



Beware of Hype: A Skeptic's View of the New Technologies

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Western Way of War

- Reliance on superior technology
- Discipline
- Resource intensive: Cicero's "sinews of war"
- Amoral: "that is, it is unshackled by concerns of ritual, tradition or religion." (VDH, *Culture and Carnage*)
- Decentralized decision-making



American Way of War

- Debates
 - Weigley: shift from strategies of attrition to strategies of annihilation
 - Echevarria: reformulated Weigley's argument—"more a way of *battle* than a way of war."
 - McFate: Cult of major combat operations
- End or New Beginning?
 - Boot: "in favor of information age characteristics, such as "speed, maneuver, flexibility, and surprise," all enabled by greater use of "precision firepower, special forces, and psychological operations" and jointness.
 - Reality is that US military adapts however imperfectly to the nature of the conflict at hand; BUT



Future of War

- Next-war-its (Gates AF Academy 2008)
- Forecasting's Foibles
 - Methodologically Suspect
 - NIC 2030



- “SPREADING LETHAL TECHNOLOGIES. The next 15-20 years will see a wider spectrum of more accessible instruments of war, especially precision-strike capabilities, cyber instruments, and bioterror weaponry. (p. 65)



Examples



Drones

Missile Defense



“Cybered” Conflict





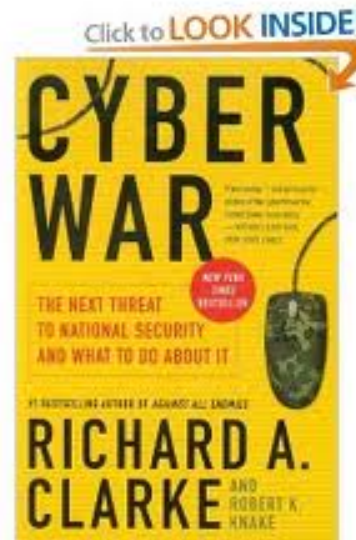
Hype

- Virtually all “new” military technologies are accompanied by a vast amount of hype

- Threat inflation
- Misleading claims
- Why?

- Issues

- Distorts political debates within democratic societies
- Exacerbates internal tensions
- Arms racing





Popular Mechanics

- For many in the national security community, not to mention the general public, there is a basic unfamiliarity with science and technology
- Issues
 - Technological credulousness
 - Two Cultures or Three?
 - Strategy and Policy
 - Operational
 - STEM





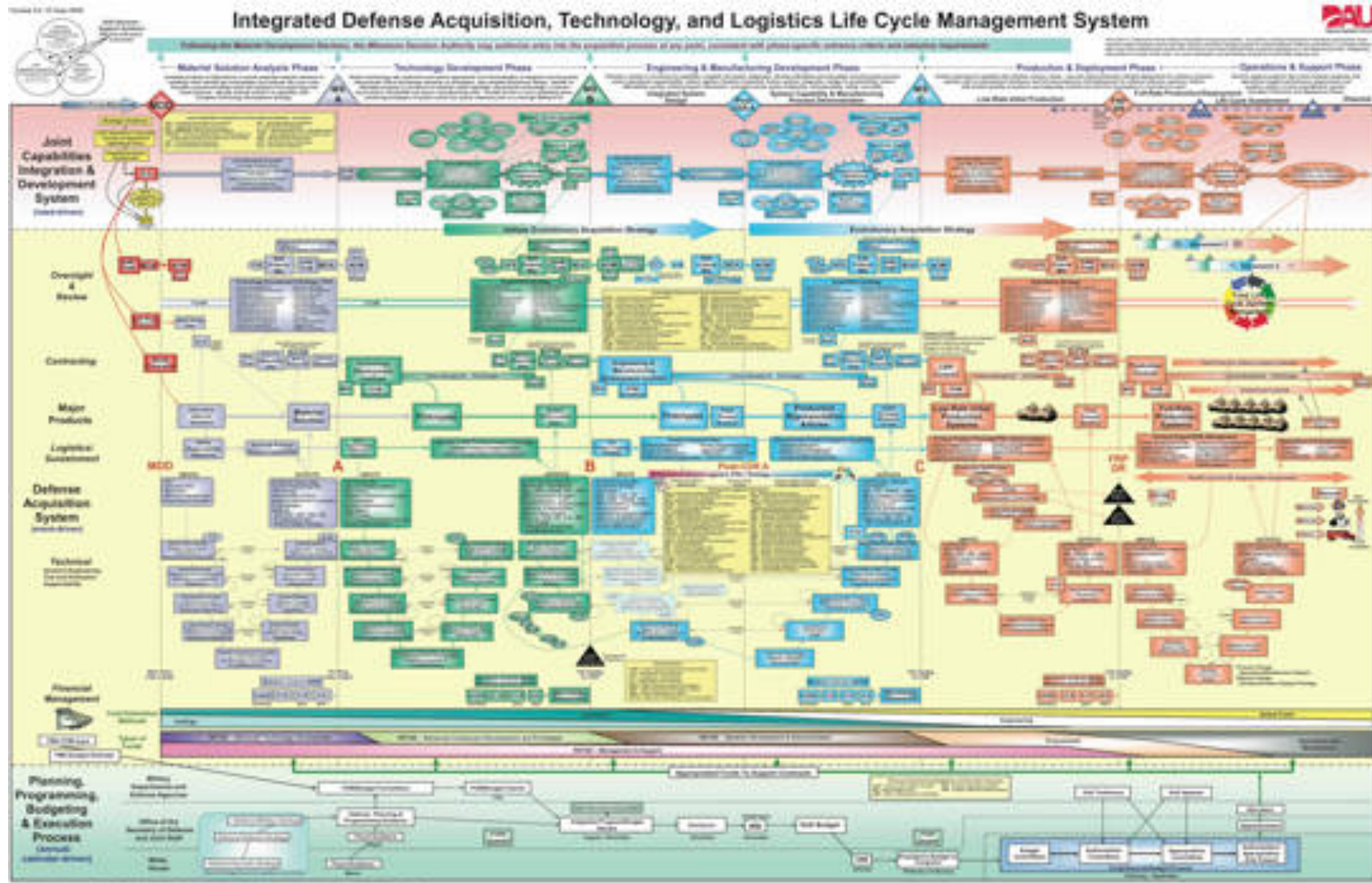
Three I's

- From Invention to Innovation to Implementation
 - To “invent” a new military technology is one thing; to field it as a useable weapons system is another
- Issues
 - Lag Times
 - Unfilled expectations
 - Cost
 - Synergies/”Dissynergies”





Innovation?





Unintended Consequences

- It is a commonplace to observe that technological advances have unintended consequences for society; it is especially so for military innovation

- Issues

- Domestic Spillage
- Pandora's Box
- Proliferation

Domestic Drone Use





Conclusions

- Historical context/history as ideology
- “New” military technologies are located within the wider security and governmental institutions and they should be analyzed as such
- Operational conditions matter
- Politics and power



Questions?