

# Strategic Studies Institute is 'all about the questions'

*Carol Kerr*

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What do our leaders need to be thinking about? What are we not noticing? The research team of the USAWC Strategic Studies Institute seeks to identify what the country will need in the future, to apply in-depth research to the strategic environment, and be the first source for strategic thinking.

You can 'google' or you can 'SSI'.

Here's a recent sampling –

**Dr. Max G. Manwaring** authored the asymmetric warfare trilogy that highlights his expertise in Latin America and military/ non-military operations other than war. Book 1 is on the SOCOM reading list: *Insurgency, Terrorism and Crime* (2008). Book 2, *Gangs, Pseudo-Militaries, and Other Modern Mercenaries* (2010) earned the Madigan Award. Book 3, *The Complexity of Modern Asymmetric Warfare*, has enticed interest of India and Brazil before its Fall 2012 publication, said Manwaring.

Taking a somewhat different enemy into consideration is of critical importance. In the present and future, the enemy will not be stupid enough to allow us to fight Iraq, Afghanistan, or even Vietnam over again, said Manwaring.

"I approached changing war operations as a result of asymmetric operations worldwide, looking at the Mexican cartels, Russians, finance, money laundering, etc. This is different from the experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army must know about this other kind of war – the only kind we've ever lost," he said.

**Dr. W. Andrew Terrill** is the SSI's Middle East specialist.

"I feel like I'm contributing by helping USAWC officers know before they need to," said Terrill. "The most dangerous organization in the world is Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," he offered as example. "AQ-AP has tried to attack us twice – the Christmas bomber and Yemen -- and has the opportunity to grow territory and influence. This is a terrorist organization that, no kidding, hates us. The US core interests are at stake but there's a limited array of options. It's a particularly delicate problem, and calls

for long-range thinking. “

A decade of published research presents Terrill's guide to understanding the *Middle East: Lessons of the Iraqi de-Ba'athification Program for Iraq's Future and the Arab Revolution*, May 2012; *Conflicts of Yemen*, 2011; *Escalation and Intra-war Deterrence During Limited Wars in the Middle East*, 2009, finds current lessons in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the 1991 Gulf War Against Iraq. He studied Jordan in 2008 and the US-Kuwait relationship in 2007. *Regional Fears of Western Primacy*, 2006, explores US options for military cooperation and basing needs in the Middle East.

**Dr. David Lai's** work on Chinese thinking and operational art is found in *The United States and China in Power*, Dec. 2011. Lai's writing to explain the key mindset for understanding the Chinese was acknowledged by Henry Kissinger, he noted.

**Dr. Jeffrey McCausland** collaborates with other academics for the Minerva project, characterized as new thinking on deterrence and control of nuclear weapons. Looking at the Russian stockpile, a workshop in October with academics and policymakers from Europe and the United States, produced *Tactical Nuclear Weapons and NATO*, April, 2012, by McCausland, Dr. Tom Nichols and Dr. Doug Stuart.

SSI expands its research scope by collaborating with external research contributors. *Drug Trafficking, Violence and Instability*, 2012, is written by SSI contributor **Dr. Phil Williams** with **Dr Vanda Felbab-Brown**. SSI's **Dr. Robin Dorff** with **Dr. Volker Franke** edited *Conflict Management and "Whole of Government": Useful Tools for US National Strategy?*

Conferences are an effective way to multiple expert collaboration -- and every conference produces a summary product, itself available online, like the compelling series of conference reports on the People's Liberation Army. This month, **Dr. Stephen Blank** is coordinating *The Transition to Putin II Conference* at Carlisle Barracks. Upcoming conferences will explore cyberspace at CCNY and University of Pittsburgh; US and India with Dickinson College; Bosnia, with the Atlantic Council.

The topic of the year -- Grand Strategy in an Era of Austerity -- was not only the subject of the USAWC April 2012 Strategy Conference (view speeches, panels and discussions at [www.youtube.com/usarmywarcollege](http://www.youtube.com/usarmywarcollege)) but of a series of academic collaborations -- the next in June at Kingston College in Ontario, Canada in June.

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