

The 4th Annual Symposium on Modern Warfare Agenda “Leadership and Modern Warfare”

Friday September 20, 2019
International Cultural Center, Texas Tech University

8:30 AM: Opening Remarks

Dr. Ron Milam, Executive Director, Institute for Peace and Conflict, Texas Tech University

8:45 AM: Session 1

Aiming for Success: The Tailored Command Philosophy

Commanding an element of national power, amid the changing character of war in a disruptive environment, is an exclusive leadership challenge. Senior leaders select promising officers for command and then expect them to succeed. Some they choose struggle. Some transform into poor commanders. Some fail. Perhaps unsuccessful commanders misconstrue their own propensity for command. Possibly, they fail to comprehend or leverage command-unique facets of management, leadership, and power. Maybe unsuccessful commanders come to be incapable of adjusting to, adapting for, and acclimating into an organization with a distinctive structure, mission, climate, culture, and degree of health. Command complexity today and in the future requires advanced and innovative preparation versus more-of-the-same leadership behavior. Emerging leaders destined for command should bring their time-tested leadership philosophy with them into command. This is essential but it is not enough. Budding commanders aiming for success should convert their personal leadership philosophy into a tailored command philosophy. A tailored command philosophy balances personal leadership aspirations, the authority of command, and the uniqueness of an organization. This presentation introduces a four-step process professionals approaching command should follow to develop, mature, and sustain their own tailored command philosophy.

Presenter: Dr. John Blumentritt, Air University, Maxwell AFB

Dr. John W. Blumentritt, Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Retired) serves as a course director and an assistant professor at Air University’s eSchool of Graduate Professional Military Education located at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. Dr. Blumentritt holds master’s degrees from Michigan State University, College of Naval Command and Staff at the Naval War College, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, and The Air War College. He earned his Ph.D. in 2009 from Our Lady of the Lake University’s School of Business and Leadership in San Antonio, Texas. Dr. Blumentritt served as a rescue and special operations helicopter pilot during much of his military career. He also served as a “Checkmate” strategist in the Pentagon and commanded an education squadron at the Air Force Academy. He retired from the Air Force in 2011. Prior to joining Air University in 2016, he worked as a course director, instructor, and analyst at Air Education and Training Command. Prior to that, he served as

an assistant professor of security studies at Angelo State University and as an adjunct professor of business and leadership at Our Lady of the Lake University. Dr. Blumentritt now develops, directs, and teaches courses primarily associated with leadership, leader development, and command. He enjoys veteran and history-centric activities during his spare time.

Time, Power, and Principal-Agent Problems: Why the U.S. Army is Ill-Suited for Proxy Warfare Hotspots

In recent years, the U.S. Army has routinely found itself in wars waged through intermediaries, or proxy forces. At the same time, the Army does not speak frankly about these proxy wars but instead speaks indirectly about the character of these environments and its relationship with its partnered force. It does so by arguing that those environments are one in which it operates by, with and through partners in a security force assistance capacity in pursuit of common objectives. While this approach softens the coarseness of proxy warfare, it also degrades understanding of proxy warfare by not speaking frankly about its environmental and relational character. In examining proxy warfare, one finds that it is dominated by a principal-actor dynamic, power relationships and the tyranny of time. Taking those ideas a step further, this examination yields two models of proxy warfare—the transactional model and the exploitative model. The goal of setting forth this theory of proxy warfare is to generate better conceptual understanding, allowing the U.S. Army to more effectively manipulate proxy environments toward its own ends.

Presenter: Major Amos Fox

Amos Fox is a Major in the United States Army. He is currently the Executive Officer for the 1st Armored Division's 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment. He has served in command and staff positions with the 1st Armored Division, the U.S. Army Armor School, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, and the 4th Infantry Division. Major Fox is a graduate of the U.S. Army's elite School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), where he graduated #1 in his class. Major Fox has masters degrees from Ball State University and the U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies and his undergraduate degree is from Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

Major Fox's written extensively on modern and future war. His recent works focus on the Russo-Ukrainian War (2014-present), Russian hybrid warfare, the character of modern war, and the rise of proxy wars in contemporary conflict. On note, his "Time, Power, and Principal-Agent Problems: Why the U.S. Army is Ill-Suited for Proxy Warfare Hotspots" received honorable mention in Military Review's 2018 General William DePuy Writing Competition, and his "Making Sense of Russian Hybrid Warfare: A Brief Assessment of the Russo-Ukrainian War" (Institute of Land Warfare, Land Warfare Paper No. 112, March 2017) pushed over 10,000 hard copies and received recognition from Lieutenant General Ben Hodges, then, the commander of U.S. Army Europe.

Major Fox is currently working on a critique of the Mosul Study Group's report on the battle of Mosul, as well as drafting an update to his three previous works on proxy war.

10:15 AM: Break

10:30 AM: Session 2

Reading with Osama: A Critical Analysis of Al-Qaeda's Abbottabad Documents

The United States government might control more information on Osama bin Laden than any other source in the world. Spurred by FOIA requests and calls for transparency, the government has declassified a portion of its overall collections. Excluding the findings of The 9/11 Commission, the most important declassified sources involve bin Laden's secluded life in Abbottabad, Pakistan from 2005-2011. These documents were collected by U.S. Special Forces during their raid on bin Laden's compound.

There remain several gaps in the bin Laden narrative, most notably the period following the American invasion of Afghanistan. My presentation will examine the papers, articles, journals, books, and other textual documents salvaged from bin Laden's Abbottabad compound. The goal will be to provide context to these documents and connect them to bin Laden's personal interests and larger strategic goals.

As a pinnacle figure in modern history, the historiography on Osama bin Laden needs to be constantly updated, especially as new primary sources are identified or declassified. Americans should want to know why nearly 3,000 citizens were killed on a September morning. Analyzing and understanding what influenced bin Laden is a perfect place to look for some of these answers.

Presenter: Dr. Christopher Carey

Dr. Christopher Carey is an Army historian who creates documentary films at Army University Press in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He has a Ph.D. in History and a M.A. from the Center for Global and International Studies both from the University of Kansas.

Primacy Lost: The US in Iraq – 1991-2011

William Wohlforth has argued that the international “system is built around US power, [and thus] creates demands for American engagement.” Moreover, Stephen Walt's balance-of-threat theory predicts that states will weigh intentions rather than capabilities of the hegemon in deciding whether to balance against it. A hegemon that provides a check on its own power by following institutional rules is less of a worry. And though realists would argue that a hegemon simply manipulates followers with material incentives via a carrot and stick approach, there is an alternative explanation for the maintenance of hegemonic leadership or primacy, “a more subtle component... that works at the level of substantive beliefs rather than material payoffs. Acquiescence is the result of the socialization of leaders in secondary nations. Elites in secondary states buy into and internalize norms that are articulated by the hegemon and therefore pursue policies consistent with the hegemon's notion of international order” (Ikenberry and Kupchan). Followers are thus less likely to balance against a hegemon that leads using a rule-abiding system of norms.

I have used the case study approach to analyze US efforts toward coalition-building through the wars in Iraq during 1991-2011, which demonstrate a degradation of US primacy. Overall, the 1991 case is an ideal demonstration of substantive-based coalition relations among the western powers and incentive-based relations among others. However, over time, coalition relations in Iraq deteriorated due to perceived US unilateral actions or behavior outside the norms, leading to a breakdown of coalition relations.

Presenter: Dr. Brent Talbot, USAF Academy

Dr Brent Talbot serves as a Professor of Military and Strategic Studies (MSS) at the US Air Force Academy. He holds a Ph.D. in International Studies from the University of Denver and specializes in National Security Studies, Middle East Regional Security, and Nuclear Proliferation and Strategy.

Dr Talbot previously taught in the USAFA Political Science department while in uniform and he concurrently served as the Deputy Director of the Air Force Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). He has also taught as an Adjunct Professor at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, and currently serves as an adjunct Lecturer at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University.

As an Air Force Weapon Systems Officer, he flew the F-111 aircraft, taught Undergraduate Navigator Training, and spent a year in Korea as a Joint Staff Action Officer.

Crisis in Baghdad: Leadership in a Risk Adverse Environment

This presentation chronicles my story as a base and unit commander during a combat tour in Iraq and includes photographs (taken then) for this fast-paced lecture. However, this is not just an account of our modern military, but it also examines leadership concepts that can be used by those who manage or command in civilian or military settings. This briefing (and my book of the same name) analyzes management issues but also intends to demonstrate that one person can make a difference. It also does not provide a tired and over-used list of leadership traits but gives examples of real ideas and actual motivational successes. It also is not afraid to honestly examining my flaws and mistakes, which had a personal cost.

This story occurred in a perilous period of the Iraqi War when U.S. military forces were locked in a stalemate with anti-government groups. Simultaneously the Iraqis society was tearing itself apart with murderous, religious strife. It was a tipping point of the war, which I helped influence and is discussed in this lecture. When I arrived, I discovered many serious problems that were festering or had not even been identified – posing extreme danger for the base and our people. Find out how I motivated the young millennials, and we worked together to make our base safe and better.

Presenter: Colonel Gregory Marston

Colonel Gregory Marston was a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1978. He graduated from USAF pilot training in 1979 and flew the A-10, A-37, OV-10 and C-141 aircraft in the active duty Air Force and Air National Guard. He has participated in four combat tours and has flown 80 A-10 combat missions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait. He has served as an A-10 “Warthog” Operations Officer, Squadron Commander, Group Commander and Wing Commander. In 2002-3 he commanded an USAF Group and the airfield at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. Under his leadership this unit flew over 1600 A-10A combat missions supporting U.S. Army Soldiers in Afghanistan. He commanded an USAF Group and Sather AB, Iraq from 2006-7. After Iraq he became the Director of Operations, Pennsylvania Air National Guard until his retirement in 2008.

Concurrent with his military career, from 1985-2008 he was a pilot for American Airlines, becoming Captain in the Boeing 727; Airbus A-300, Boeing 757, 767 and the B-777. He completed his Master’s Degree in Military History from Norwich University in 2019. He is married, has three children and lives near Doylestown, PA.

His first book is, ***“Crisis in Baghdad”*** (available on Amazon) and his upcoming one ***“In the Shadow of the Hindu Kush: A-10 ‘Warthog’ Flying and Leadership Early in Afghanistan.”*** It will feature leadership stories of his command at Bagram and the accounts of A-10 pilots flying missions in Afghanistan from 2002-2008. Publish date – Spring, 2020.

12:00 PM: Lunch

Keynote Speaker: General John Murray, Commanding General, Army Futures Command

1:15 PM: Session 3

Eagles, Falcons & Warthogs: Gen. “Bill” Creech, Col. John Boyd and the Struggle to Remake the Tactical Air Forces in the Wake of Vietnam

Discusses the tension between the USAF establishment and the Defense Reform Movement (DRM) “led” by Col. John Boyd in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Looks at the USAF/William Perry post-Vietnam technology vision, three “lines of operations” attempted by the DRM to challenge that vision and how one USAF General, Wilbur “Bill” Creech, helped to overcome the DRM in Congress, through the PPBM and with the Administration. Gives credit to the DRM for creating the need for the Tactical Air Command (TAC) to articulate a clear vision for airpower in the Reagan era—along with reinvigorating the ideas of tempo and maneuver, but also recognizes the largely unsung efforts that General Creech’s leadership, congressional testimony and training programs had on tactical aviation to and through Desert Storm. The paper condenses Dr. Price’s in-progress book of the same name, to be published by Naval Institute Press. It leverages a historical methodology anchored in extensive new oral histories of senior Air Force leaders (Generals Jumper, Kross, Loh, and Ralston, amongst others) and archival research from the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA), the National Archives at College Park, and from the Marine Corps archives at Quantico.

Presenter: Dr. Brian Price, Air Command & Staff College

Dr. Brian R. Price is currently an Associate Professor of Military and Security Studies at the Air Command & Staff College, Air University, Maxwell AFB. He holds a doctorate in military history from the University of North Texas (2011) and a BA in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA, 1992). Previously he had a Silicon Valley career where he rose to the level of vice-president; ran a history-oriented book publishing company; served a double-tour as a senior socio-cultural advisor on the ground in Afghanistan (2011-12) followed by a tour supporting JSOC (2018) as a social science SME; did a one year POW-MIA Accounting Agency fellowship (2017-18), and taught graduate courses in strategy, counterinsurgency, and American military history at Hawai’i Pacific University’s interdisciplinary Diplomacy & Military Studies program. He has two main fields of research, a modern one focused on strategy, technology and war and a second focusing on medieval and early modern combat techniques. Recent articles have appeared in *Joint Force Quarterly*, *The Counter-Terrorist*, and the *Journal of Medieval Military History*.

The Fighter Tactics Revolution, 1937-1944: Crew Ingenuity and Combat Innovation

Popular history often portrays military innovation as the product of individual vision and authority, the domain of great commanders with both the foresight and institutional wherewithal to reshape the mechanics of war. Less celebrated are more junior personnel who experienced an immediate battlefield dilemma, recognized a potential solution, engineered its implementation at the lower levels of operational employment, and – by demonstration, not decree – precipitated a widespread reformation in methods and tactics.

A young pilot in Germany’s expeditionary Condor Legion effected just such a lateral tactical transformation during the Spanish Civil War. Based upon his own experiences in a new generation of faster, higher-flying, and better-equipped fighter aircraft, Werner Mölders shepherded his squadron into a new era of air combat characterized by novel formations and tactics – many of which are still in use today. Successful over Spain, Mölders’ pioneering methods saw widespread adoption first throughout the Luftwaffe, and then across other air arms fighting the Second World War. Unlike changes forced upon the forces by senior commanders and policymakers, Mölder’s tactical playbook was nearly universally plagiarized for the simple fact that it worked when the results mattered most, in battle.

At war's end, however, blind faith in technological progress led to a series of ill-considered doctrines that stifled aircrew initiative, flexibility, and overall effectiveness against more nimble foes. Disappointing results over Vietnam then triggered another revolution in air combat based on emerging technologies and battlefield experience – once again, a revolution conceived and led not by the wonks, but the warfighters.

Presenter: Colonel Matthew Hurley (U.S. Air Force, ret.), PhD, Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies

Dr. Matthew Hurley is a Non-Resident Fellow with the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, which is based in Arlington, Virginia. In addition, he serves as a guide at the National Museum of the US Air Force.

A retired US Air Force colonel and career intelligence officer, Dr. Hurley completed military assignments with Air Mobility Command, Pacific Air Forces, US Air Forces Europe, NATO, the Air Force District of Washington, US Forces Korea, Air University, and the Air Staff. His military service also included contingency duty in Southwest Asia, the former Yugoslavia, and the Horn of Africa. During his final assignment, he served as the Chief of Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Doctrine and Policy.

Dr. Hurley is a Distinguished Graduate of the Air Command and Staff College, Air Force Intelligence Officer training, and the US Air Force Academy. He received his doctorate in history from The Ohio State University in 2009, having previously earned a master's degree at the University of Washington.

Dr. Hurley has published and presented numerous works regarding airpower history, aerospace technology, operational design, and intelligence issues. He is currently writing a comprehensive history of Portugal's colonial air campaign over Portuguese Guinea during the 1960s and 1970s.

The War Against ISIS: Views from U.S. Air Force Operations and Maintenance

The United States has been at war since the fall of 2001, and, to some extent, the Air Force has been at war since August 1990. The latest rendition of this ongoing war has been the war against ISIS. While many papers have been presented examining the war against that terror threat, this one seeks to examine how it was conducted at the most basic level—specifically from the view of the aircrews and from those who supply them with the means to wage war. What was it like to build the bomb used against the Islamic State? What was it like to deliver them in various configurations and in various scenarios, as dictated by both intelligence and by the constantly evolving situation on the ground?

Once back at the base, how did those aircrews spend time, both alone and with one another, and with their ground crews? How did they interact with one another, both on and off duty? When a mission proved to be a failure, or when they lost one of their own, how did they relate to one another?

Lastly, how did they conduct this war efficiently and effectively, while trying to not worry about how things were going at home station? Was the ability to communicate with their families a detriment or an aid to the mission?

All these issues will be examined in this presentation, as we look at the man, and woman, in theater, and how war directly affected them.

Presenter: MSgt Dennis Berger (U.S. Air Force, Ret.), Doctoral Candidate, Texas Tech University

Dennis Berger is a retired USAF master sergeant and first sergeant who was a career aircraft structural maintainer serving on F-4E Phantom IIs, F-111E Aardvarks, and KC-135R Stratotankers. In August 1990 he deployed with the 340th Air Refueling Wing to King Khalid International Airport north of Riyadh as it formed a part of the

1703rd Air Refueling Wing (Provisional) in support of air refueling operations in Operation Desert Shield. In 1994 he returned to Riyadh as a member of the 4408th Air Refueling Squadron in support of Operation Southern Watch. In 1997, while serving as a first sergeant, Berger deployed to Kuwait where he served as the chief enlisted manager for the 4406th Operations Group at Ahmed al Jaber, AB, in effect, the senior enlisted person in country—a position normally reserved for chief master sergeants. Berger retired in February 1999, having served twenty-one years in uniform.

MSgt Berger received his Bachelor's Degree in Education from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, in 1999, a Master's in Education from Wayland Baptist University in 2004, and his Master's in History from Texas Tech in 2007. He is currently completing his doctoral dissertation with an anticipated graduation in December of this year. Berger is married with two children, one an Air Force munitions officer and another who is the spouse of a F-15E Strike Eagle WSO. He currently resides in Lubbock, Texas, where he works as a high school history teacher.

2:45 PM: Break

3:00 PM: Session 4

Coalition Leadership during Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR), 2017-2018: A Historian's Perspective

Presenter: Steve Frank, Command Historian, III Corps and Fort Hood, Texas

An Anecdotal History of an Officer's Leadership Experience Over the Last 10 Years of War

The variety of leadership experiences and demands expected of Army officers today is without parallel in military history. As American power continues to be projected across wider swaths of the world and as the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan evolve, tasks given to our Company level leaders are increasingly diverse. CPT Jonathan Austin will share an anecdotal history of his leadership experiences as a microcosm of junior officer combat leadership over the last decade. The views expressed during the symposium do not reflect the official policy or position of U.S. Army III Corps or the United States Army.

Presenter: Captain Jonathan Austin, Operations Officer, G3 (CUOPS) III Corps and Fort Hood, Texas

CPT Austin is currently serving as an Operations Officer/Planner for the U.S. Army III Corps G3. He commissioned as an Armor Officer in 2009 from Appalachian State University. CPT Austin has deployed twice, once as a Mobile Gun System Platoon Leader to Afghanistan in 2011-2012 and then again as an Airborne Company Commander to Iraq from 2016-2017. His last assignment was as a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. He is from Decatur, GA, is married to Lauren Austin and they have twin four year old boys, Mason and Gabriel.

4:30 PM: Closing Remarks

Dr. Steve Maxner, Director of the Vietnam Center and Archive and the Archive of Modern American Warfare,
Texas Tech University

4:45 PM: End of Symposium