



Wrong Turn: America's Deadly Embrace of Counterinsurgency

Colonel Gian Gentile

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Colonel Gian Gentile's 2008 article "Misreading the Surge" in *World Politics Review* first exposed a growing rift among military intellectuals that has since been playing out in strategy sessions at the Pentagon, in classrooms at military academies, and on the pages of the *New York Times*. While the past years of U.S. strategy in Afghanistan have been dominated by the doctrine of counterinsurgency (COIN), Gentile and a small group of dissident officers and defense analysts have questioned the necessity and efficacy of COIN—essentially armed nation-building—in achieving the United States' limited core policy objective in Afghanistan: the destruction of Al Qaeda.

Drawing both on the author's experiences as a combat battalion commander in the Iraq War and his research into the application of counterinsurgency in a variety of historical contexts, *Wrong Turn* is a brilliant summation of Gentile's views of the failures of COIN, as well as a searing reevaluation of the current state of affairs in Afghanistan.

As the issue of America's withdrawal from Afghanistan inevitably rises to the top of the national agenda, *Wrong Turn* will be a major new touchstone for what went wrong and a vital new guide to the way forward.

Note: the ideas in this book are the author's alone, not the Department of Defense's.

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