined by Joint Doctrine is, “is a commander’s description of the broad actions the force can take to achieve an objective in support of the national objective or attain a military end state.” Applying the doctrinal definition for educational purposes, the educational approach develops from an understanding of the environment and the problem of PME stagnation combined with the necessity for intellectual overmatch within the Joint Force against

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its strategic competitors. According to Joint Doctrine there are three purposes for developing an operational approach:

(a) It provides the foundation for the commander’s planning guidance to the staff and other partners by providing the commander’s visualization of how the joint force’s operations will transform current conditions into the desired conditions…
(b) It provides the model for execution of the campaign or operation and development of assessments for that campaign or operation.
(c) It enables a better understanding of the OE [operational environment] and of the problem. 579

The Joint Doctrine provides a method to assist in the description of the approach. The doctrine recommends applying a “combination of a narrative describing objectives, decisive points, potential mission areas, LOEs [Lines of Effort], and LOOs [Lines of Operation], with a summary of limitations (constraints and restraints) and risk (what can be accepted and what cannot be accepted) will help describe the operational approach.” 580 The “Lucky 13” educational approach will label multiple lines of effort to describe its method of instruction. “An LOE links multiple tasks and missions using the logic of purpose—cause and effect—to focus efforts toward establishing operational-level objectives that can lead to strategic objectives.” 581 Translating this for the professional military education enterprise, the educational approach to develop strategic minded leaders must describe how the current educational guidance, as outlined in CJCSI 3100.01F: Officer Professional Military Education Policy and the Developing Today’s Joint Force Officers for Tomorrow’s Ways of War: The Joint Chiefs of Staff Vision and Guidance for


Professional Military Education & Talent Management, translate from mere words into accepted Joint Force practice and institutionalized organizational culture, provide a model of the professional military educational operation, and produce a better understanding of both the environment and the problem for all stakeholders of the educational enterprise.

Another way to describe the instructional approach is to use Elder and Paul’s description of developing a substantive educational concept for developing strategic minded Joint Force Officers. Elder and Paul characterize a substantive concept of education as,

…one that highlights the essential components of education, consequently one that has clear implications for how we should understand the “educated person” [for our use the SMJFO] and how we should design the educational process. Many popular concepts of education are non-substantive in that they are vague and fragmented, and therefore superficial and misleading. They do not highlight the common dimensions of the various disciplines. They do not illuminate essential intellectual standards. They do not define essential intellectual traits (the personal characteristics that, when acquired, direct the right use of the mind). Instead, they lead to instruction that mainly trains, indoctrinates, or socializes rather than educates the individual. They produce “counterfeits” of educated persons because they ignore essential abilities, standards, and traits in the instructional process.582

Elder and Paul’s analysis precisely addresses the major issue facing professional military education as outlined in the Chapter IV over the past seventy-five years. PME, especially at an officer’s transition stage from a tactical mindset to a strategic mindset, values instruction that trains, socializes, and focuses on immediate concerns rather than preparing an officer to think strategically and anticipate the future effectively by building a strategic knowledge base to be exploited later. An overreliance on intuition built through tactical repetitions predominates when considering strategic issues. This intuition, built on thousands of hours of tactical level

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repetitions, provides excellent short fuse insight into tactical problems however falls short when attempting to think through strategic problems or to be strategic minded. Kahneman distinguishes between these two different types of thinking labelling them fast and slow.

Elder and Paul extol the benefits of a substantive concept of education when developed for the Joint Force at a designated point in an officer’s career path generates the intellectual overmatch desired by the Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other senior Joint Force leaders. Elder and Paul note,

When students are taught using a substantive concept of education as the guide to the design of instruction, they learn to initiate, analyze, and evaluate their own thinking and the thinking of others (within all the content areas they study). Doing so, they come to act more reasonably and effectively in every part of life. They are able to do this because they have acquired intellectual tools and intellectual standards essential to sound reasoning and personal and professional judgment. Self-assessment becomes an integral part of their lives. They are able to master content and diverse disciplines. They become proficient readers, writers, speakers, and listeners. They use their learning to raise the quality of their lives and the lives of others. They become reasonable and fair-minded persons capable of empathizing with views with which they disagree and disagreeing with views uncritically accepted by those around them. They are able to use their reasoning skills to contribute to their own emotional life and transform their desires and motivations accordingly. They come to think, feel, and act effectively and with integrity.

Regardless, the method the Joint Force uses to define their educational framework, an approach or substantive concept, the Joint Force must ensure that they frame and define the specific purpose of each course within their educational enterprise. For the purposes of this study, we will

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use the term approach but seek to achieve what Elder and Paul promote as a substantive concept. The next several sections describe the “Lucky 13” approach in more detail.

The “Lucky 13” Approach: The Context

The Seminar “Lucky 13” approach evolved over the past seventeen years within the Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) of the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC), a component of the National Defense University (NDU). It emerged because of the study, reflection, experience and innovation of numerous instructors; the functional input of over 1,200 students; insight garnered from a host of experienced and knowledgeable guest speakers and senior mentors; a deep understanding of the relevant strategic guidance and direction; an analysis of the best practices of Adult Learning; study of creativity and design thinking; an ongoing identification, analysis, and an understanding of the international security environment and its impact on America, its Allies, the Joint Force, and the officers chartered to lead that force. The approach is not novel, but it is a fusion of all the items mentioned above, a deep interest in delivering better adult learning for the Joint Force, striving to achieve intellectual overmatch, and rapid prototyping between courses and at times within the course in residence to apply new ideas with merit as introduced by the students to meet their specific needs. The “Lucky 13” approach starts with a strong why – which is the imperative to support, defend, and promote the national interests of the United States. Moreover, the “Lucky 13” approach stays true to the strategic direction and guidance, reaching all the way back to General Eisenhower’s guidance and the current Joint Force PME guidance, consistently educating within the specified Joint Learning areas, Program Learning Outcomes, and setting the conditions for strategic mindedness and intellectual overmatch. The approach seeks to understand every new group of
students and their developmental needs over the ten-week course of instruction and educate at the speed of relevance all while establishing their strategic knowledge foundation and catalyzing the growth of their strategic-minded thinking focusing on guiding the student’s transition from a tactical mindset to a strategic mindset.

While the changes of the rapidly evolving and dynamic international security environment must certainly be addressed and accounted for, strategic minded students must also be exposed to and understand the time-tested principles of war and principles of Joint Operations as well as other doctrinal frameworks like the four instruments of national power, the Diplomatic, the Informational, the Military, and the Economic as captured in the acronym – DIME. They must also understand the doctrinal Design Methodology, the Joint Planning Process, the elements of Operational Design and seven Joint Functions, as described in Joint Publication 5.0, to properly design and plan Joint Operations and Campaigns in support of US national objectives. The responsibilities of our Joint Force Officers and their KSAs require expansion to meet the challenges and opportunities presented in the current international environment. The chapters on strategy, changes and continuities, organizational culture and the recurring PME indictments of the past seventy-five years describe this pressing requirement in detail. The “Lucky 13” model captures this requirement seeking to generate intellectual overmatch against our strategic competitors. Risks must be accepted and taken in this extremely fluid environment. The Joint Force can ill afford a stagnate educational enterprise in this rapidly changing and dynamic environment.

Elements of the “Lucky 13” approach follow the strategic guidance and direction from Eisenhower and the current CJCS. Additionally, it consciously applies much of the guidance described above regarding Adult Learning best practices and principles. For instance, the basic
“Lucky13” approach establishes several aspirational goals immediately on the first day of the course for the students. First the approach creates the philosophy and educational mindset encompassing the true spirit of adult learning highlighting that the course material is directly linked to the students’ future responsibilities. The guidance to “Lucky 13” students describes the true test of their learning, is not in the classroom itself, but when the student walks across the stage and rejoins the Force, the Fleet, the Wing, the Combatant Command, or whatever real-world endeavor they are assigned to following attendance. Their deep understanding followed by their effective and efficient performance is the outcome, not how they perform in the classroom but what they learn to better prepare them for their weighty responsibilities in the Joint Force. There should be nothing from the instruction that remains in the classroom after they depart. Every learning opportunity over the ten weeks must be useful. If it is not useful for application at some point in their career duties, it is not useful for classroom presentation and student effort. Before detailing the specifics of the “Lucky 13” approach it is practical to describe the traits of strategic minded instructors. Those entrusted with the teaching of strategic mindedness must, at a minimum, possess the traits listed in the below section.

**Strategic-Minded Instructor Traits**

“It is not what the teacher does for the pupil it is what the pupil does for him or herself.”

This quote attributed to Socrates is a guiding light for the “Lucky 13” approach and should be a principle for all adult learning. While the course material and the instructors are extremely important, many would say the center of gravity of the instruction, the pupil is the primary driver of his or her own development and must know their own strengths and weaknesses better than anyone else. Capitalizing on this, the “Lucky 13” instructor assists the student by setting
favorable conditions for learning through a deep understanding of the topics and by discerning the developmental needs of each student and by fully investing in the student’s development. Each new class must be taught differently because it is comprised of similar but different students. The experiences, core competencies, basic intellect, foundational knowledge, and other nuanced factors vary greatly between the students. To provide the best instruction possible the instructors must adapt with each new class. This is a tougher assignment for JCWS instructors because of the recurrent nature of the course – four times a year for ten weeks while other higher-level courses usually run about ten to eleven months and the instructors have more time to get to know their students. Regardless, listed below are twelve tasks that any instructor should complete to provide clear instruction, catalyze student learning, and help establish the foundation for strategic minded thinking and lifelong learning. These tasks are an essential component of delivering the “Lucky 13” approach. Each has its roots in the best practices of Adult Learning as described above. They are listed below:

1. **YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY CREATE A SEMINAR CLIMATE CONducive TO LEARNING AND FOSTER INDIVIDUAL LEARNING** - Your seminar-learning environment must be a safe and welcoming environment focused on developing students for better thinking and action in the real world. The environment must reflect the best of adult learning methodologies and always give the students a sense of ownership married with a sense of psychological safety to experiment and create leading to change. Kurt Lewin’s change theory helps underpin this concept. He recognizes that change is difficult and most resist change unless they have a safe environment to work in. Lewin’s argument, is that unless sufficient psychological safety is created, the disconfirming information will be denied or in other ways defended against, no survival anxiety
will be felt, and, consequently, no change will take place. The key to effective change management, then, becomes the ability to balance the amount of threat produced by disconfirming data with enough psychological safety to allow the change target to accept the information, feel the survival anxiety, and become motivated to change.  

The protected academic cloister is ideal for this but must be promoted and supported by the educational approach and instructors. A framework must be established early to provide that support but also empower students to flex to meet their individual goals and learning requirements within the group framework. You must set the conditions for this program of focused learning on Day 1 regardless of the duration of your course, semester, or school. It is imperative as the instructor for adult learners that you bridge the academic and doctrinal concepts with actual real-world application. To do this I find it better to learn with my students, approach them as peers and facilitate their learning rather than taking an all-knowing instructor (which doesn’t exist especially in our profession) approach. You cannot give students knowledge or order them to see the insights, but you must provide them a favorable learning environment and a venue for them to earn their own understanding. This includes creating a demanding yet safe environment for change. The ten-week Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) provides the opportune time to begin the difficult and time intensive transition from a tactical mindset to a strategic mindset.

2. **YOU MUST CLEARLY UNDERSTAND THE MATERIAL** – At a minimum, you must develop and then continually ensure that you have a clear understanding of the

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basics and the doctrinal or conceptual logic that underpins the course material. Without a basic understanding you have little to no chance of presenting the material in a clear, concise, and logical manner. Once you master the basics, supplement your knowledge from multiple perspectives – using history, analogous examples from daily life, cross-disciplinary perspectives, cross-generational perspectives etc. For professional military education a method is to go analog and develop a set of 5x8 reference cards for each lesson you are responsible for and lay out the specific topic in a simplified manner that is easy to describe assuming no knowledge by the receiving students. The cards would capture what you as the instructor deem essential information. No easy task this requires hours of study, analysis, synthesis, and preparation so that you remove the noise that surrounds all topics and generate the key takeaways for your students. As you gain experience and also learn from your students you can refine and update what you and they see as essential elements of the topic. This preparation also included the strategic logic behind the topic that generated a logically sequence for presentation and an anticipation of student questions. My initial set of cards also contained key doctrinal information on the specific topic. If I blanked on the basics or needed information to defend a position or answer an inquiry, I had the doctrinal information right at my fingertips. While Joint Force doctrine is not prescriptive, it always provides a common starting point to describe and discuss key topics. Dust those 5x8 cards off as a refresher after each presentation, include new information or views garnered from the considerable experience and knowledge of your students and create new sets as the environment forces subject material changes. Use the cards until you have enough repetitions that they are not required to support instruction. While you must work hard to earn your
understanding, you must not “assume importance merely because of a knowledge of the subject.” 587

3. **YOU MUST UNDERSTAND YOUR STUDENTS** – Are your students already strategically savvy, experienced, and knowledgeable in Joint operations? Are they experienced in Service operations with considerable skill in their service core competencies but with limited understanding of Joint principles, and the capabilities of the other services and domains? Do you have students who are strategic planners by core competency? Or do you have students who have no clue when discuss the basics of Joint Operations, design, and strategy. Do they have a solid understanding of strategy, national power, military power, the international and domestic environment, and strategic thinking methods? Or do they lack the KSAs for strategic minded thinking and the possible assumption of duties with ever-increasing responsibility. Are your student’s experienced but conceptually ignorant? Or are they conceptually savvy but have no practical experience or have a deep knowledge of the books but limited or no practical experience. Are they tactical masters but strategically illiterate? Most likely you will experience a mix of all the above. If you cater to the low end of knowledge and experience, you will lose the top end and vice versa. You must understand the student’s background and be empathetic to their current level of joint knowledge, experience, and strategic-minded foundation. From this point you can build your approach to account for all proficiency levels and focus your delivery. Having taught over sixty seminars I approach each one in a similar but distinctly different way based on the seminar experience and personality.

You must build that assessment quickly regardless of the duration of the course to be optimally effective.

4. **ESTABLISH THE LESSON FLOW** on a piece of paper. Gather the essential information you want to present and assemble it in checklist form (if needed), and then arrange in a logical sequence to ensure you cover the essential points. Rehearse.

Rehearse, Rehearse – in your mind’s eye, in front of your spouse, children, fellow instructors. Get your timing down. Be realistic. Do not try to cover multiple complex topics in one short lesson. Ensure you can meet the allotted time in your rehearsals. If the essential cannot be covered in the time allotted, extend the lesson time on the schedule or prioritize and make your lesson flow into the scheduled time. Respect the scheduled time. If you can’t get it all in learn and adjust for the next time you teach that lesson. Look to extend the time or cut back on the material. We highly recommend that you do not run over the time allotted. Part of the Lucky 13 approach accepts the reality that some lesson material will not be covered in the allocated lesson time, so the approach does not constrain by traditional time blocks as much of the complex material must be addressed multiple times, from multiple perspectives, over an extended time period to be truly understood. Simply put some lessons require multiple sessions to effectively hit the mark. Many of those lessons lend themselves to basic themes which can help frame the ten weeks and generate coherent learning. We work hard to hammer home essential points (to do that you must understand what is essential).

5. **VISUALIZE THE LESSON FLOW IN YOUR MIND’S EYE** – What are the key points that you want to deliver regardless of student engagement and questions? Think through how you are going to open the lesson and how you will conclude it. What is your
introductory set? Tell stories to inspire and to demonstrate concepts in a simple way – you should have a collection of go to stories that you can use for multiple purposes (see #8 below). Make them easy to reference. Tell a story with your lesson and build and display your own style from day 1.

6. **ANTICIPATE STUDENT QUESTIONS** – What questions do you anticipate from your students? Prepare the answers to those anticipated questions before class. Anticipate branch topics or discussions that could emerge from the questions. Be deliberate before the class in what discussions you will permit, table for another time, or just plain dismiss because they are outside the scope and objectives of JCWS. Don’t get baited into a rabbit hole or a blind canyon unless you consciously want to take the side excursion to set up a teaching point or another future lesson. You must visualize how it ultimately meets Course Learning Objectives (CLO). Again, be fully conscious of your time and course requirements and of the student’s time. Be prepared to react to where the student questions and discussion take your well thought out flow – React to contact in a pre-planned manner if possible. Moreover, while it is a student’s responsibility to ask good questions. Don’t assume a lack of questions connotes understanding. Have a good questioning strategy worked out before your lesson to assess your instructional effectiveness by asking the students questions where their answers demonstrate their understanding or lack thereof. Use Dr. Linda Elder’s and Dr. Richard Paul’s Miniature Guides to *The Art of Asking Essential Questions* and *The Art of Socratic Questioning*, [https://www.criticalthinking.org](https://www.criticalthinking.org)

7. **DESIGN YOUR LESSON THROUGH FOCUSED BOARD WORK** – to help illustrate and describe the essence of the lesson. During your preparation think through
the essential again and how you will describe it to your students. What will you put on the board to facilitate student learning? The board can visually describe the agenda for the lesson with some instructional “meat” attached as well. The best instructors consciously think through their board work prior to the instructional period but then flex based upon student input and questions. A former teaching colleague was a master at using 14x16 sheets of paper to design his lesson flow and board work. He then translated his preparatory work to the whiteboard in the front of the classroom to guide his instruction.

8. **DEVELOP “GO TO” RELEVANT STORIES** – that you will tell during instruction to help describe the main points in the lesson. Although a primary means to brief and instruct in the military, power point can limit instruction. Do not rely on power point. Rely, however, on simplified analogous situations and examples to help explain the more difficult concepts to the students. For our purposes in “Lucky 13”, the instructor team has developed numerous instructional stories around analogous examples. Two of the more useful and descriptive are Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech combined with Simon Sinek’s Start with Why Ted talk and President John F. Kennedy’s Rice University Speech detailing his direction and guidance for the United States’ race to space competition with the Soviet Union. These real-world examples provide the student’s simplified and interesting stories that illustrate key and, in some instances, complex doctrinal concepts. Instructors must research and find these relevant and simplified, yet explanatory touchstones to help students see the essential issues within the material. For warfighting and strategic minded thinking purposes, examples like the Yorktown Campaign and Crusade in Europe narratives or any other easily understandable
historical vignette are great for helping students see the course material at work. These historical examples although set in a different age with different technologies can be useful for Joint Force officers in the current age. Despite two new warfighting domains and over 200 years of technological change the lessons from Yorktown remain relevant and insightful for those chartered to think about the INDO-PACIFIC or Central Command regions. Moreover, analogous examples from sports and a wide variety of everyday examples garnered from everyday life can also assist student understanding of complex concepts or theories.

9. **USE YOUR OWN SEA AND WAR STORIES (YOUR EXPERIENCE)** – to supplement your instructional approach. As the Professional military enterprise seeks to develop strategic mindedness, the instructor cannot get stuck at the tactical level. During the transition from a tactical mindset to Always keep the operational and strategic levels of war at the forefront. Do not linger at the tactical level but don’t hesitate to use a tactical example to describe a difficult or complex concept or idea. Learn to rely on more than your own experiences and develop a series of operational vignettes that help spur your own and your students understanding.

10. **ESTABLISH THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT** – What is the context surrounding the instruction? Students, as adult learners, want real world context whenever possible. To properly establish the context of the ever evolving and dynamic international environment, the course work must invest in strategic minded thinking and ensure a proper conceptual, theoretical, and doctrinal foundation is established. This foundation relies on the theoretical and conceptual aspects of international relations, foreign policy, the principles of war, and the dimensions of strategy as described in
Chapter II. Without a proper foundation, the student will struggle to see the basic form of strategic situations and the decisions associated with those situations as well as the interface between the strategic and operational levels of war. By establishing the real-world context, the curriculum comes alive helping students connect the dots between concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities.

11. **IMMERSE YOUR STUDENTS IN THE SUBJECT** Use multiple methods to deliver the material. Lecture, homework, individual drills, small group work, seminar discourse, supplemental readings, videos and more. Choose your material carefully especially your videos to provide simplified analogous context – Ted Talks, short video clips, funny video clips, short film clips and even full-scale movies or documentaries for homework or in class viewing to help you lay out essential concepts without volumes of reading. Understand that films and videos take short cuts and that you may need to fill in the texture and higher level of detail or contextual background (as discussed in #10 above) or student reading helps check film accuracy and fill in the gaps. Regardless, immersing students in a variety of mediums keeps the work interesting and appeals to all who learn in different ways.

12. **KEEP YOUR SENSES ALERT** – Use all your senses to assess student understanding and attitude. Easier in Face-to-Face sessions but essential in on-line teaching as well. Take extensive and focused notes during teaching sessions, adjust based on your interactions during teaching, and then review them before teaching the same lesson during subsequent classes. This helps you anticipate student questions and areas of recurring student difficulty. This provides a good idea of what to expect in subsequent classes and refine the material or methods to meet student demand. This is useful in the
professional military enterprise where year after year incoming students are different but
similar in many respects. Although each seminar has its own collective personality and
knowledge base, which must be accounted for to be effective, a review of the similarities
between seminars is extremely helpful in guiding your instruction. Review what the
students say and believe. In many instances they are stuck in a tactical mindset and look
at operational and strategic issues through a tactical lens. Highlight the difference and the
gap but don’t give them the answer. Your instruction is more effective if you help them
discover the answer over the established instructional period. The “Lucky 13” approach
takes place in the ten-week Joint and Combined Warfighting School in Norfolk, Virginia.

**Assumptions Underpinning the “Lucky 13” Approach**

Before developing the “Lucky 13” approach for teaching senior students in the Joint and
Combined Warfighting School, the instructor team developed three basic assumptions regarding
the students. The three assumptions that guide the “Lucky 13” approach follow:

1. Each student is a top performer within his or her basic service core competencies.
   (Overwhelming evidence exists in their service records that validate that assumption.)
2. Each of our students will be selected for positions of ever-increasing responsibility within
   their parent Service and/or the Joint Force. (They will be the Service and Joint Force
   senior leaders of the future! The instructional approach must fuel their preparations for
   those responsibilities. The course material, methods of instruction, and seminar discourse
during JCWS should refine or ignite their transition from tactical mastery to a path
toward strategic mastery. Based on the promotion percentages of the past “Lucky 13”
   student population, the evidence strongly supports this current assumption)
3. Despite mastering core service competencies, over the span of their career to date, the Joint Force students require new skills and ways of thinking to become masters at the operational and strategic level. (On the eve of becoming the Chief of Staff of the US Army prior to WWII the following quote is attributed to General George Marshall, “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 battlefield. In this position I am a political soldier…and have to learn the arts of persuasion and guile. I must become an expert in a whole new set of skills.”)

Assumptions don’t always turn into fact, but we have found that these three assumptions focus the “Lucky 13” teaching team and guide the prioritization of the multitude of important concepts and subjects that could be taught in limited ten-week JCWS course. Even if our students don’t promote to Flag or General Officer, they certainly will serve in key senior advisory roles until they depart active service. In these advisor roles, most certainly at the strategic level, they will require a solid strategic knowledge base and the skills to be strategic minded and therefore need formal education and training to spur their development. Regardless, the future security and prosperity of the United States depend on their strategic mindedness, decision-making, moral courage, sound reasoning, “clear eyed appraisals” and timely advice.

In addition to all presented above regarding context, design, instructor traits, and assumptions to establish a baseline for the approach it is useful to present an example version of initial “Lucky 13” guidance to incoming students. In line with the Elder and Paul’s recommendations, described above, this “Lucky 13” educational approach guidance serves to

fully orient students to the course, highlight expectations, and explain the course explicitly. 589 The students receive the written guidance one week prior to their attendance. The example guidance listed in the section below highlights the basics of the “Lucky 13” educational approach and captures best adult learning practices.

The Basic “Lucky 13” Design

The “Lucky 13” approach to joint professional military education developed and has been under constant refinement over the last seventeen years. Returning from a yearlong assignment as the Chief of Staff for the three-star headquarters, Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan, tasked to prosecute the war in Afghanistan, I was assigned to the Joint Forces Staff College as an instructor in the ten week Joint and Combined Warfighting School. After being immersed in a combat environment, in a headquarters that bridged the strategic to the tactical I returned stateside and was chartered to teach students like me about Joint and Combined Warfighting. Fully knowing that this would be my terminal assignment in the military, I was excited to reflect on my Afghanistan experiences through the lens of Joint Doctrine and through the experiences and perspectives of other 05 and 06 officers that had served in Afghanistan and/or Iraq. This provided a unique opportunity to contrast how the National Security enterprise operated at multiple levels during my one-year experience, how others experienced the national security system, and examine how Joint doctrine specified how it should work. The opportunity to reflect and discourse with other Joint professionals in a collegial environment seemed unprecedented for

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me. I quickly concluded that the JCWS curriculum as written and presented fell short of the specified outcomes. My JCWS students, from across each one of the services, post 0-5 commanders, some post 0-6 commanders, many just returning from combat and many attending after graduation from a Senior Service College or Fellowship program, validated my observations with insights from their own experiences, knowledge, study, and reflection. Many of these students had practical experience or an intense year of military or civilian education before arriving at JCWS. They had a variety of views on what should be taught, how it should be taught, and what they required as strategic minded officers and prospective Flag and General officers, to think and perform better as they returned to their Services or the Joint Force. This experience catalyzed my desire to be the best possible instructor I could be and develop JCWS into the best professional military education experience possible. This led to an insatiable desire to learn as much as I could on my own, from my students, from my fellow instructors, and from the multitude of senior mentors that cycled through the Joint Forces Staff College, and to apply that knowledge to each ten-week course of instruction.

The design of the “Lucky 13” strategic minded approach is built on several prioritized elements. Staying consistent with Joint Force Doctrine, these elements are labeled as Lines of Effort (LOEs). While many more elements contribute to the overall design of this strategic minded instructional model, the elements of the basic design are prioritized from the analysis on strategy, continuity and change, organizational culture, and the best from adult learning methodologies. To simplify the design description, the LOEs will be identified in isolation but there must be a seamless integration of the elements in execution. The “Lucky 13” basic Lines of Effort parallel the five categories described in Chapter III categorizing the strategic KSA trends: **Thinking, Understanding, Creating, Adapting, Describing** with **Communicating** replacing
Describing and the addition of a sixth LOE entitled **Seeing the Big Picture**. The LOEs also integrate the Joint Learning areas from the CJCS instruction described above. The six “Lucky 13” LOEs are:

1. **LOE 1 - THINKING** – This line of effort prioritizes students thinking about thinking and specifically think about how they think. This line focuses on making the student conscious of their own thinking. The line of effort, as the others, extends across the entire ten-week course. The instruction, discourse, small group work and seminar collaboration prioritizes giving the student a clear window into their own thinking and the thinking of the organization. Elder and Paul establish fundamentals for thinking and note, “**all thinking is not of the same quality.**” 590

The goal for LOE 1 is to ensure that students have a framework for evaluating their own thinking, to fully grasp the difference between a tactical mindset and a strategic mindset, and to apply fast and slow thinking, in the correct context, as espoused by Kahneman. The LOE highlights thinking as a concept to ensure the student clearly recognizes the differences between the subterranean, tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war. The LOE exposes the student to the KSAs of strategy as laid out in Chapter II and clearly focuses on the need to align thinking and understanding. The LOE emphasizes the need to think deeply about complex issues, to generate understanding from multiple perspectives expanding their view beyond their tactical experience. Students must think clearly about how and why wars start and how wars end. The value of design thinking and how to implement that type of thinking early in the thinking about war, intervention, and the national interests of the United States. A key collaborator in the design of the “Lucky 13” methodology, a former instructor, captured the essence of this thinking LOE

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into what he coined as the Seven Cs of thinking: Critical, Creative, Conceptual, Contextual, Cultural, Collaborative, and Communicative. The “Lucky 13” emphasized each throughout the course ensuring that the students were constantly conscious of and evaluating their own thinking throughout the ten weeks. Moreover, in this LOE, the “Lucky 13” approach emphasizes the importance of asking questions to spur thinking. All instruction promotes and reinforces the student’s ability to ask thought-provoking questions. Additionally, and extremely valuable, the students are taught to think collaboratively. The seminar conducts all drills, projects and practical exercises collaboratively emphasizing and demonstrating the power of collaborative creativity.

2. **LOE 2 – UNDERSTANDING** – This LOE focuses on the Joint doctrinal design methodology of understanding the strategic direction and guidance of the United States and understanding the environment. The foundation for understanding strategic guidance and direction starts with a review of two primary founding documents of the Nation: The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. Re-reading and discussing these documents recalibrate the students and provides the students a solid foundation in the absence of specific direction and guidance. Regarding specific strategic direction and guidance, the LOE focuses on the current versions of the National Security Strategy, The National Defense Strategy, the National Military Strategy, the Unified Command Plan, the Global Campaign Plans, and the various Joint Doctrinal Publications with a focus on the Operations and Planning publications.

Moreover, this LOE prioritizes an understanding of the security environment, the domestic and the international, as well. As the security environment is vast and contains

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591 Dr. Dan McCauley, a former JCWS and “Lucky 13” instructor, captured these thinking competencies on a business card for distribution to the students. More importantly, the 7 C’s were emphasized in some form or fashion across the full ten weeks of the course.
innumerable variables a ten-week course or even a ten-month course cannot possibly cover all aspects of the domestic and international environments. The “Lucky 13” approach exposes the students to several key topics providing a knowledge foundation that the student must continue to solidify during his or her informal development or during other educational opportunities. Several of those key topics that are prioritized during the ten weeks and scrutinized to reveal their component parts are:

a. The Nation’s Founding Documents

b. The Concept of Power

c. The Basic Characteristics of Military Power and Capabilities of the Forces

d. National Interests

e. Globalization

f. Strategic Competition

g. Globally Integrated Operations

h. Joint Campaigns and Operations

i. Design, Planning, Preparation, Execution, and Assessment of Operations

j. Risk

k. Assumptions

l. Visualization

To assist in student understanding, the “Lucky 13” approach uses an immersive method of delivering the material. The seminar emphasizes the value of individual homework, paired discourse with classmates, small group drills, married with seminar group discourse. The immersion blends readings and homework, with short video clips, TED talks, and short films followed by seminar discourse and guided discussion. Analogous examples
including nonmilitary case studies, videos, podcasts, and narratives help simplify the more complex concepts to aid the students initial understanding. Overall, this LOE is extremely important as a SMJFO must earn an understanding on a wide array of concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities.

3. **LOE 3- CREATING** – This LOE advocates and emphasizes that students use all available resources but especially their thinking and understanding, as described above, to be primarily proactive, creating new pathways for national security and the conduct of Joint operations and campaigns. This requires teaching creative thinking to the students using a variety of resources and techniques. Moreover, the LOE provides opportunities for the students to experiment with their creativity. We create a zone of discomfort but a safe zone so that the student learns from their performance and are not penalized by a bad grade or hostile comments if they fall short of the objective while experimenting with a creative approach in the classroom.

Students truly respond to this type of learning environment. This LOE encourages activities that facilitate a learning environment where students can learn to outthink, out plan, out fight, and out innovate our strategic competitors and any other threats to the national security and prosperity. Students must be able to visualize potential futures calculating the probabilities of certain scenarios and the associated risks. To create, students must have a highly developed sense of the current and environment and a clear understanding of the political objectives. While creating new ways of operating in the competition continuum, the instructors and students must constantly balance the art and science involved.

4. **LOE 4 – ADAPTING** – This LOE pursues the need to be adaptable to changing conditions. The instruction makes this requirement clear by addressing the need for a deep understanding of the contemporary environment as described in LOE 2. If the SJFMO clearly
understands and appreciates the rapidly changing and dynamic nature of the environment, they easily recognize the need for the organization and themselves to be flexible and adaptable to changing conditions as counsel by Barno and Bensahel. A rigid Joint Force will be unable to respond to the many changes in the environment as described by national strategic direction and guidance. This LOE mainly influences the student’s thinking by highlighting the need to understand and create to properly handle the dynamics beyond globalization.

5. **LOE 5 – COMMUNICATING** – This LOE concentrates on reinforcing a student’s ability to describe their understanding of the environment orally and in writing. Moreover, they must be able to communicate their creative thinking regarding the future of the Joint Force and the new ways of American war. This LOE relies on storytelling techniques using briefings, storyboards, and descriptive narratives in conjunction with simple graphics that support the narrative. The approach provides multiple opportunities to the student to refine their communication skills throughout the ten weeks both formally and informally. Even though all should be good communicators by this stage of their career, many still require assistance and those that communicate well benefit from additional repetitions.

6. **LOE 6 – SEE THE BIG PICTURE** – This LOE baselines from Clausewitz.

   I propose to consider first the various elements of the subject, next its various parts or sections, and finally the whole in its internal structure. In other words, I shall proceed from the simple to the complex. But in war more than in any other subject we must begin by looking at the nature of the whole; For here more than elsewhere the part and the whole must always be thought of together. 592

   The ability to understand individual components of a situation is vital but even more important is the ability to see the bigger picture, the ability to consider the whole and think of all

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together. Unbelievably, in this contemporary environment many in the national security enterprise see the complex strategic problems through a tactical lens and posit that all will be taken care of if you just remove bin Laden or if you destroy the enemy or if you bomb the objective. All is interwoven in this day and age and to be truly effective, you must account for the whole as Clausewitz counsels. This becomes a critical LOE at the strategic level because many issues will be missed or glossed over if the strategic minded Joint Force officer does not account for the big picture or the “whole” according to Clausewitz. This LOE remains focused on the whole throughout even when analyzing the individual parts. Nye’s description of contextual intelligence comes to the forefront throughout the course and within this LOE.

**Example “Lucky 13” Welcome Letter and Educational Approach**

This sample welcome letter contains a basic description of the “Lucky 13” educational approach and provides a more simplified view into the approach as it describes the ten-week course in an elementary manner to students. The welcome letter below is like the actual welcome letter provided to incoming JCWS “Lucky 13” students about one week prior to the course start:

Welcome to the Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) Course 22-X, Seminar 11 nicknamed “Lucky 13”. My name is Instructor # (I1), and I will be your Seminar Team Leader (STL) for this course along with two outstanding active-duty instructors: Instructor # 2 (I2) and Instructor # 3 (I3). I2 and I3 are experienced instructors and top-notch joint professionals who know how to lead the way in the classroom. We have been teaching together for over a year and operate extremely well as a team. As an instructor team we plan to deliver an outstanding course and look forward to learning with you all over the next ten weeks despite the waning challenges generated by the coronavirus. Bottom-line Up Front (BLUF) – This information in this letter
should assist you in maximizing your ten-week educational opportunity and serve as a ready reference for the next ten weeks. Please look through this letter several times before Monday and the end of the first week and if you have questions or comments, please pass those to us or address them with us during our first synch session and/or throughout the first week.

I2 has already sent you an email with administrative instructions and insight into the course. Please follow those instructions and don’t hesitate to reach out if you have questions or concerns. This applies throughout the course as well as we are extremely user friendly. As your Seminar Team Leader, I wanted to supplement Troll’s e-mail with a bit deeper look into our educational approach and our thinking regarding your professional development.

JCWS has nine seminars – eight intermediate seminars (junior 04s and pre-command 05s) and one senior seminar (on average post command 0-5s but some who have yet to command and 0-6s to include some post command 0-6s). Our seminar is one of two senior seminars (there were two as of JCWS 22-1 and after this current class the senior seminar will be eliminated). The Lucky 13 approach remains true to the JCWS mission and learning objectives, but the instructors tailor and focus the curriculum to meet the experience, maturity, and upcoming assignments of our more senior students. On average you, senior seminar students, have ten years or more time in service and the commensurate experience with that time over your intermediate seminar counterparts. Based on that substantial experience differential, we instruct almost exclusively at the higher end of the operational level of war and strategic interface.

JCWS provides dedicated time and an outstanding joint forum to begin or enhance preparation for your future responsibilities. This course delves deeply into the basics, nuances, and sophistications of warfighting, peacekeeping, security force assistance as well as many other innumerable interrelated variables, encountered in the design, planning, preparation, execution
and assessment of integrated joint and combined operations and campaigns. Together as Joint Warfighters “Lucky 13” explores the intricacies of Joint Concepts and Doctrine, Operational and Strategic Thinking, Joint Teamwork and Collaboration, Strategic Operations and Campaign Design and numerous other methods to enhance your decision-making. All occur with a focus on preparing you and the Joint Force for the future. This is your professional military education, and you will reap what you sow. As instructors we will give you our best each day, but your growth depends on the effort you expend. As Socrates counsels “It is not what the teacher does for the pupil, it is what the pupil does for him or herself.” The Department of Defense (DoD) is making a considerable investment in your formal professional development with this course, take full advantage of it and return an even more substantial dividend. This is your education accept full responsibility for it.

Why does this school exist? The simple answer resides in the school’s motto “That All May Labor as One”. The school exists to promote and sustain Jointness!! Some would argue that the Joint Force has achieved Jointness and that this course is just a check in the block to satisfy statutory requirements. Our instructor group would strenuously differ with that interpretation. While solid evidence exists that the Joint Force achieved Jointness in the recent two decades of combat by tactical necessity, we must always continue to sustain that Jointness at all levels of war. General Eisenhower and Admiral Nimitz clearly understood the benefits of Jointness and the need to sustain joint teamwork when they created the Armed Forces Staff College (currently the Joint Forces Staff College of which JCWS is a subordinate school) following WWII to sustain and strengthen the cooperation that led to the defeat of the Axis powers. Moreover, and possibly more importantly the Joint Force and the Services must also achieve Jointness in the Pentagon and within the Beltway. Jointness must be evident during
budget and equipment battles amongst the services so that the Joint Force overcomes narrow service parochial viewpoints for the overall benefit of the nation. Eisenhower hammers this point home in his opening day address to AFSC Class 3 on 2 February 1948 “What I am trying to say is that in every single thing we try to do, let us think of the United States of America and let us forget narrow personalities and service viewpoints and put our minds together on that job.”

Easier said than done but JCWS and its diverse service mix allow for deep discourse on the essential opportunities and issues facing the Joint Force and primes focused discussions on how to best address these situations for the benefit of the United States.

Moreover, the school also exists to promote better thinking especially at the operational and strategic level. Again, Eisenhower provides sound counsel and direction in his opening day address. “Not only do you get the opportunity of thinking of your profession, but you are given the opportunity to think about it on its widest terms.” Within the JCWS curriculum framework, our approach strives to honor General Eisenhower’s direction. We spend most of our effort thinking about current problems, analyzing the way we think about the problems, drawing on historical and analogous examples to enhance our understanding, and looking forward in anticipation of the future. We want you to spend time reflecting on your experiences and thinking deeply about how you make decisions. Moreover, we will ensure you get multiple repetitions to think about relevant situations to refine your operational and strategic skill set. We endeavor to set the conditions for you to “allow your imaginations to take full sway and to see


whether or not your ideas cannot be expanded or exemplified, and don’t draw back because of some fancy tradition or because of what some “brass hat” might possibly say” as Eisenhower envisioned. 595 Our emphasis will be on Thinking - Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Design Thinking, Thinking through the Issues in Depth, Thinking Differently, Thinking in Time, and Thinking about Thinking all with a focus on improving our decision-making skills!

Finally, we believe that JCWS serves as a transition from tactical cognition to operational/strategic cognition. Joint doctrine lays out three levels of war – the Tactical, Operational, and Strategic. This course, per its mission statement listed below, focuses on the operational level of war but to excel at that level you must also have a strong appreciation for the tactical and the strategic. As stated earlier we assume a mastery of the tactical level, at least within your competency. Our focus then will be on the operational level and up to the strategic level of war. Our context is rooted in the current strategic direction and guidance as laid out in the INSSG, NDS, NMS, the current operating environment, adult learning methodologies and the current Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP).

While we tailor the JCWS curriculum for the senior seminar we accomplish the JCWS mission each and every class which is to produce graduates capable of creatively and effectively planning operational level warfighting for joint and combined military forces while integrating the effects of the United States Government, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations to ensure the success of Combatant and Joint Task Force

Commanders operating within an uncertain operating environment. If at any time throughout the course, you feel that we are not accomplishing our mission with you and meeting your individual learning objectives please talk with us about your specific educational needs. We are always available for one on one individually focused sessions.

Basic Course Structure

The ten weeks of JCWS are broken into modules. Those modules are:

JFF – Joint Force Fundamentals
SCD – Strategic Campaign Design
ICP – Integrated Contingency Planning
APE – Academic Publishable Essay
Exercise Purple Sirocco
Graduation

We will outline the specific dates and details of each course and the requirements for each under separate cover. Additionally, within the course we have worked hard to get extra guest mentors for Seminar Lucky 13. Although these speakers are rarely aligned with the course material, we recognize the essential need to hear from senior leaders who have executed the responsibilities that you aspire to.

Miscellaneous Direction and Guidance

1. This course is your primary duty from xxx to xxx. This is your professional development maximize the time provided for its specific purpose! We fully understand your individual career circumstances pull you in multiple directions and creates challenges to your focus, but your primary purpose is to learn not to perform job responsibilities with a secondary focus on your education. If you cannot handle your academic responsibilities because of other

distractions, we ask you to consider attending during a more settled period while on
temporary duty relieved of your current work responsibilities.

2. We strongly encourage you to set specific goals for this ten-week period. Write your goals
down and consider improvement in each of the below categories:
   a. Professional Development
   b. Intellectual
   c. Physical
   d. Social
   e. Spiritual

3. The Joint Force emphasizes the importance of relationships and trust in all we do
therefore take the time to develop relationships within the Seminar and elsewhere. Moreover,
spend some time strengthening existing ties. Think through how you develop relationships
and build trust? Share your best practices throughout the ten weeks.

4. JCWS provides us an opportunity to understand ourselves more deeply:
   a. Individually
   b. Through Service Capabilities
   c. Through Joint Capabilities
   d. Through USG Capabilities to include the national security decision-making process.
   e. Through International relations and Allies
   f. Work hard to develop a deeper and more focused understanding of our USG
capabilities. Be precise when you talk about Joint Force strengths, weaknesses, and
vulnerabilities. Beware of overestimation and/or underestimation of US, Ally, and
Competitor/Enemy capabilities.
5. **Develop your individual knowledge.** You know your strengths and weaknesses. Focus on those items that require work for you to become a better senior Joint leader not just a senior Service leader. To do this you must strengthen your individual knowledge set and turn your knowledge into capability as emphasized by Clausewitz. Although there is a healthy reading requirement especially up front, we expect you to do the basic reading and more. As senior leaders you must read, and you must know how to absorb and understand massive amounts of information. Refine and enhance your current techniques. Share best practices.

6. **Hone your perspectives.** Take the time provided and turn it into an opportunity to reflect on your experiences – figure out what has been working and why it works. Consider alternate possibilities. Seek and understand differing philosophies and viewpoints. Leverage the cross functional expertise of the seminar. Key learning will generate from your participation, sharing of your knowledge, experiences, and views and listening to and comparing/contrasting with the views, experiences, and knowledge of your fellow students.

7. **Refine your ability to see the weak signals** the not so obvious. Sun Tzu wrote, “To see victory… is not the acme of excellence. To lift an autumn leaf is no sign of great strength; to see the sun and the moon is no sign of sharp sight; to hear the noise of thunder is no sign of a quick ear. What the ancients call a clever fighter is one who not only wins but excels in winning with ease.” Additionally, Leonardo Da Vinci introduced the concept of “sfumato” or the ability to see what lies in the shadows along with those items out in the open for all to see. We want you to take time, slow your operational and strategic decision-making down and “Embrace the Shadow”! Strive to win with ease.

8. The **KEY WEAPON** for the future of the Joint Force and Joint Warfighting is you. Dedicated 06’s and senior 05’s -- Professional, smart, hardworking, clear thinking coupled
with sound reasoning and many years of experience, reflection, study, and skill your competence will lead us into the future. You are the solution but, in some instances, you remain the problem. Be the solution. Not the problem. Former CENTCOM CDR and SECDEF Mattis stated to the House Appropriations Committee when he was the Joint Forces Command Commander that, “We must continually educate our leaders to think, and not just to do. Special emphasis must be placed on human, cultural, language, and cognitive skills. A "cognitive" warrior knows how to acquire knowledge, process information from multiple sources, and make timely, accurate decisions in complex, ethically challenging and ever-changing environments.”

Transact more efficiently but be the forward leaning transformational thinkers of the future!

9. **Slow it down** over the next ten weeks – Don’t rush to the solution – Don’t focus on products- Focus on the thinking that goes on behind the products and then search for the most effective way to describe your understanding!! As an instructor group we are focused on your thinking not product focused.

Once again welcome. We look forward to formally meeting you on Monday and learning with you over the next 10 weeks. Stay healthy and happy and we will dominate the learning environment together and create a memorable professional development experience.

Additionally, we consider Seminar Lucky 13 JCWS 22-x to be a seminar for life. We look for our relationship to extend beyond the classroom and the course dates! We also want to link you with past and future students to generate a forum for adaptation and when necessary, change.

“That All May Labor as One” – Your Instructor Team

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TOO BUSY TO LEARN: REMOVE THE BUSYNESS -- ESTABLISHING NEW CAREER PATTERNS FOR SELECT JOINT FORCE OFFICERS

In Chapter IV, MG Scales indicts the Joint Force and individual officers as being too busy to learn. If you accept MG Scales premise, how do you change the organizational culture to slow down, reinvigorate the organizational and individual desire to learn, reward and recognize intellectual preparation, and carve out strategic learning and deliberate practice time in an officer’s busy career pathway. This is not an easy proposition. The organizational culture emerges and solidifies because of the results from hard work and the value ascribed to getting things done. The Joint Force rewards hard work and the resultant high-level performance. Unfortunately, the time required to meet the innumerable responsibilities to achieve day to day requirements creates overscheduled days, weeks, months, years, and in many cases full careers. How then do you remove the busyness, find time for longer periods of education, and time for strategic apprenticeship and deliberate practice?

First, start with adjustments to the strategic learning zone and the educational foundation to become strategic minded and ultimately a strategic master. Regrettably, while a great start the Senior Service Schools, no matter how effective and cutting edge, only give the Service or Joint student ten months’ worth of education. In Chapter IV, General Petraeus, recognizing that defining the best ways to educate and impart education is a vast and complex subject, is a key supporter of civilian graduate school as an option to military officers’ keen to establish a strong intellectual base. While he offers six sound reasons extolling the value of civilian graduate schooling, this study keys in on another, which is the time away from the busyness component. Whether a two-year master’s program or a three-year PhD program, the time away to think and write about strategic issues becomes an invaluable factor in mastering any given subject. It takes
time to develop a functional knowledge base. Unfortunately based on the work of Greene and Ericsson, twenty-four and thirty-six months away from the busyness still does not meet the considerable time to master strategic issues.

While the Senior Service School ten-month and Graduate school extended periods contribute greatly to a Joint Officers development much more time is required to achieve mastery according to the experts. Two- and three-year programs, whether civilian graduate schooling (one option) or other options to be determined, contribute significantly not only because of the reasons laid out by Petraeus but also because of the extended timelines allowed for thinking and writing. Another viable option, in addition to or in lieu of, would be to assign more officers with promotion potential to the JPME schools as instructors. As instructors they can continue to develop their knowledge base, hone their perspectives through daily discourse with a multitude of students, and deepen their Joint Warfighting knowledge through study, reflection, discourse, and writing. Beneficial to the Joint Force on two counts, this option is one that had great utility in the years before World War II and favorably impacted performance during the war. First, the instructor positions allow the potential Flag and General officers time to better develop themselves as evidenced in the World War II examples. Second, you widen the experience and knowledge gap between instructors and students providing the student a much better learning experience than what they are currently receiving. This removes the long-standing indictment on professional military education of an underqualified faculty. The Force must clearly understand that intellectual growth is only one component of a more comprehensive strategic development program. In addition to education, the Joint Force must also carve out time for deliberate practice and apprenticeship to turn the knowledge gained in civilian schooling or through instructor assignments into real capability.
As officers progress through their current career patterns, you could begin to pull select Commanders and Lt. Colonels or Captains and Colonels off the mainline put them in educational institutions or vantage point opportunities that provide development and growth but in a learning zone and not in a breakneck performance zone. What these opportunities will look like, who will attend, how long will they be, will they be single duration opportunities or conducted in a series of opportunities will need to be explored in greater depth than this study allows. Regardless, these apprenticeship gap periods will provide the ability to learn in greater depth and to develop skills as recommended by Greene’s process. This initiative will be expensive up front. The value that these officers will provide in the future, however, will more than cover the considerable initial investment through their strategic minded approach to national security and the projected better outcomes. Think if one of these officers can delay going to war, end a war early, or avoid war altogether because of their strategic mastery. The monies saved will fund the PME enterprise for a lifetime.

These officers will develop a better foundation of knowledge because of the additional time that they were able to study concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities that underpin events in the international environment. These officers will display the desired KSAs of strategic minded thinkers. While all will not get promoted to general or flag officer, these officers will support and advise those that do and other civilian decisionmakers. This strengthens the Force. Moreover, these officers are better positioned after these apprenticeship periods to instruct at the Joint War Colleges, Senior Service Schools, Joint Staff Colleges, and Service Staff Colleges. They will have had multiple more strategic repetitions and will be better suited to serve on a Combatant Command staff, the Joint Staff, within the DoD, and as National Security Council staff. Officers with this increased capacity and intellectual overmatch will be a vital benefit for
the Nation. To realize his thought the Joint Force must enact cultural change to create and then
dependently must become art of a new career pattern if the Joint
Force wants to create intellectual overmatch and strategic masters.

CONCLUSION

Strategic minded thinking is difficult. The concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities
that compose it are multi-faceted and complex. To understand the basics takes time and focused
study. To be well versed in the nuances and sophistications requires even more time, study, and
analysis just to get a useable knowledge base. To become a strategic master requires all the
above and years, ten years or more, of deliberate practice according to Ericsson, Greene, and
Waitzkin.

While the Joint Force recognizes the imperative for strategic minded leadership and
directs the Force to implement it through better PME, it really does not fully appreciate the cost
to create that type of leadership. It must create more programs like ASP3 and the DoD’s
Strategic Thinker program carving out time for more officers to attend and attend without
accruing penalties against their careers. Attendance cannot be viewed and communicated as
“bucking the system”, these programs must be a valued part of the system and development
process of their officers. It must create more vantage point opportunities and it must create a
strategic mentored apprenticeship program above and beyond the established educational
programs.

The mentored apprenticeship programs allow the officer to continue to learn but learn by
doing building the strategic skills necessary to lead the Force ably into the future against our
strategic competitors and other grave threats against the United States and its Allies. Costly up
front in manpower, dollars, and time, the return on investment will manifest in years to come and
the benefits will be exponential. The slang financial phrase applies “pay me now or pay me
later.” Although it will be painful, the Joint Force can afford the up-front costs and must make
the investments now. Regrettably, the Joint Force but more importantly the United States most
likely will be unable to shoulder the costs of being intellectually outmatched by our competitors.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations derived from the research and analysis conducted in Chapter II through Chapter V. The examination of strategy and strategic concepts, an investigation of the international environment revealing the continuities and changes resident or projected within that environment, a focused look at several post World War II military education guidance documents, studies, and other indictments of professional military education, insights from a recommended approach to professional military education and career timeline adjustments all contribute to the conclusions and recommendations for the development of strategic minded Joint Force officers.

The central conclusion from this study highlights that for PME to achieve its desired objectives, the Joint Force organizational culture must change to value and promote strategic mindedness throughout an officer’s career but especially at that point, which will be different for different officers, that they transition from tactical responsibilities to strategic responsibilities. From this leading conclusion, the study recognizes that the Joint Force culture must clearly understand that the transition from a tactical mindset to a strategic mindset is an extremely difficult transition, as the basics and nuances of strategy and strategic thinking are difficult and wide-ranging, and to create this transition requires as much or more time and deliberate practice to achieve (experimentation must be conducted to determine how much time is required) as the considerable time, training, and education the Joint Force already devotes to developing tactical proficiency and tactical masters. The Joint Force cannot continue to conflate education with training in an attempting to fuse the two during one educational period. An indictment since the
Masland and Radway study from 1956, education and training especially for strategic purposes must be separate and distinct.

A primary recommendation emerges from the above conclusion. To achieve the desired outcomes, the Joint Force must implement adjustments to the organizational culture values and rewards system regarding strategic education and development. Education must be valued, actively pursued, understood as career enhancing, and a discriminator for top levels of command and staff. Without substantive cultural change PME will remain underappreciated, disparaged even avoided, and fall short of its intended outcomes leading to another indictment on PME in the 2030 timeframe or so. Regrettably, at some point in the future the Joint Force will be unable to enact the required culture change because of the potential disastrous outcomes of our current inability to adapt and change. Despite the considerable cost, the Joint Force must design a more strategic minded career timeline that includes a more extensive strategic education beyond a ten-month Senior Service or Joint School experience, time for a strategic thinking apprenticeship, and a program for deliberate practice of the required strategic skills to develop strategic minded capability. Both an extensive education program, like the “Petraeus” model, followed by an apprenticeship program and deliberate practice opportunities to promote, inculcate, institutionalize, and sustain strategic minded thinking must become an accepted part of an officer’s basic career pathway. This will be costly up front on numerous fronts but the return on investment will be substantial. If a strategic minded individual or ultimately a strategic minded Joint Force can end a war early, end with a solid consolidation of gains, or avoid war altogether, the Joint Force will be able to fund a strategic minded development program for a generation or two. Education by itself, however, no matter how lengthy and effective, without a follow-up
apprenticeship period with safe deliberate practice opportunities will not accomplish the desired goals of the Secretary of Defense and the Chairmen Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The current international security environment is distinctly different from the environment that emerged following the end of World War, the Cold War, and even since 911. Characterized as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) by scholar-practitioners at the US Army War College, this post-Cold War environment, like preceding periods in US history, requires clear strategic thinking to ensure the prosperity and security of the United States. The Joint Force cannot navigate the powerful effects of globalization, Rosenau’s “dynamics beyond globalization” and Sassen’s “expulsions”, the weaponization of social media, the rapid emergence and prominence of two additional warfighting domains – space and cyberspace, renewed strategic competition with China and Russia, the COVID pandemic, the increased prospect of nations using nuclear weapons, the diffusion of national power, the weakening of the state and other variables too numerous to cover in this conclusionary chapter without drastically changing the Joint Force organizational culture responsible for educating and developing our Joint Force officers for the demands of their strategic responsibilities.

Clarity of thought, as described by Robert Cooper, is essential for a stable and peaceful environment. Lamentably, the United States and as seen throughout this study the Joint Force currently lacks an institutionalized clarity regarding strategic thinking and strategic mindedness. Moreover, the Joint Force lacks an effective institutional strategic minded educational and development program.
CONCLUSIONS

Upfront the study asked - Why do United States Joint Force officers who generally perform well at the tactical level struggle to perform at the strategic level? What hinders their transition from highly competent tactical performers into adaptable, strategic-minded leaders? After analyzing strategy and strategic concepts, the current international environment with an identification of continuities and changes, seventy-five years guidance and recurring indictments on military education, essential aspects of adult learning and mastery concepts, as well as offering an approach to strategic minded education this study offers the following conclusions:

1. Right up front the study concludes that while professional military education must be constantly open for improvement, modification and maybe even transformation to keep pace or remain ahead of the changes, with a competitive advantage, dictated by the evolving, mutating, or fragmenting international environment, the organizational culture must be the starting point and the catalyst to effect that change. Without an adaptable organizational culture, as espoused by Barno and Bensahel, the attitude towards education, the support of educational programs and curriculums, the time to attend educational experiences for strategic foundation building and growth, and the emphasis on the correct subjects, both continuities and changes, will not occur as we evidenced by the over seventy-five-year appeal for substantive change within the Services and the Joint Force.

While it is imperative to recognize the need for educational programs and constant change within those programs, it is woefully inadequate without the cultural changes need to implement, institutionalize, and sustain those changes and the organizational culture charted to do so.
2. To change the organizational culture requires a clear view of the three levels of war and their differences and the imperative for alignment, the difficulty associated with understanding the basics and nuances of strategy, the time required to develop a strategic knowledge base, and the necessity of developing strategic skills and abilities once the Joint Force officer builds an adequate knowledge base.

3. The force and the educational programs within the force must heed the counsel of Marshall, Eisenhower, Dempsey, Dunford, Mattis, and current Chairman Milley, that the skills needed for tactical versus strategic thinking are distinctly different. Not only are they different but depending on the context and specific situation they are diametrically opposed and counterproductive. A SMJFO cannot apply a tactical mindset to a strategic issue and expect good results. Kahnemann’s extensive study exposes the benefits and pitfalls of “Fast” thinking when “Slow” thinking is required and the extreme danger when the context is not recognized, and the thinking methods are misapplied. The Nation needs the Joint Force Officer’s mind to function better. He or she must be more conscious of their thinking. They must understand how intuition works and how it can short circuit deeper slower thinking as we seek cognitive relief when dealing with the extremely complex problem sets of strategic issues and problems.

4. Seeking to develop strategic minded thinkers, the evidence reveals that current teaching methods and general student attitudes are inadequate to generate the transition from a tactical mindset to a strategic one. The schools themselves are hindered by the organizational culture in what they teach, how they teach it, and the long-standing emphasis on performance versus learning. The students themselves, hindered by the organizational culture and norms, are not comfortable with time away from the force and
their daily duties to build the necessary educational foundation for the imperative to be better strategic minded thinkers. We must build an academic learning environment where faculty and students can explore the space to achieve intellectual overmatch.

5. SMJFOs must approach their environment differently. They must be more collaborative, thoughtful in anticipating the waves of consequences of their actions, they must understand the concepts, theories, doctrine, and practicalities underpinning the subjects they are thinking about. They must be creative as well as critical in their thinking. They cannot get stuck but must understand the continuities within the environment. They must also recognize, understand, and adapt to the changing environment. They must also to comprehend what they read and to “write in such a way as to say something substantive. They also must understand the importance of writing to learning.” Regrettably, over the years I have had a substantial number of students fight the requirement to write. They do not see the need. The organizational culture must continue to emphasize the need to describe understanding both verbally and in writing. To achieve this effectively and efficiently SMJFOs must practice both their verbal and written communication and receive productive feedback and constructive criticism. If the Joint Force officer cannot recognize this imperative, as they will struggle to be strategic minded and most likely will never develop the skills required to be strategic minded.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Joint Force must clearly establish a more inclusive list of strategic KSAs like the ones synthesized into the five broad categories - **Thinking, Understanding, Creating, Adapting, Describing** described in Chapter III. The list is extensive but demonstrates the magnitude of subjects a comprehensive strategic education program would need to teach and understand the considerable time required to teach the list. This list would then inform a mentored apprenticeship turning knowledge into full-fledged capability.

2. Recommend developing and then mandating extended, enhanced, and modified career paths for all officers at or destined for promotion to the 0-6 level. These new career pathways would recognize the vital requirement to build a strategic knowledge base to underpin the rigors of strategic minded thinking and strategic level positions. Moreover, the pathway must allow for a hands-on mentored apprenticeship program allowing for skill development and deliberate practice repetitions as specified by Ericsson and Greene, following the educational period before assigning the Joint Force officers to positions requiring a matured strategic-minded approach. Experimentation and analysis must be conducted to determine the composition and length of each of these specific periods of education and apprenticeship.

3. Develop an initial cadre of senior mentors that have the KSAs and experience required to effectively coach and guide a cohort of Joint Force officers during their apprenticeship period. This may require a substantial initial investment and experimentation period to ensure that the best strategic mentors available are cultivated to demonstrate expert form and guide the Joint Force officers in a similar manner as Waitzkin described in Chapter V.

5. Require prospective flag and general officers to teach at senior service and joint schools and serve in key educational leadership positions before assuming senior staff and command positions. Teaching by senior officers with potential will serve three purposes. First it will create a greater knowledge and experience gap between student and instructor enhancing the student’s experience. Second it will give the instructor an extended period and a rich environment to think and reflect deeply on his or her profession. Third it will demonstrate to the culture that an academic assignment is not a derailment, career ending position or a twilight tour. Putting those with potential for future assignments of ever-increasing responsibilities into instructor positions or key academic leadership positions, over time, will remove any negative stigma associated with spending time away from the operational force.

6. Avoid legislation mandating the above changes. Establish the necessary changes on the initiative and direction of the Chairman instead of being directed to make the necessary adjustments by Congress.

Overall strategy, strategic thinking, and strategic mindedness is difficult. The current environment demands a coherent strategy, clear strategic thinking, and officers who are strategic minded to defend and promote the national interests of the United States. The Joint Force organizational culture must adapt and change to properly develop strategic minded Joint Force officers for the challenges and opportunities resident in the contemporary, emerging, and future domestic and international environments. “War is a matter of vital importance to the State; the
province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied.”  

Now is the time for the Joint Force to silence 3/4 of a century’s worth of indictments on its ability to thoroughly study war and other strategic subjects leading to a strategic minded mindset.

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Tom served in the United States Army for thirty years in a variety of infantry, airborne, and ranger assignments. He was a commander and staff officer at multiple levels in numerous locations throughout the United States and overseas. His final operational tour was as the Chief of Staff, Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan during the 2003/2004 timeframe and his final tour was as an instructor and then assistant professor in the Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) within JFSC. He departed active duty in 2008.

Tom completed his doctoral studies in the Graduate Program for International Studies at Old Dominion University in 2022. His primary field was U.S. Foreign Policy with a secondary concentration on Transnationalism, Interdependence, and Power. Prior to attending Old Dominion University, Tom earned an MMAS from the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in 1991 and a BS from the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York in 1978.