The Routledge Handbook of
War and Society

Edited by Steven Carlton-Ford and Morten G. Ender

The Routledge Handbook of War and Society

This new handbook provides an introduction to current sociological and behavioral research on the effects of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan represent two of the most interesting and potentially troubling events of recent decades. These two wars—so similar in their beginnings—generated different responses from various publics and the mass media; they have had profound effects on the members of the armed services, on their families and relatives, and on the people of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Analyzing the effect of the two wars on military personnel and civilians, this volume is divided into four main parts:

Part I: War on the Ground: Combat and Its Aftermath
Part II: War on the Ground: Non-Combat Operations, Non-Combatants, and Operators
Part III: The War Back Home: The Social Construction of War, Its Heroes, and Its Enemies
Part IV: The War Back Home: Families and Young People on the Home Front

With contributions from leading academic sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, military researchers, and researchers affiliated with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), this Handbook will be of interest to students of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, military sociology and psychology, war studies, anthropology, US politics, and of youth.

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Iraq and Afghanistan

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Steven Carlton-Ford and Morten G. Ender

To our students—both civilian and military

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Steven Carlton-Ford

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Foreword

Christopher Dandeker

Notwithstanding deep-rooted hopes expressed from within the main traditions of sociological enquiry that warfare is a temporary feature of the human condition, wars (if not states and specialized armed forces) have occurred as long as human societies have existed. They remain a key feature of the international scene. We should also note that "[o]n a more personal scale, wars provide some of the most intense as well as brutal of human experiences, bringing out the best as well as the worst in people – heroism, comradeship and self-sacrifice as well as cruelty and viciousness" (Freedman 1994: 3). However regrettable wars may be, sometimes they are in pursuit of a just cause, command popular support (being perceived as legitimate, not just legal, acts), and also are fought according to the principles of just war. Other wars are less so. In addition, ethical issues arise for all participants in war; this has applied, for example, to the scientific community ever since it became an integral feature of the conduct of war as a result of the process of industrialization. There is a line in history connecting operational research, military psychology, and human factors research through to the application of the social sciences to, for example, using social network analysis to hunt for military targets, and human terrain analysis in contemporary war. This can occasion controversy within the academic community, as it has done recently in the fields of anthropology and psychology (Glenn 2007; Shachtman 2008).

Von Clausewitz (1832) reminds us that political leaders who are set on launching wars should be mindful of the need to think about the objectives that are to be achieved by such an extreme act and the methods by which those objectives are to be carried out. Of course, no one can know in advance the exact consequences of such an act because of the fog and friction of warfare; yet contingency planning for a range of plausible outcomes and a provision of adequate resources for dealing with them is a reasonable expectation (indeed a duty) of political and military leaders. Some pass this test; others do not: this has been a source of controversy with regard to the preparation for and conduct of operations in Iraq since 2003, especially the process of occupation and reconstruction. This controversy is not just a matter of the science of planning; it is also a moral issue: if a state removes a

regime, it has to think about the moral question of "what condition should it seek to leave behind it when it leaves the scene?" (see Mahnken and Kearney 2007).

This book deals with two wars: the ongoing conflicts in Iraq (from 2003) and Afghanistan (from 2001). It is marked by representing not just a historical reflection on the past but also a systematic reflection on unfolding events. It adopts, for the most part, the perspective of the state that has played such a central role in initiating and fighting these two wars: the United States. The US will also play the key role in concluding them. Yet the effects and the meaning of these conflicts are *global*: few remain unaffected by them, by how these conflicts are conducted and how they will end. This includes small states that have played their part in ongoing coalition operations; to mention just one example, Estonia's role in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan: its contribution and losses may be small in absolute terms and compared with the US, but its sacrifice is, for Estonia (and relative to its population size), very substantial indeed.

As far as sociologists are concerned, it is my hope that this volume will help to shift the curriculum of their discipline, by helping to make war and military affairs more central to students' inquiries, whether at upper-level undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate levels. War is too important a subject to be left to the other disciplines of international relations: military history and political science. Indeed, this book shows that to understand war properly a "war and society" approach, drawing on a multiplicity of disciplines (not just sociology), can be invaluable. The book follows in the footsteps of others who have sought to understand war in its historical, political, and wider social context, including the founder of the department from which this foreword is being written (Professor Sir Michael Howard) and those who subsequently developed that vision (see Freedman 1994; Howard 1976; Holden Reid 2009).

Although wars share certain fundamental characteristics (including the experiential dimension mentioned earlier) their character changes. The two conflicts with which this book is concerned have provided the occasion for a further reevaluation of the distinctive features of contemporary warfare, a process that has engaged policy and academic communities for the two decades that have elapsed since the end of the Cold War. For example, political and military elites find it more troublesome now to talk of the conclusion of these conflicts in terms of "winning" and "victory" than in terms of success (see Dandeker 2010). And success involves defining a complex set of objectives and milestones in terms of how it might be measured. These lengthy missions (together both conflicts have now involved the US for nearly a decade) may well conclude without a sharply defined "victory" but rather a satisfactory "security condition" (see Smith 2005, 2010 for the development of these terms). In Iraq, for example, a political settlement amongst Sunni and Shia constituencies that avoids a breakdown of the polity into civil war would be a precondition for US withdrawal of its 96,000 troops. Yet continued internecine conflict and weak security would encourage the US Administration, with reluctance, to continue its military commitment even while affairs in Afghanistan press upon its attention. Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, the idea of being able to withdraw once the Afghan military and police forces can provide their state with adequate security may well falter in face of continued infrastructural weaknesses and political corruption. Clear-cut victory, as opposed to satisfactory conditions for withdrawal, looks a chimera.

The operational space of these two conflicts also has some novel features. Notwithstanding the centrality of the US, these operations have involved complex forms of coalition building. This is not just because of a need for burden sharing but also in terms of building legitimacy for military intervention; indeed the elder Bush's efforts in this

regard in 1990–91 were far more effective than those of the younger Bush in 2003, although, to be fair, the circumstances of 2003 in terms of what the UK's ex-Prime Minister Blair has referred to recently as the "calculus of risk" were different. With coalitions of the kind operating in Afghanistan, a trade-off will arise between the benefits of political legitimacy and the costs of uneven military capacity, which is most graphically highlighted by the presence of the "national caveats" that states place on how, where, and when their forces might be deployed. This is a well-known source of frustration amongst the political and military leaders at the core of the coalition.

A good deal of effort has to be expended to make these intermilitary relationships work, and this is only one aspect of a complex of interorganizational relationships that need to be managed, extending from military (including regular and, increasingly, part-time reservist elements) as well as non–military organizations from a host of participating states (police and others, such as Foreign Office and Development components of government), non-governmental organizations, contractors, and journalists. The operational space is a very crowded landscape indeed. This space is also one that might be summarized in numbers: 360–24–7: operations increasingly take place in spaces that are not bounded with front lines and rear safe areas: one can be shot or blown up by an improvised explosive device potentially anywhere in 360-degree warfare. This has interesting implications for the employment of women. For example, in the US and the UK, rules restricting women in combat roles are increasingly anomalous and breached in practice. Of course, the essentials of infantry fighting are in some ways eternal (digging out and eliminating the enemy), but the context in which these skills are applied is different from the conventional battlefield of interstate war. Meanwhile, the space is monitored 24–7 by media that link it to the virtual space of the global community, a point to which I shall return later.

Further, in this operational space are the people amongst whom war is increasingly fought; contemporary wars are increasingly "wars amongst the people" (see Smith 2005). Wars are less a matter of violent contests between uniformed armed forces of contending states and more conflicts in which intervening armed states seek to balance the need to defeat armed insurgents (who are often supported and resourced by other states) with that of protecting the people and attracting them to engage in political institutions whose strength and functionality will provide the conditions under which those intervening states will make a judgment that allows them to withdraw. Ensuring that there are subtle balances of kinetic (violent) and persuasive (hearts and minds) strategies is the key challenge for contemporary armed forces.

Although a continuity with wars from the past is the importance of the "home front", today this is part of a broader process whereby the operational space is integrated into the information networks of a global "theatre of war," in which events on the ground are monitored and given meaning by a variety of audiences using what Shaw (2005: 47–70) has insightfully referred to as the resources of "global surveillance." These audiences reflect a paradox of war for Western democratic states: with the spread of the all-volunteer force, populations may be virtually connected to war, and their opinion matters in terms of providing the support needed for governments to continue long-term military campaigns. But their involvement in the realities of war is routinely distanced by being mediated; the real practice of war is confined to a minority: the volunteer military. Yet this situation cannot be guaranteed: the wider public's distant involvement can be interrupted suddenly and without warning by visceral and violent attack as those who oppose interventions in conflicts abroad express their opposition through terror attacks, some mounted from within the homeland itself.

The audiences in the theatre of war include the local population in a conflict, regional audiences, and wider global opinion, including of course the publics of intervening states and the families of military personnel who have been deployed. Political and military leaders know that they are actors in the theatre of war, which means that success on the ground means little if it is not translated into narratives that persuade watching audiences that the objectives of a campaign are understood, that progress is being made, and that the sacrifices are worth the success achieved. A key problem for those constructing narratives is that, with complex political objectives focused on delivering a "security condition", how are narratives and their plot lines to be given grip and traction amongst the public? In this regard, we know that governments are less able than before to rely on censorship and have to be inventive in ensuring that the narratives of war that they wish the media (and public) to follow are indeed taken up and that misfortunes (such as non-combatant deaths) are explained in ways that do not set back the central message. Some leaders realize that public opinion is not so much casualty shy or averse (something of a myth in recent years) but increasingly shy of *futile* casualties: deaths and injury that (so it is felt) could have been avoided. It is interesting to ask if such aversion to futile death and injury is a sentiment increasingly present in military populations, including their families, not just in wider public opinion.

For military personnel themselves, we have moved to a world less of Krulak's (1999) "strategic corporal" and more to one of the strategic private soldier: actions at the very lowest levels of command can (for good or for ill) have potentially strategic consequences in terms of the reputation of a country's armed force or indeed perceptions of the success and value of a mission. The need for politically aware soldiers able to calibrate kinetic and non-kinetic activities by using their judgment as appropriate in a given context is a key feature of the contemporary military landscape. The implications of this point for the political and ethical education of soldiers deploying to missions have become serious matters for the military profession.

For the military involved in these missions, the wear and tear on equipment and personnel can be costly. It is important that the health and well-being of regular and reservist personnel are kept under review; that families are given the support they need (including monitoring the effects of deployments on the children in military families); and that personnel's obligations to deploy on multiple occasions are balanced with their need for personal and family time.

As readers think about the contents of this book, let me encourage them to attend to two issues concerning the future of the military. For the all-volunteer force, it would be foolish indeed to think that any short-term features of the business cycle will remove the challenge of recruiting and retaining the quality personnel who are needed for the challenging missions that continue and the new ones that lie ahead. There is also a need to ensure that ex-service members return to civilian society not only to decent employment but also to the honor and respect they deserve for their sacrifice. When these conflicts end, will society honor, remember, and memorialize them? What will this entail if the conclusion is not victory but a satisfactory "security condition"?

The second issue (and this is not confined to the US) is whether the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan are constitutive of the conflicts that the US needs to be prepared to engage in or just one kind of conflict, with a need to be ready for the interstate wars that the US military has for so long been prepared for and has preferred to fight. Is the recent recovery of the memory of counterinsurgency, and its refinement as a doctrine that is a genuine advance on what has gone before, an example of a much-needed adjustment of

the war–fighting mindset of the US military? Or is it an example of the pendulum swinging too far and causing a distraction from other more serious troubles that lie ahead? One persuasive answer to this question is that it poses a false choice: the future will bring a complex blend of elements from different kinds of conflicts, interstate and other: in short, what has been termed "hybrid war" (Hoffman 2007).

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Introduction

Steven Carlton-Ford and Morten G. Ender

In 2005 about 35 wars and conflicts were being waged throughout the world (GlobalSecurity.org 2010). *The Routledge Handbook of War and Society* provides readers with a set of unique perspectives on two major wars: the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Most handbooks are written in retrospect, summarizing long-term trends in research. In contrast, the chapters in the *Handbook* have all been written while the wars were being fought; each chapter provides a distinct angle on the wars and society as they continue to evolve. These perspectives purposefully eschew the omniscient view of many handbooks, instead providing theoretically informed research perspectives on the war-associated phenomena they examine. The chapters provide some of the first empirical social and behavioral science research on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. More research will certainly follow.

As of the middle of January 2010, the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have cost the US government alone over $950 billion dollars (National Priorities Project 2010), expenditures that have contributed to an increase in the national debt – a debt that will have to be paid off by the coming generation. Roughly three-quarters of the cost has been incurred in Iraq, with the rest resulting from the war in Afghanistan. The wars have resulted in nearly 4,700 deaths of coalition soldiers in Iraq and nearly 1,600 more deaths in Afghanistan. In addition, 31,616 US troops have been injured in Iraq and another 9,496 US troops injured in Afghanistan (iCasualties.org 2010). Estimates of civilian deaths vary widely (see Schwartz 2008) and the psychological and cognitive costs are only beginning to be understood (Talielian and Jaycox 2008). Because these wars are not over the casualty toll will continue to mount. These well-known facts serve as the backdrop to the chapters in this handbook, which explore the national and international lead-up to these wars, as well as the broader human costs of these wars; costs that range from how militaries fight and are funded to the effects these wars have on civilians far from combat.

Since World War II (WWII) few countries have fought conventional international wars: wars fought by uniformed national armies along relatively clearly defined fronts. Instead, armies have been called upon to fight non-conventional wars: wars fought primarily against insurgent groups, who for strategic reasons avoid battles along conventional fronts. Civilians increasingly are the target rather than soldiers. Although most of these wars have been internal (aka civil) wars (Harbom and Wallensteen 2009), some have involved internal conflict as well as the armed forces of other countries, as in Iraq

and Afghanistan. Not only has the face of war changed, so too has the organization and recruitment of national armies. Since the end (in the 1970s) of the post-WWII boom in economic growth, the national militaries, particularly the US military, that have been called upon to fight these wars have also changed dramatically, from conscription-based armies to all-volunteer forces (Moskos *et al.* 1999), supplied by an increasingly pro-fessionalized and diverse body of service members (Ender 2009) as well as a contingent of civilian contractors (Miller 2007).

The present volume covers two major and traditional regions of war: the war front and the home front, and the blurring of lines within and between these two geographical spaces. We begin with part I, which examines the war front, combat, and the aftermath. In particular, dramatic changes in the type of war being fought in conjunction with the sea-change in how national militaries are recruited and funded reveal severe gaps between what the military is called upon to accomplish and what it can sustain (see Ross). The lack of clearly defined fronts in fighting complex insurgencies required mili-taries to apply a variety of non-conventional models in solving strategic problems. These changes have affected the way in which war is fought more generally (see Roxborough, as well as Pavilonis). For soldiers, war in Afghanistan has dramatically affected how they see themselves, their relationship to stated military missions, and their descriptions in public forums (see Pengelly and Irwin). In a parallel development, there are severe gaps between the types of war soldiers are trained to fight and the wars they are called upon to fight. This gap, between the ways in which soldiers have been trained and how they have to fight, has created psychological dilemmas for these soldiers (see Scott, McCone and Mastroianni) but also innovative strategies in understanding enemies such as Saddam Hussein (see Reed and Segal). Similarly, these new wars, in which captives do not fall neatly or obviously into the standard categories of "civilian" or "combatant," have exposed severe problems with the way in which armies treat captives. This issue is most clearly illustrated by the treatment of detainees at the US prison at Abu Ghraib (see Mastroianni and Reed, as well as Caldwell and Mestrovic).

The next part of the volume features chapters highlighting non-combat operations, which involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and military contractors, as well as non-combatants. Thus, changes in the way militaries are organized, in conjunction with the rise of international NGOs and civilian contractors, have dramatically compli-cated the non-combat landscape in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the 20 years preceding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, international NGOs grew dramatically, fueled in part by increasing activism at the grass-roots level, but also by dramatically increased funding that pumped billions of dollars into that sector (Reimann 2006). In addition, the dramatic changes in military organization alluded to above meant that many of the functions previously performed by the military had to be contracted to civilian companies. As a result, the organizational landscape in Iraq and Afghanistan is exceptionally complicated, requiring careful coordination between the military, NGOs, and civilian contractors; coordination that would be difficult to achieve under the best of circumstances. Such chaotic conditions stem in large part from the insurgents' attempts to destabilize the civilian police institutions traditionally tasked with maintaining day-to-day order (see Deflem and Sutphin, as well as Deflem). As analyzed from the point of view of the NGOs themselves (see Benini, Conley, Donahue, and Messick) as well as the military (see Cupp and Latham) such coordination is attempted in the absence of mutual trust and under the chaotic conditions engendered by conflict. Faced with such chaotic conflict, the military has attempted to combat these conditions through information campaigns

designed to build support among the civilians – attempts that meet with varying success (see Griffith). Finally, these wars affect civilians in indirect and often unanticipated ways. Wars destroy public health infrastructures, diminishing a country's ability to generate electricity, treat sewage, or pump clean water (Carlton-Ford 2004). The result often is increased mortality and morbidity among civilian populations, an outcome seen as a result of the Iraq war (see Poole). In addition, wars affect the psychological well-being of those involved. Typically children are adversely affected, experiencing higher levels of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)-like symptoms (Attanayake, McKay, Joffres, Singh, Burkle, and Mills 2009). The impact on adolescents is, in contrast, extremely underresearched; research (see Carlton-Ford, Ender, and Tabatabai) suggests that Iraqi adolescents react to conflict very differently compared with children. Iraqi adolescents, whose identities are most threatened by conflict, seem to rally their self-image.

Next we turn to the home front during war and social reactions to the war fighters – both heroes and enemies. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan resulted from complex global processes that have continuing international implications, all of which are debated in and shaped by the media. The long-term lead-up to the Iraq war is framed and influenced by the national political and economic interests of the US and its allies (see Egan). The course of the war in Afghanistan, although triggered by the attacks on the Twin Trade Towers in New York and on the Pentagon in Washington, is influenced by complex international relationships among Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the US; these relationships were formed during the Reagan era, as the US attempted to thwart the Soviet Union's invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. Matters are further complicated by the relationships that were formed between Pakistan's military and the groups that became the Taliban and Al Qaeda, as well as by fears concerning the potential involvement of India and China (see Shaikh).

The mass media are not simply independent reporters of events leading up to or during these wars. The way the media gather and report their information plays a significant role in a country's ability to manage risk (see Pieper). Further, the coverage of the lead-up to the Iraq war in major national newspapers, rather than promoting a liberal anti-war bias, presented a truncated discussion of the political, diplomatic, and legal implications of pursuing unilateral preemptive military action (see Nikolaev and Porpora). There were similar discussions carried on in other, and more novel public venues, of much more limited scope (see Hedley and Clark). Ultimately, as one might expect given Coser's (1956) prescient discussion of the ways in which war generates internal solidarity, national discussions have nominated some individuals as heroes, which must be understood as a result of a complex process that involves the characteristics of the individuals, the situations in which putative heroes found themselves, and the characteristics of the individuals who attribute heroism (see Gibson, Hogan, Stahura, and Jackson). A mirror process involves the construction of the enemy. This type of process has been described in detail for Japan and the US during WWII (e.g. Dower 1986), and we see today (Steuter and Wills) how the process has played out during what has become known as the global war on terror.

In the last part of the volume we turn to the American home front, specifically army families, military children, and college students. In many respects the war has not directly affected the lives of most US citizens. There have been no calls for general war-related sacrifices; there have been no bond drives to pay for the wars; with much smaller, all-volunteer militaries, civilians are less likely to know individuals in the military, and as a result much less likely to know someone killed or injured in the wars. For US Army

families the situation is different; the impact of the wars has been magnified by the ease of communication provided by cell phones, the internet, and live television concomitantly placing the war electronically in the home and the home front in the war front (see Ender, Campbell, Davis, and Michaelis); the multiple deployments required by small militaries to fight wars that have now lasted longer than WWII have also taken a toll on the children in military families, although these children also show surprising resilience (see Lipari, Winters, Matos, Smith, and Rock). Attitudes of young people toward the wars (see Ender, Rohall, and Matthews) have changed over the course of these conflicts, and have been importantly shaped by political affiliation, with significant differences between students at military academies and those in other universities.

As we close this introduction in early 2010, the outcome of these wars is uncertain. The US military is withdrawing troops (i.e. Marines) after an apparently successful new strategy for involving Sunni Muslims (the so-called Anbar Awakening) coupled with a troop surge that took place between January 2007 and the middle of 2008. The newly elected Iraqi government is not fully institutionalized and serious disagreements over political representation and the disposition of national resources continue among representatives of the Sunni Muslims, Shi'a Muslims, and ethnic Kurds.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban appears resurgent and the US military is preparing to increase its presence there by 30,000 additional troops. Many members of Al Qaeda appear to have moved to areas of Pakistan that border Afghanistan. The US has used drones to strike Al Qaeda in Pakistani territory and the Pakistani military, apparently under significant pressure from the US as well as its own people, has begun operations designed to undermine insurgents in the border areas. Military strikes by the Pakistani Army appear to be increasingly motivated by bombings that have struck very close to key military centers in Pakistan. The outcome of the two conflicts is not clear; our chapters provide important perspectives on these wars – perspectives we expect will be modified and extended in the future.

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Part I

War on the ground:
combat and its aftermath

Fighting two protracted wars

Recruiting and retention with an all-volunteer force

Susan M. Ross

Following nearly a decade of continual troop involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq, US Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates summarized the conundrum involved in fighting two protracted wars with an all-volunteer force (AVF). On the one hand, Gates (Department of Defense [DoD] 2008) noted optimistically:

> Overall, our service men and women and their families have shown extraordinary resilience. Morale is high, as is recruiting and retention – particularly among units either in or just returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Soldier for soldier, unit for unit, the Army is the best trained, best led, and best equipped it has ever been.

On the other hand, he continued:

> This is the second longest war in American history since our Revolution, and the first to be fought with an AVF since independence. To be sure the stress is real. There are metrics that need to be watched – such as the number of waivers granted to new recruits, suicides, as well as incidents of divorce and other signs of wear on military families.

Striking an even blunter appraisal of the situation while testifying before the Senate Armed Service Committee, US Army Vice Chief of Staff General Richard A. Cody (2008) stated, "Today's Army is out of balance. The current demand for our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan exceeds the sustainable supply and limits our ability to provide ready forces for other contingencies." Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen echoed the same message during a similarly timed press conference, noting, "It is a very fragile situation. … There is this incredibly delicate balance between continuing in two wars [and] making sure we don't break those same forces" (Bender 2008: A1).

By the middle of 2009, more than 1.8 million American soldiers had served in Afghanistan and Iraq since the outset of these wars in October 2001 and March 2003 (DoD 2009). Although 1.8 million soldiers represent less than one percent of the entire

US population, they represent nearly three-quarters of the approximately 2.5–2.7 million personnel who comprise the active duty and reserve components of the AVF (US Census 2003, 2009). While there is little doubt that the AVF has created a stronger fighting force compared with that which can be developed and maintained under a system of conscription (Bacevich 2008; O'Hanlon 2004), fighting the global war on terror (GWOT) has created tremendous strains on the AVF, leaving many (including top military leaders) to question the viability of the AVF.

This chapter examines challenges faced by the American AVF as it has undertaken heavy troop engagement for nearly a decade in Afghanistan and Iraq, particularly recruitment and retention within the US Army. Given that neither war has drawn to a close, this analysis is necessarily incomplete. With the Taliban's movement into Pakistan and the uncertain political stability in Afghanistan and Pakistan, President Obama announced in late 2009 the plan to send 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan, bringing the troop levels in the region to nearly 100,000 personnel (Obama 2009). Meanwhile, in Iraq, combat troop drawdown has been slower than anticipated, as President Obama had to backslide on his campaign pledge to bring combat troops home within 16 months of his taking office (DeYoung 2009). Military leaders serving in Iraq suggest that American soldiers could be engaged in combat until at least 2015 (Ricks 2009). Before turning to the issues of recruitment and retention for an AVF, it is important to provide a brief historical context to the emergence of the AVF as an alternative military manpower strategy to conscription.

From conscription to an AVF

The current structure of an AVF developed on the heels of the widely unpopular draft of the Vietnam War era. Having campaigned on a promise to end the draft, President Nixon authorized what became popularly known as the Gates Commission to study the viability of ending conscription and moving to an all-volunteer military structure (Rostker 2006). Although the Commission members were divided on the feasibility of such a structure, they ultimately recommended that the US end the draft and build its national forces through the recruitment of volunteers who would serve as professional soldiers. Having accepted the recommendation, Congress eliminated the draft in 1973 (Rostker 2006). The transition to an AVF has generated ongoing debate between proponents of national service, conscription, or volunteerism as a military manpower strategy (Moskos 1988). Segal (1989) identified five social trends that affected the choice of the AVF over national service or conscription:

- the increase in complexity of military technology;
  the increased American involvement in peace-keeping missions and other forms of "lower–intensity" warfare;
- the expansion of the welfare state, which reversed the citizen–state relationship from citizens having an obligation to the state to a system of "entitlements" of citizenship;
- the "citizenship revolution" that broke the barrier to women's and minority participation in the military, allowing for larger recruiting pools; and
- declining fertility rates following the baby boom, which produce fewer males for a draft pool between the ages of 18 and 21.