

Why America Loses Wars

How can you achieve victory in war if you don't have a clear idea of your political aims and a vision of what victory means? In this provocative challenge to US political aims and strategy, Donald Stoker argues that America endures endless wars because its leaders no longer know how to *think* about war, particularly wars fought for limited aims, taking the nation to war without understanding what they want or valuing victory and thus the ending of the war. He reveals how flawed ideas on so-called "limited war" and war in general evolved against the backdrop of American conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. These ideas, he shows, undermined America's ability to understand, wage, and win its wars, and to secure peace. Now fully updated to incorporate the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, *Why America Loses Wars* dismantles seventy years of misguided thinking and lays the foundations for a new approach to the wars of tomorrow.

Donald Stoker is Professor of National Security and Resource Strategy at the Dwight D. Eisenhower School of the National Defense University in Washington, DC. He was Professor of Strategy and Policy for the US Naval War College's Monterey Program at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, from 1999 until 2017. The author or editor of thirteen books, his *Carl von Clausewitz: His Life and Work* is on the British Army professional-reading list. His *Purpose and Power: American Grand Strategy Since 1775* will be published by Cambridge University Press in 2022.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-22086-6 – Why America Loses Wars
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Limited War and US Strategy from
the Korean War to the Present

Donald Stoker



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108479592

DOI: 10.1017/9781108611794

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Hardback first published 2019

Paperback first published 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-47959-2 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-009-22086-6 Paperback

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To Hal Blanton and Mike Jones. Great colleagues. Greater friends.

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