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Inside The Mind of General David Petraeus

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The Insurgents is the inside story of the small group of soldier-scholars, led by General David Petraeus, who plotted to revolutionize one of the largest, oldest, and most hidebound institutions—the United States military. Their aim was to build a new Army that could fight the new kind of war in the post–Cold War age: not massive wars on vast battlefields, but “small wars” in cities and villages, against insurgents and terrorists.

The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the ...
The "insurgents" of the title are a set of Army officers who developed an interest in counterinsurgency in the 1990s, when it was out of favor, having been sworn off after the failed attempt in Vietnam and the adoption of the "Powell Doctrine" that the US would not go to war without going all-in. Foremost among them are GEN David Petraeus and LTC John Nagl, but there were many others.

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The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American Way of War By Fred Kaplan Simon & Shuster, 2013 422 pp., $14.99 ISBN-13: 978-1451642667 Reviewed By Jeff Rice F red Kaplan’s The Insurgents is a highly suc-cessful and compelling intermingling of three stories: the rise and eventual fall of

Rice
With “The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American Way of War,” he has written an authoritative, gripping and somewhat terrifying account of how the American military...

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As highlighted in Fred Kaplan’s book, The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American Way of War, Chewning left a career as a Wall Street investment banker to enlist in the U.S. Army in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

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The Insurgents David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American Way of War (Book) : Kaplan, Fred M. : The inside story of the small group of soldier-scholars who changed the way the Pentagon does business and the American military fights wars, against fierce resistance from within their own ranks.

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The Insurgents en Apple Books
THE INSURGENTS unfolds against the backdrop of two wars waged against insurgencies-- wars which the Pentagon's top generals didn't know how to fight. But a small group of soldiers and scholars did have a plan for fighting these kinds of wars, people like General David Petraeus and Colonels John Nagl, David Kilcullen, and H.R. McMaster.

A finalist for the Pulitzer Prize The inside story of the small group of soldier-scholars who—against fierce resistance from within their own ranks—changed the way the Pentagon does business and the American military fights wars. The Insurgents is the inside story of the small group of soldier-scholars, led by General David Petraeus, who plotted to revolutionize one of the largest, oldest, and most hidebound institutions—the United States military. Their aim was to build a new Army that could fight the new kind of war in the post–Cold War age: not massive wars on vast battlefields, but “small wars” in cities and villages, against insurgents and terrorists. These would be wars not only of fighting but of “nation building,” often not of necessity but of choice. Based on secret documents, private emails, and interviews with more than one hundred key characters, including Petraeus, the tale unfolds against the backdrop of the wars against insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan. But the main insurgency is the one mounted at home by ambitious, self-consciously intellectual officers—Petraeus, John Nagl, H. R. McMaster, and others—many of them classmates or colleagues in West Point’s Social Science Department who rose through the ranks, seized with an idea of how to fight these wars better. Amid the crisis, they forged a community (some of them called it a cabal or mafia) and adapted their enemies’ techniques to overhaul the culture and institutions of their own Army. Fred Kaplan describes how these men and women maneuvered the idea through the bureaucracy and made it official policy. This is a story of power, politics, ideas, and personalities—and how they converged to reshape the twenty-first-century American military. But it is also a cautionary tale about how creative doctrine can harden into dogma, how smart strategists—today’s “best and brightest”—can win the battles at home but not the wars abroad. Petraeus and his fellow insurgents made the US military more adaptive to the conflicts of the modern era, but they also created the tools—and made it more tempting—for political leaders to wade into wars that they would be wise to avoid.

The "War Stories" columnist for Slate presents the inside story of a small group of soldier-scholars who have significantly changed the ways the Pentagon does business and the American military fights wars, drawing on interviews with top contributors to reveal the origins of revolutionary ideas and how they have overcome formidable internal resistance.

Presents the inside story of a small group of soldier-scholars, led by General David Petraeus, who determined to revolutionize the United States military and reshape twenty-first-century military policy.

“The definitive account . . . A fascinating combination of grand strategy and personal vignettes” (Max Boot, The Wall Street Journal). Finalist for the 2013 Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History Surge is an insider’s view of the most decisive phase of the Iraq War. After exploring the dynamics of the war during its first three years, the book takes the reader on a journey to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where the controversial new US Army and Marine Corps counterinsurgency doctrine was developed; to Washington, DC, and the halls of the Pentagon, where the joint chiefs of staff struggled to understand the conflict; to the streets of Baghdad, where soldiers worked to implement the surge and reenergize the flagging war effort before the Iraqi state splintered; and to the halls of Congress, where Amb. Ryan Crocker and Gen. David Petraeus testified in some of the most contentious hearings in recent history. Using newly declassified documents, unpublished manuscripts, interviews, author notes, and published sources, Surge explains how President George W. Bush, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, Ambassador Crocker, General Petraeus, and other US and Iraqi political and military leaders shaped the surge from the center of the maelstrom in Baghdad and Washington. “This is one of the best books to emerge from the Iraq War. I expect it will be remembered as one of the most insightful accounts from an insider of the key ‘surge’ phase of that conflict. The chapter on the Sunni Awakening especially stands out as a terrific overview of that critical development.” —Thomas E. Ricks, author of Fiasco

General David Petraeus is the most transformative leader the American military has seen since the generation of Marshall. In the New York Times bestseller All In, military expert Paula Broadwell examines Petraeus's career, his intellectual development as a military officer, and his impact on the U.S. military. Afforded extensive access by General Petraeus, his mentors, his subordinates, and his longtime friends, Broadwell reported on the front lines of fighting and at the strategic command in Afghanistan to chronicle the experiences of this American general as they were brought to bear in the terrible crucible of war. All In draws on hundreds of hours of exclusive interviews with Petraeus and his top officers and soldiers to tell the inside story of this commander's development and leadership in war. When Petraeus assumed command in Afghanistan in July 2010, the conflict looked as bleak as at any moment in America's nine years on the ground there. Petraeus's defining idea—counterinsurgency—was immediate put to its most difficult test: the hard lessons learned during the surge in Iraq were to be applied in a radically different theater. All In examines the impact in Afghanistan of new counterinsurgency as well as counterterrorism strategies through the commands of several Petraeus protégés. Broadwell examines his evolution as a solider from his education at West Point in the wake of Vietnam to his earlier service in Central America, Haiti, Kuwait, Bosnia, and Iraq. All In also documents the general's role in the war in Washington, going behind the scenes of negotiations during policy reviews of the war in Afghanistan in Congress, the Pentagon, and the White House. Broadwell ultimately appraises Petraeus's impact on the entire U.S. military: Thanks to this man's influence, the military is better prepared to fight using a comprehensive blend of civil-military activities. As America surveys a decade of untraditional warfare, this much is clear: The career of General David Petraeus profoundly shaped our military and left an indelible mark on its rising leaders.

After a series of disastrous missteps in its conduct of the war, the White House in 2006 appointed General David Petraeus as the Commanding General of the coalition forces. Tell Me How This Ends is an inside account of his attempt to turn around a failing war. Linda Robinson conducted extensive interviews with Petraeus and his subordinate commanders and spent weeks with key U.S. and Iraqi divisions. The result is the only book that ties together military operations in Iraq and the internecine political drama that is at the heart of the civil war. Replete with dramatic battles, behind-doors confrontations, and astute analysis, the book tells the full story of the Iraq War's endgame, and lays out the options that will be facing the next president when he or she takes office in January 2009.

Fiasco, Thomas E. Ricks’s #1 New York Times bestseller, transformed the political dialogue on the war in Iraq—The Gamble is the next news breaking installment Thomas E. Ricks uses hundreds of hours of exclusive interviews with top officers in Iraq and extraordinary on-the-ground reportage to document the inside story of the Iraq War since late 2005 as only he can, examining the events that took place as the military was forced to reckon with itself, the surge was launched, and a very different war began. Since early 2007 a new military order has directed American strategy. Some top U.S. officials now in Iraq actually opposed the 2003 invasion, and almost all are severely critical of how the war was fought from then through 2006. At the core of the story is General David Petraeus, a military intellectual who has gathered around him an unprecedented number of officers with both combat experience and Ph.D.s. Underscoring his new and unorthodox approach, three of his key advisers are quirky foreigners—an Australian infantryman-turned- anthropologist, an antimilitary British woman who is an expert in the Middle East, and a Mennonite-educated Palestinian pacifist. The Gamble offers news-breaking account, revealing behind-the-scenes disagreements between top commanders. We learn that almost every single officer in the chain of command fought the surge. Many of Petraeus’s closest advisers went to Iraq extremely pessimistic, doubting that the surge would have any effect, and his own boss was so skeptical that he dispatched an admiral to Baghdad in the summer of 2007 to come up with a strategy to replace Petraeus’s. That same boss later flew to Iraq to try to talk Petraeus out of his planned congressional testimony. The Gamble examines the congressional hearings through the eyes of Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, and their views of the questions posed by the 2008 presidential candidates. For Petraeus, prevailing in Iraq means extending the war. Thomas E. Ricks concludes that the war is likely to last another five to ten years—and that that outcome is a best case scenario. His stunning conclusion, stated in the last line of the book, is that “the events for which the Iraq war will be remembered by us and by the world have not yet happened.”

This groundbreaking investigation uncovers serious mismatches between David Galula's counterinsurgency practice in Algeria and his counterinsurgency theory—the foundation of current U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine in Iraq and Afghanistan. • Maps • A glossary • A bibliography

This Field Manual/Marine Corps warfighting publication, “Counterinsurgency,” establishes doctrine (fundamental principles) for military operations in a counterinsurgency (COIN) environment. It is based on lessons learned from previous counterinsurgencies and contemporary operations. It is also based on existing interim doctrine and doctrine recently developed. Counterinsurgency operations generally have been neglected in broader American military doctrine and national security policies since the end of the Vietnam War over 30 years ago. This manual is designed to reverse that trend. It is also designed to merge traditional approaches to COIN with the realities of a new international arena shaped by technological advances, globalization, and the spread of extremist ideologies—some of them claiming the authority of a religious faith. The manual begins with a description of insurgencies and counterinsurgencies. The first chapter includes a set of principles and imperatives necessary for successful COIN operations. Chapter 2 discusses nonmilitary organizations commonly involved in COIN operations and principles for integrating military and civilian activities. Chapter 3 addresses aspects of intelligence specific to COIN operations. The next two chapters discuss the design and execution of those operations. Developing host-nation security forces, an essential aspect of successful COIN operations, is the subject of chapter 6. Leadership and ethical concerns are addressed in chapter 7. Chapter 8, which concerns sustainment of COIN operations, concludes the basic manual. The appendixes contain useful supplemental information. Appendix A discusses factors to consider during the planning, preparation, execution, and assessment of a COIN operation. Appendixes B and C contain supplemental intelligence information. Appendix D addresses legal concerns. Appendix E describes the role of airpower.

The counterinsurgency (COIN) paradigm dominates military and political conduct in contemporary Western strategic thought. It assumes future wars will unfold as "low intensity" conflicts within rather than between states, requiring specialized military training and techniques. COIN is understood as a logical, effective, and democratically palatable method for confronting insurgency—a discrete set of practices that, through the actions of knowledgeable soldiers and under the guidance of an expert elite, creates lasting results. Through an extensive investigation into COIN's theories, methods, and outcomes, this book undermines enduring claims about COIN's success while revealing its hidden meanings and effects. Interrogating the relationship between counterinsurgency and war, the authors question the supposed uniqueness of COIN's attributes and try to resolve the puzzle of its intellectual identity. Is COIN a strategy, a doctrine, a theory, a military practice, or something else? Their analysis ultimately exposes a critical paradox within COIN: while it ignores the vital political dimensions of war, it is nevertheless the product of a misplaced ideological faith in modernization.

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