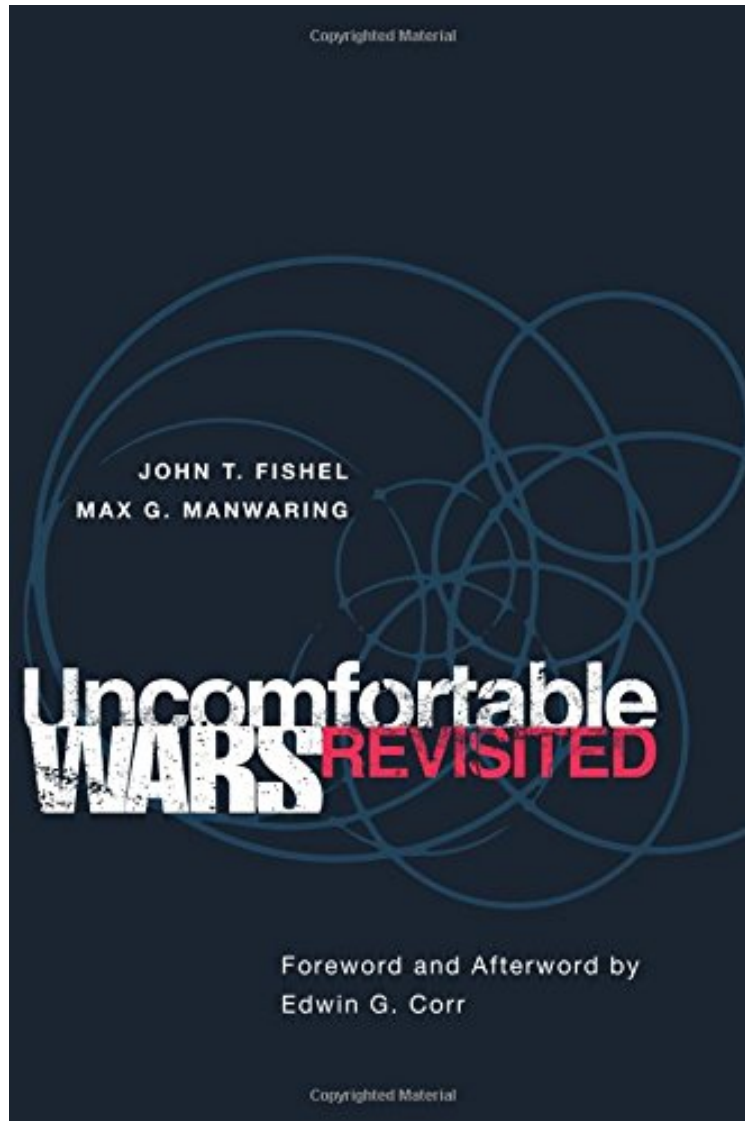


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Uncomfortable Wars Revisited (International and Security Affairs Series)

John T. Fishel, Max G. Manwaring
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#1038376 in Books University of Oklahoma Press 2008-09-01 2006-02-01 Original language: English PDF #1 9.00 x .90 x 6.00l, .95 #File Name: 0806139889360 pages | File size: 27.Mb

John T. Fishel, Max G. Manwaring : Uncomfortable Wars Revisited (International and Security Affairs Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Uncomfortable Wars Revisited (International and Security Affairs Series):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Some Marginal Utility as a Framework to Think About Certain Nation-State Insurgencies - Has both method and explanatory issues By Dr. Larry Leibrock The SWORD model was

developed in the late 1990 to explain success and failure in counterinsurgency (COIN) (p254). The date and context is assumed to also to support US involvement in Latin American and South American insurgencies, counter-terrorism and COIN efforts. SWORD is based on a multi-factor analysis of a sample of primarily, Latin American (small wars) insurgencies' in the 70's 80's and 90's, then analyzes US/Vietnam conflict – 1964-1973 (p8 – p254) SWORD Model created as result of several US Generals concerns about US military response's to small wars... "which had been conducted by the US on an ad-hoc, case-by-case, situation-by-situation and crisis-control basis" (p5) Authors' assert that SWORD Model builds on Clausewitz's military strategy as a combined political-economic-social-psychological-security effort (p7) (Explicit linkages were not apparent) The initial step in the SWORD project was to define the research parameters. What constituted an insurgency? Were all insurgencies relevant or only some? If the latter, which ones? The authors defined an insurgency as an effort to overthrow a "de-jure" government. The authors also decided to limit the task to insurgencies that had taken place since 1945 to an indeterminate date. The authors consulted with a number of experts with experience in dealing with insurgencies. (What is their definition of COIN or insurgent experts?) The researchers stated... examined available literature on (which was selected?) insurgencies, to help to identify possible causal variables for a win/lose outcome of an insurgency. (questionable assertion) They further defined a COIN win as the constitutional government still in place when the fighting ended and a COIN loss as the government having been replaced by the insurgents. This was posed as the one – dependent variable – the win/lose outcome from the counter-insurgent perspective. (What about the insurgents and mass population perspectives?) The SWORD process yielded 71 hypothesized independent variables. Ordinal scales and questionnaires were administered to experts experienced in COIN. (The precise number of experts is indeterminate) Statistical analysis using both correlation and regression techniques, were used to reduce the variable set to 7 factors. The model was then framed in the context of 7 of these were variously described terms in the book as "Factors, Concepts or Dimensions" Support Actions of the Intervening Power" (SAIP) Military Actions of the Intervening Power (MAIP) Host Government Legitimacy (HGL) External Support to the Insurgents (ESI) Actions Versus Subversion (AvS) Host Government Military Actions (HGMA) Unity of Effort (UE) The idea was to treat the insurgencies as if they were ongoing - rather than completed and thus predict their win/lose outcomes based on the way in which the factors interacted. (some confusion between description and predication capacities of the SWORD Model) The results derived in this study relied on the use of the Probit tool. Probit allows the researchers to produce a coefficient of multiple determination, called R-square. R-square of .8 means that the outcome varies with the independent variables 80% of the time. Researchers state that an R-square of .8 explains 80% of the variation in outcomes; they can also say that it predicts the outcome, correctly, 80% of the time. Probit is generally conceived as a useful basis for measuring statistical significance. The research also attempted to compare the SWORD Model, and its dimensions, with competing counterinsurgency models. These models were developed by a number of different entities. These models were subjected to probit analysis to produce comparable R-square statistics. The SWORD Model, clearly, performed better than any of the others. Its R-square of .900 explained 90% of the variation in the win/loss outcomes of the 43 insurgencies considered. The reviewer asserts that this is not a fully transparent or rigorously sound social research study. There are substantive methodological concerns that are not presented or adequately described in the SWORD research. Evidence to support this critical observations and assessment follow:

Sample Data Set: The sample set composed of the 43 insurgencies is never adequately described. The focus appears to be primarily Latin America. The precise description of the belligerents, loci of conflicts and dates of insurgencies are again, indeterminate.

Data Quality: The data quality is indeterminate, the reviewer is led to wonder, if the data sources were collected accurately, given the issues of data collection during conflict can be suspect in terms of quality as bias between COIN and insurgents is probable.

Expert Sample Size, Survey Instruments and Quality: The sample of COIN experts is never adequately described in terms of selection, development of the survey instruments or the use of validity of survey results.

Data Representations: There is apparent bias in ignoring different perspectives and data not being derived from (1) the insurgents perspective and (2) the mass population perspective.

Dependent Variable Conceptualization: The dependent variable is poorly conceptualized, as we have some historical evidence that insurgents or perhaps better termed anti-government belligerents goals may not be working for the wholesale replacement of the nation-state government. Rather, the belligerents may be articulating for changes in the way the present regimes allocates resources. The violence may have locus in resolving economic redistributions, tribal/clan issues, ethnicity, religious aspirations or irredentist disputes.

Conceptual Terminology: The readings make confusing use of the 7 terms - variously described terms in the book as "Factors, Concepts or Dimensions"

Objectivity: The overarching and most fundamental primary concern is research objectivity. Can any social science professional, actually replicate this study and derive generally the same set of findings. The analytic propositions are simply not well conceptualized, data sources are indeterminate, the basic model formulation is suspect. The posed SWORD framework and model is not sufficiently grounded in either social-science theory or field-based observations.

Generalizability: The secondary concern is the aggregate level of generalizability in this particular social-science research. The overarching issue is can this work be applied to across other political entities with use of the framework is questionable. It is important to recognize that the primary utility in the SWORD work is necessarily descriptive not prescriptive. The reviewer would posit that good research should

always present some attention to the problem of generalizability in descriptive social-science research. The SWORD study should avoid any confusion relative to notions of descriptive or prescriptive utility. The important conclusion is that the whole of the SWORD Model is greater than the sum of its parts. If those parts are the individual dimensions, then what gives the model greater descriptive power than the compared competing descriptive models. Moreover, three SWORD dimensions are heavily military and kinetic. Only the MAIP dimension, among those that are statistically significant, is kinetic. The exception to this statement is that if IP force must be used, then it should be done as early as possible and overwhelmingly.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must Read for Military

By Rob Mathews

For any novice wanting to understand insurgency and factors that contribute to successful operation.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Top Ten Book. Moral Legitimacy, Inter-Agency Unity of Effort, Deep Language Cultural Skills

By Robert David STEELE

Vivas

Max Manwaring is one of my heroes, and it upsets me to see the publisher do such a lousy job of posting information about this book, which is a gem. This book was a classic when it was first published, and it is even better now that it has been updated and the SWORD model slightly refined. Along with *The Search for Security: A U.S. Grand Strategy for the Twenty-First Century* and Max's other edited work, which I cannot find on , "Environmental Security Global Security," this book is about all any professional needs for a good clear appreciation of how to address low intensity conflicts, complex emergencies, and operations other than war. The authors understand what Will and Ariel Durant emphasized in their summative *The Lessons of History* when they said that morality is a strategic value. The heart of this book is about the non-negotiable value of moral legitimacy to govern as the precursor to addressing root problems and preventing terrorism and instability. Winning uncomfortable wars is an IO/psychological and sociological challenge, but you cannot win them, regardless of how much might, money, or message you put on target, if you are not moral in the first place (and if your supported government is not moral). The other two core messages in this book focus on the urgency of unity of effort across all agencies and the coalition, and the desperate need for LONG-TERM operations with LONG-TERM funding and LONG-TERM commitments from the leaderships of the nations as well as the United Nations and other NGOs. The authors are damning of both the US Congress and the UN for failing to be serious about budgeting for long-term stabilization and reconstruction operations. The SWORD model has seven parts: unity of effort; legitimacy of the coalition and the supported government; interdiction of support to the belligerents; effective supporting actions by the coalition; military actions by the coalition; interactions between the coalition and the belligerents; and finally, actions tailored to ending the conflict. Ambassador Corr could easily be credited with being the third author. His forward provides a sweeping review of history while his conclusion emphasizes that we cannot win without first having "a deep understanding of the cultures and languages..." A few case studies round out the book. Colombia, where my mother was born, has long been one of Max's special interests. His identification of the three wars (narcos, insurgents, and paramilitaries) reminds me of Tony Zinni's elegant distinctions among the six Viet-Nam wars a) Swamp War, b) Paddy War, c) Jungle War, d) Plains War, e) Saigon War, and f) DMZ War. Max is far more polite and diplomatic than I am, but his message is clear: US policy is in la-la land when it comes to crop eradication. On pages 197-198 he points out that farmers make four times more from narcotics than from the next available legal crop, and that they are trapped in circumstances where even if they had a profitable legal crop, there is no credit, there are no roads, there is no market, there is no security, for them to evolve legally. Credit, roads, market, security--for the LONG TERM. Another book that really drives home the ineptitude of our short-term interventions is the one by William Shawcross, *Deliver Us from Evil: Peacekeepers, Warlords and a World of Endless Conflict* Two other nuanced books I recommend with this one are Robert McNamara and James Blight's *Wilson's Ghost: Reducing the Risk of Conflict, Killing, and Catastrophe in the 21st Century* and Jonathan Schell's *The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People*.

Since the end of the Cold War, and especially since September 11, 2001, the United States has faced daunting challenges in the areas of foreign policy and national security. Threatened by failing states, insurgencies, civil wars, and terrorism, the nation has been compelled to re-evaluate its traditional responses to global conflict. In this timely book, John T. Fishel and Max G. Manwaring present a much-needed strategy for conducting unconventional warfare in an increasingly violent world. In the early 1990s, Manwaring introduced a new paradigm for addressing low-intensity conflicts, or conflicts other than major wars. Termed the Manwaring Paradigm or SWORD (Small Wars Operations Research Directorate) model, it has been tested successfully by scholars and practitioners and refined in the wake of new and significant "uncomfortable wars" around the world, most notably the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. *Uncomfortable Wars Revisited* broadens the definition of the original paradigm and applies it to specific confrontations

About the Author John T. Fishel is Professor Emeritus of National Security Policy at the University of Oklahoma and coauthor with Max Manwaring of *Uncomfortable Wars Revisited*.