

A HELPLESS GIANT WAGING WAR: VIETNAM AND LESSONS IN DECISION-MAKING

Joel N. Teklu

"How could the army of the most powerful nation on Earth, materially supported on a scale unprecedented in history, equipped with the most sophisticated technology in an age when technology had assumed the role of a god of war, fail to emerge victorious against a numerically inferior force of lightly armed irregulars?"

Dr. Andrew Krepinevich, The Army and Vietnam

In *The Prince*, Niccolò Machiavelli wrote, "Whosoever desires constant success must change his conduct with the times." The Italian statesman and political philosopher's advice is fundamental for winning military conflicts. Intuitively, in asymmetric conflicts—a strong actor's armed forces warring with a weak actor's armed forces—the strong state need not be so concerned over tactical and strategic innovation since its relative power implies victory. However, there is no historical anomaly of a weak actor's strategy rendering a strategically inflexible strong actor ineffectual more infamous than the Vietnam War (1965-73). According to Arreguin-Toft's Strategic Interaction Theory and empirical evidence from the course of the Vietnam War I will present, the United States should have taken note of Machiavelli's advice in regards to adapting its ground war strategy. Thus, the U.S. ought to have adopted a major counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy to effectively defeat the guerilla warfare strategy of the North Vietnamese Army and its Vietcong ally during the height of the guerilla war in South Vietnam (1966-7). Given the necessity for a major American COIN strategy, inevitably one must ask why the military and Lyndon B. Johnson's inner circle neglected to adopt such a strategy.

I will take a multi-level analysis through the models of the cognitive perspective on analogical reasoning in individual decision-making, organizational behavior, and bureaucratic politics to examine military and civilian decision-making. I will present empirical evidence from before and during the height of the guerilla war in the south that will prove pivotal for understanding the U.S. loss in that military interaction. Collectively, these explanations will explain why Head Commander General Westmoreland's army failed to perceive a need for a different ground war strategy and why LBJ and

his civilian policy makers failed to act decisively once they perceived the existing strategy's failure.

I hope to further strengthen the validity of the Strategic Interaction Theory for application to past, present, and future asymmetric conflicts. Second, I aim to demonstrate how a multi-level analysis is imperative to comprehensively and accurately evaluate an intricate case study like the Vietnam War, as opposed to relying solely upon the traditional rational actor model or merely Janis' speculative Groupthink theory, for example.

This discussion is important for policy because it demonstrates that the United States and other strong states all need to develop flexible and innovative military strategies for defeating antagonistic, non-democratic weak states likely to employ indirect attacks that traditionally render conventional forces ineffective. By following the warnings of the SIT, security policy-makers can seriously attempt to institutionalize strategies and mindsets of politicians and military leaders that favor unconventional warfare in asymmetric conflicts. If the United States can make such adaptations early in an asymmetric conflict, then it is less susceptible to political vulnerabilities that loom larger with time such as domestic public pressures for quick results with minimal pain and pressure to comply with international norms by not resorting to indiscriminate killing of civilians. In my conclusion, I will apply this issue to the U.S.-led coalition against the Taliban regime, where the Bush administration appears to be applying the lessons of the most infamous asymmetric conflict in history, the Vietnam War.

Part One: Did the United States Need A Major Counter-Insurgency Strategy?

Overview of the History of Guerilla Warfare Strategy

The Vietnam War involved four military interactions between the United States and North Vietnam: (1) Operation Rolling Thunder (1965-8); (2) Main-Force Units War (1965-9); (3) the Guerilla War in the South I (1965-73); and (4) the Guerilla War in the South II (Arreguin-Toft 113). The U.S. lost all of these interactions except the Main-Force Units War. By 1966, the U.S. conventional forces were so superior in troop mobility and firepower that they were enormously successful at destroying the conventional forces of the NVA and VC in such engagements as Operation Starlite in August 1965 and the Battle of Ia Drang in October 1965 (Arreguin-Toft 114). What is important for our purposes is to know that the North Vietnamese leadership soon realized that its conventional forces were too weak to stand a chance in the Main-Force Units War and strategic innovation was imperative. Vietnamese General Thanh and his advisors decided to shift their resources to South Vietnam and focus more on a guerilla warfare

strategy in which Hanoi would militarily engage with the U.S. on its terms (Arreguin-Toft 116). Throughout the Vietnam War, the NVA had two distinct armies prepared to oppose the American forces: One army trained to fight a direct/conventional war (VPLA/PAVN main-forces) and the other trained to fight an indirect, guerilla war (VPLA and VC guerilla-militias), (Arreguin-Toft 119). In the years 1966 and 1967, this shift would lead to the height of the Guerilla War in the South I and eventually an American loss. This military interaction is characterized as a U.S. direct attack (generally conventional warfare) versus NVA/VC indirect defense (GWS). After my presentation on the Strategic Interaction Theory, I will substantiate the importance of the direct/indirect distinction on the ultimate U.S. defeat in the military interaction.

For the guerilla war, the U.S. military devised a strategy of attrition in which the tactic of choice was search-and-destroy. This tactic consists of conventional army forces receiving intelligence of the enemy position and then engaging with enemy forces to ultimately destroy them (Addington 97). Large-scale search-and-destroy engagements include Operation Cedar Falls (January 1967) and Operation Junction City (February-May 1967), (Westmoreland 72). Ideally, search-and-destroy operations would wear down North Vietnam's will so severely that it would concede defeat and meet the demands of the United States and its South Vietnam ally. Far from ideal, however, both sides suffered numerous casualties and the VC slowly acquired the strategic edge because American soldiers relied on air and artillery support that resulted in significant injury and death to Vietnamese civilians (Arreguin-Toft 116).

Ultimately, the NVA/VC forces defeated the United States in the Guerilla War in the South. Dr. Andrew Krepinevich argues that the outcome is primarily due to a U.S. tactical doctrine in which military forces are trained to fight an adversary with conventional units using massive firepower and not an enemy relying on protracted warfare (Hess).

In basic terms, GWS is the coordination of resistance forces from a populace intended to inflict costs on a strong actor using conventional forces without the forces having to engage in direct confrontation. Such costs as the loss of soldiers, resources, self-confidence, and the prolonging a conflict are all intended to crush the attacker's will to fight (Arreguin-Toft 103). For an insurgent, time is an ally because it allows him to consolidate his strength while frustrating the enemy to resort to barbarism (Krepinevich 8). Many Vietnam War scholars are well aware of France's destruction at the hands of Vietnamese GWS in the Indochina War (1950-4). What is little known, however, is that the Vietnam's history of guerilla warfare against powerful outsiders (China, France, the United States) may have begun as early as the 10th century A.D. (Addington 5). Thus, after centuries of fighting protract-

ed wars, the risks and sacrifices of GWS became second nature to the Vietnamese well before the Indochina War.

Initiating a GWS requires physical sanctuary, political sanctuary, psychological unity among the guerillas, and a population sympathetic to the cause of the guerilla movement (Arreguin-Toft 113). In regards to physical sanctuary, ninety-five percent of the Vietnamese population in the early 1960s lived on only twenty-percent of the land; therefore, the VC could use much of the unoccupied land to build secret underground tunnels for shelter and protection (Addington 2). For political sanctuary, the borders of Laos and Cambodia enabled VC to receive new supplies and guerillas. The guerillas were united by North Vietnam leader Ho Chi Minh's dream of a unified Vietnam. This coincides with the sympathizers among the South Vietnamese whose causes ranged from the pursuit of a united Vietnam, resisting dependence on an American outsider directly and indirectly responsible for massive civilian deaths, and bitter revenge toward the Saigon regime for its corruption, incompetence, and feebleness (97). Many South Vietnamese served as guerilla reinforcements or provided the communists with intelligence on American and ARVN plans and positions (97). Overall, the NVA and VC fought the Guerilla War in the South primarily on its terms and took advantage of its remarkable and long-established ability to withstand devastating casualties and to sacrifice community infrastructure while patiently waiting for its enemy to completely lose the will to wage war. GWS enabled the communist forces to cope well with Westmoreland's ground strategy of attrition and search-and-destroy operations. After the death of a top general in the summer of 1967, the NVA decided to take advantage of its ability to replenish its guerillas through its protracted warfare strategy and launch the devastating and hellish Tet Offensive in late January 1968.

Strategic Interaction Theory

It is absolutely essential to discuss the relevant components of the Strategic Interaction Theory (SIT) and Arreguin-Toft's statistical study for two main reasons. First, the SIT serves as the theoretical and statistical basis for criticism of the United States' failure to adopt a major COIN strategy in the Guerilla war in South Vietnam. Second, the SIT serves as the underlining theoretical inspiration for applying a multi-level analysis to the military and civilian failures in decision-making.

The exact definition of an asymmetric conflict is "the threshold of asymmetry that matters is greater than or equal to 5:1 in favor of strong actors, where power is the halved product of a strong actor's armed forces and population at the start of a conflict versus the simple product of the weak actor's armed forces and population" (Arreguin-Toft 97). Beginning with

Thucydides, classical realism theory has asserted that the stronger power wins war and thus should almost always win an asymmetric conflict. However, Ivan Arreguin-Toft examined all asymmetric wars from 1800 to 1998 and concluded that weak actors won thirty percent of all asymmetric wars and have an increased frequency of victory over time (Arreguin-Toft 97).

Arreguin-Toft's Strategic Interaction Theory is the best existing predictor of asymmetric war outcomes. The SIT argues that strong actors are more likely to win same approach (direct v. direct or indirect v. indirect) military interactions and lose opposite-approach (direct v. indirect) military interactions (Arreguin-Toft 91). In same-approach military interactions, the objectives, values, and requirements for victory are nearly equal between the strong and weak actors so the strong actor's superior power is the prime variable granting it victory (121). However, opposite-approach military interactions, give a weak actor the advantage because a strong actor's power advantage is repelled and it resorts to a trade-off of values for time and consequently delay the accomplishment of military objectives (121). Inevitably, domestic and international pressures heighten political vulnerability for the strong actor and it suffers defeat.

What is important for my forthcoming analysis on the Vietnam War, are four key data results that validate Arreguin-Toft's SIT. First, he examined asymmetric war outcomes from 1800-1998 and found they had a statistically significant correlation with his SIT. Second, in these asymmetric wars, strong actors won seventy-six percent of all same-approach interactions while weak actors won an astonishing sixty-three percent of all opposite-approach interactions. Third, the fundamental causal mechanism of SIT is time and same-approach interactions lasted approximately 2.69 years while opposite-approach interactions lasted approximately 4.86 years. Fourth, both opposite-approach interactions and strong-actor defeats have increased over time (Arreguin-Toft 111-2).

The lone competing asymmetric conflict theory is Alexander Mack's promising, but nonetheless flawed Interest Asymmetry Theory. In a 1975 *World Politics* article, Mack argued that the determining factor in the outcome of an asymmetric conflict is an actor's relative interest and resolve (Mack 175-200). Furthermore, he contends that vast difference in power between actors explains the difference in interest such that the greater the difference in relative power, the less determined and consequently, the more politically vulnerable strong actors are (179). Since the weak actor's survival is likely at stake, it has more resolve and therefore less political vulnerability. Thus, when there is an unanticipated delay in victory, a strong state becomes increasingly susceptible to a war-weary public or irritated elites that force it to retreat instead of meeting its objectives.

Arreguin-Toft notes at least three flaws in Mack's Interest Asymmetry

Theory. First, relative interest is an inadequate predictor of relative interest and resolve in an asymmetric war because a strong state can rationalize that its national security is in jeopardy when it is not (Arreguin-Toft 98). In addition, when an asymmetric conflict of secondary importance escalates, a strong state's will to win can increase significantly. Second, Mack's theory fails to explain why some asymmetric conflicts end quickly, while others carry on (98). Third, as long as relative power is held constant, the IAT assumes that there is little to no change in the distribution of asymmetric conflict outcomes (99). Arreguin-Toft's data findings above clearly contradict this assumption. In sum, the SIT clearly compensates for IAT's shortcomings.

Admittedly, Arreguin-Toft's analysis is limited because data from civil wars with no clear record on the number of forces and adopted strategies were not included (the defects though were statistically controlled), (Arreguin-Toft 112). Also, the traditional rule of thumb from psychology experiments applies here: Correlation does not equate with causality. Despite these minor flaws, the data results noted above proves that SIT is quite necessary and sufficient to continue onward with my analysis on the Vietnam War.

Westmoreland's Flawed Ground Strategy: The Warning Signs

From 1965-1968 MACV Head Commander General William C. Westmoreland was the primary proponent, defender, and architect of the attrition strategy and its tactic of choice, search-and-destroy. He controlled all of the segments of the Army, oversaw the U.S. military advisory and assistance to the ARVN, and managed the Allied divisions in South Vietnam (Addington 98). Westmoreland defined his conception of the attrition strategy in his September 1965 mission statement to the DOD, entitled "Concept of Operations in the Republic of Vietnam" (94). In the report, he stated that the objective of search-and-destroy operations was for large units of American troops to initiate combat with large units of the NVA/VC soldiers under conditions that allow the Americans to utilize its superiority with mobile troops, massive firepower, and helicopters (Gallucci 115-6). The key determinant for success was a high body count and kill ratio (enemy kills per American killed). Success, however, was contingent upon three factors that would reflect the tragic flaws in the ground war strategy. First, Westmoreland and his staff must receive accurate estimates of enemy casualties. Second, the operations must hinder the enemy's ability to strengthen its troops with reinforcements. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the American troops must compel the enemy's big units to reveal itself and engage in battle (Krepinevich 167).

The first warning sign that Westmoreland's attrition strategy would be

ineffective in defeating North Vietnam came from the conclusions of a war game conducted by the JCS named SIGMA 11-65 (Addington 94). The first conclusion was that the U.S. forces would face extreme complications with S&D operations whenever the enemy refused to reveal itself and fight and if it had easy access to shelter in Cambodia or Laos (94). Second, under such circumstances, the communist enemy could likely sustain and replace casualties (94). Third, a war of attrition that is prolonged due to these difficulties would be likely to tire out the U.S. forces before the communist forces (94).

An analysis of the actual reports from the battlefields at the end of 1966 confirmed the three grave implications from SIGMA-II-65. Furthermore, NVA/VC troops, rather than Allied forces, initiated approximately eighty-eight percent of the battles provoked by the Allied forces (Krepinevich 188). In approximately sixty-six percent of these cases, the communist forces maintained their positions in bunkers and trenches while the Allied forces moved in to face rapid fire (Addington 99). Moreover, although the U.S.-led forces accomplished the annihilation of enemy forces and supplies through countrywide sweeps, many more enemy forces and bases remained undiscovered (99). A May 23, 1967 CIA report states that despite "increasingly effective" S&D operations, North Vietnam continued to expand its main force units from reinforcements within the South Vietnamese population and will do so during 1968 as well (McNamara 238). Thus, the "Vietnam Quagmire" begins to solidify.

An additional criticism of the search-and-destroy operations was that the reliance on producing a massive casualty total destabilized the U.S. pacification efforts for the South Vietnamese population (Gallucci 117). In other words, S&D's military goals subordinated the primary political goal of garnering the support of the South Vietnamese by keeping the communist forces away from the populated regions (116). The standard operating procedure for S&D operations of air and artillery strikes to "clear out" landing areas for large unit troops arriving by helicopter failed to discriminate between South Vietnamese villager and communist guerilla (118). Therefore, the U.S. clearly alienated potential allies among the South Vietnamese population when a DOD report stated that in 1966, "Some sixty-five percent of the total tonnage of bombs and artillery rounds used in Vietnam was expended against places where the enemy might be, but without reliable information that he was there" (118).

Despite the overall failures of Westmoreland's S&D operations, admittedly the head commander did face major political, geographical, and operational constraints on the use of the combat forces he commanded (Gibbons 169). For example, the infamous Pentagon Papers report that JFK and LBJ often chose partial military measures, despite military officials advising that the measures were effective only when adopted completely (Smith).

Although the border areas of Cambodia and Laos were vital for the communist forces to seek shelter, resources, and reinforcements, LBJ did not allow U.S. ground forces to conduct operations there. Furthermore, the Saigon government consistently demonstrated that it was too corrupt and incompetent to protect its own people so the U.S. did not have the luxury of a reliable ally (Arreguin-Toft 118).

Moreover, in the defense of the MACV, during the course of the guerilla war in the south, Westmoreland and the U.S. military did employ two strategic innovations known as the Strategic Hamlets and the Phoenix programs (Arreguin-Toft 118). The former was intended to relocate villagers to fortified hamlets and damage VC intelligence and resource networks (Thompson 213). However, the program was rarely conducted efficiently and as a result, many villagers forced to leave their homes began to support the VC, funds and resources intended to go to the hamlets were embezzled by corrupt Saigon officials, and American television audiences became angered at the mistreatment of the Vietnamese peasants (Arreguin-Toft 118). As far as the Phoenix program, it was the U.S. military's most effective strategic program at disrupting VC attempts to continue its GWS in South Vietnam (Herring 232). However, the destruction of VC intelligence and leadership was at the expense of resorting to barbarism and killing civilians (Arreguin-Toft 118).

The Alternative Ground-War Strategy: The U.S. Marines' Enclave Strategy and Its COIN Tactics

Dr. Andrew Krepinevich, an army officer serving in Vietnam, explains that to defeat an insurgent, a strong state's COIN forces must minimize his access to the manpower, resources, and intelligence of the population (Krepinevich 11). Guerilla-militias cannot sustain their operations without food supply, popular support, and information on the position and intentions of the opposing forces. If military forces attempt to oppose guerilla-militias with conventional military tactics, Krepinevich argues that they will operate according to the favorable terms of the insurgency for two main reasons (11). First, since the guerillas are not fighting for control over territory, they have no need to engage in battle (11). Second, the guerillas possess the initiative as long as the government forces seek to engage with the guerilla units instead of sealing off access to the population (11). The political goal of both the government forces and the guerillas is to win over the population and this cannot be fully realized until the population is secured and under control.

U.S. Marine officers likely had a strategy the U.S. Army could have adopted broadly that was capable of effectively securing Saigon's base areas,

denying VC/NVA forces access to the South Vietnamese, and destroying the communists' infrastructure (Krepinevich 13). This "Enclave Strategy" (or ink-stain strategy) concentrated American resources developing imitations of the sophisticated Marine Combined Action Platoon (CAP), which are small units intended to settle in populated areas and garner the trust and loyalty of the South Vietnamese villagers (Addington 98). The CAP program combined military and political goals by focusing on pacification operations so as not to alienate a population in which many were sympathetic to the communists.

In his memoir, *A Soldier's Report*, General Westmoreland admits, "In what may be called a pacification approach to anti-insurgency warfare, the marines achieved some noteworthy results, particularly with one of the more ingenious innovations developed in South Vietnam, the Combined Action Platoon" (Westmoreland 166). However, he contends that, "I simply had not enough numbers to put a squad of Americans in every village and hamlet; that would have been fragmenting resources and exposing them to defeat in detail" (Westmoreland 166). He argued that the only viable alternative was search-and-destroy, which is certainly suspect after all the flaws on this tactic noted above. Yet, Krepinevich presents convincing information in his book, *The Army and Vietnam*, maintaining that securing the populated areas via the enclave strategy would have been less costly in human and financial terms and thus granting Westmoreland the conditions that can favor a larger COIN ground strategy (Hess 291). Viewed under this harsh light, MACV officials never solved the major strategic problem of Vietnam being not one war but several quite different wars combined into one (Berman 48). In his memoirs, Westmoreland admits that, "Although the U.S. Army had anticipated guerilla warfare...the Army failed to pay sufficient attention to a combination of guerillas, local forces, and invading regular troops" (Westmoreland 414).

Admittedly, the Marines' inkblot strategy had three major disadvantages. First, the strategy could achieve success only in the long term and time favored the VC (Arreguin-Toft 116). Second, CAPs were never given the chance to make a difference because Westmoreland chose not to institute the programs on a grand scale (Brush). Westmoreland spread the CAPs too thinly and ordered the Marines to move northward away from populated areas when the U.S. learned of a large North Vietnam buildup in the Demilitarized Zone (Brush). Third, CAP may have been militarily effective, but its success only demonstrated the inability of Saigon to protect its population (Arreguin-Toft 116). Nonetheless, the marines had the ground war strategy that could flexibly respond to the conditions of the guerilla war in South Vietnam far better than their army counterpart could (Gallucci 120).

The overview of the guerilla war in the South and evaluation of the

GWS, attrition, and enclave ground strategies provides the empirical justification for analyzing key American decision-makers' failure to adopt a major COIN strategy. Meanwhile, the Strategic Interaction Theory on asymmetric conflict provides the theoretical justification for this analysis. We now have the foundation and driving force we need to delve into four key puzzles in U.S. decision-making during the Vietnam War.

Part Two: Why The U.S. Failed to Adopt a Major Counter-Insurgency Strategy

Realists assume that one can view a nation-state as simply a "black box" and the international system as "billiards balls" because domestic political and military processes are too difficult to understand and unnecessary to explain external behavior. However, Ole R. Holsti argues that, "Power plays a central role in classical realism, but the correlation between the relative power balance and political outcomes is often less than compelling, suggesting the need to enrich analyses with other variables" (Holsti 16-7). To understand the U.S. failure to adopt an effective COIN strategy against North Vietnam, I am compelled to utilize three major decision making models: Cognitive, Organizational Behavior, and Bureaucratic Politics.

Level One: Cognitive Perspective On Analogical Reasoning In Individual Decision-making

The overall impression from international politics literature—that foreign policy is primarily theory-driven policymakers have preconceived notions that they bring to the proverbial decision-making table that take precedent over objective empirical data—is supported by experimental and case study evidence (Tetlock 494). Clearly important to theory-driven foreign policy-making is analogical reasoning to define novel problems in terms of familiar ones. Alexander George and Robert Jervis are among several political scientists examining case studies to demonstrate how political leaders have applied historical analogies to justify their present policies (496). The problem here lies in decision-makers relying on oversimplified, trivial, and biased historical analogies. Experimental and case study evidence exposes policymakers often choosing from an often limited range of options and often drawing hasty generalizations that disregard the differences between the circumstances in the past from that of the present situation (497). Finally, policymakers often neglect to create a synthesis of several useful historical analogies or draw up contingent criteria, but rather prefer a nearly universal generalization (497). This phenomenon appears to be a tendency where an individual chooses between two theories, but pays attention only to data that one of the theories cannot sufficiently explain (Jervis 481).

Yuen Foong Khong argues that historical analogies are desirable to decision-makers because they provide reassurance by familiarizing an intimidating new problem, normative underpinnings for a solution, and help to predict the future (8). Political scientists have argued that historical analogies are especially important to policymakers under conditions of conflicting and ambiguous information (Khong 165). Certainly then, the chaotic episodes of the Vietnam War provide precisely the conditions for key decision makers to rely on historical analogies. I will focus on the historical analogies JFK, LBJ, and Westmoreland relied on during the Vietnam conflict.

As mentioned in Section VII, JFK was clearly concerned over the threats GWS posed on U S conventional military forces and consequently ordered the research and development of "flexible response" COIN solutions. Both Walt Rostow and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. argue that Kennedy was quite familiar with the French military's significant inability to oppose the Vietnamese GWS in the Indochina War and wanted to avoid repeating France's mistakes in escalating Vietnam conflict (Khong 88). In February 1961, Kennedy asked the JCS what plans they learned from other nations with conducting COIN training for their militaries. The chiefs replied that they had examined the British experience in Malaya and the French experience in the Indochina War (Khong 83). The Pentagon Papers reports that the JCS indeed adopted COIN models from the 'Malaya analogy' to implement the ineffective Strategic Hamlets program. National Security Action Memorandum No. 111 dated November 22, 1961 proposes that the U.S.,

"Provide such increased economic aid as may be required to permit the GVN to pursue a vigorous flood relief and rehabilitation program, to supply material in support of the security efforts, and to give priority to projects in support of this expanded counter-insurgency program" ("National Security").

When Johnson became president after Kennedy's assassination in November 1963, why then did not he continue his predecessor's focus on the connection with France's experience with the GWS in the Indochina War? At least a partial answer derives from LBJ's skepticism about the French connection and his subsequent preference for the military options of the "Korea analogy" (88). LBJ likely adopted this analogy to demonstrate that the Vietnam War was a war of infiltration by Hanoi's NRV against the South and that the successful conventional military intervention in Korea could effectively be applied with this dilemma (172). Secretary of State Dean Rusk and his Assistant Secretary of State for the Far East William Bundy reinforced LBJ's satisfaction applying the "Korea analogy" to the Vietnam War, as they both advocated that communist aggression must be defeated with immediate force so it would not be more difficult to oppose over time (161). LBJ was haunted by repeating "the mistake of withdrawing of our forces from South

Korea and then our immediate reaction to the Communist aggression of 1950" by not taking aggression action against North Vietnam (171).

During the Korean War, the U.S. military followed the Conventional Army Concept by emphasizing massive firepower and an attrition strategy against North Korean and Chinese troops (Krepinevich 17). American military response in the Korean War was proportionate in order to prevent the limited war from escalating to a nuclear war with China. Therefore, the "Korea analogy" was especially gratifying to LBJ because of evidence of his concern about proportionality (Khong 86). The "Korea analogy" may have been an appropriate fit during the main-force units war interaction (remember it was a direct versus direct military approach) the U.S. would ultimately win. However, when North Vietnam strategically innovated and focused more troops and resources in the guerilla war in South Vietnam, MACV ought to have severed ties with the analogy.

The "Korea analogy" was not unopposed in the State Department. Under Secretary of State George Ball was a major opponent of applying the "Korea analogy" to the Vietnam War and voiced his concerns in a 1964 memorandum to several members of LBJ's inner circle (Khong, "Seduction" 115). The most important point he makes in the memo is that the Korean War was a case of clear invasion while in South Vietnam, the situation is instead gradual infiltration primarily by South Vietnamese peasants sympathetic to the communist movement (Khong 515). Nonetheless, Ball did not convince LBJ and his inner circle of advisers to discard the lessons of the Korean War and the Conventional Army Concept institutionalized in the mindsets of many U.S. military officials. The outcome of Ball's compelling memo appears to be a good example of what Alexander George calls the "institutionalization of the Devil's Advocate" (195) Examining this issue further, however, is beyond the scope of this paper and I will thus move onward.

Westmoreland reconciled his perception of the insurgency of the Vietnam War with the Conventional Army Concept by relying on an American Civil War analogy (Krepinevich 167). He viewed the Vietnam War as a war of movement analogous to the Civil War and believed that if he applied standard Army operations like Union General Ulysses S. Grant, he too would be victorious (167). In an interview, Westmoreland stated, "You 'homed' on the enemy as in the Civil War and tried to bring the enemy to combat. Once you've done that, then you regroup, move, and continue to try and find the enemy and force him to combat" (167). Therefore, this Civil War analogy was a motivator in Westmoreland advocating for S&D operations from the pre-1965 advisory era to the era of intervention. Section V highlights the failures of such operations. A further unfortunate consequence of this flawed historical analogy was that Westmoreland and Army leadership rejected the argument from GWS expert Sir Robert Thompson to concen-

trate troops and resources to destroying the local guerilla-militias because they were strengthening North Vietnam's main-force units (168). Instead, Westmoreland argued that the situation was the inverse: the main-force units were aiding the local guerilla-militias-despite a 1966 Pentagon study estimating that VC resource requirements outside of South Vietnam totaled a miniscule twelve tons daily (168). Notice that this miscalculation is quite similar to the mistake LBJ made by relying on the flawed "Korea analogy."

Level Two: Organizational Behavior

In regards to the relevance of organizational behavior to political processes, Holsti writes, "Organizational norms and memories, prior policy commitments, normal organizational inertia routines, and standard operating procedures may shape and perhaps distort the structuring of problems, channeling of information, use of expertise, and implementation of executive decisions" (68). Primary ownership over a narrow set of responsibilities fosters organizational parochialism that is increased by such factors as exclusive access to information, tenure of individuals within the organization, and the distribution of rewards by the organization (Allison 421). Organizational action driven by SOPs that limit flexibility and rationality can harvest short-sighted, inside-the-box biases that lead to actions not in the best interest of the unitary actor (Sagan). Krepinevich's central thesis is that the United States Army was neither trained nor organized to effectively meet the demands of an indirect, guerilla war (Hess 291).

The key to evaluating Krepinevich's thesis is to understand how the United States military evolved over the course of the 20th Century and the two World Wars to adopt the "Blitzkrieg pattern" (Arreguin-Toft 116). In this direct attack military approach, success is measured by the ability to create and deploy armed forces with the highest standards of military technology and high volumes of firepower designed to annihilate the enemy's forces without suffering heavy casualties (106). As a result of this evolution, Krepinevich refers to the institutionalized Conventional Army Concept (CAC), as "the product of an organizational character that has evolved over time and that, because of its high regard for tradition, has become deeply imbedded in the service's psyche" (Krepinevich 4). Organizational behavior expert Scott Sagan concurs with this contention, arguing that military officers are more likely to advocate preventive war because they are trained on pure military logic, have shortsighted viewpoint, and are offensive-minded and decisive (Sagan).

The gallant victories of World Wars I, II, and the Korean War solidified the CAC and conversely dispelled the Army's experience in guerilla warfare from the Revolutionary War and the Philippine Insurrection (Krepinevich

5). Until the Vietnam War, the CAC had never failed the U.S. military so if the conventional war strategy ain't broke, most Army officials assumed, why fix it? Since general organizational behavior is to only bring about change incrementally, aside from budgetary constraints, only dramatic failure of procedures and option selections during a major crisis can bring about substantial change (Allison 412).

Once the CAC is institutionalized, two key standard operating procedures hinder the U.S. military's ability for a flexible response in an asymmetric conflict. First, troops, equipment, and training techniques are all closely integrated in the military organization and to disrupt the uniformity is financially and logistically difficult (Arreguin-Toft 106). Second, the concept justifies the prioritization of a military strategy that can succeed in a direct confrontation with the greatest threat to national security: America's Cold War nemesis, the Soviet Union (Arreguin-Toft 107). This "worst-case" threat became the threat of choice for a military almost oblivious to the virtues of COIN warfare (Krepinevich 5).

The rigidity and reassurance of the CAC provides the foundation for the answer to why Westmoreland and his staff persisted in continuing an undeniably flawed attrition strategy. The impact of CAC on organizational behavior can further explain why JFK's focus on COIN strategy and not repeating the French mistakes in the Indochina War were not completely adopted by LBJ and the MACV staff. Since JFK voiced such concerns in 1961, the army had tolerated, but never seriously adopted the COIN "fad" and "flexible response" rhetoric among the civilian decision-makers in the White House (Gallucci 119).

Furthermore, the impact of CAC on the military's organizational behavior can explain why Westmoreland and other Army officials refused to adopt the Marine's counterinsurgency enclave strategy. Westmoreland notes in his memoirs that he was well-aware of the merits of the operation. Therefore, most of the Army leadership appears to have actively rejected unconventional strategies on their face. It was standard operating procedure for MACV division commanders to exchange advice on improving tactics and strategy (Gallucci 126). However, the options were often contradictory and since the crude indicators of kill ratios and body counts met the standards of success for the military, the important differences were not reconciled (Gallucci 126). The JCS tended to neglect the unconventional Special Forces and COIN-trained Marines units because their operations would deplete funds and resources for search-and-destroy operations (Komer 56). Robert L. Gallucci notes,

"Even the army's own Special Forces, whose mission was redefined in the early sixties to that of a small elite counterinsurgency unit designed to operate in cooperation

with indigenous troops, was shunned by the army establishment" (Gallucci 119).

In fact, an army field pamphlet for "Counter-Guerilla Operations" devote a mere paragraph to Special Forces and placed it between longer passages on communications and military dogs (Gallucci 119).

For Westmoreland and his supporters, to acknowledge the efficacy of Marine efforts at pacification would force them to deny the appropriateness of the Conventional Army Concept and ignore the rich tradition of historical successes for the U.S. Army (Brush). Therefore, this necessity to maintain a global characterization demonstrates that Westmoreland rejected contingency theory's proposal to identify the situational boundary conditions to determine which type of characterization is most appropriate.

Level Three: Bureaucratic Politics

The major premise of the bureaucratic politics model is that complex organizations like a White House administration are characterized by politicians and departments with competing, and at times antagonistic, perceptions, values, and interests because of parochialism and attitudes based on "where you stand is where you sit" (Holsti 26). The consequences of bureaucratic political games can place numerous constraints on how issues are defined, the breadth of options evaluated, and how lower-ranked officials act on decisions from the executive leadership (Holsti 26). Bureaucratic politics are defined by quid pro quo politicking for resources, responsibilities, and undertakings resolved by compromise rather than merit-based analysis (Holsti 26). Thus, decision outcomes in the bureaucratic politics model are a combined result of compromise, coalition, competition, confusion, and foul ups (Allison 421).

Together we have reached the point where we seek an answer to, "Why didn't the civilian decision-makers in Lyndon B. Johnson's inner circle immediately recognize and sufficiently resolve the weakness in the military's predominant attrition strategy?" I believe that two key bureaucratic constraints will give a sound explanation to this perplexing question. Collectively, they paved the way for the malfunctions of the advisory process Alexander George warns about in *Presidential Decisionmaking*. By no means is the evidence I highlight the only examples of bureaucratic constraints hindering the civilians' check on the military's operations. The literature is enormous and one could not possibly account for everything due to the imposed page limits.

Military Versus Civilians Over the Attrition Strategy

In the beginning of the Vietnam War in 1965, McNamara undoubtedly supported the attrition strategy of Westmoreland (Addington 162). Yet, upon receiving the startling results of the SIGMA-II-65 war game, by 1967 McNamara offered recommendations that strongly challenged Westmoreland's rationale for S&D operations (Krepinevich 184). Notice however that the challenges to S&D were merely recommendations. There was a heated conflict between McNamara and the JCS since he led the reorganization of the Pentagon and extended greater civilian control over the military (Komer 53). Instead of the often healthy inter-service rivalry within the military, the JCS often formed a united front when the military was at odds with McNamara and his "Whiz Kids."

Therefore, McNamara often walked a tightrope with Westmoreland and other military officials that required him to choose his battles wisely. His major role with the strategic bombing campaign of Operation Rolling Thunder significantly limited his ability to reform the attrition ground strategy. The Secretary of Defense persuaded LBJ to disregard JCS recommendations and focus on limited bombing campaigns. Once McNamara concluded that Rolling Thunder was ineffective and advised the President to order a pause in the bombing, he already had the explicit opposition from Westmoreland, the JCS, and Admiral Sharp (commander of the Pacific fleet), (Addington 95). Thus, McNamara could not face the political consequences of intensifying this opposition with top military officials over the air bombing strategy with commands to reform their ground war strategy as well.

Civilian-military precedents further constrained McNamara and Johnson's ability to counter Westmoreland. Alexander George claims that, "In contrast to the practice of some other armies, U.S. theatre commanders had always been given considerable freedom to decide on tactical operations in the field" (Gallucci 128). There is evidence that McNamara failed to aggressively intervene in the attrition strategy because of his lack of military experience and lack of presidential support as he and LBJ grew more frequently at odds by mid-1967 (128). The bargaining power for a president and secretary of defense relative to top military officials is not as high during wartime because the military's political potency rises as it nearly monopolizes the instruments for waging war (Komer 68).

Thus, Westmoreland had rising political potency and dominated the instruments for waging war in Vietnam. His MACV was LBJ's major source for intelligence, which is unfortunate because numerous sources blame the MACV for grossly underestimating the strength of the guerilla-militias (Adams 15). MACV intelligence estimated that by late 1967, there were 241,000 VPLA troops consisting of 117,900 main force troops, 86,300

guerilla warriors, and 37,600 support personnel (Addington 107). Based on these numbers, the attrition strategy focusing mainly on main-force units was logical. However, a CIA analyst named Sam Adams claimed that Westmoreland significantly underestimated the number of VPLA guerillas, which he found to total an astonishing 600,000 men and women (Adams 18). President Johnson was well aware of the bickering between the MACV and the U.S. intelligence agencies, but appeared to keep the controversy under wraps and favored Westmoreland's estimates over Adams (Addington 108). Therefore, the false assumptions of the attrition strategy—that the NVA main-forces were primarily responsible for infiltrating South Vietnam and providing resources to guerillas and that the guerilla-militias numbers were dwindling—were perpetuated among LBJ and his inner circle.

Nonetheless, advocates within the military did attempt to earn LBJ's confidence and lobby for reform of the attrition strategy. Marine General Victor Krulak was the most articulate and outspoken proponent of the enclave strategy's ability to promote pacification to the South Vietnamese people (Brush). Krulak was a former special assistant for counterinsurgency to the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff so he was well aware of the important need for American COIN tactics. He felt that Westmoreland's strategy of attrition would fail because it fell into the clever strategic trap of North Vietnam's GWS. He bypassed an antagonistic Westmoreland to speak with President Johnson on his plan to adopt an enclave strategy for all of South Vietnam. After listening to Krulak's plan in the summer of 1966, he remarks that the President, "got to his feet, put his arm around my shoulder, and propelled me firmly toward the door" (Brush). Peter Brush explains that in the struggle between Westmoreland and Krulak for President Johnson's support, the head commander won in the end because of his fourth star and all the popularity with the press and public that came with it (Brush). Eventually the Marines gave up their attempts to more widely implement their pacification strategy and fell in line with the Army (Arreguin-Toft 106).

LBJ's Inner Circle and Communication Breakdown

The Pentagon Papers reports that President Johnson was leading a "split-level" executive branch; only LBJ's inner circle was aware of the President's daily decisions while important officials (such as Assistant Secretaries of State and Defense) outside the intimate circle were late to learn of any changes in his thinking (Smith). This top-down and bottom-up communication breakdown would prove to be damaging to LBJ's ability to influence the failing attrition ground war strategy. Pentagon analysts note that not only did LBJ's inner circle conceal important information and their objectives to the public—a fact that the American public is well-aware of today—but it withheld

the true intentions behind sensitive written memos or actions from the White House bureaucracy (Smith). One Pentagon commentator appointed by McNamara to assist with the DOD account remarks, "The lesson in this is that the rationales given in such pieces of paper (intended for fairly wide circulation among the bureaucracy, as opposed to tightly held memoranda limited to those closest to the decision maker) do not reliably indicate why recommendations were made the way they were" (qtd. in Smith).

Presently, I will highlight two examples of how this executive branch "split-level" communication breakdown affected LBJ's ability to recognize and reform the flaws in the attrition strategy from 1966 to 1967.

In March 1967, Alain Enthoven, assistant secretary for Systems Analysis under McNamara's department, was concerned over the merits of one of MACV's requests for additional troops and decided to send the Secretary of Defense two memos reporting some startling conclusions from studies this office had conducted. Enthoven concluded that there was no evidence of a correlation between troop requests by Westmoreland and an increase in the body count of the enemy (Gallucci 121). Moreover, confirming the field reports, Enthoven noted that the enemy had initiated eighty percent of the battles sparked by American S&D operations. However, the warnings remained unacknowledged until Westmoreland was finally replaced in March 1968. Enthoven would later remark that his office,

"carried on an unofficial, unsolicited, and small-scale effort consisting mainly of making a number of pilot studies on various aspects of the war... [w]ith one or two possible exceptions, the studies had no significant impact on major Vietnam decisions" (122).

Prompted by a January 1967 draft special presidential assistant Walt Rostow submitted to LBJ regarding future strategy in Vietnam, Undersecretary of State Nicholas B. Katzenbach submitted a report intended to demonstrate that Westmoreland was devoting far too many resources to his conventional attrition strategy (Gallucci 121). Katzenbach emphasized what he believed was the failure of the attrition strategy in the guerilla war in South Vietnam. He notes, "The claims of top U.S. military officials notwithstanding, the waging of a conventional war has overriding priority, perhaps as much as nine to one (as compared to pacification), according to the personal judgments of some U.S. advisors" (qtd. in Gallucci 122). If seriously evaluated by LBJ and his inner circle, this evidence could serve as a direct rebuttal to Westmoreland's claim that he did not have enough resources to expand the Marines' enclave strategy. However, this report failed to reform any policy. I must note, however, that Katzenbach's analysis was not comprehensive enough and did not provide a definitive prescription (Gallucci 121). Nonetheless, Krepinevich confirms Katzenbach's findings by reporting that during the last five months of 1966, MACV invested ninety-five percent of

its combat resources to S&D operations (Krepinevich 180).

Addressing Objections to the Bureaucratic Politics Model

Of the three levels of analysis I have presented, the bureaucratic politics model appears to be the most contentious. Stephen Krasner and others have argued that the bureaucratic politics model is misleading because it reduces the predominant role of the president and incorrectly implies that the values department chiefs place on policy outcomes is independent of the president (442). Furthermore, Krasner criticizes the bureaucratic politics model's claim that the "bureaucratic machine" is to blame for Vietnam rather than the ideologies of JFK and LBJ (452). Instead, he favors the rational actor model and concludes that neither organizational behavior nor bureaucratic parochialism are the fundamental factors in policy outcomes (447).

There is no denying that when it comes to major decision-making, the buck stops at the Oval Office. Nonetheless, bureaucratic politics can seriously constrain presidential decision-making when there are malfunctions in the advisory process (George 6). For example, LBJ and his inner circle were quite dependent on MACV reports to evaluate Westmoreland's attrition ground strategy from 1966-7. Moreover, on several occasions, the key assumptions and premises of various components of the ground war strategy were evaluated primarily by advocates of that option, rather than giving the dissidents a more prominent voice (George chp. 6).

There is one point where Krasner's arguments support my evidence of the constraints on the president's role in creating and reforming the ground war strategy. Krasner writes, "The only conclusion which can be drawn from the inability of the chief executive to fully control the implementation of a policy in which he was intensely interested and to which he devoted virtually all of his time for an extended period is that the risks were even greater than the president knew" (452). In fact, LBJ was primarily worried over containing the war and paid greatest attention to Operation Rolling Thunder against the NVA (Krepinevich 165). As long as the MACV limited its campaigns to S&D operations in South Vietnam, LBJ and McNamara would do their best not to interfere (165). Thus, Westmoreland and top army officials had significant autonomy over how they conducted the guerilla war in South Vietnam.

A Critique: The Rational Actor Model

In this perspective, the actor's value-maximizing decision results from the combination of the actor's values and goals, perceived alternative options, action, perceived sets of consequences from each of these options, and the net

valuation of each of these sets (Allison 402). The problem lies in the model's assumption that the actor is unitary and has one set of all these factors founded upon the same perception about the strategic problem and the same perception about the overall mission in solving that problem. As I have demonstrated, the segments of the military and the White House bureaucracy are both far from having unitary methods and concerns. The U.S. army intended to utilize its conventional superiority and break the will of the enemy through a swift war while the U.S. Marines focused more on earning the trust of the villagers and acknowledging the intricacies of the communist GWS. Despite glaring discrediting evidence, historical precedent in the Indochina War, and an awareness of the dangers of communist-led guerilla warfare, Westmoreland and others actively rejected unconventional strategies that may have been value-maximizing. The merits of the Strategic Interaction Theory were certainly present during the Vietnam War, but parochialism, decentralization, and communication breakdowns, resulted in the overall problem being cut up and parceled out to various organizations who acted with short-sighted lenses.

The rational actor model does correctly explain why the United States must give a conventional military strategy priority since the Soviet Union was its primary threat during the Cold War. However, before Nixon and Kissinger's attempt at détente and engagement with China in the 1970s, Chairman Mao's regime—the quintessential model for guerilla warfare—was also a major threat to the United States. Moreover, communist infiltrators from Havana, Hanoi, and other communist headquarters around the world adopted Mao's GWS and JFK was well aware of their collective threat to Free World Security. Therefore, the rational actor model fails to explain why the GWS threat—nearly as important of a concern as conventional war with the Soviets—was not taken seriously by the largest, best financed, most technologically-advanced military in the world.

Groupthink Model

Irving Janis' Groupthink argues that the rational-choice model and the bureaucratic politics model cannot fully explain group behavior and outcomes. In his 1982 account, "Escalation of the Vietnam War: How Could It Happen?" he relies solely upon Pentagon Paper accounts and the memoirs of some of the players in LBJ's inner circle. These two sources are quite suspect for his purposes. Frankly, the Pentagon Papers offer too fragmented an account to provide a coherent understanding of the interactions of the group because of its numerous inconsistencies and lack of an all-encompassing summary (Smith). How can Janis verify his speculation on the influential role the advisers had on LBJ choosing to escalate the war when the Pentagon

Papers lacks the section on secret gatherings of the president and his advisers during Johnson's administration (Smith)? Janis compensates here by relying on the accounts of Chester Cooper, J. Townsend Hoopes, James Thomson, Jr. and others that all likely have "biases of retrospection" that tamper with the analysis. Therefore, Janis himself admits that with the lack of concrete and sufficient evidence on policy deliberations between 1964 and 1968, he cannot determine whether his hypothesis even provides a partial explanation to the decisions for escalation (Janis 554).

Even assuming Janis had access to the new documented information released since his article was published nearly twenty years ago, he would need to move outside of the vacuum he created for the LBJ circle. Perhaps he would gain more credibility if he also focused on group analyses of Westmoreland and his associates in the military and the lower echelons of the executive bureaucracy to get a more comprehensive scope on the escalation decisions. In particular, a Groupthink analysis would be interesting to understand why Westmoreland's incorrect assertion that North Vietnam's main force units were supporting the local guerillas (I believe the reverse was actually the truth) was unopposed by such military officials as JCS Chairman Earle G. Wheeler and Army General Harold Johnson (Krepinevich 168). Regardless, if Janis would be successful, a group analysis explaining why policy-makers explicitly took measures to escalate the war will not explain why the civilian and military bureaucratic and organizational constraints existed in the first place. Of course, this is what I have pursued, most notably with understanding the U.S. military's routines in responding to the demands of a war.

A Vicious Domino Effect

As I mentioned in the Section IV, the key causal mechanism in the Strategic Interaction Theory is time. When there is a significant power inequality in an asymmetric conflict that infers a swift victory and when the direct versus indirect military interaction infers a prolonged war, growing political vulnerability is inevitable for the strong state (Arreguin-Toft 120). Therefore, even an effective COIN strategy to combat a GWS of a weak actor takes time and the delay may be unacceptable for a public that is unprepared to hang in for the long haul. Nonetheless, I wish to speculate that America's failure to adopt an effective major COIN strategy is a driving force (though certainly not the only force) that led to a vicious domino effect culminating in the 1973 withdrawal from Vietnam and the first U.S. military defeat in its history. This domino effect includes the escalation of U.S. military strategy to barbarism (indiscriminate killing of noncombatants), the heightening of anti-war movements (quite decentralized and antagonistic

and thus far from a united front) back home, and even criticism from such long-established allies as Great Britain and France. The SIT is wise to argue that political vulnerability does not hinder every case of a strong state ability to defeat a weak state; rather political vulnerability becomes a major constraint when there is an unforeseen delay between the deployment of troops and victory (121).

Thus, supported by SIT, it is not out of order to envision a major U.S. COIN strategy—ideally perceived as unambiguously effective domestically and internationally—that does not need to resort to barbarism and gives the military breathing room from domestic opposition despite heavy casualties. Addington writes, "Johnson's war policy would have probably survived the anti-war movement's demonstrations and arguments, and even benefited from some of its more outlandish behavior, had the war been seen by most Americans to be going well" (Addington 174). In fact, public opinion polls consistently demonstrated that most Americans opposed a complete and immediate abandonment of Vietnam and by a two-to-one margin favored a new and effective military policy that could salvage the South Vietnamese population (McNamara 252). How else could newly elected President Nixon in 1968 afford to continue U.S. operations in Vietnam and sustain heavy casualties for another five years? By no means can we definitely conclude that an effective COIN strategy could have sustained sufficient public support, despite the antagonistic domestic and international climates. Nonetheless, asking "What if?" is quite necessary to improve American political and military effectiveness in future asymmetric wars. This matter leads us to discussion on the current American military operations in Afghanistan.

Drawing Parallels With the U.S.-Led War in Afghanistan

The U.S.-led coalition war against the Taliban represents yet another asymmetric conflict between former allies (the U.S. and Vietnam were allies against the common enemy of Japan during WWII while the U.S. and Afghanistan were allies against the common enemy of the Soviet Union in the 1979 USSR invasion). When the U.S. began its military operations in Afghanistan in early October 2001, its military strategy appeared reminiscent of Vietnam once it began strategic bombing of Taliban "infrastructure." A careful observer may have a sense of *deja vu*: the U.S. actions in Afghanistan looked a lot like Operation Rolling Thunder in Vietnam from 1965-1968. Would the U.S. repeat its mistake of employing a conventional military strategy and resorting to barbarism to oppose an indirect, guerilla defensive strategy of the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and their allies?

Fortunately, it appears that the Bush administration and the United States military have learned and applied the key lessons of the Vietnam War.

First, Bush has prepared the American public for the long haul so as not to risk an unexpected delay in victory, despite America's vast technological and material advantage (Arreguin-Toft 123). Second, the U.S. has given a major role to Marine special operations forces specially equipped and trained for COIN operations. Daily accounts from the New York Times point out that the arrival of two Marine Expeditionary Units totaling 4,400 soldiers undoubtedly confirms the shift in the American ground war strategy away from strategic air bombing and proxy Afghan armies to topple the Taliban regime (Dao). The Marines, trained and equipped for both conventional ground combat and guerrilla-style warfare, became available not only for attacking Taliban troops but also for moving in small groups to pursue Osama bin Laden and his top aides across Afghanistan (Dao, New York Times). Finally, the military has employed tactics quite similar to the combined action platoons of Vietnam, in which Marines pursue a COIN strategy including Northern Alliance soldiers that patrol out in widening circles searching for Taliban and Al Qaeda forces in and around Kandahar.

A few years before the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent response from the U.S. and its allies, numerous political scientists and military experts had already warned of asymmetric warfare arising in the form of catastrophic terrorism and guerrilla warfare. These two forms of warfare are together characterized as the new "4th Generation Warfare" for the 21st century (Metz). Understanding the failures of civilian and military decision makers to overcome organizational, bureaucratic, and cognitive constraints during the Vietnam War can build awareness and eventually reform for present and future asymmetric conflicts. In his memoirs, McNamara wrote, "We failed then-as we have since-to recognize the limitations of modern, high-tech military equipment, forces, and doctrine in confronting unconventional, highly motivated people's movements" (245). The implications of Arreguin-Toft's Strategic Interaction Theory ought to be a major impetus for a renewed consciousness of the appropriate strategy and tactics for asymmetric conflict that deserves equal status with preparation for the major conventional wars the U.S. military is clearly so well-adapted for.

Abbreviations

ARVN - Army of the Republic of Vietnam
 CAC - Conventional Army Concept
 CAP - Combined Action Platoons
 COIN - Counterinsurgency
 DOD - Department of Defense
 GWS - Guerilla Warfare Strategy
 IAT - Interest Asymmetry Theory
 JCS-Joint Chiefs of Staff
 MACV - Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
 NVA - North Vietnamese Army
 PAVN - People's Army of Vietnam
 S&D - Search and Destroy
 SIT - Strategic Interaction Theory
 VC - Vietcong
 VPLA - Vietnamese People's Liberation Army

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INSUFFICIENT DISSENT:
REVISITING *BOWERS V. HARDWICK* AND
THE SEARCH FOR A LEGAL JUSTIFICATION
OF HOMOSEXUAL EQUALITY

Alex DiGiorgio

In February of this year, the Supreme Court of Massachusetts unanimously overturned the state's anti-sodomy laws, reducing the present number of states with similar regulations to fourteen. Without question, this move warrants the praise of all those who support the removal of these antiquated and often discriminatory legal provisions. Yet, as is often the case, the exercise of justice at one juncture makes its absence only more conspicuous at another, and despite the progress recently made in Massachusetts, inequities remain. Because of the 1986 Supreme Court ruling in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, citizens of more than a dozen states remain exposed to prosecution for engaging in private, consensual expressions of intimacy. This article not only critiques the *Hardwick* Court's majority opinion—and the flagrant prejudices espoused therein—but addresses more specifically the inadequacies of the Court's dissenting opinions and the subsequent failure of the American judiciary to endorse a legal justification of homosexual equality.

Introduction

On June 30, 1986, the United States Supreme Court affirmed the conviction of Michael Hardwick, an openly gay adult male who had been found guilty of violating a Georgia statute that criminalized sodomy.¹ A majority of the Court upheld the Georgia statute, declaring that the Constitution makes no guarantee for the rights of individuals "to engage in homosexual sodomy."²

In his dissenting opinion, Justice Blackmun begins by claiming that the case of *Bowers v. Hardwick* "is no more about a fundamental right to engage in homosexual sodomy... than *Stanley v. Georgia* ...was about a fundamental right to watch obscene movies..."³ Instead, Blackmun claims that the point at issue is an individual's constitutional right to privacy, citing Justice

DiGiorgio, a public policy editor of *Helvidius*, is a second-year student at Columbia College, Departments of Political Science and Human Rights