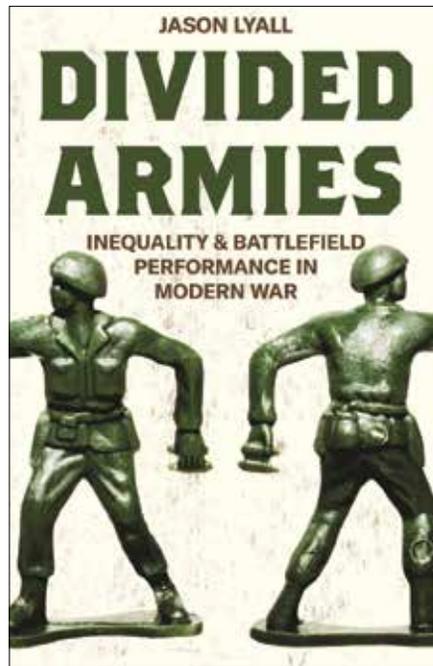


Payne supplements his discussion of first principles with useful tables comparing policies and their outcomes based on the fundamental positions outlined. These comparisons will aid the novice and the expert alike and reveal that deterrence discourse is not necessarily as burdened with nuance as some cottage industrialists assumed. The clarity of this comparative work goes hand in hand with the dutifully researched and well-sourced argumentation. Payne's sweeping command of the full constellation of political science and deterrence theory literature makes him an excellent guide through the undergrowth-cluttered forest, beyond which one must see in order to home in on essential principle.

*Shadows on the Wall* provides the reader with a rare occurrence—a clear view of the fundamental principles that form the basis of deterrence discourse. Payne does the entire field a service by acknowledging that there is a lot of undergrowth to be removed if one is to understand the essence of what might otherwise seem to be a bewildering array of nuanced policy choices. Joint force policymakers, planners, and national security practitioners would be wise to take up this book and absorb its first principles before any other that claims to expand on the merits or demerits of nuclear deterrence and disarmament policy. JFQ

---

Dr. John Mark Mattox is a Senior Research Fellow in the Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Institute for National Strategic Studies, at the National Defense University.



### **Divided Armies: Inequality and Battlefield Performance in Modern War**

By Jason Lyall  
Princeton University Press, 2020  
528 pp. \$35.00  
ISBN: 978-0691192444

Reviewed by Larry D. Miller

Why armies win wars or suffer battlefield defeats has long piqued the curiosity and interest of military historians, war planners, and strategists alike. Theorists commonly attribute military effectiveness (or not) to force ratios, firepower, technological superiority, material/resourcing advantages, or exceptional leadership (possibly aided by surprise or dumb luck). Jason Lyall, however, advances a groundbreaking analysis for understanding who wins, who loses, and why. In the process, he suggests equality as a key element in better designing military forces positioned for battlefield success.

His argument is that political communities necessarily and invariably import existing ethnic, racial, religious, and/or societal hierarchies into military organizations—organizations that are political

extensions of the state poised to inflict violence. Preexisting inequalities create friction, promote division, diminish organizational cohesion, and undercut battlefield performance to varying degrees. *Military inequality*, a measurable construct introduced by Lyall, is a function of identity as it relates to group membership and relational standing within the political community weighted by inclusion, discrimination, or repression. This concept includes all group members who enjoy full standing, those who are marginalized, those who suffer sanctioned discrimination, and those who experience collective repression. Lyall's extensive, detailed, and well-crafted book effectively demonstrates the validity of his hypothesis and how high levels of military inequality negatively affects battlefield performance. Armies rife with politically sanctioned inequalities, therefore, are flawed by their very design.

The evidence Lyall presents is original and compelling. The opening chapter overviews the genesis of his thinking while detailing essential concepts, terms, and definitions. The balance of the book, eight chapters and two appendices, is organized under three major headings: "Theory and Initial Evidence," "Historic Battlefield Evidence, and "Extensions and Conclusions." The chapters present detailed historiography, quantitative analyses of data drawn from Project Mars, and case studies purposefully selected to challenge and assess the strength of his argument from various angles. Project Mars, the culmination of a 7-year research effort, documents direct force-on-force conflicts between 1800 and 2011. Building the Project Mars database required the support and expertise of 134 coders tracking primary documents and secondary sources across 21 languages. The goal was to construct a global military database documenting armed conflicts in the modern era. Containing 825 observations of belligerence, the database complements, and will possibly supersede, portions of the Correlates of War Project database.

Throughout the book, Lyall employs statistical analyses and historiography—a potent combination of quantitative and

qualitative methods—to assess cross-national military inequality against measures of battlefield performance. Hypothesized expectations include, for example, that as the coefficient of force inequality increases, tactical and operational sophistication will decrease, battlefield fatalities will increase, defections will increase, and coercion and fratricidal violence within the force will rise.

Lyall's detailing of a well-researched conflict in the latter 1800s is particularly illustrative and serves as a preliminary test of his hypothesis. In brief, Muhammad Ahmad (known as the Mahdi) built an inclusive and egalitarian political community from diverse tribes, clans, and ethnic groups in what is primarily present-day Sudan. He assembled an army that defeated Egyptian and Anglo-Egyptian forces during the first Mahdist war (1881–1885). Following the Mahdi's early and unexpected death in 1885, his successor initiated sweeping changes that infused poisonous identity politics into the community. Some tribes and ethnic groups were favored, some were not, and some experienced state-sanctioned repression. In due course, the Anglo-Egyptian forces returned and claimed a resounding victory during the second Mahdist war (1896–1899). Numerous accounts for this reversal of events exist, including arguments about improved weaponry and technological advantages that favored the British. Lyall's careful matching of covariates and contextual variables, however, along with insights from primary and secondary source material, successfully illustrates the "relationship between inequality and battlefield performance."

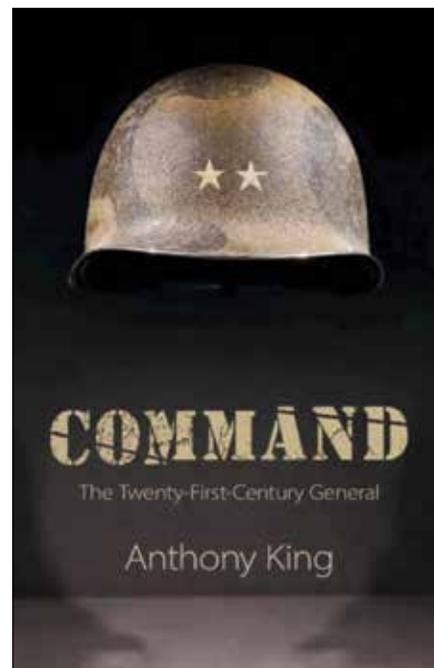
*Divided Armies* is an inviting and challenging read, one that necessitates and rewards thoughtful investment. Readers who are unfamiliar with notions of independent variables, covariates, paired comparisons, and regression analysis may find some elements of the discussion obscure and possibly off-putting despite the author's solid and generally successful efforts to deliver a book with minimal technical jargon. Some will also undoubtedly critique the emphasis on land-based operations in

the case data; however, the conclusions are applicable across the joint force. Regardless, the book is well-written and worth the intellectual bandwidth required to parse through the meticulous research.

The joint force will find much to consider in *Divided Armies* as the national security enterprise adjusts to confront 21<sup>st</sup>-century challenges. Lyall's work suggests inclusivity as a way forward, especially in uncertain times. The future of war is unknown in many respects, but absent full-on technological destruction, one can predict that the tensions between globalization and nationalism will continue, variously propelling and repelling the desirability of diversity within national and international communities. Yet Lyall has convincingly demonstrated that the most successful armies will not only *be* diverse, but they will also *embrace* diversity as strength and use that strength to repel and defeat armies unable to overcome their own inequalities. JFQ

---

Dr. Larry D. Miller is the Director and Professor of Communicative Arts at the U.S. Army War College.



## Command: The Twenty-First-Century General

By Anthony King

Cambridge University Press, 2019

504 pp. \$79.99

ISBN: 978-1108476409

Reviewed by Allan R. Millet

**C**ommand is two loosely connected books. One book is about generalship in combat in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a focus on hybrid conflicts. The second is about imagining generalship as a collective enterprise and the challenges of employing a division of differently sized units with unique capabilities. A division might be limited to units that shoot and destroy and heavy in units that simply collect and process information with such speed that no single commander could possibly make timely decisions. Drawing on his prior work on unit cohesion and military culture as a British army contractor, Dr. Anthony King offers an updated look at generalship and division command for an increasingly complex battlefield.

*Command* provides a review of how ground combat divisions developed from World War I to the present, spiced with