The Art of War 2020

by

Donnie Gebert

(Tales from the War Department)
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All of the warriors of the USS McFaul, 3rd Brigade 1st Cavalry, 1/109th Infantry, staff of Explosive Ordnance Disposal School, 504th Military Intelligence Brigade
Part 0: Reality

Keeping the shit in your own head straight is the only hope anyone has for sanity. The longer you live, the more resources you expend, the farther you go, the harder that will get. I am the Marie Kondo of mental housekeeping and intracranial feng shui. Marie will tell you what to keep; I’ll tell you how to organize it.

You function as a Venn diagram. There’s your human and then there’s you, the zero-point energy no one can find but is displayed in all of us until death. Your existence is tangibly human but You are a philosophy, that You want to live. Being. This understanding allows you to properly assess your food and toilet paper needs versus your emotional ass wiping. They are not the same and pretending otherwise is a reality one must accept because gravity and tidal waves and starvation are fully detached from gravitas, waves of emotion, and thirst. I’m not judging your idiom as fucked; your idiom is geolocated on Earth and your position is assessed as fucked. Accept it. Only work gets the glorious creature-being of light that is You to your place of employment on time. Best to not confuse your very essence for an argument, aye?

Here’s how Marie’s tips can help to organize your head: the downsize and spark joy method. However, being the killjoy that I am, you have to accept that ‘downsize’ to “you and how 3 dimensional space functions”. You don’t know who you are until you have done a lot of stuff. Life experience will change who you are. Education can get you past many of the non-human parts of that. Learning systems, games, and strategies will streamline your life and allow you to do more things. An ever expanding volume of experience also helps sort out the individual tasks.

No one wants to learn a bunch of petty tasks. However, do the work. Amateurs practice til they get the basics right; pros practice til they don’t get the basics wrong. The time and energy you save over your life by some basic, Marie Kondo type disciplines are the little work now that made my last 20 years a breeze. The military can do that for you or not. Easier to DIY, honestly.
However, the organization in your life will conform to the organization in your head, like it or not. Best organize it in that manner, for your sake. Whenever you speak or present anything, there’s a 5-dimensional chair you get to sit in. These are the confines of Earth relative to you.

The 5 Chairs of Organization/Argumentation:
All arguments assumed honest, as the purpose is organization not conflict; positions are submitted to scrutiny after constructed.

You: Your position, always you; others will attempt to argue for you. Don’t allow it, unless you do so for your advantage.

Other: You are trying to understand someone else’s position and argue from there. You must first assess enterprise environment factors. Second you assess options, based off EEFs. Then, you apply what you know about the ‘other’ and correlate what the other may do with what they appear to want to do.

In-group: (green) Your group/organization has an ethic, this is that. The in-group is all in agreement, in theory. In-group discussions are about how to achieve the group end state, not what that end state should be.

Universal: (pink) This is assumed to be for all. When discussing for all, human is the de facto position and must fit everyone to be accurate. Murder, rape, theft vs Republican or Democrat.

Out-group: (purple) Argument from ‘enemy’ position. It’s easy to bias your argument when arguing from the enemy position. You need to come with real intent to break your own position. Play any game as best you can from opposite sides at the same time, without mercy. This is how to test your own work and to allow the work of others to properly compare and contrast to your own.

“He who knows only his own argument knows little of that.” -J.S. Mill

An academic would refer to this as Postmodernism or ‘looking through a lens’. This just refers to a thought experiment because the beginning of wisdom is to call things by their proper names. No need to brand label the thought experiment unless you’re trying to make it sound like everyone can’t do it. However, doing it properly is a measurable skill.

All of that explanation is to display how humans talk to each other, from a perspective. My chair; your chair; our chairs; all chairs; their chairs. If you are not careful, you will argue for positions you cannot assess, positions you should not assume upon others, from positions you’d not want cast upon you because you didn’t know better than to suggest it, and positions no one wants but everyone is stuck in.
Don’t worry. Bad arguments sound grand because no one wants to sound dumb. And let’s face it, it works, right? Bullshitting works. How you ask? Because you’re surrounded by idiots and/or cowards. Unless someone called you out and showed you how, you might still be on the round end of dumb looking for a point. Hopefully some brave soul was there to save you from yourself.

This is how it gets when people are trying to convey information. You know you have issues with it; so do others. The real battlefield is with lies and tone and bullshit and ignorance and imperfect information. How will you understand any of reality without misperceiving your place in any given enterprise? What you believe that enterprise is doing? What is your actual place in the enterprise? How does that enterprise actually function?

When you are presenting anything to someone, do you find yourself speaking for a group not present or the whole world? That’s a Venn diagram there. Ever notice yourself inflicting your ethics on others in your political discussions and then expect the laws to wrench the others into that mold? That’s just an example of how this goes on. It’s intellectual combat.

This is the line where delusion and philosophy collide. When an idea is made a statute and then called a law, this is a real life non sequitur. Human existence cannot persist in an inefficient state that allows the 2nd and 3rd order effects take over the original intent. The real world always wins. Humans cannot inflict philosophy on anything. They will perform measurable acts on a very real budget or they will fail. The rest is inaccurate speech used to fool people with systems that allow the participants to do so. If you don’t have your own head straight, someone else can send you off on a tangent, by accident or on purpose. The mirror is the biggest hurdle.

That’s about where I stop. You have the rubric. You need to assess from the proper perspective. Let Marie Kondo guide you in what parts of you that get kept and what parts get downsized. Let reality of the situation be the guide to your assessments. Let good assessments lead to rational judgments. Let the judgments spark as much joy as possible.

The goal is to assess for validity; the goal is not to judge or win. The purpose of perspective is accurate communications, not de facto domination by any hubris necessary.
Part 1: Analyst 101

**How vs Why: Rube Goldberg vs Socratic method**

How and why have exactly zero correlation. How one executes any plan is a description of a process in 3-dimensional space. ‘How’ has no ethics, morals, or values. It is costs, cost/benefit analysis, and measurable, testable results. While one may argue that values take place in a cost/benefit analysis, the chartered end state will limit and determine, to a six sigma level, the benefit to the operation. The costs must be paid and the results can be measured. ‘How’ is accomplished with abductive reasoning and is not an opinion. This is the end result and results are all that’s relevant here.

‘Why’ is not relevant to the act but does give insight into motive. Motive for X narrows the scope to a defined set of targets and to the rationally successful methods to accomplish X, nothing more. The motive offers clues to what direction X will come from/go to but has nothing to do with the enterprise environment factors. ‘Why’ is constrained to how, every time. This is why is a subordinate issue to how, mechanics of functioning and nothing more. Rube Goldberg is supremely agnostic about our species.

When communicating, all of the ‘how’ information should be conveyed with as much ‘why’ information as needed to facilitate high fidelity data transfer. While I understand there are human comfort factors here, it needs to be noted that communication between humans is normally terrible. Breaking down communications in total, 55% is nonverbal, 38% is in the tone, and 7% is in the terms used. The only standardized portion between 2 people is the terms and that’s only 7%. The communication fidelity is a constant factor in the solving of the human coordination problem on every level.

If the goal is to prevent X, your knowledge of how X comes about is germane to apply a method in 3-dimensional space that will prevent X. If the goal is to execute plan X, how will be called the project/program/portfolio management plan. It is extremely important that everyone understand one thing clearly: if you are doing analysis and discussing why, it better be deduction, not induction. When you decide why something is or is not of any utility, you are not performing analysis. You are exercising your judgment. Enterprise environment factors (EEFs) have no ‘why’ factors; they have logistical requirements. Systems/strategies/games are about understanding, management, and mastery; judgment is exercised when there’s a preference at stake.

The clean distinction here is the difference between that-which-takes-place-in-the-parking-lot and that-which-we-discuss-and-hypothesize-about. Lots of stuff sounds nice but cannot be performed in the parking lot. If you are getting information that comes with someone else’s analysis and/or judgment, your information is compromised. You know something happened but the report focuses on why. ‘Why’ types of discussions do not contain the germane information to inductively gain insight into a situation that unfolded in your absence. ‘Why’ discussions are also used to dialectically mislead, intentionally but also by amateurish mistakes, like fallacies and judgment. This is why arguments need to be read charitably, lest you judge the situation before the enterprise environment factors frame your solution for you. This is also where ideology sneaks in.
Military Science, Economics, and Philosophy

Military science is only, ever, about how. That’s discussed above. However, the end result will earn ticker tape or the gallows. This is where taking the time to understand the human element past the enterprise matters. Just because one can fill a mass grave doesn’t mean one should. Is there a time that ever presents? I will call it an unlikely and exceptional outcome that amateurs will force themselves into. Those amateurs are definitely the ones doing the executing, because these dummies cannot fix this problem any other way. It also may be the ones going in the hole, because they attacked the wrong humans and they are part of the clean up after a successful defense. Either way, amateurs are to blame.

Philosophy will apply to your scaled-systems management (strategy) and applied-systems management (tactics) as well as the results you achieve. The methods matter, the results matter, and the opinions do not change the first two; the work has to be completed, validated, and then judged. Ethics will be applied to the results of human action. The goal is to master the ‘how’. To that end, if you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough. Direct, unapologetic verbal examination shouldn’t be a problem for a knowledgeable adult.

Economics has a Venn diagram with military science where Rube Goldberg reigns supreme. The reason to limit violence is simple; violence has its own 2nd and 3rd order effects to be avoided and extra is 100% muda, 100% of the time. Therefore, it’s always in the best interest for any budgeted operation to be focused on a Minimal Viable Product. Profit, in the military science, looks like life and infrastructure intact upon completion. Exceptions to that norm should look like the least amount of death and the destruction possible, with the skin in the game, to keep that accounted for, preferably to an insurable extent. When your military has a bottomless budget, the amount of muda possible is a horrific revelation. Insured and accountable humans without legal immunity can mitigate many of the domestic and foreign policy issues we are relying on legislatures to solve today.

There’s more on all of this later. To better understand military science, play games. Understanding on display through action and reaction is how things in 3-dimensional space happen and you should know how to do all the things in your life. To better understand economics, go ride a bike. The up and down hills and energy exerted is a basic economy. The rest just understands the energy transfer between bike to body and capital to economy.

Philosophy is the black hole of all the topics; it truly has no bottom. However, we all live in 3-dimensional space and that does have limitations. Therefore, any philosophy that cannot measurably take place in 3-dimensional space is objectively false. That’s not an opinion or a judgment; any philosophy that cannot be manifested and validated is irrelevant past a subjective/emotional context. It’s not real but there will be a ton of hot air and verbiage that will claim to ‘disagree’, as if all things are determined by agreement.

Understanding your enterprise environment factors and goals will help in taking the opinions out of the systems and conversation surrounding those systems.
Monitor vs Measure

Monitor - observe and check the progress or quality of (something) over a period of time; keep under systematic review
Measure - ascertain the size, amount, or degree of (something) by using an instrument or device marked in standard units or by comparing it with an object of known size

When you are monitoring something, you require a fixed and known unit of measure to perform that act and you monitor that situation by those static increments. When you measure something, you are ensuring the unit of account is unchanging and reliable. It’s imperative that you understand and monitor your unit of measure, for fidelity, and then monitor your situation with that known standard. Warping the unit of measure allows for warping of the ability to monitor something properly.

EX: The US dollar (Read: Federal Reserve Note) is not a unit of measure. It has no independent basis in science. This standard is not independently verifiable and testable. It’s a unit of belief that is familiar and used often enough by enough in so many different transactions to not rapidly fluctuate. It has suffered systemic erosion over time through monetary policy, propaganda, poor accounting, and ignorance of those using it.

Historically the dollar had been measured in tangible objects, like gold and silver. By separating the dollar from an objective measure, the slow decay of that unit/standard accelerated, requiring new monetary theories and regulated markets to even attempt its continued use, for good or ill. This was performed via non-transparent methods and the belief of a captivated audience. A regulated and captive market allowed a currency monopoly to be abused due to its position as the singular world reserve. Positional ability to manipulate doesn’t mean it will work or that it’s a good idea. Positively, the dollar liquidity lubricated a lot of prosperity on Earth and billions of people live a better quality of life because of an elastic money supply. It also created the 1%. Due to the effects of this in total, I’ll call it a bad idea that worked out.
Concept of Zero

(This graphic intentionally not blank.)

Zero in 3-dimensional space is nothing. It’s not an empty bucket; it’s no bucket, no anything that should be in said non-bucket. The Hobbesian state of Nope; a very empty emptiness. In a computer it is represented by the digit 0. This is an illusion. A 256-bit system is 0-255, not 1-256 + nothing, as it would be if you were counting eggs. There’s no egg zero. The machine has no concept of nothing. It has an affirmative input of the digit zero and it will interpret that as it was coded to.

There are no quantities equal to or less than zero in reality; even if you are waiting for 6 tacos, you do not have -6 tacos. You have zero tacos. This confusion, the difference between theory and reality, is often the mental surface for fallacy, ignorance, and fraud. When you are misperceiving the situation, you cannot analyze it correctly. Any method that leaves you in an incorrect state is likely to lead to failure.

Zero may be a solution. It’s one that gets skipped because it means ‘the answer is do nothing’. Humans have a preference for action over inaction, so zero may be overlooked. Nothing is often the opposite of what someone is looking for. However, a lot of people don’t grasp the EEFs, either the individual perspective or the scaled solution process for any given problem is not in their experience. Having to explain to someone that there is no solution because it’s beyond our individual, group, or species capacity to effectively engage the issue is a talk that needs to be had more often.

Moreover, the individual learns best when no one helps them and they are, de facto, required to self-educate or abandon the task. This allows opportunities for problem solving, growth through failure, resilience, and growth through success. By not helping someone, you may be doing a lot more for them than by helping.
Venn diagrams

With 3 germane data points, you will have 6 or 7 interactions. Outside the Venn and the asterisk space in the middle of the right image function as zero. Do not assume that zero (*) on a Venn is not an actual solution in 3-dimensional space. These zero-based solutions may represent as a self-synergistic or self-defeating option.

EX: Cannibals on an island is a self-serving problem and solution; it also conforms to cannibal ethics without involving non-cannibals for victims/meals. This represents a cannibal society; the solution is segregation of ethics, in theory, with corresponding physical separation in 3-dimensional space. To that end, your analyst skills must include an intuitive understanding of counter-intuition and paradox.
Paradox

-a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained may prove to be well founded or true.

-a statement or proposition that, despite sound (or apparently sound) reasoning from acceptable premises, leads to a conclusion that seems senseless, logically unacceptable, or self-contradictory.

The definition of paradox explains it both ways, absurdity that functions and what should function but doesn’t. Paradox is a perceptive phenomenon, not a reality. When you find yourself in a paradox, you are missing something. Most of what people call paradox is just dialectic nonsense that is grammatically correct.

“This statement is false.” is a truth statement with no truth attached minus itself; just a description with contradictory context to determine the validity. Not a paradox, grammatical circular logic without a reality to validate its content. (absurdity with only dialectic function)

“The rules are there are no rules.” is a paradox based in zero. While many games have rules, this game has no rules but I have to convey that to you with words. The words give the appearance of 1 rule, no rules. The game has no rules but the words describe the game as it would any other game, the template or rules. Paradox because words. (absurdity that functions; computer input of 0 equaling a functional 1)

“Everything I say is a lie.” is a paradox based in one. This is one truth statement that is grammatically correct and in context but the truth is indiscernible because the method used to convey it is inherently unreliable. It’s the self-confessed warning of a liar, which is logically antithetical to lying. The nature of lying demonstrates its nature in its attack vector, like cannibal ethics. (absurdity that doesn’t function; one equaling zero)

“This page intentionally left blank.” is a truth statement that is false. This type of grammar uses illusion to hide a root logic of reverse logic. The grammar claims to be not there but clearly is. The effect seems to be to mislead someone into conjuring a logic to excuse the irony, therefore misunderstanding the context. (absurdity with fallacious function)

Deciphering Paradox

* Learning logical fallacies will clear up most of the dialectic and mechanically defunct speech that may misrepresent a paradox

* Mechanically understanding common phrases such as “damned if you do, damned if you don’t” as ‘2 bad options; one of action, one of inaction’ is needed to keep your own analysis straight in your own head

* Validation of your work; “By denying scientific principles, one may maintain any paradox.” - Galileo Galilei
**Induction vs Deduction Vs Abduction**

Induction is data gathering. Induction is science. This is the process of providing evidence to support a claim and reasoning is based off that which was introduced. EX: Gathering all the edge pieces of a puzzle and assembling the frame first. You must sort through all the pieces and only induce pieces with 1 flat side first.

Deduction is a general process of elimination. This is problem solving by ‘echo locating’ that which is missing based on the enterprise environment factors in total and that which has been already been induced. EX: Once the puzzle frame is completed, you can then conclude where some pieces go based on the picture and what is already in place.

Abduction is like evidence-based induction with a focus on cause-and-effect relationship; military science. This isn’t reasoning. We have these assets/this budget. We will make this portion happen, therefore de facto correct in functioning. There may be multiple ways to abduct; therefore, it’s always correct for function but not automatically the only way to secure that reasoning.

Holistic analysis is only performed when ALL enterprise environment factors are tabled and measured. Induce any additional info required past EEF’s, like other human motive of support or dissent. Deduce what is missing and attempt to locate and induce more info. Then, draw conclusions based on all factors, accurately and in context. The process is not difficult because it’s not easily explained. The process is difficult because of the oscillations of the factors involved and the management of those factors in real time.

Known Knowns: Operations – Known issue, known solution; day to day
Known Unknowns: Priorities – Known issue, unknown solution; research and effort
Unknown Knowns: Pop-up issues – Unknown issue, known solution; unplanned inconvenience
Unknown Unknowns: Problem – Unknown issue, unknown solution; unplanned effort and resources
Project management goes by many names and methods. Waterfall methods are the standard for long term endeavors; Agile methods work well for shorter time frames, all project dependent. PMP (Project Management Professional certification) is, functionally, MDMP (The Military Decision Making Process; used by US military) but has a budget as its foundation.

Military operations mix lives and equipment cost as inherent EEFs. When lives are in a budget, fiscal responsibility goes out the window for humanitarian reasons. Provided no lives are at risk, the budget is the real-world limitations one must conform to. Regardless: time, scope, and cost are the fundamental anchors to which all enterprises are contained.

Scope is the frame of the puzzle. Without a defined scope, you will not be able to contain the enterprise to a bailiwick. Without a frame, your costs can have no limits and fraud or waste will ensue. Cost is the total amount of recourses to be used before completion or failure. Time is the unyielding march of days that will eat the budget until complete or failure. More funds may be able to be procured to cover costs from ill-defined scope or unforeseen cost over runs. Time cannot be unwound; you may be able to pay for catch-up, but never more days.
Chardee MacDennis: The Game of Games

-This game is from the “It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia” tv show
-Portrayed as a nonsense drinking game
-Rules must be seen to be believed; also, fiction and funny

The Real Game:

-Create-your-own-game game; must be done properly or will throw obvious, stupid, and hilarious errors
-Post-Modernism/Thought Experiment: it’s a construct; if inaccurate it’s invalid and must reset
-Cataloging rules for fidelity with the goal of not-nonsense
-New rules must conform to all previous rules to prevent nonsense outcomes by design
-Competitive or collaborative

(Fig. 3)

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<tr>
<th>Legal</th>
<th>Rule #1</th>
<th>Rule #2</th>
<th>Rule #3</th>
<th>Rule #4</th>
<th>Rule #5</th>
<th>Rule #6</th>
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<tr>
<td>System 1</td>
<td>Laws of Physics</td>
<td>UN Rules</td>
<td>US Statute</td>
<td>State Statute</td>
<td>Social norm</td>
<td>Personal discomfort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adversary 1</td>
<td>(Trapped by ^)</td>
<td>Covert ops and Jurisdictional Arbitrage</td>
<td>Legislative capture</td>
<td>Purchase enforcers</td>
<td>Propaganda/Mob behavior</td>
<td>Guilt/Fear</td>
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<th>Murder</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Theft</th>
<th>Unavoidable Social Interaction</th>
<th>Avoidable Social Interaction</th>
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<tr>
<td>System 2</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Agree to abstain</td>
<td>By invite only</td>
<td>By mutual agreement</td>
<td>Peacefully with self defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adversary</td>
<td>Cunning</td>
<td>Hide corpse</td>
<td>Without consent</td>
<td>By any means required</td>
<td>Reserves right to agress</td>
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The game is not easy without data imaging because it requires Tony Stark’s sand table to watch; if you are mentally disciplined, you can follow the bouncing ball in your head. The complex interactions at each juncture have different Venn diagrams of consistent ethics solution sets. The system is just to get you into the mindset of ‘accountability in planning’. Many post-modernists like to use this tool to explain things but then judge the interactions and deduce ‘power’ as a problem. Power of another human has been substituted for ‘work’ or ‘energy’.

The ‘power’ described is force, energy used to produce work created by human action. This is not ‘problematic’; it’s an enterprise environment factor, namely the agency of other humans. Your EEF’s require you to move around the other humans, not restrict them to gain freedom of movement. This is where post modernism may end up making slaves in the name of help.
Stratagem

A stratagem is a tactic designed to gain the upper hand by engaging your problem with the antithesis of that problem. Water solves fire. Food solves hunger. Accurate description solves ignorance. A stratagem, if properly executed, is the de facto solution to the problem. While there may be arguments about the effectiveness of a stratagem, the only definitive way to know if you have a solution or a stratagem is to conduct the experiment.

The goal of analysis is to derive a stratagem to every problem; some problems have no stratagem available to you. Just because you do not have the ability or process assets to find or execute a stratagem doesn’t mean it’s impossible or one doesn’t exist. Approach all problems as if you are a god with a bottomless budget and then get as humble as the problem or circumstances dictate. Better to approach it from a point of accepting your actual limitations rather than assume something isn’t possible and miss viable solution sets.

Your goal in troubleshooting is ALWAYS a stratagem. You should be striving for nothing less; a minimal-viable-product solution with no second order effects. This is not always available but if this is not understood to be the optimal goal, standards will not be kept and ‘close enough’ methods will become the standard, which is how the War Department lost its way in the first place.
Part 2: The Philosophy of War

You and I have something that the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and even the Far East did not have during their time, Zero. They had hunger; they knew what ‘no’ meant; zero was not well established in math and equations until the ninth century.

My thesis for zero as a moral anchor for war is a fairly simple one. *Nothing tastes like hunger.* This paradox applies to every single one of our species, like it or not. There isn’t much real debate about most moral issues. Murder, rape, theft, and easily definable harms are all de facto claims on your person and your means of existence by another human. It doesn’t take much study to see why the common law tenants of these principles have been in place throughout history and they are easy to validate. Sharing and charity have also been tenants of human existence and revolve around one’s own voluntary action of giving from your own excesses. The contrast between compassionate acts and acts of war seem to revolve around desperation or corruption or both. Assuming you are a rationally consistent human, the obvious anti-murder understanding, you could still end up in a conflict out of desperation and hunger. Never mind those consumed with greed or hatred.

Is it wrong to do harm to someone for the sole purpose of being inept at existing? I don’t know but I do know one can’t make a definitive claim either way. *Is it murder or a meal when there’s nothing left to steal?* Grim. Real grim.

That said, the cost and benefits of charity and sharing become apparent when war is the vehicle to close the very real, tangible, non-philosophical hunger gap. While I understand no one is obligated to help another, unless the remedy for this problem presents rapidly, hungry humans will do things that
quickly leave civil society in jeopardy. Wisdom says to share; it takes courage to give to avoid the famine of another human just to avoid a war that they will bring in hunger, not anger.

Fair has left the building. This is survival. It’s why humans go a Viking. In that context, a war prosecuted offensively for anything other than survival is nothing more than an expensive abomination. The assumption that aggression will solve an economic deficit, permanently, is amateur hour. Rarely will an offensive recoup the lost resources spent prosecuting it. Even if one can make this possible, it looks like a heist, not justice. This is war for avoidable reasons. Desperate people need training and time to recoup and work off the deficit, not theft to cover the short term needs. This is where sharing of knowledge and resources will save not only the lives spent in a war but usually less resources than to prosecute the defense. All it takes is the giving away of intellectual property and enough food to cover the time gap until those humans can self-sustain.

Defense in the form of food aid and/or trade WILL be cheaper than a war. The soldiers will eat too, plus all the other costs. Defensive wars are exponentially cheaper, have home field advantage, and have a de facto moral validity; however, that means that you let trouble within range of your homes. That is distasteful and “brave“, at best. Unless a culture has the fortitude to refuse military action for anything other than defense and staving off death, they will never be genuinely civilized.

In that light, voting yourself into an empty bowl is the most childlike understanding of the human battle space and is why democracy has been scoffed ever since the hemlock was passed to Socrates. Voting is the legal transference of going-a-Viking without the danger, because legislation. The system allows you to do this while others work the system for all the wealth imaginable. You’re honest. Good for you. They aren’t. All warfare is based on deception. The politicians know they have the superior position; Kissinger says “military men are dumb animals” and he’s correct. The warriors are on the wrong battlefield, trying to fix economic problems and legal systems with combat.

The germane battlefield is no longer physical. It crossed into the finance world in the early 20th century, with the creation of the global currency reserve. The supply train of all the warriors was then controlled by others. By the time Kissinger was mouthing off, it had moved into the legislatures. Now, it belongs to private interests that control the legislatures.... that control the warriors. The lawyers approve the JDAMs being dropped. Ladies and gentleman, the warriors have been reduced to the piss boys of the political/legal class. Don’t have any sympathy for this; we were deceived and that lesson needed to be learned again, apparently.

The pleas to moderation that dictate the warriors should be controlled by politicians do not hold water or stand the test of time. It takes humans with no stake in anything other than success to keep an eye on each other. The rubric is obvious competency, not talking. The level of dishonest language and tonality used to generate the fog of war upon people is only to glean a pension from the unsuspecting, desperate, and unlearned. Well, we don’t do that to our own kind. That’s for the monkeys and other assorted primates.

Protection and enforcement are not the same. The Venn diagram best be so tight that there’s no accidental victims in it. Anyone not supporting protection will be dragged out back by the protectors. Turnabout is fair play. Enforcers want aggression; we can find some for’em.
Understanding the fundamentals of the operation are key to knowing when physical violence is necessary and then only when useful. Amateurs will do this for any old reason, because they are immune and/or like the rush. The professionals need to make the environment of ignorance that allows the amateurs to operate obsolete. It’s the warriors’ job to keep goods and service moving across borders. If that stops, there will be a deployment. If we’re allowing the politicians to deploy us, we’re fools. If we have to deploy ourselves because we’re inept, same. The economic controls that subvert the flow of trade is our bailiwick now, Jetson. The Flintstone bullshit needs to end, forever.

Humility has got to be the baseline for the warriors. You know it and I know it. I’ve noticed that humans seem to demand some kind of prostration to them be exhibited to them by others. While that’s a give and take in social situations, any human who accepted this prostration as an ethic is missing a key piece of their own character that defends something that’s rightfully theirs, even if that thing is only respect. For all the bragging I’ve seen amid the warriors, it’s usually not bullshit. Its tips and tools passed on in story as it has for thousands of years, albeit in a tone that strains credulity sometimes. Narcissus was a hunter that fell in love with his own reflection; the mirror is to find flaw and watch your back.

Warriors have shared this way for so long, I envision the phrase “I have been to the mountain and I have seen the elephant” as still echoing through the beer halls for ages. I sense some Roman saying it, exhausted and exasperated, while handing over the lost wager, as many of us have done once or twice. Well, the paying of the bet, the admission of failure, the speed to which you’ll demand to be proven wrong, and the self-deprecation at the end for good measure is the discipline of self-actualization.

Self-actualization is the antithesis of bureaucracy. It’s being shunned by the incompetent and bureaucratic, as it always has. However, now it has removed the warrior profession from the relevant battle space. The coordination problem is so difficult that the reality you and I deal with every day can be deemed psychological warfare. Rather than continue here on this tangent, I will refer to the work of Nassim Taleb and Jonathan Haidt.

Their ‘antifragile’ framework really explains much of how a human can be raised to be a functional victim with nothing but love and how to build human resilience as a life pattern/creed. By never allowing or making that human to engage in rough play, difficult labor, mental expansion challenges, or any functional discipline whatsoever, you anti-shape a human with no real intellect or spine to speak of; a worker class. A legal system can soft bully employers into ineffective hiring practices, for fear of litigation expenses. Honestly, what society allows statutes to do this? One where the protectors are not on the relevant field of contention.

The culture is important because it’s manipulable and the state actors have used it to make certain humans illegal. If warriors allow this, their culture will fail and something else will replace it. And by that I mean the warrior culture will relearn those lessons the hard way and end up reasserting dominance-thru-competency, at a minimum, to maintain civilization. Staying on top of the shit is easier than rework...
Psychological Warfare and Reality

I was military intelligence, 35F3O. However, by function, there were many of us that should have been indoctrinated via a welcome brief, given a class by MOS/job task, or read on to what is the nature of psychological warfare. We were not.

I can argue that everyone in the US military should have gotten the brief because we’d need to know the ‘signs and symptoms’ of a psychological attack. No one was briefed. Ok, let’s call it MOS specific. Why are the military intelligence MOSs not briefed? I was in a BN S2 shop and my whole battalion staff wasn’t aware of what a psychological attack was, what equipment and vectors would clue us in to an attack, and what we’d look like in that case, to deploy countermeasures. None of it. Am I to assume the entirety of psychological warfare is to be denoted by the presence of leaflets claiming an imminent artillery barrage, should I not surrender? As an American, does this denote we’re immune from psychological warfare because air superiority?

All warfare is based on deception. Deception is not just a philosophy, it’s a methodology. Therefore, it’s not just deception you must watch out for but anything that functions like it. Therefore: psychological warfare is any deception, misperception/delusion, or ignorance that yields a failing method; this is especially a failing method that can be exploited by someone else. Notice, all are rooted in baseline ignorance. See extreme sensitivity to initial conditions; chaos.

It really doesn’t matter why you are failing to you, beyond the needed feedback. If I’m trying to leverage my success on your failure, I may do so in a known or unknown and/or recognized or unrecognized manner to you. If you’re fooled or an amateur, you fail. If you’re clueless, you fail. Everything you don’t know is a secret. Ouch.

Why were we never told this? Because everyone does it to everyone else, all the time, that’s why. The military procedure cuts through all the baseline elements of psychological warfare. You will be given the terms, the place, the paperwork, the time, and the state of not-living-in-that-confusion. The baseline system prevents that chaotic mind set through standardization of enterprise practices. I’ll also add that it’s used against us, for the benefit of those who benefit from war.

However, there’s more. We also weren’t told because the nature of the human enterprise is disorganized. In economics, it’s called the coordination problem. Well, the military members have a streamlined life due to that standardization but then take so many elements on faith that we end up inept tools in a system. We’re looking for answers with baseline biases that make root cause analysis very unlikely, if not a borderline suicidal endeavor. The rest of the non-corporatized humans do everything the hard way and have no real idea what streamlined ‘Jetson life’ looks like.

The language in the military is standardized; the language in the civilian world is industry-specific, at best. I will venture an accusation; language is intentionally vague to disintermediate real communication. George Carlin noted this in the 70s. Well, ‘legalese’ always has language that doesn’t correspond to reality or the other industries that are supposed to be ‘regulated’. This is the language that is currently coordinating the enterprise known as America circa 2020.
All that to explain this: Our language is a weapon, if used in that way. If used poorly, it looks like an amateur or a child with a weapon. Intent is not relevant. Emotional connection to the words only harms your perception of what was said. You may believe otherwise, if you like. The nature of this enterprise has us all boxed in. Welcome to Earth.

But wait, there’s more! So far, we’re looking at how ignorance and deception, via methods, will cause failure. Also, lies or unusable communications will cause failure. What’d we miss? Tone and movements. The numbers say we gather our communication from 55% other, 38% tone, and 7% verbiage. ‘Other’ will be 100% disregarded for the following reason: it’s 2020. This is not needed. If you cannot figure out how to communicate without visually seeing the other party, you’re not going far in life Flintstone. Best of luck to you. The norm is audio or text communication.

The amount of information one gets via tone is about 7x over the verbiage but the ONLY reliable communication tool we carry around with us is the verbiage, our shared language which we don’t all share. At 6 am, you have a 7% chance today will work out. This is why we want to stay in bed, the rational odds of the day.

Is the claim that we’re all practicing psychological warfare on each other unfounded? Definitely not. Look around. Are the humans experiencing any of the following: deception, delusion, hallucination and/or ignorance? Yup. What’s the cure? Science. Validating your way out of a flash bang or a violence-induced concussion is the process of post-violence stabilization. Validating your information is that same process, post-information session. Military science is just validating the enterprise environment factors(EEFs) and creating and executing a plan, using abductive reasoning and resources.

‘Emotional validation’ is not a thing, but it makes you feel better so you think it’s a thing. Emotions are not validated; they are an individual event and subjective. I cannot validate your emotions, nor mine. I can measure electrical stimuli. That stimuli can be external, as I poke you and ask for samples of your essence, or internal, which you create and I may get some measurement but cannot validate through known roots. While you did register ‘feeling’ according to the test equipment, why and or how you generated these stimuli cannot be validated because you can lie and I cannot test those root claims/causes. ‘Emotional validation’, ‘critical theory’, ‘stable coin’, and ‘liberty tax’ are all terms that are obviously deceptive... or not.

-Critical theory is an ideology; critical thinking is a skill. Critical thinking is not used in critical theory. Go figure.

-Stable coins are blockchain-based coins pegged to a fiat currency. Fiat currency is not stable, as all fiat currency is not an actual unit of measure in any scientific way; unstable units of measure pegged to blockchain coins = stable because propaganda.

-Liberty Tax - Taxation is not liberty; it’s the explicit or tacit understanding that a portion of your productivity/life belongs to someone else by mechanic; fractional-reserve slavery. Please don’t look behind the curtain, it’s the law after all.

Validation can be super refined or good-enough. The real issue is this: you have 7% to work with. You have to know where you are starting. You cannot rely on people you cannot see for 55% of the
total information they have. You cannot rely on the tone of another human because they may be suffering from injury, any symptom of psychological warfare, or may be intentionally deceiving you with tone. So, at best, other humans will give you 7% of information you can use, with 38% more if their tone is decipherable and truthful. Applying this rubric, you’ll learn to appreciate honest humans very quickly.

This is the best explanation of psychological warfare that I know of. To that end, it’s what I see humans practice every day. The concept is very basic but it has profound implications on your day to day communications with others, as we all try to solve our own coordination problems. Because the ball never stops bouncing on Earth, you now get to add 2 concepts to the above: neurolinguistics and propaganda.

Neurolinguistics is centered around the tonality and the use of the tone and language in total; a mastery of the 45% of communication that’s unseen. Propaganda will be considered negative, while its original context is just ‘to propagate’ information. To further limit the discussion, we’ll keep it to the ways these things are used against you.

Propaganda can come in text, speech, or both. Politicians, lawyers, magicians, and priests all use the same methods in their perspective venues. You believe that which is not seen for a fee and sensory experience. When you start to realize how many ways there are to deceive someone with the full sensory experience, you may get a giggle out of it.

*Theatricality is a powerful tool on the uninitiated. But we have been initiated.*

- Bane

It seems that ancient peoples called this ‘white magic’ or ‘enchantment’. I wish I was kidding. Wizardry is the art of bullshit. How much have we learned since the Dark Ages... or are we still in them?

To avoid propaganda, you must first avoid or train to deal with ‘the show’. ‘The show’ is the full sensory onslaught. Bernie Sanders with voice, hands, and teleprompter has the visual, auditory, and intellectual processes engaged in socialist propaganda. His methods do not pan out but he can captivate audiences, regardless of his conviction to anything he’s saying. He may be lying or not: the show doesn’t require validation of the EEFs and his methods; it requires him to do the show, nothing else. When you look aside from the show, you see a man with 3 houses that preaches socialism but clearly doesn’t practice it, past his government check.

Removing visuals is easy. Removing tone is difficult. Children and child-like people use a pleading tone, to elicit their desires regardless of their words. Tonality is used to abuse people and *everyone* should be aware of it. Soft bullying someone with tone and mannerisms is very easy to do in 2020. To validate all of this, you must strip it all down to the words and work from there. That human said X; you validate X. The end. When X leads to why, the bullshit has begun! Assessments of EEFs and claims, not beliefs or judgments, until assessments are valid and complete. There’s lots of ways to fail. Fallacies, ignorance, and bad information are everywhere. You have to do all the work, no excuses.

Neurolinguistics is a science. Your primate brain has tones it likes and doesn’t; some are learned and some are inherent. This is the most dangerous playground for another human to own real estate in.
They have a ~7x advantage here to get you with the tone, if the words alone wouldn’t work. If this wasn’t an issue, dating would be a lot easier.

The use of inherently comfortable tones with deceptive language is the life of the priest/politician/attorney/magician. The difference between definition 1 and definition 2 is how these people arbitrage their lives from the humans around them. It’s not to say that intricate contract and arbitration doesn’t happen without a statutory system. It’s to say these humans have convinced everyone that other human pensions are mandatory, lest civilization fall apart. That’s false but the organization that humans recognize as valid and positive is where the parasitism is most easily hidden with nonsense language.

The single worst part of the rampant use of psychological warfare is the loss of honesty/fidelity in human communications. All warfare is based on deception. That’s certainly being used against you, more so when ignorant of it. Are you trying to not be misunderstood? Are you being understood? Only honest people ever find out how hard communication really is. Validation of the actual situation is required for all assessment. Patients must be honestly and skillfully triaged; problems must be honestly and skillfully assessed. Keeping your own head clear is not an option and understanding the whole theater is needed for your competency as well as your sanity.

Nomad vs Settler

Judgment is a great way to end up with dumb conclusions. Assessments are how you find the root cause of a problem. The root cause of the legal/political philosophical issue is the nomad versus the settler. Every dispute you can imagine fits this template. There’s one stationary party, one mobile party, and a host of ways that the interactions can change based on any factor you like; it’s a Venn diagram parade.

A nomad, by their nature, is mobile and cannot own much. They own property but it’s tangible and portable; they also own skills. These skills are a nontransferable property, like your body. The nomad uses their skills to get paid and keep moving as their situation and/or desires dictate. This is all of humans until property rights are established. The nature of the nomad is one of motion. Nomads must move around the mountain and the lake.

A settler is a tired nomad or a different human that dislikes/cannot be a nomad; it’s their prerogative. They provide for themselves in many ways because they do not move around and establish an infrastructure around one location that allows them to support themselves. A settler needs to protect their support structure. The settlers devise property systems to organize who’s where and standardize disputes. One cannot claim a house because the owners went to lunch or on vacation, silly nomad.

Regardless of the type of human you are, one may not dictate to others that which is or is not theirs. If you and I have 2 different property systems, no one is de facto correct. If you are in the same property system, there may be a correct answer amongst the in-group. The point here is that I do not dictate your property rights to you nor do you to me. You explain your system and I explain mine. The
only way someone is de facto incorrect is when they impose their property system upon you or violate the in-group rules. It really is that simple.

Is this a solution to property disputes? Nope. It’s to understand them at their root and then make sense of how to adjudicate the process. Yes, a 21st century warrior needs to know their property rights, to a six sigma level, before you really understand when violence is an answer that will work. Let alone if it’s a good idea or not, that’s another discussion.

So while we can discuss settler versus settler and nomad verses nomad conflict and property divisions, that’s easy and the only difference between reality and that discussion is that one violence monopoly controls the argument. Is the US large enough and educated for 2 ‘federal’ property systems? It sure is. That we have one federal and 50 state systems is not de facto correct. It’s just the way it is today.

Let’s look at settler versus nomads and we’ll start with worst case in both instances: a nomad demanding a settler move and a settler capturing a natural terrain/easement to restrict nomadic movement.

The nomad has no right to demand the settler move any more than they demand a mountain move. The nature of the nomad is to go around. It’s irrational by nomad rules. “Because I cannot move a mountain” is not a relevant issue or defense to the claim. The ability to make the settler move is not germane; there’s no intelligent claim, just a demand. It’s also an offensive operation, so the resources required to perform this involuntarily is high to extensive. This is a waste of time unless the settler is Jedi mind-tricked into it. That’s the point of the statutes. Agreeing to pre-determined methods of adjudication to prevent violence. But when the ethic is to find a way in and violate the property, you’d better hope there’s not a statutory way in or that the nomad, or a neighbor, isn’t persistent.

The settler who tries to monopolize a natural throughfare for human traffic has the burden of enforcement. The settler is also not ‘settling’ in a place, but using the legal culture of the settlers to offensively obstruct movement of the nomad. The issue then comes when the settlers assist in that obstruction, systemically. This is a natural occurrence because the ‘obstruction’ may be the only physical or economically sound way through the area or it may be legit progress the nomad wants to disrupt.

This is where all property systems become the least bad option. Why is it better that the system denies the nomad? Because the nomad moves on, that’s why. This is a permanent change for those who live here and a temporary change for the nomad. Is this right? It’s neither. However, the noticed benefit will be by those who stay and cultivate that area/decision and they will live with it. The nomads may not return because of it. They may take the nomad economy with them and destroy that settlement; maybe not.

There’s no answers here. However, this is the bottom. You understand how property rights work now because this is the basic property understanding for all of time. All disputes emulate this functionality and then add complexity of specific legal systems, technology advances, and specific circumstances, both physical and financial.

Why do warriors need this? From here, you will be defending the property border and ensuring the flow of goods and services. The macro movements are what most think of in a modern military. Well, the Iraq and Afghanistan wars have demonstrated one thing quite clearly: no one knows why
we’re all there. The excuses that allow people to be led into war are all based in ignorance, as many of us found out. When all the warriors can see, from afar, that there’s a political war brewing but no real damage, the warriors can abstain and tell the politicians to fight their own war. We’re taking control of the battle space back, with education and abstention. Abandoning politicians doesn’t make a war. Focusing the warriors toward an issue does. Blinders off lads and ladies, we’ve been had. It’s time to send the attorneys and politicians packing, in the name of peace.

Defense vs Offense: War is ALWAYS inefficient

By this point, it should be somewhat obvious that the circumstances of warfare in fact do not live up to the cultural conditioning most receive. Power projection is not a matter of the average human and the type of power projected going forward will need to be different, in the same way war has changed since 1776. Technology removes several factors, changes others. Human understanding of the enterprise must also adapt to those changes.

This is not a historical argument. If you have something to add and you reference that addition prior to 2009, I’ll probably agree with you. The human enterprise has been brutal for thousands of years and any time-traveling Monday-morning quarterback who thinks they know how to redo all this is a idiot. This is warfare now and that’s the context.

Two inventions are species-altering in the warfare enterprise: blockchain and laser weaponry.

A blockchain will alter how and if wars get paid for, how property will be settled, and how goods and services will flow. These structures are code based and do not report to legislatures. This is the tech that will #killallthelawyers. The code will remove legislators from math-based transactions, like banking transactions and currency creation. The remaining tenants that one considers ‘legal’ will be decentralized, as these systems make the economic relevance of an attorney as obsolete as the wainwright and the cobbler.

Laser weapons will kill you from so far away that showing up to the battle field is a de facto suicidal ideation. This is the equivalent of a sniper with a .50 cal Barret that can shoot you from hundreds of miles away. The curvature of the Earth is your cover. Fuck that. This will be a wakeup call for everyone that violent adjudication is a terrible idea, even if you can justify it. The goal here is minimal violence and this type of weaponry should be fully supported by everyone, in the name of peace.

With defensive weaponry of this ilk in place, the argument for deployments is simultaneously complicated and dumb. The world we live in is changing, rapidly. Is a deployment necessary? No. Immunity for politicians to commit monetary fuckery is the reason most foreign policy exists. If the deployments don’t work, why did they happen? They happened for reasons that do work.... like dollar hegemony. If we want to claim victory over terror, we failed. If we want to say the system lived a lot longer because stable Iraqi oil and Afghan poppy, then ok.

Well, the blockchain systems make deployments like Norman Schwarzkopf performed unneeded. Militaries securing property is dumb, unless it’s on the N. American land mass. The rest is a
matter of insurance, staking, leverage, and individual economic risk, not societal military or existential risk. The warrior culture needs to adopt an ethic of non-deployment problem solving, lest they be sent on fool's errands. (See Fool’s Errand by Scott Horton) Warriors on another continent are a sign of a problem here, not abroad; at least not anymore. If one cannot fix the stuff here; it’s not helping elsewhere.

Defensive warfare is rather cheap. The laser weaponry is a high up front cost but nothing compared to the costs of the current 2-front-war set up. The ground forces here should look like it does, an armed population. There are not enough movement assets to get a large army here. Russia would need all the movement assets on Earth, including the US assets, to come here. China would need 2x that. We are safe minus missiles from orbit or the sea. Again, radar and laser targeting. The War Department has the ability to solve these issues. They won’t with a dumb mandate... and a printing press.

Regardless of specific instances, how you will pay for an effort will determine success before ideology will. To learn the enterprise of war, your supply train is job one and all the details produce the efficiency the supplies will flow. Your supply chain needs to be understood and defended. It will be your abductive vehicle of success in your operations, military or otherwise.
Part 3: The Art of War

14. Pass it on

Let’s start the perceptive bullshit right up front. *The last shall be first.* Two people starting on opposite ends, trying to meet in the middle; the conversation begins and ends here. It’s the most important part. Also, it’s an example where one can see how paradox can yield a natural, ergonomic solution.

The coordination problem is what we’re solving. Be it how the beans and bullets arrive or the HE is landing in a time-on-target attack; synchronization is the point. Everything is a function of time, like it or not. You have to keep up and everyone has to do that with you. The manner in which we do this as a species is to pass on all we know. While I won’t get into the ails of the Secret Compartmentalization Information system or concept, I’ll demonstrate with this book how that doesn’t work and our very sanity hinges on good information being passed as fast as possible to achieve the agreed upon end state.

On an organizational level, we have to have the trust and communication to make the enterprise happen. Well, an organization filled with amateurs can be even more dangerous than one filled with scandalous pros. The primary reason to pass on all you know as best you can is that the aggregate level of productivity that is achieved when all parties in a transaction have mastery in performing it is really impressive. You want to be a part of it. The efficiency of everyone keeping the process honest and tight is the end goal of every transaction for honest people. It is that simple with transparent goals and methods. Keeping that process tight is about transparency in responsibility.

The first part of becoming a warrior is to be skeptical and critical of what you involve yourself in. Validate your own work to an extent where dishonest people have difficulty performing around you and honest people feel your synergy. This is not for anyone but you. Your understanding is what you rely on and bring to the table. While there’s a Venn diagram here between padawan, knight, and master, the goal/mindset needs to be “I know what’s going on. I stay informed because I know how to engage the problem set we are dealing with. If my own actions are not testable and valid, I am not performing.”

The game I used to play was pretend. *I hate pretend.* I’d pretend someone around me died and I needed to perform their job, lest I die. It’s a grim game and I hate it. However, you’ll figure out how shit works, who knows what, and who doesn’t. The goal of the game is to improve you; don’t think this game works out in real life, for anyone. You want mastery of your circumstances for your own security and you want to pass it on for the same reason. The only reason you know is someone else told you; you do the same so others benefit, like you did. Pay this much forward, for everyone’s sake.

In WWII, the German army had 4 levels of continuity. That means that the company commanders knew division commander’s intent. It made that army extremely difficult to fight because almost every German you met knew the plan, to a relevant extent. The more levels of information sharing that go on, the harder it is to infiltrate into something vital because everyone knows what’s vital and all eyes tend to be on that. While OPSEC best practices are one thing, your team not knowing the mission is not a sign of superior OPSEC; it’s a sign of amateur hour.
Humans behaving normally in nature are by definition chaotic. All moving about for their own reasons based on needs, desires, information, and circumstance you and I cannot know for few, let alone ALL of them; sometimes, even ourselves. While the focus here will be on the details of competition and war, it needs to be said up front that the far end of the logistical supply train is, without any question, more important than the side nearest to you and your battle space. The sole reason a war is ever prosecuted is to ensure that the freedom/people engaged in it are benefitting from said act, for whatever reasons. To conduct a counterproductive war is to only do some form of harm to those the war was to protect, while bankrupting them. Know the definition of help.

A modern commander would be wise to learn sound, basic economic theory and practice to aid in the cost benefit analysis of prosecuting any large scale action that could harm those it is designed to empower. This is the unavoidable nature of war. If a war starts for desperate reasons, the outcome can end a civilization. Going to war because your bowl is getting empty is the fastest way to the bottom of it. You will only determine the battle fields of your choosing, not the ones you’re dragged onto. No law or regulation will change this; therefore, accepting the responsibility of your own chaos will allow for more fluid thinking and a better rolling assessment of the factors and realities of your strategic and logistical position. These points of chaos are people engaging in planned and random events. Not all chaotic points are to be controlled, as that is impossible.

A healthy economy is required to make war, as all that you do in war is highly unlikely to yield a net more than you started with, especially in lives and even with spoils. The economy of war is the supply train. Any general knows to guard that chain, but in ancient times they needed to understand the frailty of that chain from its root to the conclusion of the war, not from the bottomless checkbook and its entry point into the battle space. This is why a good general would refuse a war from a king and find other means. Even if war was accepted as the methodology, it would be ineffective without a war chest.

This is where we meet; the rally point. There are so many people/points of chaos, each picking their own way. This is how an economy operates, almost seamlessly, without central control or much organization. With sound incentives, the machinery that feeds your people doesn’t need extra 3rd parties draining the vitality of the supply train. It’s fine on its own. It produces so much on average and has a maximum threshold.

Regardless of how robust that system or not, this is the point you and I hop on together. If we do not synchronize, our points may never meet or synergize and/or may collide. We, as a unit, become a single point of chaos and move together, amid all the other chaos around us. Missing this point,
whatever step 1 looks like today, may end the conversation/operation at step 1. It’s our “objective” but just another event amid the random and irrelevant act to the other humans observing us.

You and I are chaos but you and I control ourselves. We do not control chaos because other people cannot be controlled; we can control ourselves by inviting and working with others. We coordinate to solve our own chaos. We’ll be imposing our will to move through the rest of the unplanned and other-planned events around us, peacefully. Then, the organized, horrific, and rare exceptions of order that look like taking up arms. If this is not your planned methodology, you’re going to hurt people for no reason or bad reasons.

The mental imagery I’d like to convey is what’s commonly called ‘the bang’. It’s the event in question or current discussion. You are ‘the bang’. You have come from somewhere. You will do something, then the second and third order effects. Events leading up to X, X, and events cascading from X. Assessment is not being part of the sequence; an observer. Self-actualization is being that sequence and becoming that hinge.

(Fig. 6)
2. Tangent

Now we’re moving but to where isn’t really discernable to anyone. If you are off on one, you will need to find your way back. Abstraction is a useful skill, not to be confused with naval gazing. This could be good, or bad. It is inefficient effort if not synergizing with your main effort. This can be research or training that never gets used. It is how you learned half of the stuff you know. This is a mid-point between acceptable and failure; at least you’re in motion. See: trying.

The economy has one/several people on a tangent all the time, only to find failure. Those lessons are, hopefully, learned by those involved and those around them. Business is very efficient now due to the decentralized, unregulated process best stated as “wise one learns from his mistakes, wiser one learns from someone else’s”. This inefficiency produces a greater and more refined efficiency, over time. See the Lean Six Sigma process. All muda is tangential by its nature.

Think about the discovery process of any enterprise. The strands of information will form a net of tangents that carry the project, or not. If you’re not securing that work or research, who is? Does anyone know about that? Some of these issues are coordinated with others and some things you need to track down yourself. Face it, some things only get done when you do them. Tangent or not, someone has to do that thing. Either way, do it for you. Make it part of your ethics to go find out yourself.

"You are obliged to go off at a tangent if you want to stop going round in circles."

-Alan Fletcher
This is a basic perimeter. One needs 3 points to triangulate or ‘secure’ your own position on a map. This looks like/perform the function of the scope of operations. When doing a puzzle, you secure the ‘scope’ first by doing the edges until complete. This step is to understand where you and your operations begin and end.

Minimum management of any plan requires time, scope, and cost. Period. The manner in which we do everything is to triangulate and bracket the data of our lives with other data in our lives. The visual, auditory, and intellectual components have sub components to determine if the information is valid. Eyes use light, shadow, depth, and motion. Ears use volume, tone, and verbiage. Intellect uses valid inputs, personal experience, and personal judgment. This is, usually, where the fidelity in communications is lost. In a perimeter, it’s a breech.

How one defends this in 200 BC, 400 AD, 1776, 1944, 1968, 1990, 2008, and 2020 change as the tools change. Sun Tzu teaches the principles of security. You need to learn the security profession, as an anti-fraud tool. A trained warrior knows fraud in all its forms because the job of a warrior is to arbitrage lives and resources at the greediest premium possible. If you cannot defend yourself, you’re what’s exchanged in that trade. By learning all the ways to prevent fraud, you learn how to commit those acts and how to use them to maximum effect. It’s not always the case that violence will be the arena and other types of fraud allow the subversion of violence by defrauding the means of producing violence. (EX: If the protesters are coming by public bus, stop the busses; don’t fight the protestors.)

Scope of operations also yields ‘the definition of done’ or your end state. To this end, all parties should know what this is. While many people at Enron knew something was not right, the scope of information was not passed to ensure that many were blindsided. When your team is in blissful ignorance, the disaster won’t be far off. Worse than deceptive communications, the lack of end-state awareness leads to the ‘just a cog in the machine’ mentality, which further assists in the ignorance and lack of information seeding.

Securing your operation and people with explicit and transparent communications and operations is what’s best for everyone. Expect people to mess up while taking initiative; expecting them to not take initiative is worse. Training and experience don’t really come any other way and everyone is
always in a state of growth. Better to embrace the risk of training and transparency than the results of not doing that.

4. Tetrahedron

Division  Box Trap  Pit  Caltrop

(Fig. 9)

This is the first 3 dimensional understanding of any battle space. Depending how the lines are connected, where, and why, this will change the structure of the problem you face. The relevant issue is that if this is a 3D trap, it can present as a very real problem without depth or dimension to your binocular vision and the brain that absorbs information with binocular vision. A tetrahedron is also a very efficient way to destroy 3D material with explosives. In the abstract, to model a 3D problem, you need a 3D model.

The illusions created in this way are real and metaphorical. Worry about the real ones because dialectic contradiction is not an actual threat. A problem being properly understood by the confines of 3D space, not your mental imagery suite, is paramount. EX: “This page left blank” making the page not blank is fun with words. Blank checks and disappearing ink are another.

Some points will shape the battle space rather than the participate in its operations. There are many ways where a failing economy/supply train will be hiding relevant issues that will affect your lifeline(s). The situation is now real; as long as your assessment is based in the 3D world, science boxes in the enterprise. Heads up and pay attention to that which is relevant versus that which is planned.

“It’s a trap.” Admiral Ackbar

When applied to thought experiments, the 3D model allows us the integration of the 2D mechanics into operational systems or games or strategies. The complexity of those basic operations multiples when connected with other mechanics. If you can imagine 3D Venn diagrams, that’s the accurate image. This is where the moving parts and choreography come in. The goal is to not disrupt the individual mechanics while making them synchronize for a larger output, preferably in a ‘sum greater than the whole of its parts’ kind of way.

A tetrahedron is one more point, a LOT more work, but is very accurate. One may call this 4D chess. When you add a 4th point, you have 4 ways to triangulate and measure errors to a superior quality of
work. The whole operation is dynamically checked 4 ways from 4 points. It’s a type of super-Scrum methodology.

The difference between modeling a 2-dimensional model and a 3-dimensional model is in the complexity, aka the number of ways it can go wrong. The simpler model only works in text and excludes sounds. The more complex model becomes, the more likely one is to have errors and/or fraud surfaces to exploit; they are cumulative in reference to hindering your success/end state.

While this is an example based on language, any problem in 3D space needs 4 criteria to model because all enterprises in 3D space have at least 4 criteria in their nature. Text is a 2D issue; audio communication takes place in 3 dimensional space.

My basic troubleshooting model looks like a tetrahedron; the four issues I attach are physics (science/energy/matter), economics (data, efficiency, results), organizational model (project charter, project management plan, planned end state), and philosophy (ethics, statutes, ignorance). By narrowing your concerns to only the game, the concerns of the participants become economic, not personal. I worry about pay checks on pay day, not impressions and feelings of pay day.

I then attach a primary focus/ethic to each element. This serves the purpose of establishing both end state and tie breaker for future decision points. The concept here goes back to Chardee MacDennis. On philosophy, you know on step 0 you need to guard against cunning. I start by selecting compassion as my goal/tiebreaker to yield a compassionate outcome. When I hit any philosophical issue I have along
the way, I will apply compassion first, then triangulate my choice 3 other ways. I will ensure my priorities on the other 3 marry up with compassion.

The physics/economics/philosophy exercise breaks down where compassion is referenced to physics (Is this possible?, compassion would enable but not prescribe) and economics (Do I have the budget?, enabled compassion cannot have slave conditions and wages). Next triangulation: physics, philosophy, and organizational model. Is my model compassionate, feasible, resourced, and (do I have the skill?). Incompetent folks cannot execute, even with budget and good guidance. Last, we remove the bias of compassion and ask the pure military science questions. Is this possible, do I have the budget, am I capable of this task, and will my methods result in chaos due to incompetence or a non-compassionate end state? When you can assemble the plan in this manner and the end state intelligently upholds a compassionate ethic, this should represent a method biased to the outcome of compassion.

Example: Placing murderers and rapists on an island.
-Compassion/physics to the victims dictates a prison or separation from the criminals; to the criminals, humane conditions in whatever venue we place them. To this, nature is a solution as it suits the victims and is the neutral starting point for all humans. Criminals have no claim to anything greater than nature.
-Compassion/economics to the budgetary reality demands the victims not foot the bill for criminals; the criminals can only pay X before they cannot pay more anyway. There’s no guarantee the criminal can ever repay the debt, is interested in doing so, or will follow through on doing so. In cases of murder or rape, restitution is not monetarily possible unless designated by a victim; impossible for murder.
-Compassion/organization model only needs to preserve the enterprise environment factors, not ethics. Because we’re bracketing compassion into the EEFs, this should be an output, not an input.

The end state here does not come with the costs of a prison, the environment of prison guards and executioners, the moral conundrums of human captivity, the moral hazard of human captivity on a budget, the compromises that are made to ethics due to budgetary constraints, and removal of the politicians and lawyers from the process to ensure fidelity.
5. Pyramid

This represents your 5 senses and is deciphered by your 6th, your intellect. If you understand the nature of a pyramid, you should understand that it's all math you can see. You can measure the unseen parts of the object, based on the measurements from the sides that are seen. You can get used to the idea that science and your intellect can cover missing sensory or scientific data by induction, deduction, and abduction if you know how.

Your senses will be tested in life and conflict; your existence is unavoidably subject to the elements and psychological warfare; inner and outer struggle. Every element can be used for you or will just work against you because nature and random and apathy. Being aware of all factors, weather, terrain, time of day, diet, personal biases, and ailments that are affecting your senses, can aid in eliminating or mitigating negative effects on your perception that will cause you to miss obvious factors like budget and time requirements that are not about you.

This is the place to discuss discipline. Discipline is just rehearsed behavior that becomes efficient due to the experience of repetition and determination. While physical discipline is the cornerstone of health, the mental discipline will carry you past the physical tasks and into your thinking years, the ones where lifting stuff is done with a hand truck by someone else. Sun Tzu refers to this in The Art of War Chapter 1, Laying Plans. The discipline, ethics, and marshalling capabilities of a commander and his ranks are described. This plays into the warrior-philosopher meme but is based in EEF’s, not Sun Tzu prescribing particular ethics. Scrum, Kanban, PMP, and other org models demonstrate this discipline.

"Without constant practice, the officers will be nervous and undecided when mustering for battle; without constant practice, the general will be wavering and irresolute when the crisis is at hand." -Wang Tzu

Sun Tzu specifies his book to be about war and the germane details of competition/war in that time. This book is focused on the abstract of competition and understanding the complexities that arise when Sun Tzu’s guidance becomes technologically outdated. Insurgency didn’t have the potential to overturn wars back then. Small bands of people couldn’t disrupt hundreds of thousands or millions without significant forces; car bombing key infrastructure wasn’t an option. Media of all kinds was almost nonexistent and the communications of the day were slow, expensive, and easily controlled.

Understanding your own shortcomings is a self-directed and monitored step. I suggest daily stretching and work outs for your body. I suggest a constant flow of study of philosophy, economics, and logical fallacies until complete. Also, playing challenging puzzle and real-time strategy games, like Starcraft 2 and Civilization 5. These challenges force you to learn and react fluidly while your studies
guide how you manipulate those challenges with rational principles and applied critical thinking
exercises. See Daniel Kahneman's book, "Thinking, Fast and Slow".

Starcraft 2 is a real-time strategy game. This is an unforgiving process management nightmare
in the name of fun. The story line is yours to go read. This is mentioned because this is the place your
mind and your hands will come to an understanding, regardless of your skill level. You have 2 kinds of
resources, blue and green, and available build capacity called supply. You must maintain your own
supply with the resources gathered and your starting resources are the same. So, all management of
your build order can be pre-planned based on blue, green, and time. You should practice and steal this
template.

Note: Command and Conquer and Star Trek: Armada are similar to SC2. SC2 is refined and is the most
consistent platform to practice process management, due to upkeep and balance patches maintained
by Blizzard Entertainment.

Even if you play at low levels, you'll find that the task list looks like:

Macro strategy - represented in a build order; a build order is the order in which you'll
algorithmically plan the first X amount of time or supply.

Macro strategy management - Because you can plan this out to the second, this is the logistical
supply, maintenance, and repairs thereof. You have a plan, stick to it unless opponent forces a change.
Repairs are only when you have taken relevant damage to your management timeline. Damaged
buildings, ok. Destroyed buildings are logistical setbacks. Better troops than structures but at some
point, it won't matter. You'll be overwhelmed by the comparatively greater production capacity of
your opponent when losing structures.

Micro strategy - This is your unit composition. Many build orders do not make some structures
because they'd be unused and wasted time and resources. You may have to change your unit comp
based on opponent unit comp and/or lost structures.

Micro strategy management - Playing the game and executing the above, with very high twitch
times. That means the players will 'automate' their hand movements and make some of the motions a
constant baseline. This can yield over 300 Actions-Per-Minute (APM) because every action is not
explicitly conscious and baked into the pre-planned sequence. An example of this is probe/drone/SCV
production. You're doing that every few seconds for the first 15 minutes of the game and consciously
cut those later to make supply room for combat units.
To play the game at an expert level, you must have a template before you arrive. You'll have key control of your game. You'll know how to shift gears on-the-fly, as a stud poker player watches the table odds shift. The SC2 player must alter a unit composition, or a build order, or both to flex the changing logistical tide.

I'll say it. This is not a game. It's a hobby. A game is played and put down. This requires intent and effort to begin and A LOT of practice to be even remotely good at. It's a really great way to find out how human you are. It's also the best process management trainer imaginable. You will be the weak link. You will face the enemy in the mirror LONG before any opponent becomes relevant.

There are only 3 ways to attack anything: micro, macro, and time.
- Macro strategies involve surrounding the whole problem and smothering it. A solar flare, the SWIFT system, or gas chambers are macro attacks on a planet, monetary ecosystem, or human.
- Micro strategies involve hitting a portion to cause a fatality. A sith lord, regulatory capture/fraud/theft, or a sniper are micro attacks on a planet, in a monetary environment, or human.
- Time strategies involve using patience and your 2nd and 3rd order effects to erode or sedimentarily bury a problem. A propaganda campaign akin to COVID-19, monetary debasement, and starvation are time attacks on a planet, an account, or a human.

By taking concepts like Lean SixSigma, 6S, PMP, Agile, MDMP, and other templating methods, we can practice these skills in an environment that focuses on your abilities and failures against the process and then against other humans. All adults need this understanding in their life. While some would claim this exercise may be too high a standard, success is not based in opinion. It’s based in competent management of EEFs. The process here is three-fold.

First is the concepts of timeline/algorithm, budget, and change management while real time problem solving. Everyone needs this and I count it all as one.

Second is getting out of your comfort zone. Everyone also needs this.

Third is fraud prevention. This level of detailed process management requires someone to take action on skilled nuances of the game. In real life, this skill makes one more acute to how fraud works and noticing slippage in an active process. Go play this game because you like to be better at being you. Notice, the process management is based on your abilities, not your preferences. This is all activities in 3-dimensional space and can be articulated in any particular circumstance, if you know how.
The whole process is life skills. The longer you possess them, the better you are. Get on it

6. Triangular Prism (Tent)

Hopefully by now, you’re realizing that there’s A LOT of shit to get in a pile and that’s just for yourself. Well, this enterprise isn’t about you. This is about the coordination and the “greater good” you volunteered for. This is really taking the time to understand the EEFs in total, the other humans; those poor simple bastards you call family, friends, and coworkers. If you thought looking at them was difficult, wait til you find out all they are and aren’t doing when you aren’t looking.

I would place this skill level as that of a US Army Major, circa 2020. However, let’s strip away the military specific application and provide a civilian equivalence. This will be a head-of-household for 200. In each step of any process, you may look at a military specific task or what a grandfather with 13 kids who have 13 kids would have to manage on a farm or some other familiar enterprise.

This is the basic logistics of people and their needs during peace and war on a scaled level. The people on both ends of the supply train should be fully appreciated and, especially the non-volunteers in the roots of your economic war-machine, left with the greatest amount of autonomy to exact their own freedom of movement. Violating this may lead to 1980’s Soviet-like productivity and collapse. “So long as the bosses pretend to pay us, we will pretend to work” is how that works out, like it or not. As counter intuitive as it seems, one must allow a population to freely produce the means of war/defense.

Not only will morale, health, equipment, hygiene, etc. be needed to sustain any human action, all combined will be the pivotal factor in the operation. If it has become the reason that a battle is lost, the battle should have never been fought because amateur hour and wasted stuff. As a rule, this represents fairly simple problem sets that pale in comparison to the whole of the operation, but pile up to derail the main effort. In totality, those problem sets represent an opportunity to create a robust buffer for victory or a compound-complex shit show. This is your economy and it’s your baseline input to your supply chain. It needs to be assessed, understood, and managed, not ruled.

There is a mix of unit and personnel needs that will have a real price tag. Taking a day off and having everyone train to swim in a lake/river/ocean and clean their bodies and gear can save real costs, now and long term. Why doesn’t that apply to every other human endeavor? It does; don’t forget that some of the disciplines you and I use in war struggle also apply to general life struggle.

The leadership needs to be acutely aware of how to limit costs at every level but not be lashed to penny-wise, pound foolish concerns. Penny-wise in all the things because those same resources get used on something else; life isn’t a zero sum game, even if laundry is. Pound-foolish, avoiding the loss of lives or key infrastructure by mastering your EEF’s and planning for them.
Exceptions can be liberally worked around as long as there is an understanding by all to conserve the supplies as best as is practical. Think of this as the power generated by a community that recycles something at a profit. How does that happen? Mass participation, thru incentives or mandates. The incentives are reliable; the mandates are not. Therefore, building the educational understanding of the group effort should be done with incentives that produce the end state through transparency. “Pass it on” is very important; the systemic incentives make participants give the dopamine to help and the visual end state that was discussed up front. Success.

War costs and every nickel will be paid for by someone, eventually. Pretend your mother will not get her tax return if you sprinkle Gerber®’s on the lads this fiscal year. There are unavoidable costs. Be fully aware of that through competency and make sure everyone else is by spreading your information. An attitude of generous frugality is the paradox you best understand to keep your logistical world as small as possible while maintaining the best equipment, information, and communications possible.

Ex: The modern American military is almost 180° off on costs but does quite well with troop equipment and creature features. A better balance would most likely yield better results in force capabilities and discipline. The overall reason this part must be done correctly is this is the reason we’re doing this in the first place; the prosperity of our lives and the lives of our families in total. If the real reason we’d get together for organized violence isn’t the preservation of ourselves in the long run, we’re not civil, we’re doing it wrong, and we’ll eventually fail. So, even if you would like to believe that the group and personal sanity is all that’s required to make that happen, you’re incorrect but I wish you weren’t.
7. Heptaracht

This is my model that I use as my 3-dimensional chair. It’s 2 tetrahedrons, connected at a single point, the user.

(Fig. 12)

When plotting interactions of complex systems, you need a sand box to play in. (also see Fig. 6) This operates a bit like Tony stark’s sand table in the Avengers movies. Your imagination is a functioning,
digital sand table and it gets as detailed as your level of information fidelity provides. You can, if you do
the effort, plot every aspect of a project into this 3-ring Venn diagram and use the adjustable rings in the
heptaracht, to refine your understanding. The 2D format may make complex projects look like a traffic
jam. If you can’t keep it straight in your head, you can’t grasp it to then graph it. Modeling helps others
visualize and you to explain and demonstrate.

This looks complex. Think nuanced. A great active visual is an episode of Smarter Every Day
titled “Two Vortex Rings Colliding in SLOW MOTION”. This is a moving model of this concept. Red, in the
video, is enterprise environment factors and represent that which is not arguable; blue is the
theory/philosophy that drives innovation, madness, and failure. While I can tell you that you only need
to look at the video for 5 seconds, you’ll want to watch the whole thing and probably the entire content
of the channel. Destin, who runs the channel, is a human treasure.

Those rings collapse on the center point, you. From the larger, planned, obvious rings come the
smaller rings. There’s the nuance of your position, like it or not. This model mechanically functions like
that experiment. The phrase “He who knows only their side of the argument knows little of that” is a
perfect example of coming to the thought experiment with one color. You can’t deal with the other ring
and the nuances will lose you. If you cannot do the red and blue at the same time, you need practice,
not a safe space. If you don’t deal with the nuances, you’d better hope the intent was accomplished by
the main effort or you are still not prepared.

Even the rings that do not symmetrically produce this effect are still great examples of how a
thought experiment goes not-as-planned. The visuals are very telling and give clues to the person trying
to understand the format of sound experimentation. These rings do not represent a topic you are
learned or ignorant of but the form by which you must understand it. As the argument spreads out, the
substance begins to lack and spins in a different direction. Smaller, still relevant nuances and lopsided
disasters are out here. To run this sequence in reverse, you build the argument from its basic
components. Those are called first principles. Nuance is produced from the top-down argument. First
principles are where a bottom up argument begins. Opposite sides of the same coin.
8. Cube (the battle space/your mind)

This will be the space you need to understand to achieve your goals; while this template is little more than basic problem solving, the focus will be on ever increasing elements of understanding and dimension of a physical operation or military battle space. This space can and will change, with or without your input(s). Understanding the baseline environment and the static/dynamic/chaos factors that will/can arise and may change that baseline will be required to effectively and efficiently manipulate this space to your preferred end state.

The factor that will control your actions the most is you. This may seem overwhelming; not relevant. Perform or don’t. Your logical/ethical compass is the first navigational tool for these tumultuous waters and why all that abstraction in previous chapters. No more thought experiments; this is real life now. You are your own commander. Fight your battles your way, in your time.

However, IF... you screw this up, you are going to find yourself fighting at the bottom of an empty bowl, with no snacks. Maybe because someone fucked you but maybe because you are shit at your job. If you cannot demonstrate it’s not you, it’s you. This, most likely, won’t bother you too much. You’re a dumb fuck like me and you’ll clean up the mess and learn your lessons in your way. Who you drag in the fuck with you unintentionally will bother you. If it doesn’t, you’re in the wrong line of work.

If your thought process is ‘outside the box’, you will see other options that will give all engagement options depth and nuance beyond the military solution set. Fighting battles with gifts, phone calls, and trade; always more trade, not less. “When goods don’t cross borders, soldiers will”. Welcome to it. Earth, Your Slice, 1 each. Whatever battle you will be fighting/avoiding will be done here.

Rule 1- Never fight a battle that will not happen without you. There is just no reason. Peace is the goal. When you have it, go away and be happy. If you got dragged in, which is very often the case, you have the right to be pissed. Do not let dumb humans give you the “You’re just angry because…” speech. Those humans need to know their place in your life and properly kicking them back into their own battle space is your prerogative and human liberty to freely associate. They had no right to drag you into their nonsense. Those humans will never see it your way. Shields up and abstain; angry is normal for humans who are encroached upon. Don’t be the one doing it.
Rule 2- Rule 1 has no exceptions. Stop looking for them. Adult up. Send the kids to bed and plan out success. Again, don’t be the one breaking Rule 1.

Rule 3- IF... you see a ‘fight’ coming: be it the weakening of your strategic, tactical, or logistical position from a breakdown of diplomatic relations or a real, actionable threat arises, the least amount of effort to ensure that situation is stabilized, neutralized, stratified into irrelevance, destroyed and/or deflected is what is best for all involved. Minimal viable product is what everyone wants. There are limitless possibilities to ending a conflict before it starts. Keep in mind, the goal is to avoid war/conflict, not master it through practice.

The inability to keep other humans out of your life will equate to not keeping 3rd parties out of your operations and can metastasize operations, snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. Ensuring that the operation is prosecuted in the least-invasive manner possible, leaving the non-participants as pristine as possible, will preserve the fledgling economy in that operation. Failed economies are where your charter ends and insurgencies begin. The battlespace will be heavily influenced, if not totally controlled, by you. If not, you should have stayed home. While things may still slide into a war, being situationally aware of your current and future battlespace will allow you to get ahead of problems.

“Resistance is futile.” -The Borg
Better stated, the EEFs of Earth have already assimilated you. Accept it.
9. Leader’s Recon (Holistic threat assessment and validation; doctrine application)

So, the battle/problem has not been avoided. The recon of the battle space can and should be
done in several dimensions. Top-down photos are no substitute for a good “lick”, as a child would learn
by putting things in their mouth. Everything before here is the human condition/dynamic. This step will
begin selectively grooming those factors out. At this point, one of those factors might be another
human. Yes, 1. If you are not trying to preserve every single one, take up chess; You shouldn’t do this
job.

**Exception:** You are the only human with the skill set. Better the devil you know... Take
advice from family men, go have sex, do your battle planning in a school yard; whatever you
need to do to keep those chaos points in mind. “Think of the children” becomes the word of the
day, despite the grizzly context.

Who am I to tell you not to? Carpe diem and caveat emptor.

This is not just about how to operate in this environment. It’s not just about ensuring you are
with people who know how and will not accidentally or intentionally fail. It’s ensuring those people are
competent to assist you and have such similar motivations that trust is almost a given.

Mathematically, it takes 6 points to fix a point in 3D space. The more of the 5+0 questions you
ask and answer about each battlespace concern, the more accurate your calculations will be. Who,
what, when, where, how, and why. You can assign each side a question except the 6**th** side. The why is
your opening into that space and that side is all you. No one likes a shit show. A self-mitigating operation
with measurable effects that can kinetically alter the battle space in favor of you, against ‘them’, or both
may end a war before it starts. Again, better the devil you know.

The reason you and your moral compass are the most important factor(s): from here on out,
most of this is terrain, weather, invention/application/modification of doctrine, max/min ranges (**Yes,
min ranges matter. Your nostrils are a blind spot**.), transportation and logistical soft and hard stops,
limits and goals of your campaign, temporal constraints and windows of opportunity; math. It’s mostly
math in the 21st century.

Modern tactics, strategies, and methods are taught by video games to 2 year olds. The ability to
wage war has little ability to exact how you will prosecute one. Your style and insight should scale to the
problem(s) you face. Ex: dropping a JDAM in the suburbs can be a somewhat sterile event if one does
the math for subterranean detonation to create a camouflet and let the house fall in the hole, rather
than sprinkle the excess energy and frag onto the neighbors.

When those neighbors do not lose a family member in the explosion and can be compensated
for the damage done to their world, they may be pissed more at their dead neighbors for whatever they
were up to rather than the folks who dropped the bomb. Humans, go figure.
If a cost can be cut and lives are not lost, cut. Less is more here. This is the step past the last available non-war stop. Math will most likely be equal or greater than your preferences from here on out.

*I've been crawling on my belly, clearing out what could've been...* – M.J. Keenan

10. The 10th Man

*I've been wallowing in my own chaotic, insecure delusions.* – M.J. Keen

The 10th man strategy states that if nine people agree on a particular course of action, the tenth person must take a contrary approach so that alternatives can be considered. In business, this process can help break "group think" and ensure that a business considers all options. Due to manning constraints, sometimes no one has sent at least one known good to do a separate, unbiased assessment. This is adulting. This is a hubris check. This is where friends and sanity meet up and part ways. It’s also expensive and many organizations just cannot afford it. However, you really can’t afford the ignorance of not doing it either.

Find another to check your work, always. If you do not get dissent on something, find another pair of eyes and have them look. You may do very fine work. Let the group look. Find flaw; refine. Stress test, break, and shore up. It’s a sand table. Shoot yourself in the leg once or twice; it won’t hurt.

*“Vicariously I live, while the whole world dies.” – M. J. Keenan*

*“The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.” – Ralph Nader*
11. The 11th Hour: Solving the coordination problem

Everything in 3-dimensional space is dumb. It’s either Rube Goldberg going to work or Rube Goldberg jerking off. The End. This is where the understanding between moderation and extent is apparent. You should know the difference and moderation needs to be the word of the day, especially when dealing with extent. The coordination problem costs human lives now. The choreography will be correct or not.

This could result in trillions of dollars in losses and millions of lives lost in defeat or a drop of pride is squeezed into a gold-inlaid shotgun and given to a foreign general to redirect his ambition to another area of operations. Pride is free. Gifts are cheap. You make the call. Better yet, find a solution and coordinate it.

No excuses now. Your band of humans will succeed or not and be known for it, like it or not. The responsibility for the end state is a given. If anyone is guarding ‘their legacy’, have them guard a porta-potty. They are unfit. Moreover, a good step 9 will surround you with people that will create an environment where bullshit and lunacy are not welcome. Cheers and good luck.

“The more violence, the less revolution.” Bart de Ligt
This is the show. Regardless of the era, equipment, or culture, the ability to understand and direct the flow of all factors in the battle space, as close to real time as possible, is the task that now lies ahead. This is the moment of impact. You’re executing and creating points of energy and mitigating the waves you make, as you make them. All of these actions should be pure win, minus the chaos popping up. You planned it, right? You double checked, right? Someone else did too? As of now, your plans are a kinetic echo of your worst decisions. Those waves will flow and crash, split and redirect; until they dissipate and history is very unforgiving of miscalculations. You are the composer of this echo, for good or ill. Brothers and sisters, you will not pay for these mistakes; others will, in any currency they have. The chaos of doing harm is not really controllable, just containable.

“Be like water making its way through cracks. Do not be assertive, but adjust to the object, and you shall find a way around or through it. If nothing within you stays rigid, outward things will disclose themselves. Empty your mind, be formless. Shapeless, like water. If you put water into a cup, it becomes the cup. You put water into a bottle and it becomes the bottle. You put it in a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Now, water can flow or it can crash. Be water, my friend.” - Bruce Lee
I certainly hope there was a point to all this and the value generated is apparent to all. The pride and care you took with the lives of others will determine the headline. “Soccer hooligans save Rhineland, fighting in shade” is a happy ending. “Man strangles child in crib, RIP baby Adolf” is too but no one will see you as anything but a time traveling child murderer. Timing is *everything*. I suggest fighting in the shade over being shady. However, it is your circus and your monkeys. *Carpe diem and caveat emptor.*

Fluid Dynamics

Chariot or tank, elephant or horse; the tools change but the rules don’t. All the skills acquired up to this point culminate in this fishbowl of choreographed circumstances. You will now start hitting the surface of this battle space and surf the waves you make, making estimates of force movement, speed and impact of different assets, random shifts in the plans, and the chaos to be dialed in and redirected or dissipated, as intended and/or as desired effects come to pass.

As you swim in the ocean, the motion of the water, your motion, and the lack of motion of someone on the beach are all relevant to the operational space. Your ability to focus on the two points of motion and the relative horizon is the skill you need to manage a project. There’s an inner ear portion that understands the process intuitively; so much so that, sometimes, you can hear how the operation go sideways as it’s described.

Because the operation should be aiming for precision, introducing the concept of fluid dynamics into the obviously choreographed brings mathematically precise phenomena into algorithmic synchronization models, as the Starcraft 2 example shows.

Leverage is an obvious mechanic. The atmosphere you breathe is, in the realm of physics, a fluid. Sound travels 5x through water; you lose body heat 25x faster in water than air. Perception is not reality when you need to understand functioning. Laminar flow, residence time, the tri-point of water, and dozens of other principles that govern fluids in 3-dimensional space are also the most ergonomic and synergistic motions to choreograph in your project plans. A dialectic Mobius strip is not where you want to be. Circular logic is the one ring to rule them all.

*One great big festering, neon distraction.*
*I’ve a suggestion to keep you all occupied.*
*Learn to swim.*  – M.J. Keenan
If most of us remain ignorant of ourselves, it is because self-knowledge is painful and we prefer the pleasures of illusion.

(Aldous Huxley)

Who are you?

What possess you to read a book titled “The Art of War”? Do you do so for yourself or someone else? Do you do so for defensive purpose and necessity or lack of personal bounds and exhilaration? I think the addict’s description of ‘the bottom’ is the best understanding of finding who you are; the floor of life. Honesty to self is how you will gain competency. Honesty to others is how you gain honesty to self.

One may call this ‘ego death’. I find ego death a comfortable explanation for wishing the ego problem into the corn field and pretending you’re alive without an ego. It’s the dialectic of lashing one’s self to the main sail while denying the inevitability of tomorrow that cannot be talked past. I don’t care about all the heroic metaphors. Lashing yourself to the main sail is not a solution. You will either get the wax out of your ears and learn to harmonize with some salty bitches... or you won’t. Don’t confuse EEF’s of a skill set with attributes of your ego. No one cares about you; this isn’t about you. Do or do not, there is no main sail.

I like to describe this process as ‘ego forced to dig its own grave and then to live in the hole, awaiting orders’. After that, the only order that should ever need to be given is “Ego, you may come out and drag that thing into your hole, to play”. A hole with a carnivorous bottle of lotion in it, waiting for someone’s skin to put in the game. The thirsty need moisture, after all. That’s about all your ego is good for. Competency is a solid replacement for ego; get some.
Character is how you limit yourself. A warriors’ job is exactly that; self-discipline at the worst times. The goal is never making victims, only dealing with those who do. There’s a lot of people who will claim to be a protector and then use that position to take. The incompetent does this in error and only continues to do so without proper feedback. This discipline is not possible with immunity for ones’ actions. The skin in the game must be yours or the disconnect will look like you becoming the thing you set out to stop.

“Inside of me there are two dogs. One is mean and evil and the other is good and they fight each other all the time. When asked which one wins I answer, the one I feed the most.” - Sitting Bull

The verbiage of this parable takes the interactions and makes this conflict moral, not pragmatic or functional. I prefer “war dog” and “peace dog”. War dog loves war but doesn’t go looking for it. Peace dog is always in someone’s face preaching about ‘keeping the peace’. When looked at in this way, the script is flipped and the peace is broken by the one labeled peace; war is there but…. over there.

I work this out paradoxically. I fed peace dog to war dog. Peace dog was the obvious problem, despite the deceptive labeling. War dog was a solution, despite not really looking like it. This solution removes the problem and allows war dog to finally taste peace. You are what you eat.

Absolute power doesn’t necessarily corrupt a human but power does allow a scope of operations so large that the care normally taken on a micro scale is not possible by the leader. That leader may become an accidental tyrant, through sheer lack of information of operations. The ability to supervise the macro operation without the ability to translate intent to micro fidelity can get counterproductive fast. Again, it’s best to direct and incentivize subordinates while allowing those in the supply chain/economy and the commanders/troops to operate within intent of the mission without micromanagement. With knowledge of the mission EEF’s and intent, individuals can then be held accountable for individual errors. This feedback is absolutely required to ensure that the people in your charge are not suffering through degradation of communications and processes.

The skill set you will need to perform this work does not define you. You conform to it because if you do not you will fail. That’s not a moral assumption; it’s a description of the road ahead. You will be a warrior/protector. The commitment to be something you’re not will harm you or someone else. The job requires you to conform to it. This is not weakness, provided that the end result is not-harm or best-available-outcome because tragedy.

If you’re harming others because you’re inept, no one cares. You’re a failure and now we have more victims than we had before the ‘help’. If you want to believe that your type of help isn’t harm, it is. When you aren’t causing harm, it’s obvious. It doesn’t require belief because the evidence is all around. When the house is not cleaned, it’s evident not believed. Same when it’s clean. Belief is how kids get to Sunday school, not how adults get to church.

The warrior life really is a simple one. You find out what help looks like and then help if you know how and can. However, this simplicity is complicated by your fellow humans. They’re dumb, like you. They will conjure scenarios where delivering help renders questions like “How the fuck did this
happen?” before anyone can render aid. They are uneducated primates with cash and tools. The shit will get ugly and that assumes you do not graduate from protector to warrior. Warriors know how dumb stuff works so well, we do it to others who are dumber-still than ourselves. Fair fights are for movies, not real life.

You will need to take on four fields of study: law (statutes/regulations/politics), science, economics, and philosophy.

Statute/Law

What most call the law is nothing more than manmade statute. It’s an opinion, in almost all cases and if it isn’t, it’s coincidental and a Rosetta Stone into statute mastery. The term, law, will be misused to put the same gravity into statute as in science; it will be used to control politics and philosophy; it will be used in regulations to control economics. Politics is warfare by other means. It isn’t not warfare. It’s a deception. Words are the battle space. Your primate brain, neurolinguistics, and vocabulary are used against you, even if you know how the system works or should work despite the lack of successful results.

Why must you understand the law? Because a warrior needs to know what exculpatory evidence is, what it looks like, and how that, not statutory immunity, is where the “immunity” will come from for the aggressive acts one may commit. The terms and conditions under which one avoids prosecution cannot be permissions from some unseen human or group. It cannot hide in a legal fiction, like a corporation or government. It can only be found in the sunlight of full transparency.

Killing Che Guevara was a just act; killing Muammar Qaddaffi, very unlikely. Saddam Hussain? Well, not like he was a good guy. However, the military rely on blind faith and orders. This leads to low-information and incompetent humans at every level. The communications are intentionally not set up for mass understanding. They are set up minimal viable product. This is not an opinion. Easier when everyone has info access, and we go armed, than when INFOSEC leave everyone sheep on a contract and pretend that our delicate movements are not easily observed. This is only hurting the volunteers, mentally and intellectually. Ending up in a place you never saw coming is where a lot of the trauma starts; ending up in a place you can’t get out of is where it ends up. Many end themselves there as a result.

Let’s have warriors that have minimal regrets for information procured after the fact. Let’s make it a practice to not compartmentalize methods and goals. Let’s show up with some idea of what help
doesn’t look like, at least. Without an accurate definition of the words disaster or done, all activity is sales and values.

While I can admit that this is it, it’s not. Exculpatory evidence and the definitions of disaster and done should bracket a human to some semblance of success. All the surrounding philosophy, economic fluidity, and methods are the tools you need to check your work. Without knowing why one must deal with a violent human with violence, you will not understand the definition of done or help and those results may culminate in you paying for your actions, despite the exculpatory evidence. That’s right, methods and results matter.

When goods and services don’t cross borders, soldiers will. This is the real reason a warrior needs to look at all enemies, foreign and domestic. The laws will be used to prevent trade, always. In 2019, intellectual property is the argument. Intellectual property is for people with neither looking for both. The claim of intellectual property is only enforceable in an authoritarian legal system. IP is just marketing but the state makes it a permissioned legal tenant. This is the weakest of reasons to start an economic or shooting war but politicians will do that.

Henry Kissinger called warriors dumb animals. He’s right. If you do not know how to secure victory with the law, you work for Kissinger, de facto. You will need to understand legal mechanics just to avoid bureaucratic defeats. So, get used to the idea that you need to be well versed in how law functions; politics is war after all. Understanding tactics and strategy help immensely.

Science

This is the easy part. All of the science is a matter of discipline and Rube Goldberg is your personal East German line judge. Mastery of rough sports, power tools, high power vehicles, and weapons are not a matter of opinion. It’s competency. This is how you will avoid your own prosecution for ‘helping’. You take the time to learn your game. You aren’t a good shot until you produce the paper. You aren’t a mechanic until the vehicle runs. Validation is not emotional, it’s done with evidence collection and testing results.

Science will also shape your philosophy. You will understand some things cannot happen. You will understand that some things may happen but they can’t go uphill forever. Philosophy reports to reality, like it or not. Good philosophy is wasted on the incompetent. Don’t be that human. Get your skills together. Prove it to yourself. Then, prove it to someone else; for confidence and feedback, not “emotional validation”.

Economics is a science, not a ‘soft science’. The issue is not that 100% of economics is not testable and insured valid or even necessarily repeatable. The cost associated with understanding certain variables it too high for the process itself to bear. This is every enterprise. The productivity generated requires 10x the resources to monitor while in operation. It’s a wonderful mix between Schrodinger and Heisenberg. Stopping the process to measure effects the outcome, therefore all in the box, the process, is assumed to be alive until evidence arises.
As the end result is productive, one may state objectively that the process is successful. One may not state to what degree unless one can measure the process while in motion, requiring more cost to even attempt by having equipment installed to monitor while in motion. As soon as one factor is not accounted for, anyone may declare not-science. Therefore, the argument around economics is one of both feasibility and efficiency. We can’t do X if we don’t have the resources, don’t know how, or X is impossible.

It’s not hard to define X and then set the Rube Goldberg machine in motion. If one uses philosophy to select X, one may never get a ‘firing solution’ for your machine. Your method may not accomplish the mission when ‘defeating terror’ was the goal instead of a grid coordinate filled with murderers. Listen to Rube; Rube is wise.

Economics

There’s plenty of economic theories. Some produce others not. All have a sales pitch but some pitches must be believed. This is how words and concepts like socialism and capitalism have 200 definitions and perpetual Tourette’s attached. However, this is where you will need to make the tactics and strategy machine work. Not an opinion; no exceptions.

The goal is efficient expenditure of resources and this may mean lives. Arbitrage is your friend and the budget will not let you skim. While one may learn schools of economics as part of the tactics and strategies you employ, the flow of a functioning process is very important and the whole study is just that. The detail and nuance economics is founded on are required to have the detail and discipline to succeed, especially when lives are the currency. How the process effects your team and your people needs to be efficient to be successful; See Sun Tzu, II, 13-14.

If one allows philosophy or statute to replace a functioning, scientific economy, you have either allowed someone else to redefine what is allowable to produce success or have ideologically screwed yourself. This is why every part of your economy is required to have a defined, procured, and successful tactic to complete that portion, not a hope or permission that can be removed. An example of this is securing your intellectual property by method, rather than statute.

Ideology is predominantly bad in planning. If you don’t set aside/defeat ideology at step one, it’s foundational and will cause failure unless that ideology is naturally expressed by the mechanic. Extreme sensitivity to initial conditions predisposes chaos. The 50-slot mass grave is never compassion, even if the 50 KIA JDAM is. Mass graves demonstrate intent, whereas a JDAM may be reactionary defense and justifiable, provided there’s no extra humans dead.

Your philosophy is critical. The definition of disaster and done are vital here; you may be procuring your own exculpatory evidence from this. This is why I say to let the task steer your methods. If you are dispassionate about everything other than the definition of ‘done’, an outcome with guaranteed exculpatory evidence is insured or will work out where you don’t need any.
Philosophy

If you are trying to prevent harm, it’ll be obvious. The rest is lawyer mouth and excuses. The goal here is to learn the tricks and the trade, perform them competently, and pass them on. That’s it. Ego, accolades, and shiny baubles are only there to make you feel good and fail. May the odds be ever in your favor.

The front is not a location you deploy to now. It’s keeping an eye on the currency, the law, and the predators. Your job is not the preservation of a perimeter. It’s preserving prosperity.
Appendix 1 = A copy of the original copy of The Art of War by Sun Tzu with notes

I. Laying plans

1. Sun Tzu said: The art of war is of vital importance to the State.

2. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.

(The state is a legal fiction and is not real. The organization it represents can hurt the people it’s designed to help. It’s important to remember that at all times.)

3. The art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one’s deliberations, when seeking to determine the conditions obtaining in the field.

4. These are:
   (1) The Moral Law;
   (2) Heaven;
   (3) Earth;
   (4) The Commander;
   (5) Method and discipline.

5. The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.

(This is the principle that forms a direct republic. The in groups form legal systems based around shared ethics, not geography. In this way, no one is commanded to put their efforts together.)

6. Heaven signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.

(Unchangeable enterprise environment factors; Nothing here is an opinion; reality.)

7. Earth comprises distances, great and small; danger and security; open ground and narrow passes; the chances of life and death.

(This is a mix of EEFs and your own position on it. Nothing here is an opinion; your reality, not everyone’s’ reality.)

8. The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerely, benevolence, courage and strictness.

(It’s difficult to lead without example. In this way, anyone in charge needs to be obviously dedicated to the enterprise and must know how to perform competently in that context.)
10. By method and discipline are to be understood the marshaling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the graduations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military expenditure.

11. These five heads should be familiar to every general: he who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.

(This describes an army but can easily describe self-discipline, in these areas in your own life.)

12. Therefore, in your deliberations, when seeking to determine the military conditions, let them be made the basis of a comparison, in this wise:

13. (1) Which of the two sovereigns is imbued with the Moral law?
(2) Which of the two generals has most ability?
(3) With whom lie the advantages derived from Heaven and Earth?
(4) On which side is discipline most rigorously enforced?
(5) Which army is stronger?
(6) On which side are officers and men more highly trained?
(7) In which army is there the greater constancy both in reward and punishment?

14. By means of these seven considerations I can forecast victory or defeat.

15. The general that hearkens to my counsel and acts upon it, will conquer: let such a one be retained in command! The general that hearkens not to my counsel nor acts upon it, will suffer defeat: let such a one be dismissed!

(Notice, this is a question of ‘sovereigns’, morals, and skill. People, ethics, and skill is the enterprise; it’s also your enterprise. Again, this can easily describe self-discipline in your own life.)

16. While heading the profit of my counsel, avail yourself also of any helpful circumstances over and beyond the ordinary rules.

17. According as circumstances are favorable, one should modify one’s plans.

(Don’t get bureaucratized.)

18. All warfare is based on deception.

(This is most important in your assessments of yourself, then apply it to others and/or your circumstances. Every lie you tell is a reflection of your inability to deal with that obstacle. Honesty is an integral part of your own learning and competency in total.

When engaging in ‘deception’ upon others, it’s often their ignorance that affords your opportunity. Only
with very advanced opponents do you need to actively deceive the opponent. In many cases, your open movements will either be unobserved or not recognized as a threat.)

19. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.

20. Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him.

21. If he is secure at all points, be prepared for him. If he is in superior strength, evade him.

22. If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant.

23. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them.

24. Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected.

25. These military devices, leading to victory, must not be divulged beforehand.

(This is operational methods and security. Notice, not hard. Everything in 3D space is dumb.)

26. Now the general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple ere the battle is fought. The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and few calculations to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose.
II. Waging War

1. Sun Tzu said: In the operations of war, where there are in the field a thousand swift chariots, as many heavy chariots, and a hundred thousand mail-clad soldiers, with provisions enough to carry them a thousand li, the expenditure at home and at the front, including entertainment of guests, small items such as glue and paint, and sums spent on chariots and armor, will reach the total of a thousand ounces of silver per day. Such is the cost of raising an army of 100,000 men.

2. When you engage in actual fighting, if victory is long in coming, then men’s weapons will grow dull and their ardor will be damped. If you lay siege to a town, you will exhaust your strength.

3. Again, if the campaign is protracted, the resources of the State will not be equal to the strain.

4. Now, when your weapons are dulled, your ardor damped, your strength exhausted and your treasure spent, other chieftains will spring up to take advantage of your extremity. Then no man, however wise, will be able to avert the consequences that must ensue.

(This describes the economic nature of warfare. The people you defend pay for your victory, pay more for your mistakes, and pay all when you fail. This enterprise is not about you.)

5. Thus, though we have heard of stupid haste in war, cleverness has never been seen associated with long delays.

6. There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare.

7. It is only one who is thoroughly acquainted with the evils of war that can thoroughly understand the profitable way of carrying it on.

8. The skillful soldier does not raise a second levy; neither are his supply-wagons loaded more than twice.

(This is where all the kids get off and the adults move forward with difficult decisions. Lives and budgets with tangible consequences on a timeline assembled by those who know how and it’s victory or bust.)

9. Bring war material with you from home, but forage on the enemy. Thus the army will have food enough for its needs.

(This is a logistical shortcut, not a way to win the hearts and minds of the opposing population. This is not an opinion, it’s a decision. Will our forces pillage the enemy population? If yes, be ready for second and third order effects that look like refugees and human suffering. If no, realize you will pay for the smiles on their faces but they might not be receptive to your ‘help’, even if you do it as nicely as possible. It’s where you need to know that the population is with you before you arrive and need to invest in information operations before you proceed with military operations.)
In this way, every civil country with a ‘right to free speech’ is vulnerable to an educational attack. Teaching the population to verbally defend themselves is a logistically, strategically, tactically, and ethically a superior operation, if the EEFs are present or can be created.

10. Poverty of the State exchequer causes an army to be maintained by contributions from a distance. Contributing to maintain an army at a distance causes the people to be impoverished.

11. On the other hand, the proximity of an army causes prices to go up; and high prices cause the people’s substance to be drained away.

12. When their substance is drained away, the peasantry will be afflicted by heavy exactions.

(Again, all the activity has a cost. Robert Murphy details the economics of security in his book “Chaos Theory”. For every action, there’s an equal and opposite reaction, violently or logistically.)

13,14. With this loss of substance and exhaustion of strength, the homes of the people will be stripped bare, and three-tenths of their income will be dissipated; while government expenses for broken chariots, worn out horses, breast-plates and helmets, bows and arrows, spears and shields, protective mantles, draught-oxen and heavy wagons, will amount to four-tenths of its total revenue.

(One can argue that the Art of war can be pointed in two directions at the same time. One end of the war abroad, pointed at a foreign enemy. This takes the people at home most likely to volunteer to rip out corruption with their bare hands, most likely to resist the ‘wartime provisions’ process, and most capable of replacing corrupt leadership that does harm to the human freedoms and gets them out of the home front. Then, you turn on a war with the intent of executing it poorly. This causes the blunt end of the war to bludgeon everyone at home as well. The fiat monetary system allows that same group to print the spread. Sun Tzu couldn’t print more silver and supplies and he know it.

All warfare is based on deception. Do you know how your currency works?)

15. Hence a wise general makes a point of foraging on the enemy. One cartload of the enemy’s provisions is equivalent to twenty of one’s own, and likewise a single picul of his provender is equivalent to twenty from one’s own store.

(20:1 is what ‘nation building’ costs. Offensive operations will cost you a lot; more if you want to succeed. This is before the ‘no JDAM’ safety rules require friendly lives to enforce. Offense is not a plan any American should support.)
16. Now in order to kill the enemy, our men must be roused to anger; that there may be advantage from defeating the enemy, they must have their rewards.

17. Therefore in chariot fighting, when ten or more chariots have been taken, those should be rewarded who took the first. Our own flags should be substituted for those of the enemy, and the chariots mingled and used in conjunction with ours. The captured soldiers should be kindly treated and kept.

18. This is called, using the conquered foe to augment one’s own strength.

(Spoils of war going to the most competent. So much for the labor theory of value. It pays to be a winner and the opposing population is now the de facto loser. Best of luck making friends and preventing a humanitarian disaster.)

19. In war, then, let your great object be victory, not lengthy campaigns.

20. Thus it may be known that the leader of armies is the arbiter of the people’s fate, the man on whom it depends whether the nation shall be in peace or in peril.
III. Attack by Stratagem

1. Sun Tzu said: In the practical art of war, the best thing of all is to take the enemy’s country whole and intact; to shatter and destroy it is not so good. So, too, it is better to recapture an army entire than to destroy it, to capture a regiment, a detachment or a company entire than to destroy them.

2. Hence to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting.

3. Thus the highest form of generalship is to balk the enemy’s plans; the next best is to prevent the junction of the enemy’s forces; the next in order is to attack the enemy’s army in the field; and the worst policy of all is to besiege walled cities.

4. The rule is, not to besiege walled cities if it can possibly be avoided. The preparation of mantlets, movable shelters, and various implements of war, will take up three whole months; and the piling up of mounds over against the walls will take three months more.

5. The general, unable to control his irritation, will launch his men to the assault like swarming ants, with the result that one-third of his men are slain while the town still remains untaken. Such are the disastrous effects of a siege.

6. Therefore the skillful leader subdues the enemy’s troops without any fighting; he captures their cities without laying siege to them; he overthrows their kingdom without lengthy operations in the field.

7. With his forces intact he will dispute the mastery of the Empire, and thus, without losing a man, his triumph will be complete. This is the method of attacking by stratagem.

8. It is the rule in war, if our forces are ten to the enemy’s one, to surround him; if five to one, to attack him; if twice as numerous, to divide our army into two.

9. If equally matched, we can offer battle; if slightly inferior in numbers, we can avoid the enemy; if quite unequal in every way, we can flee from him.
10. Hence, though an obstinate fight may be made by a small force, in the end it must be captured by
the larger force.

(It’s not about your numbers, it’s about your understanding but it will require minimums. Again, the
EEFs will always dictate your scope.)

11. Now the general is the bulwark of the State; if the bulwark is complete at all points; the State will be
strong; if the bulwark is defective, the State will be weak.

(Murray Rothbard said “War is the health of the state.” Sun Tzu agrees.)

12. There are three ways in which a ruler can bring misfortune upon his army:

13. (1) By commanding the army to advance or to retreat, being ignorant of the fact that it cannot obey.
This is called hobbling the army.

14. (2) By attempting to govern an army in the same way as he administers a kingdom, being ignorant of
the conditions which obtain in an army. This causes restlessness in the soldier’s minds.

(This is how a politician believes it’s helping.)

15. (3) By employing the officers of his army without discrimination, through ignorance of the military
principle of adaptation to circumstances. This shakes the confidence of the soldiers.

16. But when the army is restless and distrustful, trouble is sure to come from the other feudal princes.
This is simply bringing anarchy into the army, and flinging victory away.

(This is all self-defeating circumstances that cannot be allowed to manifest and need to be actively dealt
with. This is preventing time and poor discipline from destroying readiness.)

17. Thus we may know that there are five essentials for victory:
(1) He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight. (Competence)
(2) He will win who knows how to handle both superior and inferior forces. (Confidence)
(3) He will win whose army is animated by the same spirit throughout all its ranks. (Cohesion)
(4) He will win who, prepared himself, waits to take the enemy unprepared. (Disciplined)
(5) He will win who has military capacity and is not interfered with by the sovereign. (Prepared)

18. Hence the saying: If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a
hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a
defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

(Amen.)
IV. Tactical Dispositions

1. Sun Tzu said: The good fighters of old first put themselves beyond the possibility of defeat, and then waited for an opportunity of defeating the enemy.

2. To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself.

3. Thus the good fighter is able to secure himself against defeat, but cannot make certain of defeating the enemy.

   (In this way, it’s often that the warrior becomes callous to their own death and, by proxy, the death of others. The calculations made in this process are often self-deprecating.)

4. Hence the saying: One may know how to conquer without being able to do it.

5. Security against defeat implies defensive tactics; ability to defeat the enemy means taking the offensive.

6. Standing on the defensive indicates insufficient strength; attacking, a superabundance of strength.

7. The general who is skilled in defense hides in the most secret recesses of the earth; he who is skilled in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven. Thus on the one hand we have ability to protect ourselves; on the other, a victory that is complete.

8. To see victory only when it is within the ken of the common herd is not the acme of excellence.

9. Neither is it the acme of excellence if you fight and conquer and the whole Empire says, “Well done!”

10. To lift an autumn hair is no sign of great strength; to see the sun and moon is no sign of sharp sight; to hear the noise of thunder is no sign of a quick ear.

11. What the ancients called a clever fighter is one who not only wins, but excels in winning with ease.

12. Hence his victories bring him neither reputation for wisdom nor credit for courage.

13. He wins his battles by making no mistakes. Making no mistakes is what establishes the certainty of victory, for it means conquering an enemy that is already defeated.

14. Hence the skillful fighter puts himself into a position which makes defeat impossible, and does not miss the moment for defeating the enemy.

15. Thus it is that in war the victorious strategist only seeks battle after the victory has been won, whereas he who is destined to defeat first fights and afterwards looks for victory.
(The skill is to become a master for the sake of mastery, not for your ego. Focus and remember, not about you. That said, prepare to compete against the most difficult opponents in training, for your educational benefit. When it comes time to use your acumen, that will not be the time to learn; it will be the time to do.)

16. The consummate leader cultivates the moral law, and strictly adheres to method and discipline; thus it is in his power to control success.

(Method and discipline is how to get things done, not hope and change. By operating openly, this information and confidence in the process is easy to share and spread to the team.)

17. In respect of military method, we have, firstly, Measurement; secondly, Estimation of quantity; thirdly, Calculation; fourthly, Balancing of chances; fifthly, Victory.

18. Measurement owes its existence to Earth; Estimation of quantity to Measurement; Calculation to Estimation of quantity; Balancing of chances to Calculation; and Victory to Balancing of chances.

19. A victorious army opposed to a routed one, is as a pound’s weight placed in the scale against a single grain.

20. The onrush of a conquering force is like the bursting of pent-up waters into a chasm a thousand fathoms deep.

(To reinforce a lack of ideology to this discipline, all the descriptions and analogies are about 3D space, not opinions and emotions. Learning how does not negate the need to learn why but how does come first and is the utilitarian part of the job.)
V. Energy

1. Sun Tzu said: The control of a large force is the same principle as the control of a few men: it is merely a question of dividing up their numbers.

(Jocko Willink has a great body of work describing how to delegate and how one should only be supervising 3-5 people, who supervise 3-5 people, right on down to the fire team level. A whale is eaten one bite at a time. If you need help, get help.)

2. Fighting with a large army under your command is nowise different from fighting with a small one: it is merely a question of instituting signs and signals.

3. To ensure that your whole host may withstand the brunt of the enemy’s attack and remain unshaken—this is effected by maneuvers direct and indirect.

4. That the impact of your army may be like a grindstone dashed against an egg—this is effected by the science of weak points and strong.

5. In all fighting, the direct method may be used for joining battle, but indirect methods will be needed in order to secure victory.

6. Indirect tactics, efficiently applied, are inexhaustible as Heaven and Earth, unending as the flow of rivers and streams; like the sun and moon, they end but to begin anew; like the four seasons, they pass away to return once more.

7. There are not more than five musical notes, yet the combinations of these five give rise to more melodies than can ever be heard.

8. There are not more than five primary colors (blue, yellow, red, white, and black), yet in combination they produce more hues than can ever been seen.

9. There are not more than five cardinal tastes (sour, acrid, salt, sweet, bitter), yet combinations of them yield more flavors than can ever be tasted.

10. In battle, there are not more than two methods of attack—the direct and the indirect; yet these two in combination give rise to an endless series of maneuvers.

11. The direct and the indirect lead on to each other in turn. It is like moving in a circle—you never come to an end. Who can exhaust the possibilities of their combination?

(In the same way that Sun Tzu recognizes there are a limitless number of tactics to initiate and react with, following these maneuvers is a matter of sight and communication. In a conversation, these same...
meneuvers cannot be seen. Politics is war by their means; you need to assess and navigate that unseen terrain as the next step of this skill, in an effort to head the problem off before military maneuvers are required. If the sovereign or his lawyers get you into a fight, you were not ahead of the domestic enemy that now pushes you towards a foreign one.)

12. The onset of troops is like the rush of a torrent which will even roll stones along in its course.

13. The quality of decision is like the well-timed swoop of a falcon which enables it to strike and destroy its victim.

14. Therefore the good fighter will be terrible in his onset, and prompt in his decision.

(The initiative is the greatest power you will have in operations. Shooting first is a solution, just not always a good one. Understanding fluid motion and mechanical motion will assist you in your understanding of what solutions look like and how to create them with coordinated human action.)

15. Energy may be likened to the bending of a crossbow; decision, to the releasing of a trigger.

16. Amid the turmoil and tumult of battle, there may be seeming disorder and yet no real disorder at all; amid confusion and chaos, your array may be without head or tail, yet it will be proof against defeat.

17. Simulated disorder postulates perfect discipline, simulated fear postulates courage; simulated weakness postulates strength.

18. Hiding order beneath the cloak of disorder is simply a question of subdivision; concealing courage under a show of timidity presupposes a fund of latent energy; masking strength with weakness is to be effected by tactical dispositions.

19. Thus one who is skillful at keeping the enemy on the move maintains deceitful appearances, according to which the enemy will act. He sacrifices something, that the enemy may snatch at it.

20. By holding out baits, he keeps him on the march; then with a body of picked men he lies in wait for him.

(Many things in life are uncomfortable or difficult. Practice makes perfect.)

21. The clever combatant looks to the effect of combined energy, and does not require too much from individuals. Hence his ability to pick out the right men and utilize combined energy.

22. When he utilizes combined energy, his fighting men become as it were like unto rolling logs or stones. For it is the nature of a log or stone to remain motionless on level ground, and to move when on a slope; if four-cornered, to come to a standstill, but if round-shaped, to go rolling down.

23. Thus the energy developed by good fighting men is as the momentum of a round stone rolled down mountain thousands of feet in height. So much on the subject of energy.
VI. Weak Points and Strong

1. Sun Tzu said: Whoever is first in the field and awaits the coming of the enemy, will be fresh for the fight; whoever is second in the field and has to hasten to battle will arrive exhausted.

2. Therefore the clever combatant imposes his will on the enemy, but does not allow the enemy’s will to be imposed on him.

(Time is the ultimate battlefield.)

3. By holding out advantages to him, he can cause the enemy to approach of his own accord; or, by inflicting damage, he can make it impossible for the enemy to draw near.

4. If the enemy is taking his ease, he can harass him; if well supplied with food, he can starve him out; if quietly encamped, he can force him to move.

5. Appear at points which the enemy must hasten to defend; march swiftly to places where you are not expected.

6. An army may march great distances without distress, if it marches through country where the enemy is not.

7. You can be sure of succeeding in your attacks if you only attack places which are undefended. You can ensure the safety of your defense if you only hold positions that cannot be attacked.

8. Hence that general is skillful in attack whose opponent does not know what to defend; and he is skillful in defense whose opponent does not know what to attack.

9. O divine art of subtlety and secrecy! Through you we learn to be invisible, through you inaudible; and hence we can hold the enemy’s fate in our hands.

10. You may advance and be absolutely irresistible, if you make for the enemy’s weak points; you may retire and be safe from pursuit if your movements are more rapid than those of the enemy.

11. If we wish to fight, the enemy can be forced to an engagement even though he be sheltered behind a high rampart and a deep ditch. All we need do is attack some other place that he will be obliged to relieve.

12. If we do not wish to fight, we can prevent the enemy from engaging us even though the lines of our encampment be merely traced out on the ground. All we need do is to throw something odd and unaccountable in his way.
13. By discovering the enemy’s dispositions and remaining invisible ourselves, we can keep our forces concentrated, while the enemy’s must be divided.

14. We can form a single united body, while the enemy must split up into fractions. Hence there will be a whole pitted against separate parts of a whole, which means that we shall be many to the enemy’s few.

15. And if we are able thus to attack an inferior force with a superior one, our opponents will be in dire straits.

16. The spot where we intend to fight must not be made known; for then the enemy will have to prepare against a possible attack at several different points; and his forces being thus distributed in many directions, the numbers we shall have to face at any given point will be proportionately few.

17. For should the enemy strengthen his van, he will weaken his rear; should he strengthen his rear, he will weaken his van; should he strengthen his left, he will weaken his right; should he strengthen his right, he will weaken his left. If he sends reinforcements everywhere, he will everywhere be weak.

18. Numerical weakness comes from having to prepare against possible attacks; numerical strength, from compelling our adversary to make these preparations against us.

19. Knowing the place and the time of the coming battle, we may concentrate from the greatest distances in order to fight.

20. But if neither time nor place be known, then the left wing will be impotent to succor the right, the right equally impotent to succor the left, the van unable to relieve the rear, or the rear to support the van. How much more so if the furthest portions of the army are anything under a hundred LI apart, and even the nearest are separated by several LI!

21. Though according to my estimate the soldiers of Yueh exceed our own in number, that shall advantage them nothing in the matter of victory. I say then that victory can be achieved.

22. Though the enemy be stronger in numbers, we may prevent him from fighting. Scheme so as to discover his plans and the likelihood of their success.

23. Rouse him, and learn the principle of his activity or inactivity. Force him to reveal himself, so as to find out his vulnerable spots.

24. Carefully compare the opposing army with your own, so that you may know where strength is superabundant and where it is deficient.

25. In making tactical dispositions, the highest pitch you can attain is to conceal them; conceal your dispositions, and you will be safe from the prying of the subtlest spies, from the machinations of the wisest brains.

26. How victory may be produced for them out of the enemy’s own tactics—that is what the multitude cannot comprehend.

27. All men can see the tactics whereby I conquer, but what none can see is the strategy out of which victory is evolved.
28. Do not repeat the tactics which have gained you one victory, but let your methods be regulated by
the infinite variety of circumstances.

29. Military tactics are like unto water; for water in its natural course runs away from high places and
hastens downwards.

30. So in war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak.

(These concepts convey many ways to do one thing: be the prime mover. Cause your opponent to move,
set the pace, and know what you are doing to be the thing that others react to.)

31. Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works
out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing.

32. Therefore, just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions.

33. He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be
called a heaven-born captain.

(The root discipline is to not get comfortable and then go be uncomfortable to your opponent until you
win.)

34. The five elements (water, fire, wood, metal, earth) are not always equally predominant; the four
seasons make way for each other in turn. There are short days and long; the moon has its periods of
waning and waxing.
VII. Maneuvering

1. Sun Tzu said: In war, the general receives his commands from the sovereign.

2. Having collected an army and concentrated his forces, he must blend and harmonize the different elements thereof before pitching his camp.

3. After that, comes tactical maneuvering, then which there is nothing more difficult. The difficulty of tactical maneuvering consists in turning the devious into the direct, and misfortune into gain.

4. Thus, to take a long and circuitous route, after enticing the enemy out of the way, and though starting after him, to contrive to reach the goal before him, shows knowledge of the artifice of DEVIATION.

5. Maneuvering with an army is advantageous; with an undisciplined multitude, most dangerous.

6. If you set a fully equipped army in march in order to snatch an advantage, the chances are that you will be too late. On the other hand, to detach a flying column for the purpose involves the sacrifice of its baggage and stores.

7. Thus, if you order your men to roll up their buffcoats, and make forced marches without halting day or night, covering double the usual distance at a stretch, doing a hundred LI in order to wrest an advantage, the leaders of all your three divisions will fall into the hands of the enemy.

8. The stronger men will be in front, the jaded ones will fall behind, and on this plan only one-tenth of your army will reach its destination.

9. If you march fifty LI in order to outmaneuver the enemy, you will lose the leader of your first division, and only half your force will reach the goal.

10. If you march thirty LI with the same object, two-thirds of your army will arrive.

11. We may take it then that an army without its baggage-train is lost; without provisions it is lost; without bases of supply it is lost.

12. We cannot enter into alliances until we are acquainted with the designs of our neighbors.

13. We are not fit to lead an army on the march unless we are familiar with the face of the country—its mountains and forests, its pitfalls and precipices, its marshes and swamps.

14. We shall be unable to turn natural advantage to account unless we make use of local guides.

15. In war, practice dissimulation, and you will succeed.

16. Whether to concentrate or to divide your troops, must be decided by circumstances.

17. Let your rapidity be that of the wind, your compactness that of the forest.
18. In raiding and plundering be like fire, is immovability like a mountain.

19. Let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt.

20. When you plunder a countryside, let the spoil be divided amongst your men; when you capture new territory, cut it up into allotments for the benefit of the soldiery.

21. Ponder and deliberate before you make a move.

22. He will conquer who has learnt the artifice of deviation. Such is the art of maneuvering.

23. The Book of Army Management says: On the field of battle, the spoken word does not carry far enough: hence the institution of gongs and drums. Nor can ordinary objects be seen clearly enough: hence the institution of banners and flags.

24. Gongs and drums, banners and flags, are means whereby the ears and eyes of the host may be focused on one particular point.

25. The host thus forming a single united body, is it impossible either for the brave to advance alone, or for the cowardly to retreat alone. This is the art of handling large masses of men.

26. In night-fighting, then, make much use of signal fires and drums, and in fighting by day, of flags and banners, as a means of influencing the ears and eyes of your army.

27. A whole army may be robbed of its spirit; a commander-in-chief may be robbed of his presence of mind.

28. Now a soldier’s spirit is keenest in the morning; by noonday it has begun to flag; and in the evening, his mind is bent only on returning to camp.

29. A clever general, therefore, avoids an army when its spirit is keen, but attacks it when it is sluggish and inclined to return. This is the art of studying moods.

30. Disciplined and calm, to await the appearance of disorder and hubbub amongst the enemy: this is the art of retaining self-possession.

31. To be near the goal while the enemy is still far from it, to wait at ease while the enemy is toiling and struggling, to be well-fed while the enemy is famished: this is the art of husbanding one’s strength.

32. To refrain from intercepting an enemy whose banners are in perfect order, to refrain from attacking an army drawn up in calm and confident array: this is the art of studying circumstances.

33. It is a military axiom not to advance uphill against the enemy, nor to oppose him when he comes downhill.

34. Do not pursue an enemy who simulates flight; do not attack soldiers whose temper is keen.

35. Do not swallow bait offered by the enemy. Do not interfere with an army that is returning home.

36. When you surround an army, leave an outlet free. Do not press a desperate foe too hard.

37. Such is the art of warfare.
VIII. Variation in Tactics

1. Sun Tzu said: In war, the general receives his commands from the sovereign, collects his army and concentrates his forces.

2. When in difficult country, do not encamp. In country where high roads intersect, join hands with your allies. Do not linger in dangerously isolated positions. In hemmed-in situations, you must resort to stratagem. In desperate position, you must fight.

3. There are roads which must not be followed, armies which must be not attacked, towns which must be besieged, positions which must not be contested, commands of the sovereign which must not be obeyed.

4. The general who thoroughly understands the advantages that accompany variation of tactics knows how to handle his troops.

5. The general who does not understand these, may be well acquainted with the configuration of the country, yet he will not be able to turn his knowledge to practical account.

6. So, the student of war who is unversed in the art of war of varying his plans, even though he be acquainted with the Five Advantages, will fail to make the best use of his men.

7. Hence in the wise leader’s plans, considerations of advantage and of disadvantage will be blended together.

8. If our expectation of advantage be tempered in this way, we may succeed in accomplishing the essential part of our schemes.

9. If, on the other hand, in the midst of difficulties we are always ready to seize an advantage, we may extricate ourselves from misfortune.

10. Reduce the hostile chiefs by inflicting damage on them; and make trouble for them, and keep them constantly engaged; hold out specious allurements, and make them rush to any given point.

11. The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy’s not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we have made our position unassailable.

12. There are five dangerous faults which may affect a general:
   (1) Recklessness, which leads to destruction;
   (2) cowardice, which leads to capture;
   (3) a hasty temper, which can be provoked by insults; (4) a delicacy of honor which is sensitive to shame;
   (5) over-solicitude for his men, which exposes him to worry and trouble.

13. These are the five besetting sins of a general, ruinous to the conduct of war.

14. When an army is overthrown and its leader slain, the cause will surely be found among these five dangerous faults. Let them be a subject of meditation.
IX. The Army on the March

1. Sun Tzu said: We come now to the question of encamping the army, and observing signs of the enemy. Pass quickly over mountains, and keep in the neighborhood of valleys.

2. Camp in high places, facing the sun. Do not climb heights in order to fight. So much for mountain warfare.

3. After crossing a river, you should get far away from it.

4. When an invading force crosses a river in its onward march, do not advance to meet it in mid-stream. It will be best to let half the army get across, and then deliver your attack.

5. If you are anxious to fight, you should not go to meet the invader near a river which he has to cross.

6. Moor your craft higher up than the enemy, and facing the sun. Do not move up-stream to meet the enemy. So much for river warfare.

7. In crossing salt-marshes, your sole concern should be to get over them quickly, without any delay.

8. If forced to fight in a salt-marsh, you should have water and grass near you, and get your back to a clump of trees. So much for operations in salt-marshes.

9. In dry, level country, take up an easily accessible position with rising ground to your right and on your rear, so that the danger may be in front, and safety lie behind. So much for campaigning in flat country.

10. These are the four useful branches of military knowledge which enabled the Yellow Emperor to vanquish four several sovereigns.

11. All armies prefer high ground to low and sunny places to dark.

12. If you are careful of your men, and camp on hard ground, the army will be free from disease of every kind, and this will spell victory.

13. When you come to a hill or a bank, occupy the sunny side, with the slope on your right rear. Thus you will at once act for the benefit of your soldiers and utilize the natural advantages of the ground.

14. When, in consequence of heavy rains up-country, a river which you wish to ford is swollen and flecked with foam, you must wait until it subsides.

15. Country in which there are precipitous cliffs with torrents running between, deep natural hollows, confined places, tangled thickets, quagmires and crevasses, should be left with all possible speed and not approached.

16. While we keep away from such places, we should get the enemy to approach them; while we face them, we should let the enemy have them on his rear.

17. If in the neighborhood of your camp there should be any hilly country, ponds surrounded by aquatic grass, hollow basins filled with reeds, or woods with thick undergrowth, they must be carefully routed out and searched; for these are places where men in ambush or insidious spies are likely to be lurking.
18. When the enemy is close at hand and remains quiet, he is relying on the natural strength of his position.

19. When he keeps aloof and tries to provoke a battle, he is anxious for the other side to advance.

20. If his place of encampment is easy of access, he is tendering a bait.

21. Movement amongst the trees of a forest shows that the enemy is advancing. The appearance of a number of screens in the midst of thick grass means that the enemy wants to make us suspicious.

22. The rising of birds in their flight is the sign of an ambuscade. Startled beasts indicate that a sudden attack is coming.

23. When there is dust rising in a high column, it is the sign of chariots advancing; when the dust is low, but spread over a wide area, it betokens the approach of infantry. When it branches out in different directions, it shows that parties have been sent to collect firewood. A few clouds of dust moving to and fro signify that the army is encamping.

24. Humble words and increased preparations are signs that the enemy is about to advance. Violent language and driving forward as if to the attack are signs that he will retreat.

25. When the light chariots come out first and take up a position on the wings, it is a sign that the enemy is forming for battle.

26. Peace proposals unaccompanied by a sworn covenant indicate a plot.

27. When there is much running about and the soldiers fall into rank, it means that the critical moment has come.

28. When some are seen advancing and some retreating, it is a lure.

29. When the soldiers stand leaning on their spears, they are faint from want of food.

30. If those who are sent to draw water begin by drinking themselves, the army is suffering from thirst.

31. If the enemy sees an advantage to be gained and makes no effort to secure it, the soldiers are exhausted.

32. If birds gather on any spot, it is unoccupied. Clamor by night betokens nervousness.

33. If there is disturbance in the camp, the general's authority is weak. If the banners and flags are shifted about, sedition is afoot. If the officers are angry, it means that the men are weary.

34. When an army feeds its horses with grain and kills its cattle for food, and when the men do not hang their cooking-pots over the camp-fires, showing that they will not return to their tents, you may know that they are determined to fight to the death.

35. The sight of men whispering together in small knots or speaking in subdued tones points to disaffection amongst the rank and file.

36. Too frequent rewards signify that the enemy is at the end of his resources; too many punishments betray a condition of dire distress.
37. To begin by bluster, but afterwards to take fright at the enemy’s numbers, shows a supreme lack of intelligence.

38. When envoys are sent with compliments in their mouths, it is a sign that the enemy wishes for a truce.

39. If the enemy’s troops march up angrily and remain facing ours for a long time without either joining battle or taking themselves off again, the situation is one that demands great vigilance and circumspection.

40. If our troops are no more in number than the enemy, that is amply sufficient; it only means that no direct attack can be made. What we can do is simply to concentrate all our available strength, keep a close watch on the enemy, and obtain reinforcements.

41. He who exercises no forethought but makes light of his opponents is sure to be captured by them.

42. If soldiers are punished before they have grown attached to you, they will not prove submissive; and, unless submissive, then will be practically useless. If, when the soldiers have become attached to you, punishments are not enforced, they will still be unless.

43. Therefore soldiers must be treated in the first instance with humanity, but kept under control by means of iron discipline. This is a certain road to victory.

44. If in training soldiers’ commands are habitually enforced, the army will be well-disciplined; if not, its discipline will be bad.

45. If a general shows confidence in his men but always insists on his orders being obeyed, the gain will be mutual.

X. Terrain

1. Sun Tzu said: We may distinguish six kinds of terrain, to wit:
   (1) Accessible ground;
   (2) entangling ground;
   (3) temporizing ground;
   (4) narrow passes;
   (5) precipitous heights;
   (6) positions at a great distance from the enemy.

2. Ground which can be freely traversed by both sides is called accessible.

3. With regard to ground of this nature, be before the enemy in occupying the raised and sunny spots, and carefully guard your line of supplies. Then you will be able to fight with advantage.

4. Ground which can be abandoned but is hard to reoccupy is called entangling.

5. From a position of this sort, if the enemy is unprepared, you may sally forth and defeat him. But if the enemy is prepared for your coming, and you fail to defeat him, then, return being impossible, disaster will ensue.
6. When the position is such that neither side will gain by making the first move, it is called temporizing ground.

7. In a position of this sort, even though the enemy should offer us an attractive bait, it will be advisable not to stir forth, but rather to retreat, thus enticing the enemy in his turn; then, when part of his army has come out, we may deliver our attack with advantage.

8. With regard to narrow passes, if you can occupy them first, let them be strongly garrisoned and await the advent of the enemy.

9. Should the army forestall you in occupying a pass, do not go after him if the pass is fully garrisoned, but only if it is weakly garrisoned.

10. With regard to precipitous heights, if you are beforehand with your adversary, you should occupy the raised and sunny spots, and there wait for him to come up.

11. If the enemy has occupied them before you, do not follow him, but retreat and try to entice him away.

12. If you are situated at a great distance from the enemy, and the strength of the two armies is equal, it is not easy to provoke a battle, and fighting will be to your disadvantage.

13. These six are the principles connected with Earth. The general who has attained a responsible post must be careful to study them.

14. Now an army is exposed to six several calamities, not arising from natural causes, but from faults for which the general is responsible. These are: (1) Flight; (2) insubordination; (3) collapse; (4) ruin; (5) disorganization; (6) rout.

15. Other conditions being equal, if one force is hurled against another ten times its size, the result will be the flight of the former.

16. When the common soldiers are too strong and their officers too weak, the result is insubordination. When the officers are too strong and the common soldiers too weak, the result is collapse.

17. When the higher officers are angry and insubordinate, and on meeting the enemy give battle on their own account from a feeling of resentment, before the commander-in-chief can tell whether or no he is in a position to fight, the result is ruin.

18. When the general is weak and without authority; when his orders are not clear and distinct; when there are no fixes duties assigned to officers and men, and the ranks are formed in a slovenly haphazard manner, the result is utter disorganization.

19. When a general, unable to estimate the enemy’s strength, allows an inferior force to engage a larger one, or hurls a weak detachment against a powerful one, and neglects to place picked soldiers in the front rank, the result must be rout.

20. These are six ways of courting defeat, which must be carefully noted by the general who has attained a responsible post.
21. The natural formation of the country is the soldier’s best ally; but a power of estimating the adversary, of controlling the forces of victory, and of shrewdly calculating difficulties, dangers and distances, constitutes the test of a great general.

22. He who knows these things, and in fighting puts his knowledge into practice, will win his battles. He who knows them not, nor practices them, will surely be defeated.

23. If fighting is sure to result in victory, then you must fight, even though the ruler forbid it; if fighting will not result in victory, then you must not fight even at the ruler’s bidding.

24. The general who advances without coveting fame and retreats without fearing disgrace, whose only thought is to protect his country and do good service for his sovereign, is the jewel of the kingdom.

25. Regard your soldiers as your children, and they will follow you into the deepest valleys; look upon them as your own beloved sons, and they will stand by you even unto death.

26. If, however, you are indulgent, but unable to make your authority felt; kind-hearted, but unable to enforce your commands; and incapable, moreover, of quelling disorder: then your soldiers must be likened to spoilt children; they are useless for any practical purpose.

27. If we know that our own men are in a condition to attack, but are unaware that the enemy is not open to attack, we have gone only halfway towards victory.

28. If we know that the enemy is open to attack, but are unaware that our own men are not in a condition to attack, we have gone only halfway towards victory.

29. If we know that the enemy is open to attack, and also know that our men are in a condition to attack, but are unaware that the nature of the ground makes fighting impracticable, we have still gone only halfway towards victory.

30. Hence the experienced soldier, once in motion, is never bewildered; once he has broken camp, he is never at a loss.

31. Hence the saying: If you know the enemy and know yourself, your victory will not stand in doubt; if you know Heaven and know Earth, you may make your victory complete.

XI. The Nine Situations

1. Sun Tzu said: The art of war recognizes nine varieties of ground:
   (1) Dispersive ground;
   (2) facile ground;
   (3) contentious ground;
   (4) open ground;
   (5) ground of intersecting highways;
   (6) serious ground;
   (7) difficult ground;
   (8) hemmed-in ground;
   (9) desperate ground.
2. When a chieftain is fighting in his own territory, it is dispersive ground.

3. When he has penetrated into hostile territory, but to no great distance, it is facile ground.

4. Ground the possession of which imports great advantage to either side, is contentious ground.

5. Ground on which each side has liberty of movement is open ground.

6. Ground which forms the key to three contiguous states, so that he who occupies it first has most of the Empire at his command, is a ground of intersecting highways.

7. When an army has penetrated into the heart of a hostile country, leaving a number of fortified cities in its rear, it is serious ground.

8. Mountain forests, rugged steeps, marshes and fens— all country that is hard to traverse: this is difficult ground.

9. Ground which is reached through narrow gorges, and from which we can only retire by tortuous paths so that a small number of the enemy would suffice to crush a large body of our men: this is hemmed in ground.

10. Ground on which we can only be saved from destruction by fighting without delay, is desperate ground.

11. On dispersive ground, therefore, fight not. On facile ground, halt not. On contentious ground, attack not.

12. On open ground, do not try to block the enemy’s way. On the ground of intersecting highways, join hands with your allies.

13. On serious ground, gather in plunder. In difficult ground, keep steadily on the march.

14. On hemmed-in ground, resort to stratagem. On desperate ground, fight.

15. Those who were called skillful leaders of old knew how to drive a wedge between the enemy’s front and rear; to prevent co-operation between his large and small divisions; to hinder the good troops from rescuing the bad, the officers from rallying their men.

16. When the enemy’s men were united, they managed to keep them in disorder.

17. When it was to their advantage, they made a forward move; when otherwise, they stopped still.

18. If asked how to cope with a great host of the enemy in orderly array and on the point of marching to the attack, I should say: “Begin by seizing something which your opponent holds dear; then he will be amenable to your will.”

19. Rapidity is the essence of war: take advantage of the enemy’s unreadiness, make your way by unexpected routes, and attack unguarded spots.

20. The following are the principles to be observed by an invading force: The further you penetrate into a country, the greater will be the solidarity of your troops, and thus the defenders will not prevail against you.
21. Make forays in fertile country in order to supply your army with food.

22. Carefully study the well-being of your men, and do not overtax them. Concentrate your energy and hoard your strength. Keep your army continually on the move, and devise unfathomable plans.

23. Throw your soldiers into positions whence there is no escape, and they will prefer death to flight. If they will face death, there is nothing they may not achieve. Officers and men alike will put forth their uttermost strength.

24. Soldiers when in desperate straits lose the sense of fear. If there is no place of refuge, they will stand firm. If they are in hostile country, they will show a stubborn front. If there is no help for it, they will fight hard.

25. Thus, without waiting to be marshaled, the soldiers will be constantly on the qui vive; without waiting to be asked, they will do your will; without restrictions, they will be faithful; without giving orders, they can be trusted.

26. Prohibit the taking of omens, and do away with superstitious doubts. Then, until death itself comes, no calamity need be feared.

27. If our soldiers are not overburdened with money, it is not because they have a distaste for riches; if their lives are not unduly long, it is not because they are disinclined to longevity.

28. On the day they are ordered out to battle, your soldiers may weep, those sitting up bedewing their garments, and those lying down letting the tears run down their cheeks. But let them once be brought to bay, and they will display the courage of a Chu or a Kuei.

29. The skillful tactician may be likened to the shuaijan. Now the shuai-jan is a snake that is found in the Chung mountains. Strike at its head, and you will be attacked by its tail; strike at its tail, and you will be attacked by its head; strike at its middle, and you will be attacked by head and tail both.

30. Asked if an army can be made to imitate the shuaijan, I should answer, Yes. For the men of Wu and the men of Yueh are enemies; yet if they are crossing a river in the same boat and are caught by a storm, they will come to each other’s assistance just as the left hand helps the right.

31. Hence it is not enough to put one’s trust in the tethering of horses, and the burying of chariot wheels in the ground

32. The principle on which to manage an army is to set up one standard of courage which all must reach.

33. How to make the best of both strong and weak— that is a question involving the proper use of ground.

34. Thus the skillful general conducts his army just as though he were leading a single man, willy-nilly, by the hand.

35. It is the business of a general to be quiet and thus ensure secrecy; upright and just, and thus maintain order.

36. He must be able to mystify his officers and men by false reports and appearances, and thus keep them in total ignorance.
37. By altering his arrangements and changing his plans, he keeps the enemy without definite knowledge. By shifting his camp and taking circuitous routes, he prevents the enemy from anticipating his purpose.

38. At the critical moment, the leader of an army acts like one who has climbed up a height and then kicks away the ladder behind him. He carries his men deep into hostile territory before he shows his hand.

39. He burns his boats and breaks his cooking-pots; like a shepherd driving a flock of sheep, he drives his men this way and that, and nothing knows whither he is going.

40. To muster his host and bring it into danger: this may be termed the business of the general.

41. The different measures suited to the nine varieties of ground; the expediency of aggressive or defensive tactics; and the fundamental laws of human nature: these are things that must most certainly be studied.

42. When invading hostile territory, the general principle is, that penetrating deeply brings cohesion; penetrating but a short way means dispersion.

43. When you leave your own country behind, and take your army across neighborhood territory, you find yourself on critical ground. When there are means of communication on all four sides, the ground is one of intersecting highways.

44. When you penetrate deeply into a country, it is serious ground. When you penetrate but a little way, it is facile ground.

45. When you have the enemy’s strongholds on your rear, and narrow passes in front, it is hemmed-in ground. When there is no place of refuge at all, it is desperate ground.

46. Therefore, on dispersive ground, I would inspire my men with unity of purpose. On facile ground, I would see that there is close connection between all parts of my army.

47. On contentious ground, I would hurry up my rear.

48. On open ground, I would keep a vigilant eye on my defenses. On ground of intersecting highways, I would consolidate my alliances.

49. On serious ground, I would try to ensure a continuous stream of supplies. On difficult ground, I would keep pushing on along the road.

50. On hemmed-in ground, I would block any way of retreat. On desperate ground, I would proclaim to my soldiers the hopelessness of saving their lives.

51. For it is the soldier’s disposition to offer an obstinate resistance when surrounded, to fight hard when he cannot help himself, and to obey promptly when he has fallen into danger.

52. We cannot enter into alliance with neighboring princes until we are acquainted with their designs. We are not fit to lead an army on the march unless we are familiar with the face of the country—its mountains and forests, its pitfalls and precipices, its marshes and swamps. We shall be unable to turn natural advantages to account unless we make use of local guides.
53. To be ignored of any one of the following four or five principles does not befit a warlike prince.

54. When a warlike prince attacks a powerful state, his generalship shows itself in preventing the concentration of the enemy’s forces. He overawes his opponents, and their allies are prevented from joining against him.

55. Hence he does not strive to ally himself with all and sundry, nor does he foster the power of other states. He carries out his own secret designs, keeping his antagonists in awe. Thus he is able to capture their cities and overthrow their kingdoms.

56. Bestow rewards without regard to rule, issue orders without regard to previous arrangements; and you will be able to handle a whole army as though you had to do with but a single man.

57. Confront your soldiers with the deed itself; never let them know your design. When the outlook is bright, bring it before their eyes; but tell them nothing when the situation is gloomy.

58. Place your army in deadly peril, and it will survive; plunge it into desperate straits, and it will come off in safety.

59. For it is precisely when a force has fallen into harm’s way that is capable of striking a blow for victory.

60. Success in warfare is gained by carefully accommodating ourselves to the enemy’s purpose.

61. By persistently hanging on the enemy’s flank, we shall succeed in the long run in killing the commander in-chief.

62. This is called ability to accomplish a thing by sheer cunning.

63. On the day that you take up your command, block the frontier passes, destroy the official tallies, and stop the passage of all emissaries.

64. Be stern in the council-chamber, so that you may control the situation.

65. If the enemy leaves a door open, you must rush in.

66. Forestall your opponent by seizing what he holds dear, and subtly contrive to time his arrival on the ground.

67. Walk in the path defined by rule, and accommodate yourself to the enemy until you can fight a decisive battle.

68. At first, then, exhibit the coyness of a maiden, until the enemy gives you an opening; afterwards emulate the rapidity of a running hare, and it will be too late for the enemy to oppose you.

XII. Attack by Fire

1. Sun Tzu said: There are five ways of attacking with fire. The first is to burn soldiers in their camp; the second is to burn stores; the third is to burn baggage trains; the fourth is to burn arsenals and magazines; the fifth is to hurl dropping fire amongst the enemy.
2. In order to carry out an attack, we must have means available. The material for raising fire should always be kept in readiness.

3. There is a proper season for making attacks with fire, and special days for starting a conflagration.

4. The proper season is when the weather is very dry; the special days are those when the moon is in the constellations of the Sieve, the Wall, the Wing or the Cross-bar; for these four are all days of rising wind.

5. In attacking with fire, one should be prepared to meet five possible developments:

6. (1) When fire breaks out inside to enemy’s camp, respond at once with an attack from without.

7. (2) If there is an outbreak of fire, but the enemy’s soldiers remain quiet, bide your time and do not attack.

8. (3) When the force of the flames has reached its height, follow it up with an attack, if that is practicable; if not, stay where you are.

9. (4) If it is possible to make an assault with fire from without, do not wait for it to break out within, but deliver your attack at a favorable moment.

10. (5) When you start a fire, be to windward of it. Do not attack from the leeward.

11. A wind that rises in the daytime lasts long, but a night breeze soon falls.

12. In every army, the five developments connected with fire must be known, the movements of the stars calculated, and a watch kept for the proper days.

13. Hence those who use fire as an aid to the attack show intelligence; those who use water as an aid to the attack gain an accession of strength.

14. By means of water, an enemy may be intercepted, but not robbed of all his belongings.

15. Unhappy is the fate of one who tries to win his battles and succeed in his attacks without cultivating the spirit of enterprise; for the result is waste of time and general stagnation.

16. Hence the saying: The enlightened ruler lays his plans well ahead; the good general cultivates his resources.

17. Move not unless you see an advantage; use not your troops unless there is something to be gained; fight not unless the position is critical.

18. No ruler should put troops into the field merely to gratify his own spleen; no general should fight a battle simply out of pique.

19. If it is to your advantage, make a forward move; if not, stay where you are.

20. Anger may in time change to gladness; vexation may be succeeded by content.

21. But a kingdom that has once been destroyed can never come again into being; nor can the dead ever be brought back to life.
22. Hence the enlightened ruler is heedful and the good general full of caution. This is the way to keep a country at peace and an army intact.

XIII. The Use of Spies

1. Sun Tzu said: Raising a host of a hundred thousand men and marching them great distances entails heavy loss on the people and a drain on the resources of the State. The daily expenditure will amount to a thousand ounces of silver. There will be commotion at home and abroad, and men will drop down exhausted on the highways. As many as seven hundred thousand families will be impeded in their labor.

2. Hostile armies may face each other for years, striving for the victory which is decided in a single day. This being so, to remain in ignorance of the enemy’s condition simply because one grudges the outlay of a hundred ounces of silver in honors and emoluments, is the height of inhumanity.

3. One who acts thus is no leader of men, no present help to his sovereign, no master of victory.

4. Thus, what enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men, is foreknowledge.

5. Now this foreknowledge cannot be elicited from spirits; it cannot be obtained inductively from experience, nor by any deductive calculation.

6. Knowledge of the enemy’s dispositions can only be obtained from other men.

7. Hence the use of spies, of whom there are five classes: (1) Local spies; (2) inward spies; (3) converted spies; (4) doomed spies; (5) surviving spies.

8. When these five kinds of spy are all at work, none can discover the secret system. This is called “divine manipulation of the threads.” It is the sovereign’s most precious faculty.

9. Having local spies means employing the services of the inhabitants of a district.


11. Having converted spies, getting hold of the enemy’s spies and using them for our own purposes.

12. Having doomed spies, doing certain things openly for purposes of deception, and allowing our spies to know of them and report them to the enemy.

13. Surviving spies, finally, are those who bring back news from the enemy’s camp.

14. Hence it is that which none in the whole army are more intimate relations to be maintained than with spies. None should be more liberally rewarded. In no other business should greater secrecy be preserved.

15. Spies cannot be usefully employed without a certain intuitive sagacity.

16. They cannot be properly managed without benevolence and straightforwardness.

17. Without subtle ingenuity of mind, one cannot make certain of the truth of their reports.
18. Be subtle! be subtle! and use your spies for every kind of business.

19. If a secret piece of news is divulged by a spy before the time is ripe, he must be put to death together with the man to whom the secret was told.

20. Whether the object be to crush an army, to storm a city, or to assassinate an individual, it is always necessary to begin by finding out the names of the attendants, the aides-de-camp, and door-keepers and sentries of the general in command. Our spies must be commissioned to ascertain these.

21. The enemy’s spies who have come to spy on us must be sought out, tempted with bribes, led away and comfortably housed. Thus they will become converted spies and available for our service.

22. It is through the information brought by the converted spy that we are able to acquire and employ local and inward spies.

23. It is owing to his information, again, that we can cause the doomed spy to carry false tidings to the enemy.

24. Lastly, it is by his information that the surviving spy can be used on appointed occasions.

25. The end and aim of spying in all its five varieties is knowledge of the enemy; and this knowledge can only be derived, in the first instance, from the converted spy. Hence it is essential that the converted spy be treated with the utmost liberality.

26. Of old, the rise of the Yin dynasty was due to I Chih who had served under the Hsia. Likewise, the rise of the Chou dynasty was due to Lu Ya who had served under the Yin.

27. Hence it is only the enlightened ruler and the wise general who will use the highest intelligence of the army for purposes of spying and thereby they achieve great results. Spies are a most important element in water, because on them depends an army’s ability to move.
Games – Tactics and strategies to each game are an inherent component. Generalizing those skills is the goal.

- **Starcraft 2** – Algorithmic/six-sigma planning; economics application; evaluation and change management skills
- **Civilization 5** – Historical societal, military, and economic capabilities approximated; long term planning
- **Risk/Axis and Allies** – Random acts of dice are a lot like random acts in real life; economy of the game defeats strategy, despite the theme
- **Monopoly/Life** – Dealing with a budget, random acts. Children and family being planned for amid other tasks.
- **Pandemic** – Biological components have different vectors; teamwork is a victory condition; communication and small team issues.
- **Mouse Trap** – Rube Goldberg 101
- **Operation** – Rube Goldberg 102; Rube can hurt people.
- **Jenga** – Mistakes have consequences. Planning doesn’t help you avoid the bear but it does get you ahead of the competition and lets the bear eat someone else.
- **Chess/Checkers/Othello** – Basic and advanced planning with natural consequences that teach the cost of failure.
- **Chess/Stratego** – Ego. Rank is right but the tactics matter. Dealing with bureaucratic hurdles with mines and spies.
- **Trivia** – Understanding the world you live in allows you to relate your knowledge and communicate more effectively.

Studies – Dumb and its effects are the course work, not the goal.

- **Math** – You need this.
- **Geography** – This too.
- **Logic** – Fallacies are not math. Thinking is a skill and remaining consistent in your thinking is intellectual engineering. Learning fallacies is how you don’t turn it into a pedant by understanding what parts of a discussion are germane or not.
- **Keynesian economics** – John Maynard Keynes, Paul Krugman, Nouriel Roubini
Keynesian economics is the predominant school taught. It’s a method that relies on unsustainable monetary mechanics, printing money, to support the curing of economic ails through stimulus packages. It’s an economic defibrillator with a printing press attached as a ‘social good’. It doesn’t work because a defibrillator is not always the tool for the job. The ROI is a longer fiscal runway for a government at the expense of the population but you will see and hear about it a lot. Best to know what conversation you’re walking into.

**Chicago economics** – Milton Friedman, Thomas Sowell, Walter Williams

Chicago school revolves around data with legal tenants but no ethical tenants. That means it will avail itself to printing money without consideration past being possible and nets a benefit to a population. When data runs out, Chicago school stops and makes no further conclusions.

**Austrian economics** – Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, Robert Murphy, Walter Block

Austrian school does make several ethical tenants, surrounding the mechanics of the enterprise. Austrian school will not print money because the act is considered a manipulation of an economy to do so, not necessarily immoral. Austrian school functions like Chicago school until the data runs out. Then, Austrian school makes suppositions. EX: “Data demonstrates up to this point but if we wish to remain solvent then X is called for.

**Philosophy and Law** –

*David Friedman* – The Machinery of Freedom, et al
Legal systems assembled in a voluntary, market way. Your legal supply lines understood and the conditions under which legislation is possible and relevant.

*Andrew Napalitano* – A Nation of Sheep, et al
Legal tenants and history. Consistent and apolitical in legal interpretations, to the extent that is possible to separate politics from law.

*Walter Block* – Defending the Indefensible, et al
Property rights and methodology to a six-sigma level. Property rights are the best way to protect human rights. Military science is the domination of 3-dimensional space; Walter holistically ties law and economics together to prevent the use of violence in property adjudication.

*Robert Murphy* – Chaos Theory, et al
Bob’s understanding of the macroeconomics of war is the next step past Sun Tzu. The action has a supply that will be paid for or it will not exist.
Stefan Molyneux – The Art of the Argument, et al
Several book on assessing the nature of a problem, intellectual honesty, and how to do both at the same time.

Donnie Gebert – A Direct Republic: The Null Hypothesis of Politics
Yeah, my first book. A description about how to decentralize a legislature and many of the methods and principles surrounding the economic, military, and legal battles we face in the 21st century. Basically, a culmination of all of the above plus my military experience. (For the record, I hate using myself as a reference, because Stefan did a great job on his books. Such is the nature of decentralization and he who describes it.)