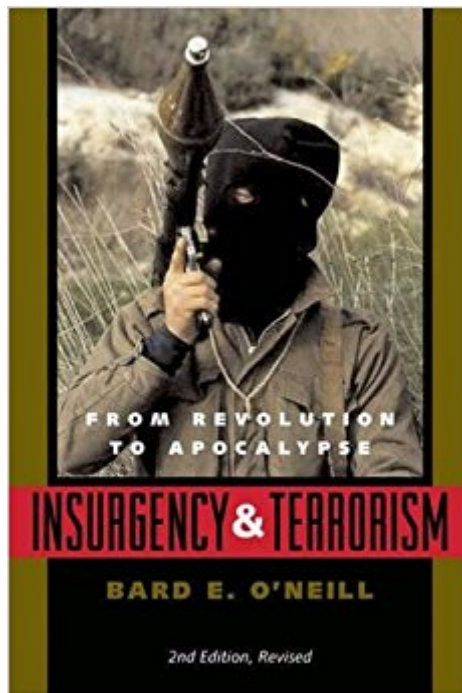




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Insurgency And Terrorism: From Revolution To Apocalypse, Second Edition, Revised



Synopsis

A systematic, comprehensive, and straightforward textbook for analyzing and comparing insurgencies and terrorist movements, *Insurgency and Terrorism* was first published in 1990 to broad acclaim. Observers, scholars, students, military personnel, journalists, and government analysts worldwide found it worthy of study. Now *Insurgency and Terrorism* has been thoroughly revised and updated to cover activity that has since occurred in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Colombia, and elsewhere and to address the new tactics and weapons used and threatened. Author Bard E. O'Neill, the director of studies of insurgency and revolution at the National War College, addresses insurgencies with respect to ultimate goals, strategies, forms of warfare, the role and means of acquiring popular support, organizational dynamics, causes and effects of disunity, types of external support, and government responses. Course syllabi included.

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Customer Reviews

"Far from the model of a rigid prescriptive text, this book approaches its subject in a way that allows full consideration of complexities in this difficult area. . . .The author provides not only a useful text for studies of political violence but also and more importantly a readable guide for security practitioners. Security and Management (Security and Management 2007-06-01)" "This paperback is a tour de force of modern insurgency. . . . Neill has the capacity to make the reader enter the mind and tactics of insurgents. The book ends with a self-study syllabus that can expand the reader's study of terrorism and

insurgencies. O’Neill’s book is highly recommended in this current combat environment. “Seminal . . . a modern classic. Dr. O’Neill’s treatise is now required reading in American and British military schools and war colleges. Analytical and insightful, O’Neill compares and contrasts many recent insurgencies and provides a theoretical framework in which to view current and future struggles. “Should be on every military professional’s reading list and is a must read for anyone deploying to Afghanistan, Iraq, or any potential hotspot around the world. . . . Whether one is able to get one’s hands on the first edition or the revised second edition, the results will be the same: a greater appreciation and understanding of the enemy, the battlefield, and what is required to fight and win in the twenty-first century. . . . Without a doubt, Mr. O’Neill’s book arms soldiers and leaders with a way to define the threat and develop ways to defeat it. “Well-organized, clearly written, and solidly thought out. “A career military man will find it worthwhile to spend some time reading and studying this book. “Required reading that should be in infantrymen’s rucksacks and on the desks of all twenty-first-century national security experts. As the principal military adviser to two CIA task forces, I used this text daily. O’Neill’s second edition addresses the tumultuous beginning of our new century and has direct application on the battlefield as well as in the classroom. To suppress terrorism, to undermine terrorism’s ideological support, and to win the war of ideas, you need some of the better ideas found in this book. “Col. Nick Pratt, USMC (Ret.), Director, Program on Terrorism and Security Studies, and Professor of Strategy and International Politics, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies “(Col. Nick Pratt, USMC (Ret.), Director, Program on Terrorism and Security Studies, and Professor of Strategy and International Politics, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies) “Anyone interested in the role of force in international affairs should read *Insurgency and Terrorism*. Bard O’Neill has educated thousands of our leaders. Now his celebrated framework for analyzing insurgencies is available to a wider audience. This book cries out to be read and studied. “Maj. Gen. Perry M. Smith, USAF (Ret.), former U.S. Air Force director of plans “(Maj. Gen. Perry M. Smith, USAF (Ret.), former U.S. Air Force director of plans) “A gold mine for the library of any serious student of revolutionary warfare. This may well be the most in-depth and scholarly treatise on insurgency and terrorism of the decade. “Gen. P. X. Kelley, USMC (Ret.)

“Bard O'Neill offers an excellent conceptual framework for studying insurgencies and terrorism, underscored with numerous real-world examples. This is the ideal textbook or reference aid for soldiers, analysts, students, and scholars who seek a better understanding of contemporary conflicts.”
•Chuck Fahrner, assistant professor of geography, Georgia College and State University (Chuck Fahrner, Assistant Professor of Geography, Georgia College and State University)

Bard E. O'Neill is professor of international affairs at the National War College, Washington, D.C., where he is also director of Middle East studies and director of studies of insurgency and revolution. His other publication credits include *The Energy Crisis and U.S. Foreign Policy* and *Armed Struggle in Palestine*. He lives in Springfield, Virginia.

Well written. I have not finished yet but the book is easy to read and has been well researched. So far it is very good

This is an excellent book. The author is a well known and respected expert of the field. The book begins with an introduction that attempts to level set and baseline definitions and meanings. Although this may appear to be semantics, the differences both subtle and great is important. The book is well organized it is easy to refer to a specific chapter or section in the event you need a quick refresher and or reference. The book is well written, concise and offers a large quantity of foot notes at the end of each chapter. This book is for both the expert and the novice. Terry Tucker, Adjunct Professor, Military Studies/History University of Maryland and Senior Doctrine Developer SANGMP, Vinnell Arabia

This is not a history book, it is a framework for understanding. It is the single best resource for learning about insurgency and terrorism. It is not lengthy or obtuse or filled with academic jargon. It is practical and useful regardless of whether you are a soldier, politician, analyst, or aid worker.

Still read it

O'Neill makes analyzing and understanding the actions of diverse groups straight forward. Great analytical model for students. Hope he can update the examples in his next edition.

Well done

Everyone, at some time or another, looks for a magic wand, for that perfect solution to a problem. In the last few years, since the end of the cold war and of our comfortable belief that conflict was something that happened between two superpowers, by proxy in far, distant lands, we have had to wake up to the reality of a transnational insurgency that has the power to affect us wherever we are, be it in a commercial building in New York, a hotel in Jakarta, a train station in Madrid or a bus in London. Since Francis Fukuyama's optimistic "The end of history" (as premature a title as ever has been written), a number of books have been published that analyze small wars, as these are now at the forefront of the news. Reading these books one hopes to find an answer to the new phenomenon of an apparently religiously driven discontent that is spanning two continents (Africa and Asia) and has actively engaged proponents in another two (America and Europe). Bard O'Neill's "Insurgency and Terrorism", published by Potomac Books in 2005, is a well-written analysis of how and why insurgencies develop. Does it give readers an immediate understanding of how to deal with the Al Qaeda's new threat of an international Islamic insurgency? Does it give us the magic wand we are seeking in a flash of inspiration? Unfortunately no. But the problem is that there are no easy solutions to the incidents of terrorism we are facing today. It is disingenuous and fallacious of Governments to propose and believe in easy solutions to this problem, as "Mission Accomplished" all too painfully has shown. It does however pay to analyze carefully the situation we are dealing with in its proper (and several) contexts. And this O'Neill does reasonably well. Insurgencies have been fought against invading armies, or against unpopular regimes that use established armies to impose their governance. In the first seven chapters of the book, O'Neill offers a structured analysis of the socio-economical motivations for insurgencies, the environments in they are fought and the strategies used to fight them, the importance of gaining and using popular support (through conviction, propaganda and coercion) as well as manipulating external support (outside the areas directly affected by conflict), and the organization and hierarchy of an insurgent operation. Through this structured categorization O'Neill examines how insurgencies develop and succeed. Also through this analysis we discover how different Al Qaeda's operations are today from past guerilla engagements. Indeed, in this revised second edition of the book, O'Neill does keep the discussion current with references to how he believes the insurgency Al Qaeda is leading fits (or otherwise) in to his analyses. One would assume that Al Qaeda might deserve a chapter of its own but that is unfortunately missing; as O'Neill observes, the group's strategies and objectives don't fit particularly well in to any past or present insurgency. For instance, Mao's strategies are reasonable well

described, particularly the requirement of support from the masses, and their mobilization in support a protracted popular war strategy, that seems to be one of Al Qaeda's aims. But, as the author points out, the closed cell organizational structure, loosely independent of a central authority, "is not conducive to mass mobilization." It is interesting to contrast Mao's doctrines on insurgency with Al Qaeda's today. O'Neill might have juxtaposed the two types of insurgency more strongly; in the section describing Mao's approach to coercion (as one of the tools used by insurgents to gain popular support) the author recalls Mao's "Eight Points of Attention" used to ensure his troops did the following: * Speak politely. * Pay fairly for what you buy. * Return everything you borrow. * Pay for anything you damage. * Do not hit or swear at people. * Do not damage crops. * Do not take liberties with women. * Do not ill-treat captives. How different from the tactics being used by Al Qaeda today! Particularly the last two points! Mao led what arguably must be history's most successful insurgency and his tactics and strategies were successfully used in another war that began as an insurrection: the conflict that Vo Nguyen Giap conducted first against the French and then against the Americans. However Al Qaeda's protracted war doesn't seem to be modeled on any previous engagement. Indeed O'Neill doesn't specify any example in history on which the Al Qaeda led insurgency is based. But it is in evaluating historical context that the book is quite weak. The approach O'Neill takes is structural rather than historical. He defines categories, and then finds insurgencies that fit them. The historical background of each insurgency is barely sketched out in most cases. And this leads to some omissions. For instance, there are references to the 1948-1960 Malayan Emergency throughout the text. But the context within which the British were eventually successful has been completely ignored: Gerald Templer's plan to set the country on the path to Independence, thereby voiding the political appeal of the insurgents, is not mentioned. Indeed neither there is a mention of Templer himself, who arguably was the architect of the most successful counterinsurgency effort ever staged by Britain. Of even more relevance today, and even though Afghanistan is mentioned throughout the book, no reference is made to the failed colonizing efforts made by the British in three disastrous wars conducted by them against Pashtun warriors, whose descendants also routed the Russians, and, in spite of all the recent American, Coalition and NATO efforts, are still causing seemingly endless trouble today. One might reasonably assume that a more detailed analysis of these two events would have been useful in the final chapter in which O'Neill evaluates possible Government responses to the threats presented by insurgencies. A far more detailed historical perspective of insurgencies, beginning with how the Romans fought successfully against insurgents in the lands they conquered, can be found in Walter Laqueur's "Guerrilla Warfare" published by transaction in 1998. Even though the historical contexts of the various

insurgencies O'Neill describes aren't presented as thoroughly as one might expect, the structured categorization of insurgents' operations allows the author to define a number of possible counterinsurgency strategies in the final chapter of the book. It is in this chapter that we find out that there are no easy solutions to be expected. Indeed a single definition of "victory" is not given. O'Neill observes that one of the most important factors in the success of a response is to be able to anticipate insurgents' plans and counter them effectively. However anticipation can only come from an administration that has a clear understanding of the opposing forces' strategies, tactics and goals. Without a clear comprehension of these, responses can be misdirected at best or play directly in to the goals of the insurgents at worse. In limited, national engagements, insurgent forces' strategies can be understood, but historically there has been a steep learning curve Government have had to face, and the learning has been (and obviously still is) faulty. This learning curve is much steeper for insurgencies that span beyond a single country's borders, as international cooperation is needed in the fight against them, and politics provide a huge barrier against this. In conclusion, the book gives the reader some very good insights on how recent past insurgencies have developed and been handled. In today's context what the book misses out on is a strong thread that might give more specific insights in to how we might tackle the problem of a transnational insurgency that is driven through the very modern tools of communication (such as the Internet) by a group of people whose ideals are very firmly rooted in the medieval past. This lack of a thread is probably due to the fact that O'Neill wrote the first edition of the book in 1990, well before the rise of Islamic extremism. In keeping with the original structure of the book, the second revision shows that the Al Qaeda revolution is in a category of its own. It become implicit that we will need to develop new tools to fight it, and not much of our previous knowledge and experience on insurgencies can be called upon successfully.

Terrorism and Insurgency by Bard E. O'Neill, is an invaluable resource for those interested in understanding insurgency and the relevant factors that lead to its success or failure. This book appears to be written for a classroom audience (the author in fact provides a proposed semester-length class schedule complete with lesson plans and assigned reading). However, O'Neill also has government analysts and policy makers in mind. Throughout the book, and especially in chapters covering government response and the conclusion, he stresses the value of providing as complete a picture as possible while keeping in mind objectivity and maintaining an unbiased approach to analysis. O'Neill begins his book by looking at insurgencies and the related fields of terrorism and guerilla warfare. His framework for analysis includes understanding the

nature of the insurgency, insurgent strategies, both political and military, understanding the physical as well as human environment, organization, and the role of external support. In the final chapter, O'Neill lays out a comprehensive lens through which a government analyst could view its adversary and policy makers can create successful counterinsurgency operations. Urging the avoidance of polemics and shortsightedness, O'Neill provides a credible and realistic lens through which to create effective countermeasures. O'Neill helps to settle many unhelpful arguments and issues for analysts. For example, he rejects the false dichotomy of freedom fighter versus terrorist, as one deals with ends (freedom fighter) and one is a means to get their (terrorism). As such, a freedom fighter can use terrorist tactics to achieve his ends. Also, a driving factor that many insurgencies use to determine their strategies are the physical and human environment around them and the perceived and real government response. Understanding this is invaluable both for insurgents and counterinsurgency operations. The ideology, or political campaign, the insurgent group promotes, serves the valuable function of differentiating friend from foe. Providing an alternative to this ideology is integral to separating insurgents from the majority population (assuming the insurgents are a minority). Many insurgencies survive through external support from other states or insurgent groups. One method students and analysts can use to find weaknesses to exploit is by knowing which insurgent groups do and do not receive external support and the motives for the disparity. Finally, many responses to insurgency fail because of inflexibility, sloppiness, ignorance, bias, anger, bureaucratic imperative or psychological aversion. These failings create often flawed and fatally mistaken counterinsurgency strategies. Avoiding this should be of primary concern.

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