

U. S. Army Center for Military History

Recommended Professional Reading List

Cadets, Soldiers, Junior NCOs

Atkinson, Rick. *An Army at Dawn: The War in Africa, 1942-1943*. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. In this first volume of Rick Atkinson's highly anticipated Liberation Trilogy, the author shows why no modern reader can understand the ultimate victory of the Allied powers in May 1945 without a solid understanding of the events that took place in North Africa in 1942 and early 1943. Atkinson convincingly demonstrates that the first years of the Allied war effort was a pivotal point in American history, the moment when the United States began to act like a great military power, but he also chronicles without apology the many false steps taken before the new and untested American Army could emerge as a coherent and capable force.

Boot, Max. *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*. New York: Basic Books, 2002. A survey of American "small wars," this work focuses on Navy and Marine Corps actions in the 18th and 19th Centuries, broadening to include Army operations with the Philippine Insurrection of 1899 to 1902. Although there is little on the Army's role as a frontier constabulary, this is a well-written and thoughtfully reasoned account focusing on expeditionary warfare and the best available book on the subject.

Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*. New York: Norton, 1982. A classic of American literature, this Civil War novel depicts a Union soldier's terrifying baptism of fire and his ensuing transformation from coward to hero. Originally published in 1895, its vivid evocation of battle remains unsurpassed.

Constitution of the United States. Available on-line at URL:

www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution.html.

As soldiers and civilians we swear an oath to defend this document as the basis of our government and way of life. It is time to go back and read this classic expression of organizing and balancing human society and understand what you are swearing to "support and defend."

Hogan, David W. Jr. *Centuries of Service: The U.S. Army, 1775-2005*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2005. An easy-to-read and informative pamphlet that describes the many missions the U.S. Army has performed over the course of its history. The booklet covers America's wars as well as the Army's many operations other than war, including occupation, peacekeeping, nation building, exploration, civil administration, scientific research, and disaster relief. This pamphlet is a valuable introduction to American military history for the soldier and junior leader.

Keegan, John. *The Face of Battle*. New York: Penguin Books, 1985. One of the classics of modern military history, *The Face of Battle* brings to life three major battles: Agincourt (1415), Waterloo (1815), and the First Battle of the Somme (1916). The author describes the sights, sounds, and smells of battle, providing a compelling look at what it means to be a soldier and how hard it is to describe realistically the dynamics of combat.

Kindsvatter, Peter S. *American Soldiers: Ground Combat in the World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam*.

Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003. Historian Pete Kindsvatter, a combat veteran himself, uses the letters, memoirs, and novels written by other soldiers, along with official reports and studies, to detail the experience of soldiers from entry into military service through ground combat and its aftermath. Thoughtful discussions of leadership, the physical and emotional stresses of the battlefield, and the various ways soldiers try to cope with these stresses make this a valuable book for all those preparing to lead American soldiers in ground combat.

McCullough, David. *1776*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006. A fast-paced narrative of the Revolutionary War from the summer of 1775 to Washington's stunning twin victories at Trenton and Princeton in late 1776. McCullough shows that, through persistence, dedication to the American cause, and Washington's remarkable leadership, a small and ill-equipped American army overcame severe hardships and numerous defeats to save the American Revolution from collapse during the war's most tumultuous year.

McPherson, James M. *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. This inspiring book by a Pulitzer Prize winning historian argues, contrary to many scholars, that Civil War soldiers overcame their fear by remaining dedicated to the ideals that had motivated them to enlist: duty, honor, patriotism, and love of liberty. In reaching his conclusions, he draws on roughly 25,000 letters and 249 diaries written by 1,076 Union and Confederate soldiers, thus wisely allowing the soldiers to tell much of the story in their own words.

Moore, Harold G. and Joseph L. Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young*. Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 2004. A gripping firsthand account of the November 1965 Battle of the Ia Drang by the commander of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division. The Ia Drang was the first major combat test of the airmobile concept and the first major battle between U.S. forces and the North Vietnamese Army.

Stewart, Richard W., gen. ed. *American Military History, Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era, 1917-2003*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2005. Created initially as an ROTC textbook, this second volume in a two volume overview of the Army's story covers the period from World War I to the early days of the Iraq War. Written in an engaging style and enhanced by sophisticated graphics and recommended readings, the work is an excellent source of general service history in the modern world.

U. S. Army Center for Military History

Recommended Professional Reading List

Company Grade Officers & NCOs, WO1-CW3

Atkinson, Rick. *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943-1944*. New York: Henry Holt, 2008. In this second volume of Rick Atkinson's highly anticipated Liberation Trilogy, the author shows how a newly blooded and more experienced American Army overcame distance and allied squabbling to conduct successful amphibious operations that secured the Mediterranean and knocked Italy out of the war. Although after the war many doubted whether the extended slog up the boot of Italy was strategically wise, there was no doubt of the courage and persistence of the American soldier in this theater of war so soon to be overshadowed by the landings in northern France.

Appleman, Roy E. *East of Chosin: Entrapment and Breakout in Korea, 1950*. College Station, TX.: Texas A&M University Press, 1987. This book tells the riveting story of 3,000 soldiers of the U.S. 7th Infantry Division who fought in a four-day and five-night battle on the east side of the Changjin (Chosin) Reservoir in November and December 1950 during the initial Communist Chinese intervention in the Korean War. During this brief battle, Task Force MacLean/Faith endured misery, frigid cold, privation, and exhaustion, before meeting with disaster. Although facing overwhelming odds does much to explain the complete annihilation of this army unit, the author clearly shows that eight factors, including a lack of experience, poor training, inadequate supply, and non-existent communications, combined with less than astute leadership and unwise troop deployments, doomed the men of the 31st Regimental Combat Team, most of whom did not survive. Although not as well-known as other tactical disasters in Korea, such as the earlier Task Force Smith, this book says a great deal about the overall poor condition of the U.S. Army during the early days of the war.

Bolger, Daniel. *Savage Peace: Americans at War in the 1990's*. Presidio Press, 1995. Both a scholar and professional soldier, General Bolger chronicles the many unconventional missions performed by the U.S. Army over the past two decades, especially those involving difficult peacekeeping tasks throughout the world. From Lebanon and the Sinai to Somalia and the Balkans, he shows why these critical missions are not susceptible to the high-tech solutions preferred by many Americans and instead put a premium on the ability of soldiers on the ground to devise creative solutions after considering an extremely diverse number of local variables not readily apparent to those in Washington. An excellent primer for the full-spectrum professional soldier of the future.

Brown, Todd S. *Battleground Iraq: Journal of a Company Commander*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2007. This journal of a company commander in the 4th Infantry Division north of Baghdad from 2003 to early 2004 captures the stresses and emotions of combat in a confusing war. Especially useful is Brown's evolving understanding of the differences between combat operations and nation-building missions-and how U.S. forces came to employ that new knowledge. This work provides significant lessons for the young professional, and for anyone interested in the Iraq War.

Fischer, David Hackett. *Washington's Crossing*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. This Pulitzer Prize winning book details the "darkest hour" of the American Revolution in 1776, from the defeats of Washington's army around New York City, through the miserable retreat across New Jersey, to the cold, wretched camps of eastern Pennsylvania, as the British seemed poised to crush the cause of independence in its first year. Yet Washington quickly achieved two stunning successes at Trenton and Princeton through boldness, perseverance and personal example. Fischer emphasizes the unpredictable role of contingency in military operations, and shows that the remarkable victories of Washington and his men saved the faltering American Revolution.

Galula, David. *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger, 2005. [originally published in 1964] This classic work, written at the height of Communist insurgencies in the 1960s, remains as relevant today as it was decades ago. Galula, a French officer, distilled and refined the lessons being learned

the hard way in Greece, Algeria, Southeast Asia, and other regions torn apart by revolution in order to provide a guide for future conflicts.

Heller, Charles E. and Stofft, William A., eds. *America's First Battles: 1776-1965* . Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986. Eleven prominent American military historians assess the first battles of nine wars in which the U.S. Army has fought. Each essay is written within a similar framework, examining how the U.S. Army prepares during peacetime, mobilizes for war, fights its first battle, and subsequently adapts to the exigencies of the conflict. *America's First Battles* shows clearly the price of unpreparedness and the harsh adjustments that are often necessary when preconceived plans and doctrines meet ground reality.

Knox, MacGregor and Murray, Williamson, eds. *The Dynamics of Military Revolution, 1300-2050*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. The editors provide a conceptual framework and historical context for understanding the patterns of change, innovation, and adaptation that have marked war in the Western world since the fourteenth century. Case studies and a conceptual overview offer an indispensable introduction to military change for all Army leaders.

MacDonald, Charles B. *Company Commander*. Springfield, N.J.: Burford Books, 1999. Original edition, 1947. Published repeatedly for decades, this classic is an exciting memoir of a young company commander in the Battle of the Bulge and an unforgiving tale of American infantrymen in combat. Written shortly after the war, his account gives a vivid sense of the awesome responsibility of command from the perspective of a small unit commander and a keen sense of what it was like for an inexperienced officer to be thrown into battle. Highlighted are the personal leadership skills needed for survival and the intangibles that held small units together in the face of danger and deprivation. This is a book that should be read by every junior leader about to face the test of leadership in war.

Parker, Geoffrey, ed. *Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Parker's authors cover the gamut of Western warfare from antiquity to the present in a digestible, compelling manner, to include the development of warfare on land, sea and air; weapons and technology; strategy, operations and tactics; logistics and intelligence. Throughout, there is an emphasis on the socio-economic aspects of war, the rise of the West to global dominance, and the nature of that aggressive military culture that has been its hallmark.

Van Creveld, Martin. *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977. Surveying four centuries of military history, the noted historian Martin Van Creveld points out clearly the reasons why "amateurs study tactics; professionals study logistics." Most battlefield results would not have been possible without the careful organization and allocation of logistical resources. Leaders who fail to consider logistics in all of their plans and operations will do so at their peril.