

maintain a dynamic and flexible strategy in Korea regarding all of the agenda items, whose downstream effects distracted the American armistice negotiators who led the UNC negotiation team at Panmunjom:

[We] never knew when a new directive would emanate from Washington to alter our basic objective of obtaining an honorable and stable armistice agreement. . . . It seemed to us that the United States Government did not know exactly what its political objectives in Korea were or should be. As a result, the United Nations Command delegation was constantly looking over its shoulder, fearing a new directive from afar which would require action inconsistent with that currently being taken (130).

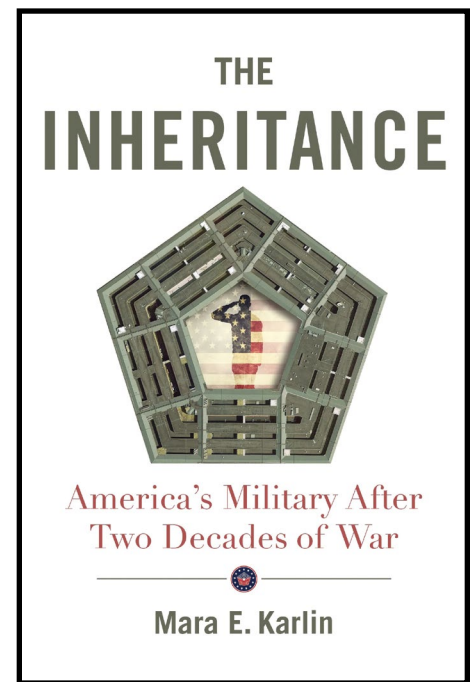
Gibby notes that the rigid stance against forcible repatriation protracted the armistice negotiations, which could have ended the war as early as May 1952. Though not explicit in Gibby's narrative, this issue at this point marked a paradigm shift in Truman's understanding of the utility of military force. Disillusioned that he could not bring the war to a satisfying military conclusion in a repeat of 1945, Truman nevertheless felt the Communists "needed to pay a military and political penalty" for their recalcitrance and duplicity (155). Allowing enemy prisoners to vote with their feet helped impose that penalty.

Gibby also provides a perceptive analysis of the various ground and air strategies the UNC used to compel the Communists to agree to an armistice. He draws parallels between the Allies' early experiences with the Combined Bomber Offensive during World War II and the evolution of the Far East Air Force's Operation STRANGLE and the Railway Interdiction Program. Although the latter two produced spectacular destruction across North Korea, they could not by themselves force the Communists to a cease-fire. Gibby argues that the air campaign's success provided the necessary impetus for Mao and Marshal Peng Dehuai to institute a series of reforms to posture the Chinese army in Korea for attritional war. As a result, cadres began inculcating a doctrine of *lingqiao niupitang* ("eating sticky candy bit by bit") to the members of the *Chinese People's Volunteer Forces*. In place of maneuver to surround and isolate UNC formations, "[t]actical objectives were redefined to stress the capture and use of terrain and prepared positions to

inflict maximum casualties on the enemy over battles of annihilation of large units" (102–3). Together with more capable air forces and better-trained and equipped artillery, air defense, engineering, and logistics systems, "Chinese flexibility in their various operational approaches to counter American firepower and maneuver formed the basis for prolonged and successful negotiations"—much to the dismay of the UNC and U.S. leadership (176).

A variety of readers will find much to value in Gibby's work. The easy flow of the narrative belies the exhaustive primary and secondary sources underlying it. In fact, Gibby's coverage here (225–41, among others) of the success of the U.S. advisory effort with the South Korean army sets the stage for a comparative study of less successful results in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The book should be carefully read by policymakers and their advisors, civilian and military, as well as the wider academic community. Gibby's analysis of the interdependence of battlefield and political developments reinforces the curricula of the various senior service colleges and the services' flag officer education programs. Army officers especially will find instructive Gibby's account of Generals James Van Fleet's and Mark Clark's attempts to convince President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower to let them fight the war they wanted to fight instead of the one they had to end. Gibby's discussion of the many flaws of Clark's planned campaign for 1953, Operation Plan 8–52, offers a textbook case of military officers failing to provide not just "best" but proper professional recommendations to elected officials. Just as important, the author's detailed coverage of the Chinese Communists' ability to mitigate or nullify American technological superiority should give pause to policymakers favoring a more confrontational policy in the South China Sea.

Dr. Tom Hanson, a retired Army colonel, earned his PhD in history in 2006 and has taught on the faculties of the U.S. Military Academy, George Mason University, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff School, and the U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies.



THE INHERITANCE: AMERICA'S MILITARY AFTER TWO DECADES OF WAR

BY MARA E. KARLIN

Brookings Institution Press, 2022
Pp. xvi, 304. \$37

REVIEW BY MICHAEL BONURA

Mara E. Karlin's *The Inheritance: America's Military After Two Decades of War* seeks to uncover the legacies of the post-11 September 2001 wars on the U.S. military and then to make some recommendations on how to address the negative aspects of those legacies. Karlin conducted nearly one hundred interviews with generals and admirals and a few civilian senior leaders in the Department of Defense to inform her analysis of those legacies. She also heavily leveraged her career as a civilian senior leader serving five secretaries of defense and is currently serving as an assistant secretary of defense. This is not a traditional historical analysis but an assessment of the war on terror on the national security establishment, including the military. It is focused on understanding how that establishment prosecuted the war and what its legacy on that establishment is to the present. This analysis of the legacies of the longest war in American military history would be important in its own right, but the fact that neither the Department of Defense, the Joint Staff, or any of the

services have conducted or are conducting the same kind of review makes this inquiry even more critical.

Although Karlin sets an important and lofty goal for her analysis of the legacies of the Global War on Terrorism, *The Inheritance* has a much narrower focus. Because of her professional perspective and the senior rank and positions of the subjects of her interviews, *The Inheritance* provides legacies from the perspective of the senior military and civilian leaders who directed those wars. This includes an analysis of the effectiveness of the military's senior leaders and their inability to achieve strategic victory. It also discusses the challenges of civil-military relations from the Global War on Terrorism to the present. This senior-level perspective—which includes both the more recognizable commanders and advisors from the period, as well as a sizable portion of the subordinate generals and admirals who made and executed military plans and policies that have not made front-page news or treatment in studies of the wars to date—is an extremely valuable contribution to the literature.

Through interviews, the works of scholars of the military, poll results, social media bloggers, and Hollywood presentations, Karlin identifies three main crises that form the negative legacies from the post-11 September 2001 wars: a crisis of confidence in the military, a crisis of not caring for the military by the American people, and a crisis of meaningful civilian control between senior military officers and the civilian managers of violence in the Department of Defense, the White House, and Congress. With chapters explaining these crises, Karlin presents several issues that influenced them, including how the U.S. military goes to war, how the military fights, who serves in the military, who leads the military, and which theories of war are adopted and which ones are rejected. The book ends with general recommendations on areas that need to be addressed and overcome, more than any particular recommendation for how the military should come to terms with these legacies as it prepares for an era of competition between great powers.

For Karlin, the crisis of confidence represents the confusion of many service members about what the military does, how they do it, and why they should do it with respect to the lack of clear victory in the Global War on Terrorism. This is not a crisis

of the rank-and-file military but of the military's senior leadership, and their answers to why they did not achieve victory are telling. The general and flag officers Karlin interviewed expressed three reasons why they did not achieve victory: the military *did* achieve the victory of avoiding catastrophe at home by fighting abroad; the missions given to the military were impossible to win; and that victory was possible, but service members were failed by poor military and civilian leadership and given the wrong resources to achieve victory. The answers to the question of victory from senior military leaders would be a valuable contribution to a wider assessment of leadership over the past twenty years.

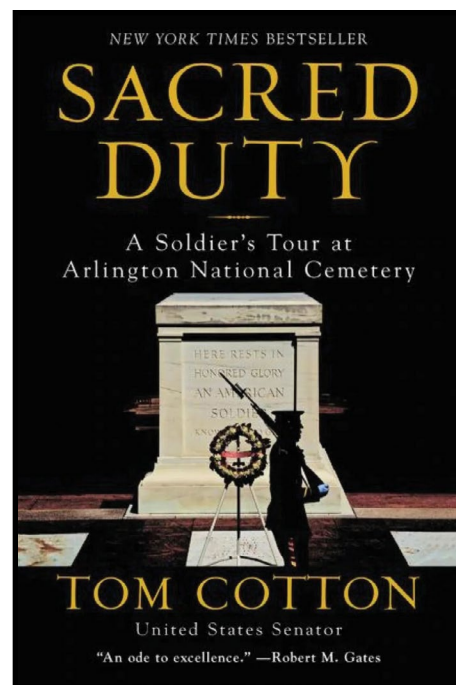
The crisis of caring focuses on the separation of the military from American society. Karlin identifies the concerns of generals and admirals about how isolated the military has become, as well as the problem of the military becoming a family business. The vast majority of Americans volunteering for service today come from families with a military background, thus further isolating service members from American society. Karlin identifies this as the biggest challenge the all-volunteer force has faced since its inception in the 1970s. However, neither she nor the generals or admirals she interviewed questioned the utility of the all-volunteer force based on this crisis. The logical result of decreasing the separation between society and the military would be an increase in concern about how and where the military is deployed. What would that do to the ability of civilian decision-makers to use the military for overseas missions to advance foreign policy goals?

The crisis of meaningful civilian control is the most straightforward and refers to the increasingly difficult relationship the military has had with the civilians in the national security enterprise. Again, this crisis of senior military leaders reflects the civil-military challenges of the recent conflicts.

Like many of the reports, studies, and after action reviews from the recent wars, Karlin's work raises many critical issues but does not treat any of them comprehensively. From how different secretaries of defense affected the promotion of generals to the integration of women into combat roles, each one requires a separate study or volume, or at least a broader treatment in the book. If there is any criticism to be made, it is that Karlin raises many important issues but does not explicitly state for the reader what

the short- and long-term implications of those issues are. Based on her interviews and professional experience, her perspectives on the implications of those issues also would have been an important contribution to the analysis of the post-11 September 2001 wars and their legacies.

Dr. Michael Bonura has been an assistant professor in the Department of Joint, Multi-National, and Interagency Operations at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff School since 2022. A retired Army colonel with over twenty-five years of service, he earned his PhD in history from Florida State University in 2008. He taught military history at the United States Military Academy at West Point from 2006 to 2009.



SACRED DUTY: A SOLDIER'S TOUR AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

BY TOM COTTON

William Morrow, 2019

Pp. viii, 301. \$28.99

REVIEW BY CRAIG LESLIE MANTLE

What happens to us when we die? If buried at Arlington, religious considerations aside, the answer is simple: a perfect funeral. At least, that is the goal for members of the