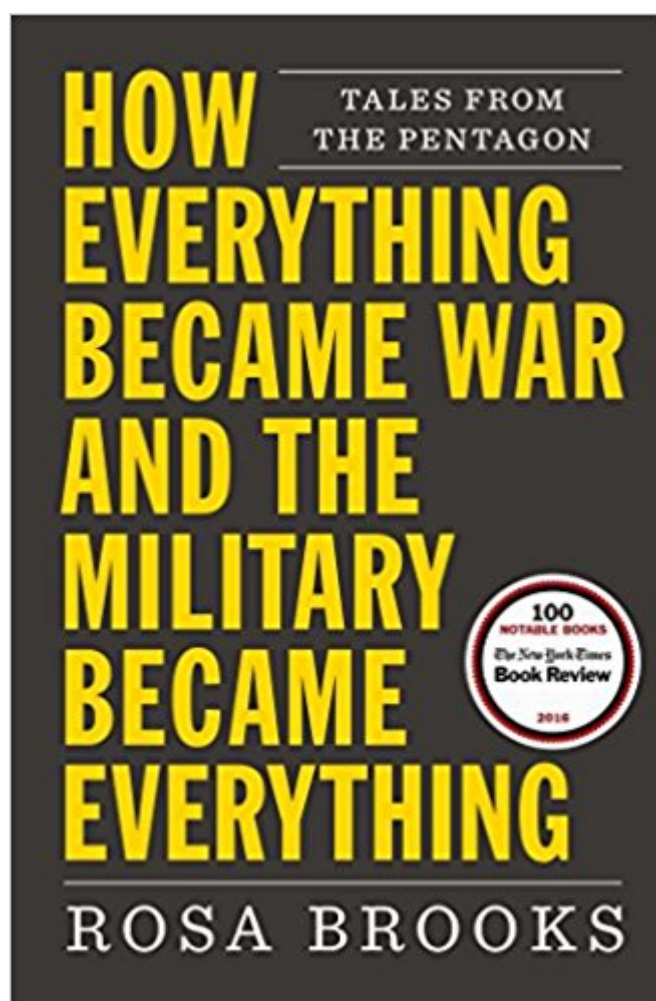




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How Everything Became War And The Military Became Everything: Tales From The Pentagon



Synopsis

“A dynamic work of reportage” (The New York Times) written “with clarity and...wit” (The New York Times Book Review) about what happens when the ancient boundary between war and peace is erased. Once, war was a temporary state of affairs. Today, America’s wars are everywhere and forever: our enemies change constantly and rarely wear uniforms, and virtually anything can become a weapon. As war expands, so does the role of the US military. Military personnel now analyze computer code, train Afghan judges, build Ebola isolation wards, eavesdrop on electronic communications, develop soap operas, and patrol for pirates. You name it, the military does it. In this “ambitious and astute” (The Washington Post) work, Rosa Brooks “provides a masterful analysis” (San Francisco Chronicle) of this seismic shift in how America wages war from an unconventional perspective—that of a former top Pentagon official who is the daughter of two anti-war protesters and married to an Army Green Beret. By turns a memoir, a work of journalism, a scholarly exploration of history, anthropology, and law, *How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything* is an “illuminating” (The New York Times), “eloquent” (The Boston Globe), “courageous” (US News & World Report), and “essential” (The Dallas Morning News) examination of the role of the military today. Above all, it is a rallying cry, for Brooks issues an urgent warning: When the boundaries around war disappear, we undermine both America’s founding values and the international rules and organizations that keep our world from sliding towards chaos.

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Customer Reviews

“A dynamic work of reportage, punctuated by savory details. It delights. The author is a chipper field guild and canny ethnographer, writing with refreshing honesty about the folk ways of the Department of Defense, which often confound outsiders. Illuminating.” (Jennifer Senior *The New York Times*) “Brooks writes with clarity and epigrammatic wit.... In impressive and often fascinating detail, she documents that the boundaries between war and peace have grown so hazy as to undermine hard-won global gains in human rights and the rule of law.” (Harry Evans *The New York Times Book Review*) “One of the most thought-provoking books I’ve ever read. It’s as if we have been sleep walking into this new world and Rosa has turned on a flashlight to show what we are doing and where we are going.” (General James Mattis (USMC, Ret.), former CENTCOM Commander) “An important and compelling examination of the American war machine, reported from inside the Pentagon, the great beast itself. Outstanding.” (Richard Rhodes, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*) “Ambitious and astute.” (The Washington Post) “For anyone troubled by our murky and perpetual wars, Rosa Brooks offers a deeply challenging and delightfully provocative answer to the question: What the hell is going on here, and what can we do about it?” (Phil Klay, National Book Award-winning author of *Redeployment*) “In a masterful argument, sometimes between her own contradictory feelings, Rosa Brooks shows how battle lines have been blurred. Soldiers work, and sometimes rule, in areas once the uncontested realm of civilians. It is another complex, potentially dangerous, challenge that we must work to understand. Start with this book.” (General Stanley McChrystal (U.S. Army, Ret.), former Commander of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan) “Rosa Brooks asks us to confront hard but essential questions about war, peace, liberty, morality, and the rule of law. As challenging as these issues are, she has a gift for wrapping them in gripping stories and delightfully witty prose. Reading *How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything* is like having a conversation with a smart, wry, and unsentimental friend who guides and pushes us toward a new set of answers.” (Anne-Marie Slaughter, president of New America and former president of the American Society of International Law) “*How Everything Became War* is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the continuing evolution of the modern military, and who is prepared to engage

in serious thinking about the future of armed conflict. (Dallas Morning News)"Brooks provides a masterful analysis of how global connectedness has created vast new responsibilities and vulnerabilities for the armed forces of the United States...." (San Francisco Chronicle)"Fascinating. (Fareed Zakaria)"A trenchant, timely new book.... Approaching her sprawling subject in a rambling voice that mixes politics, human rights, history, literature, travel to desolate lands and some of her own story, Brooks produces an ambitious, courageous tome that helps both sides of the wide civilian-military divide. (US News & World Report)"Rosa Brooks has written the best book yet on the "öospace between "öthat messy blend of war and not-war that characterizes so much of our world. As equal parts legal scholar, policy practitioner, and engaged citizen, she "öthe perfect guide for a tour of our national nobility... and absurdity." (Nathaniel Fick, bestselling author of One Bullet Away)"A hugely significant, very thought-provoking examination of how and why America's armed forces have been pulled into myriad missions beyond the "östrictly military "ö tasks in which they traditionally engaged in past decades, written by a woman uniquely qualified for such an undertaking. How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything raises hugely important questions that should spark serious conversations in Washington and throughout the United States. (General David Petraeus (U.S. Army, Ret.), former CENTCOM Commander and former Director of the CIA)"In this clear-eyed account of her time at the Pentagon, Brooks, a human-rights lawyer by training, makes an eloquent case for just what is at risk. (Boston Globe)"By turns unsettling and brilliantly insightful, Brooks's work is a must-read for everyone concerned about national security and troubled by the U.S. military's steadily expanding budget at the expense of social programs. (Booklist)"An important and insightful book.... Brooks is a clear and entertaining writer. Her sense of humor is quite acute. (National Review)"Rosa Brooks is one of the most fluid, thoughtful and interesting writers in the field of national security and has lived a fascinating life as a Pentagon official, public intellectual, law professor and Army spouse. This life has informed her important and entertaining new book, an intriguing hybrid of memoir and policy analysis that is the best exposition of how it is that, a decade and a half after 9/11, we now live in a strange twilight world where the old boundaries between war and peace are being erased. There is no better guide to how and why this happened than Brooks. (Peter Bergen, author of The United States of Jihad)"Brooks's detailed, illustrative prose makes the reader feel as though she is inside "öthe world's largest office building," giving a sense of the enormity and vastness as well as the weight of what has become an overwhelming

bureaucracy. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in national security policy, strategy, or how America wages war in the 21st-century. [\(Real Clear Defense\)](#) "Brooks has written a book that is both personal and provocative. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the inner workings of the Pentagon and how we got to the point where the military has become everyone's favorite hammer. [\(Modern War Institute at West Point\)](#) "The great strength of this book is that it manages to be thought-provoking and entertaining at the same time.... [Brooks] writes with knowledge and wit. [\(Foreign Affairs\)](#) "Every once in a while, a book comes along that should be read by everyone who teaches, practices, or thinks about national security. This is one of those books.... [\(H-Net.org\)](#) "The question of where the lines are between war and peace, between the military and the civilian world in 21st-century conflicts that never seem to end, is among the most vexing and important in American politics today. In *How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything*, Rosa Brooks deftly tackles these issues, weaving together rich analysis with personal anecdotes and stories that pull you in. It is a book that won't just inform you, but make you think. [\(P.W. Singer, strategist at New America and author of *Wired for War*, *Cybersecurity and Cyberwar*, and *Ghost Fleet*\)](#) "Perceptive, inquisitive, sensitive and persuasive, *How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything* is troubling but rewarding. Combining memoir, journalism and history, it is an insightful analysis of where the United States and its military sit today, how they got there and where they might turn next for more balance and restraint." [\(Shelf Awareness\)](#) "In a post-9/11 world of persistent warfare... [Brooks] expertly guides readers through this confusing new terrain.... Whether she's invoking Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit image to illustrate the ambiguity of language and the importance of context, dissecting an excruciatingly difficult Hague Tribunal case assigning guilt to an obscure Croatian soldier, or drawing comparisons between a Putin-ordered assassination and an Obama-ordered drone strike, she never fails to stimulate and enlighten. Legal theorists and policymakers will approve the scholarship and close analysis; general readers will appreciate the sensitive storytelling, the wit, and the uncommon good sense." [\(Kirkus Reviews \(starred review\)\)](#) "Lively, informed, and insightful.... Brooks discusses these emerging legal and practical problems with the clarity of an outsider given a seat at the insider's table. [\(New York Review of Books\)](#) "This book is an important addition to the professional body of literature on the evolution of warfare, providing readers with ideas on the future of warfare and the required institutions, legal frameworks, and strategies that need to be in place to maintain stability against an increasing number of threats to the post World War II order. [\(The Strategy Bridge\)](#) "An important book that sets the scene for a much needed discussion

and reappraisal of not just the concepts of war and peace, but rather its laws and operational practicalities. — (New York Journal of Books) "This book forces you to think hard, but it is so much fun to read you almost do not realize it." — (Huffington Post) — "Written with a casual but razor sharp wit, Brooks's... — narrative is fascinating and piercing. She draws the reader into a world that one quickly begins to understand is a quagmire of complexity few, even within the highest offices of the land, fully appreciate. — (DefenceReport) — "Having read this engaging work, I find her wholly credible, delightfully readable and quite convincing. Confounded by the vexations of today's unwon conflict, she asks more questions than she answers. But that kind of deadly ambiguity is cooked into the vile, ill-defined nature of the sprawling mess we call war these days.... If you, too, wonder what happened since 9/11 and why, you will get a lot from this fine book from Brooks. — (Army Magazine) — "This book contains keen insights from a sharp lawyer who served in important policy positions at the Pentagon... Brooks's work is also important, in my view, to better understand how a serious-minded civilian thinks about the U.S. military. — (From the Green Notebook) "[A] thought-provoking glimpse inside America's vast post-9/11 national security apparatus." (Publishers Weekly)

Rosa Brooks is a Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation, a columnist for Foreign Policy, and a law professor at Georgetown University. She previously worked at the Pentagon as Counselor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; in 2011, she was awarded the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service. Brooks has also served as a senior advisor at the US Department of State, a consultant for Human Rights Watch, and a weekly opinion columnist for the Los Angeles Times. Her articles and essays have appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, and dozens of other newspapers and magazines, and she is a frequent television guest, with appearances on the Charlie Rose Show, the Rachel Maddow Show, the Today show, Meet the Press, and Erin Burnett OutFront. Brooks lives in Alexandria, Virginia, with her husband Joe, her daughters Anna and Clara, and a Brittany spaniel named Scout.

This book should be mandatory reading for every American who cares about the direction the country is moving. It should be read by everybody in government and the military. It will scare the socks off of you, but at the same time it is a prescription for how to avoid having the military take over America whether intentionally or as a result of mission creep. The author, Rosa Brooks, knows whereof she speaks. Originally from an anti-war background, she is a lawyer teaching at Georgetown law school who has worked in high-level positions in the State Department, in the

Pentagon and has personally visited Afghanistan, Iraq, and many other hot spots around the globe. She has interviewed diplomats, generals and common soldiers. Brooks' message is that war has changed since 9/11, that it now incorporates cyberspace, drones, nation-building and boots-on-the-ground. The military is gradually doing stuff that has been the province of the now-under-funded civilian agencies. Unfortunately, it's simply easier to let the military do it—easier but more dangerous to the health of our democracy. Read it and get off the couch if you want to have America survive as a democracy.

Required reading if you have any sense of how rapidly globalization has fused so many countries into confrontation and the military mindset. The thoughtful thesis of the title and eloquent reasoning by the author offers a powerful case leading to the difficult conclusion that the faster we globalize this world, the more rapidly hopes of peace recede. For the moment we continue to avoid the end-all of nuclear confrontation and nuclear war, but the proliferation of wars and the power of the military as a political tool are at heart of Ms Brooks' reasoning. The book is not a difficult read thanks to the authors fluid style and sensible organization. What is difficult is confronting the reality of how far down the road of aggression and confrontation we have come in dealing with all of our problems.

Rosa Brooks has written a cogent and succinct description of the process that has brought us into the legal morass where we are in a perpetual state of war in which the laws of war no longer apply. Of course, this summary doesn't do justice to the complexity of the book, and the book can't cover the entire landscape of the complicated intersections between the military and the civilian world, i.e. the issue of the militarization of domestic police forces. It does a superb job of setting the philosophical and legal framework for the question of the nature of war (and therefore also the nature of peace) and suggests that our natural human state includes conflict. A very basic social function is managing that conflict. Brooks contends that in our current system, military and civilian leaders don't speak the same language. Misunderstandings are so profound that if we don't find a way to build common experiences and develop the same view of the world and the problems that confront us, we are unlikely to find the appropriate responses to build a sustainable future.

A useful discussion about war in the 21st century. The book really shines when Brooks talks about her time in the Pentagon and at Human Rights Watch. The examples and stories are quite fascinating. Her discussion about the legal issues surrounding the conduct of war is also interesting.

I found the last chapter - Managing War's Paradoxes - to be the least effective. She presents some good thoughts about how to secure human rights in a time of muddled lines between peace and war as well as how to shine light on some sketchy US government acts but there is no blueprint. Overall, this book is very interesting particularly if you're interested in the DoD. Recommended.

In this era of extreme polarization, this book does a very good job of illustrating how very little there is that is clearly black and white - even in our notions of war. The proper structure of that 'space between war and peace' is the thoughtful theme of this book. This author is smart and nuanced.

Must read for anybody interested in an insiders look at the international issues our government has to contend with. Just the facts of what is dealt with. And it's amazing how often I hear issues brought up in this book alluded to by those in government today, on both sides of the aisle.

Engaging and insightful, this book provides important food for thought regarding the role of the military in our current and future society.

This is a very important book, and for that reason, I've assigned my undergraduate national security class to read and discuss it this semester. Rosa Brooks brings a critical lens to the paradoxes of the current state of our military and the ethical and effectiveness challenges of its expansion. She asks us to think about the reflection of American values and priorities through military presence and actions around the world. The challenges she discusses are complex and not easily solved, and the book is balanced in offering perspectives on multiple sides. She leads the reader through a deeper analytical exercise in thinking about some of the unintended consequences of our actions for American democracy and for the frameworks and norms that have governed international relations since World War II. She does this all while weaving in her own personal background and experiences, creating a blend of analysis and memoir that is both thought-provoking and fascinating to read.

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