

ANNOUNCEMENT

Symposium: The Role of SOF in an Era of Great Power Competition

The Special Operations Research Association and the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) are pleased to announce this year's annual academic symposium, which will be held March 8–9, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, near the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA.



This year's symposium theme is: The Role of SOF in an Era of Great Power Competition. In the 2018 National Defense Strategy, Defense Secretary James Mattis put "great power competition" at the center of the US defense posture. But what will this "competition" look like in the 21st century, and what role will special operations play?

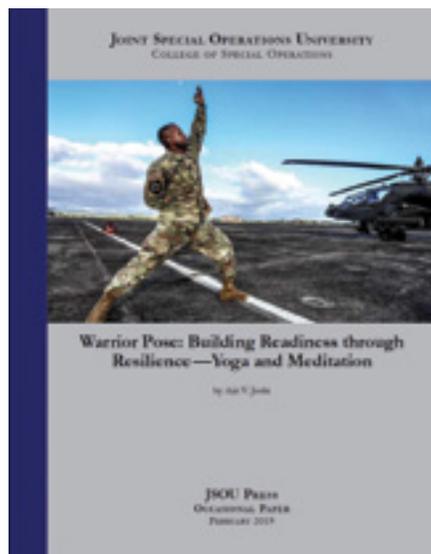
Competition can be looked at through many angles, including: great power relationships, non-geographical communities of interest, alternate financial systems, new versus old international regimes, the return of multipolar politics, the rise of megacities, and information and influence operations.

Developing a conceptual understanding of what "competition" means for the 21st Century demands a wide-ranging discussion, but one important component of that is the role of SOF in great power politics. We hope to spur discussion and reflection on both the concept of competition and the implications for SOF at this year's annual symposium.

No registration is needed to attend. The event is free. For more information, please see <http://www.specopsjournal.org/symposium.html>.

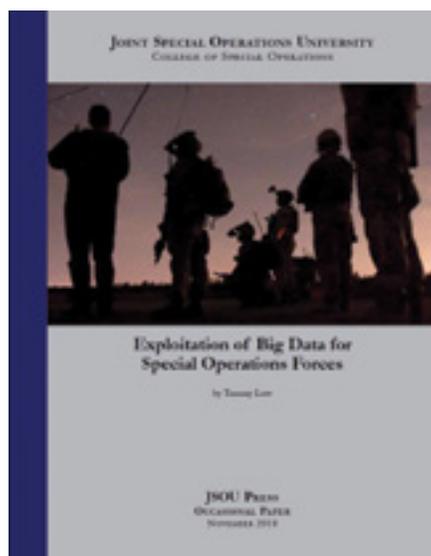
JSOU PUBLICATIONS

These recent JSOU Press publications are available electronically in the JSOU Library Management System in the JSOU Press Publications 2018 and 2019 sections, <https://jsou.libguides.com/jsoupublications>



Warrior Pose: Building Readiness through Resilience—Yoga and Meditation by **Ajit V. Joshi**

Mr. Ajit V. Joshi's award-winning research asserts that the foundation for readiness is resilience, which aligns with the warrior ethos and is an enduring quality of good leaders. A variety of techniques and practices including yoga, trauma sensitive yoga, systematic relaxation, breathing (pranayama), meditation, yoga nidra, and iRest Yoga Nidra are proven tools for improving the health and resilience of Joint Force service members and their families. It is vital for the Joint Force to adopt these tools for all service members' comprehensive physical, mental, and spiritual fitness in a world of increasing uncertainty, but barriers exist at both the individual and organizational levels. This paper defines relevant terms; reviews the extensive literature on the subject, with particular attention to the conclusions of studies conducted with veteran and military populations; examines the relevance of these tools to the modern warrior ethos and military culture; and makes specific recommendations regarding cultural and institutional change to facilitate program implementation. Mr. Joshi conducted this research while attending the US Army War College and received the US Army War College Commandant's Award for Distinction in Research for excellence in research and writing.

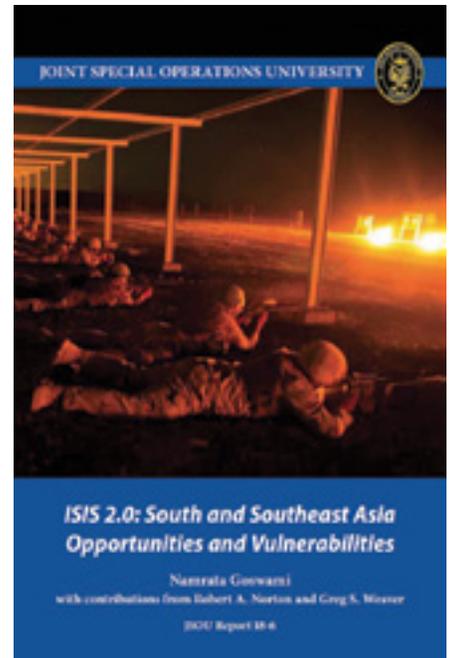


Exploitation of Big Data for Special Operations Forces by **Tammy Low**

In this new occasional paper, US Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Low examines "big data," which is characterized by extensive open source datasets that are too large to analyze using traditional analytic methods. Those datasets include data comprising news media, social media, and other open source information. By using innovative analytic tools and techniques, big datasets can be exploited to improve situational awareness and decision-making and directly increase SOF mission effectiveness. The author advocates for the exploitation of big data during SOF pre-conflict activities. She offers lessons learned and opportunities discovered by the United Nations Global Pulse program, which has used big data analytics since its establishment in 2012. Through that lens, the author describes how big data can assist SOF through greater situational awareness that then leads to increased understanding of sociocultural, political, and economic issues and events.

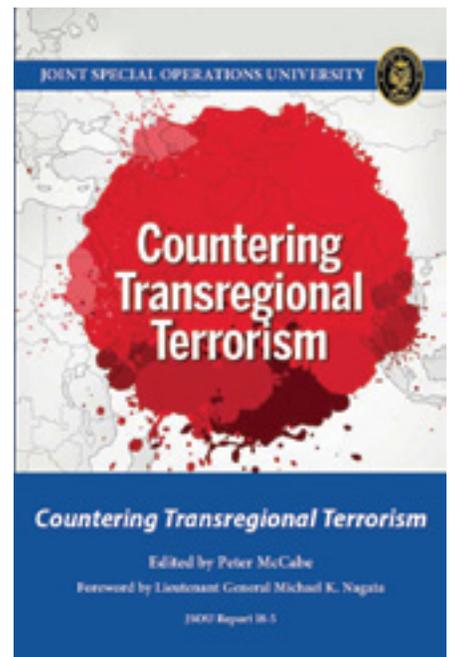
ISIS 2.0: South and Southeast Asia Opportunities and Vulnerabilities by Namrata Goswami

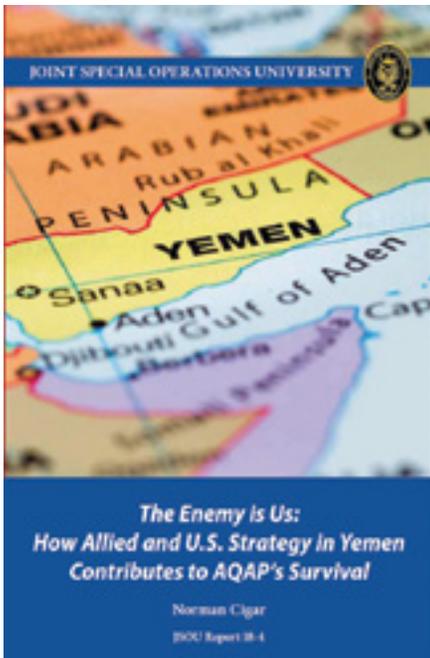
Behind the headlines, social media, and fear-mongering lies an ISIS threat not of ideology but rather of opportunity. This ISIS is masterful at maximizing political instability and discontent and parlaying them into new potential strongholds and followers. In this monograph, Namrata Goswami expertly unmasks this underground version of ISIS and uncovers the vulnerabilities of potential ISIS targets in Bangladesh, Burma, India, and Indonesia. This monograph provides a much needed fact-based perspective that explains the success of ISIS in both spreading its ideology and expanding its recruitment base. Drawing upon historical examples and parallels, the author argues for a movement very strategic in its emphases. Even existing scholars of the region are apt to find new and invaluable insights into where the societal, cultural, and political variables of this region intersect with opportunities for ISIS.



Countering Transregional Terrorism Edited by Peter McCabe with a foreword by Lieutenant General Michael K. Nagata

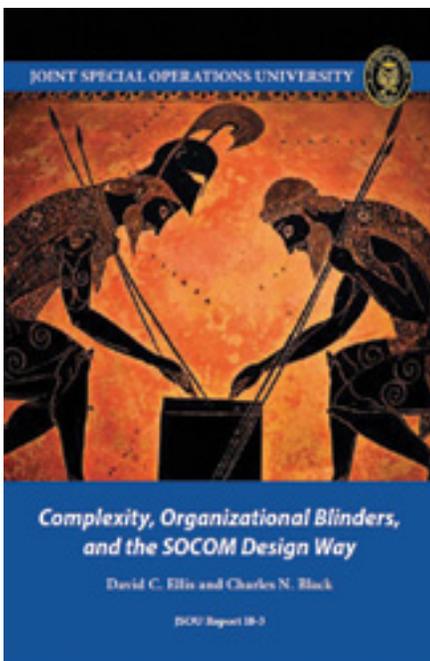
Countering terrorism is very hard. Countering it across global and regional geographic boundaries is even harder. Also, as increasingly powerful technologies become available to terrorists, the consequences of failing to surmount their adaptability and agility become much larger. It is vital to recognize that, despite very impressive progress that the United States and the international community have made in combating terrorism since 9/11, we still struggle as a global community with the creation of durable, permanent solutions and outcomes against violent extremism. This important publication urges consideration of how we might be able to find better pathways, better solutions, and better designs into the future. The future will not wait for us.





The Enemy is Us: How Allied and U.S. Strategy in Yemen Contributes to AQAP's Survival by Norman Cigar

In this monograph, Dr. Norman Cigar provides Special Operations Forces (SOF) commanders and planners with an overview of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's (AQAP) operational framework and presence in Yemen. He analyzes the strategic and operational issues that confront policymakers as they respond to the threat posed by AQAP within Yemen's challenging social, political, and physical environment. This monograph presents the far-reaching implications for SOF, from recognizing the nuances of Yemen's tribal-based human terrain to understanding key relationships, rivalries, and competition between AQAP and other Yemeni players. AQAP will likely continue to represent a threat to US interests and regional stability for the foreseeable future.



Complexity, Organizational Blindness, and the SOCOM Design Way by David C. Ellis and Charles N. Black

Complexity, Organizational Blindness, and the SOCOM Design Way (SDW) takes on the monumental task of explaining why the complex world is so difficult to comprehend and provides a way for navigating through it. The authors accomplish this utilizing US Special Operations Command design techniques. This monograph is not just for the Special Operator or the Operational Planner. It is useful for anyone who is seeking a better way to address problems that seem to have no solution. Dr. David Ellis and Mr. Charles Black provide the tools necessary to define the problem and develop an approach. The SDW needs to be seriously considered and put into practice if the community desires to make progress on complex and wicked problems.