

involved in force development, that is, writing military concepts and doctrine and designing future organizations” (p. 5). Indeed, it is easy to understand why he finds Isserson’s claim—“the determination of the tasks of military operations corresponding to the political goals of war” (p. 4)—attractive, as at the time when Isserson made this claim, the U.S. Army’s textbook on strategy stated that “politics and strategy are radically and fundamentally things apart.”² However, Isserson’s work served as a practical solution for the limitations created by the technology and tactics of the early 20th century, without any attempt to reduce the significance of his work, but it seems that its relevance to military problems of the 21st century is similar to the relevance of Counts of Nassau and their volley technique to the battlefields of World War I.

Moreover, the suggestion that reading Isserson contributes to the understanding of the contemporary Russian military approach is rather contestable. Analyzing the works of contemporary Russian strategists on the phenomenon of war, such as Aleksandr Vladimirov, Andrey Kokoshin, Vasilii Mikriukov, and others, is invaluable, but it is difficult to find Isserson’s heritage in them. In other words, those American military scholars who focus on Isserson’s work, which is steeped in the context of preparations for World War II, do it much more than their Russian counterparts. Maybe Dr. T.X. Hammes was right after all, and the U.S. military is still struggling to move away from its embrace of the third generation of warfare with its massive force deployments, armored maneuvers, and deep operations.³ Isserson’s manuals, so crucial for the effective deployment of massive forces in World War II, seem to shed little light on Russia’s military decisions in the second decade of the 21st century.

Overall skillfully translated and edited, this volume may deserve “a place in any military professional’s library,” as General Van Riper writes. However, it should be placed on the same shelf with Jacob de Gheyn’s *Arms Drill with Arquebus, Musket and Pike*, written in 1607, for its historical significance rather

than contemporary relevance. Russian military thought has its own Machiavellis, Clausewitzs, and Jominis, who have been shaping the Russian way of war for the last two centuries—Genrikh Leer, Aleksandr Mikhnevich, Aleksandr Svechin, Evgeny Messner, and Makhmut Gareev, just to name a few. Despite their enormous potential to improve the American military understanding of the Russian traditional approach to war, these works, unfortunately, have been generally neglected by American military thinking. Van Riper is right about of the gaps that American military officers have in their knowledge of the Russian military (p. 2), but Isserson’s work is not the best one to start filling these gaps. JFQ

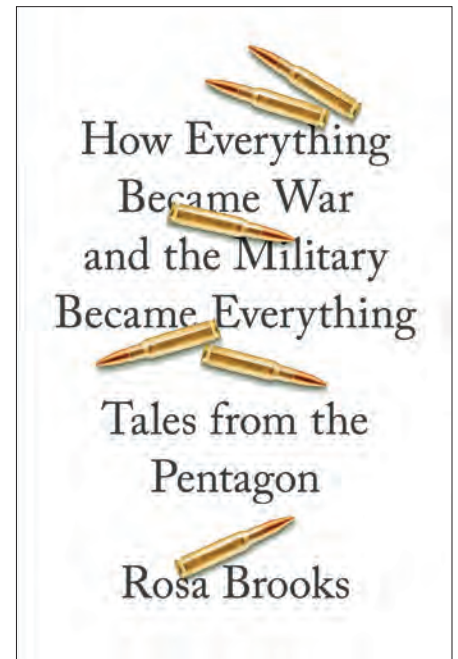
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Notes

¹ Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West 1500–1800*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 18–24.

² *Principles of Strategy for an Independent Corps or Army in a Theater of Operations* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff School Press, 1936), 19.

³ T.X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004).



How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything: Tales from the Pentagon

By Rosa Brooks
Simon & Schuster, 2016
448 pp. \$29.95
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Reviewed by Tammy S. Schultz

The reader of *How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything: Tales from the Pentagon* will cheer, groan, and have core beliefs reinforced and challenged—everything a good book should do. Rosa Brooks argues that warfare is changing, the military is taking on way too much, and U.S. national security is in peril as a result. The book is especially timely given calls for increased military spending while simultaneously drastically cutting State Department and foreign aid funding.

Brooks, currently a professor at Georgetown Law School and a Senior Fellow at New America, served in the Barack Obama administration. She also traversed the worlds of the State Department and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). A well-respected

commentator on national security, Brooks is uniquely positioned to transform what could be another tedious national security book into a page turner given her journalism background and other experience.

Part memoir, part sounding an alarm on the military's ubiquitous role in national security, Brooks deftly weaves together research on warfare trends and Pentagon "there I was" policy fights. She organizes the book into three sections: the new American way of war, how we got here, and counting the cost.

The first section covers her views on the vast changes in the operational environment that have led to a new American way of war. Brooks covers a lot of ground, but a few themes stand out. When she discusses the "individualization of war," I recalled a conversation with a Marine Corps-level intelligence officer more than 10 years ago. He commented that other than historic bigwigs such as Adolf Hitler and the like, he could not recall an entire Corps' intelligence shop focused on finding specific individuals, as was the case in Operation *Iraqi Freedom*. Brooks also discusses technology, such as the ubiquity of drones, international law not keeping up with current challenges, and ambiguity over traditional roles and missions.

With the next section, Brooks jumps to history. Here the author employs more of her legal and NGO background to show how the briar patch containing national security thorns catching us today was planted long ago. Brooks takes on such subjects as warriors (and societies) cleansing themselves before and after war; the laws of war (whatever "war" is), which are meant to put war "in a box"; and state sovereignty issues, from wars in the state-making enterprise to intervention in failing states.

Brooks finally tackles the costs for these skewed lines in the third section. Even if all U.S. civilian and military leaders are good people, which Brooks believes, she does not trust the rest of the world, which makes the precedents we are setting troubling indeed. Should the United States follow international law in a fight against a nonstate actor,

or just some parts of international law? Should new law be written, or does that aggrandize these scourges upon the world? Should drone strikes continue to violate the sovereignty of states with whom we supposedly are not at war, or take out U.S. citizens? What should be the threshold of proof for a state to act preemptively? How can U.S. civilian and military leaders learn to trust and respect each other enough to enter into these difficult conversations without immediately defaulting to entrenched, zero-sum positions? These are all important questions that Washington needs to think much deeper about if we are to remain not only a global power, but also a unique one.

Brooks is a fantastic storyteller. Some may believe that she jumps from topic to topic too quickly. For instance, she goes from Special Forces to contractors to overclassifying documents in a short span. But that critique entirely misses Brooks's artistry. I believe she uses that style to symbolize one of the book's main points regarding our haphazard approach. The military becomes the default answer to any national security problem absent other policies and civilian capabilities. The President, Congress, and the American people would prefer to fund the troops instead of civilian instruments of power, even though a mindset change followed by true action could actually save Servicemembers' lives.

I depart from Brooks on one of her main arguments—that war itself is changing. First, Carl von Clausewitz's most famous dictum states that "war is policy by other means." I once asked Dr. Eliot Cohen of the School of Advanced International Studies when Clausewitzian principles would no longer apply to warfare: War would have to cease to be about policy, he stated. I agree, and believe we have not breached that fundamental characteristic.

This leads to the second reason I am not confident that war itself is changing. Brooks's argument centers on warfare's ways (policies, doctrine, concepts, and the like) and means (capabilities, resources), not on the ends (goals) themselves. So while she makes a compelling case that we have yet to truly develop

more appropriate ways and means for many issues, from drones to cyber warfare, we struggled to reconcile means and ways with ends before. Nuclear weapons are the most profound example. We just have to have the moral courage to recognize the problem and work on better answers.

Clausewitz held that while warfare's grammar might be unique to policy, the logic is not. Brooks makes a compelling case for how war's grammar is changing, but in my opinion the policy logic still holds. That said, civilian and military leaders who disregard her book's arguments do so at their, and the nation's, peril. JFQ

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