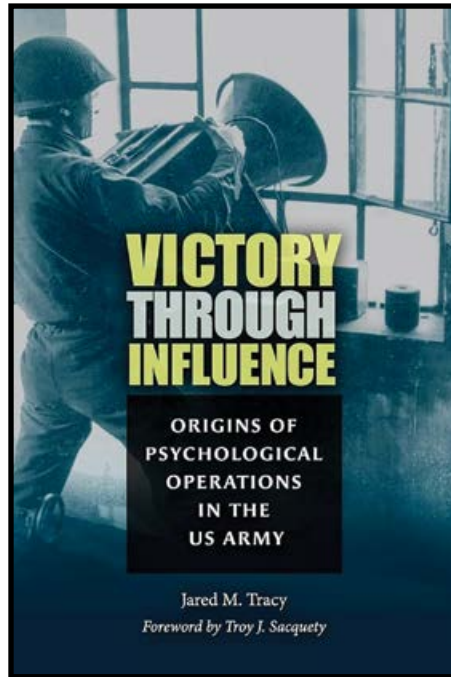


determine if senior leaders have been impacted by detrimental behaviors or masking (219).

Bipolar disorder is not a voluntary condition; it is a biochemical one that combat or a similar trauma can trigger. Unlike visible wounds that immediately manifest, the biochemical imbalance can develop after the triggering event and manifest decades after. Martin recognizes this and cautions the reader that bipolar disorder never lets up; once diagnosed, treatment can never cease. Military members, their families, and those who have been diagnosed, as well as those that wish to help persons with mental illness will find much to consider in *Bipolar General*.

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VICTORY THROUGH INFLUENCE: ORIGINS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS IN THE US ARMY

BY JARED M. TRACY

Texas A&M University Press, 2022
Pp. xix, 263. \$47

REVIEW BY TRAVIS M. PRENDERGAST

Every military capability was once new and untested. In most cases, a single war was enough to prove the value of any given emerging capability. However, the psychological operations (PSYOP) capability was an exception. Despite the long history of psychological warfare, it took three wars to firmly establish PSYOP as a capability worthy of the U.S. Army's investment. In the periods between World War I, World War II, and the Korean War, hard-earned lessons and best practices were lost. It was only through repeated experiences that psychological operations became a capability that the U.S. Army would learn to value.

In *Victory Through Influence: Origins of Psychological Operations in the US Army*, Jared M. Tracy, deputy command historian for U.S. Army Special Operations Command, masterfully describes PSYOP's journey. In the introduction, Tracy clarifies that this is not a history of PSYOP organizations in the U.S. Army, but rather the history of the capability itself. To tell

this story, Tracy performed an impressive act of archival research. By doing so, he was able to tell the story of PSYOP using the words of those who brought PSYOP into the fold of the U.S. Army.

Tracy focuses on several themes that reappear throughout the book. Perhaps the most prominent is proving the return on investment for PSYOP. In this regard, the gold standard was the surrendering enemy combatant holding aloft a leaflet describing the U.S. Army's fair treatment for enemy prisoners of war. However, Tracy also presents primary source accounts that demonstrate the problems with assessing PSYOP's effects. For instance, at one point, the focus was on the total number of leaflets dropped, a shoddy metric at best and a harmful one at worst.

A strength of Tracy's research is that he is not afraid to point out instances in which PSYOP was deemed to be ineffective. For example, he refers to surveys of enemy prisoners of war. Many of these prove that PSYOP affected the enemy's decision to surrender. However, Tracy is open about the fact that not all enemy soldiers were swayed by psychological operations. During the Korean War, one captured Chinese soldier remarked that "most of his comrades remained skeptical of propaganda and avoided surrender due to fears of UN [United Nations] forces killing them in captivity" (158).

Another theme of Tracy's book is the importance of winning over advocates for PSYOP. This proved difficult, as some high-ranking officials considered psychological operations as "pansy" operations (34). Others considered anything that detracted from the pool of combat soldiers to be a detriment to the war effort. However, the acquisition of high-ranking advocates of PSYOP enabled the capability's survival in the U.S. Army. At times, Tracy goes a bit far in trying to prove that high-ranking officials valued PSYOP, as when he recounts how Maj. Gen. William Bergin liked a picture that a PSYOP soldier had taken of him so much that he used it as his official photo. Although Tracy admits that the general's appreciation for the photo is not necessarily an endorsement of PSYOP, he does call it an "indirect validation of PSYOP" (177). Examples like this one are few and far between, but they detract, albeit only slightly, from the argument that Tracy is making.



Tracy also demonstrates that talent management, a problem that the military grapples with today, was just as much of a problem for PSYOP during the wars. He presents numerous accounts of PSYOP soldiers complaining about incoming soldiers having no training in psychological operations. Even when schools were established for psychological operations training, PSYOP units did not receive trained personnel to fill their rosters. A report from the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company stated that “an attempt to obtain trained and available personnel from the pool of Psywar School enlisted graduates, not one of whom has ever been assigned, failed” (162). Furthermore, there was a lack of knowledge about PSYOP within other training units. This may have contributed to issues with moving PSYOP school graduates to PSYOP units. As one soldier recounted about basic training, “The cadre [had] never hear[d] of the [1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group], and [did]n’t understand the functions of bon-bon troopers from high-level outfits” (174).

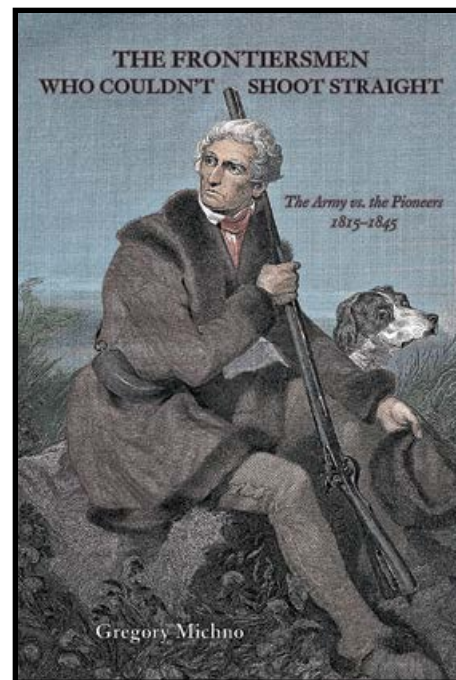
The last major recurring theme in *Victory Through Influence* is how the U.S. Army organized PSYOP units from war to war. The organization varied from theater to theater within wars, and Tracy somewhat tediously lays out the mishmash of radio broadcasting and leaflet groups, mobile radio broadcasting companies, loudspeaker and leaflet companies, and reproduction companies. Keeping track of the various PSYOP organizations was an unenjoyable aspect of the book, and a few organizational charts would have been helpful in making things clearer.

Another minor difficulty the reader will encounter is the presentation of different theaters within each war. Each chapter focuses on a specific theater from the beginning of the particular war being discussed to its end, which means that when switching to another theater within the same war, the reader is taken back to the start of that war. This can make for tedious reading, especially in the Korean War chapters. Nevertheless, the overall presentation makes sense, even if it could have benefited from better transitions.

Overall, Tracy does an excellent job of using primary sources to demonstrate how PSYOP developed as a capability across three wars. By showing both how the capability developed and how it was or

was not retained, Tracy provides a history of the PSYOP capability that gives readers a chance to apply the lessons of history to today’s circumstances. A careful reader could draw parallels between the development and adoption of PSYOP and the development and adoption of emerging technologies in recent decades. Should it take three wars before the military understands that a capability is worthy of retention?

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THE FRONTIERSMEN WHO COULDN'T SHOOT STRAIGHT: THE ARMY VS. THE PIONEERS, 1815–1845

BY GREGORY MICHNO

Caxton Press, 2020

Pp. iv, 368. \$18.95

REVIEW BY ALEXANDER M. HUMES

In his work on American pioneers between 1815 and 1845, Gregory Michno examines myths, particularly those related to White settlers and the Army. A scholar on the American West and warfare in that region, Michno presents an Army led by officers who increasingly were devotees of the Enlightenment and its principles, as opposed to the frontiersmen, who existed to obtain as much personal wealth as possible.

Michno’s central focus is to change the popular perception of frontiersmen as self-sufficient, virtuous citizens who cleared a wilderness for civilization. He writes that “while historians may have seen behind Oz’s curtain, the majority of Americans still cherish the smoke and mirrors” when it comes to their memory of settlers (4). Michno acknowledges that it appears he “only focused on the negative” but argues that “to swing the pendulum back toward the middle, the unflattering and scandalous need exposure” (6). Rather than structure his argument chronologically, Michno arranges