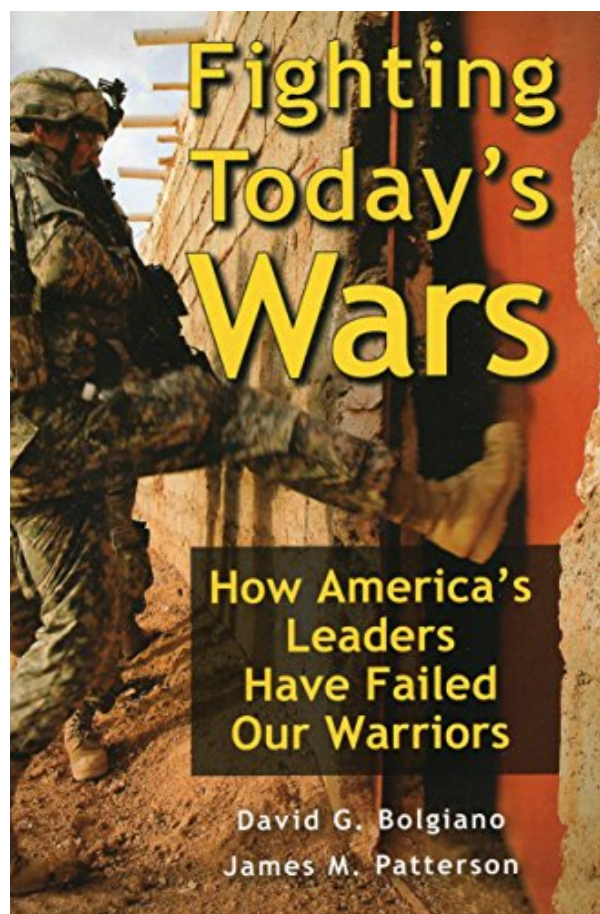
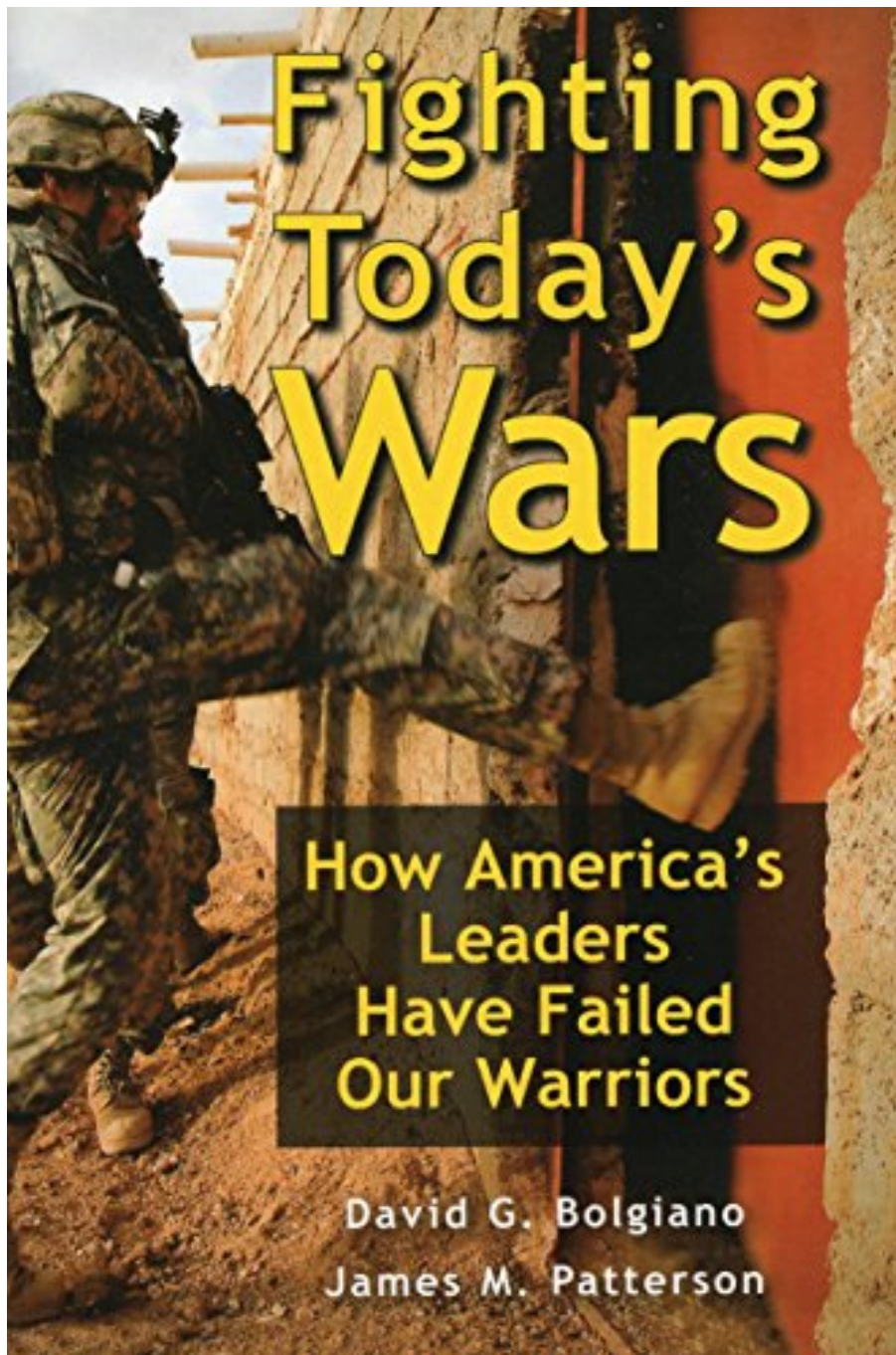


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## About the Author

A former law enforcement officer and paratrooper, David "Bo" Bolgiano served multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan with the 82nd Airborne Division and Special Operations Forces. He is the author of *Combat Self-Defense: Saving America's Warriors from Risk-Averse Commanders and Their Lawyers* (978-0-9791824-0-2). He lives in Delaware. Colonel Jim Patterson has over 32 years of experience as a Green Beret and legal advisor. A Special Forces Weapons Specialist, Combat Diver and Master Parachutist, Jim has served in multiple combat rotations and provided direct operational law support of special mission units. He lives in Illinois.

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One of the most important books to emerge from a decade of wars. Read it. Then send a copy to your member of Congress. --Ralph Peters, Fox News Strategic Analyst and author of Lines of Fire

## About the Author

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Legally Aware, Combat Savvy, Victory Oriented

By K. R. O. Brien

As a veteran of one of the wars of the title, I have experienced the sinking feeling that comes when you recognize that elements in your own command are more concerned about the welfare of your enemies than their own troops. Bo and Jim have written a remarkably insightful book about why this happens, how this happens, and how to stop it.

I consider the chance that Big Green will adopt these wise prescriptions to be approximately zero. The chance that they will retaliate against the authors is unity, 1:1. They knew the career consequences and had the courage to go to press... they'd be up for a Profiles in Courage award, if their conclusions were politically correct. Readers may be grateful that their conclusions were not; it makes for a much more readable book.

Both of the authors are military lawyers, but (you know what I'm going to say, like when your buddy shows up with a pair of strippers -- "but they're not like all the others." But in all seriousness, these guys are not like all the others). They come out of the special operations community, where even the lawyers have to contribute to mission accomplishment positively or hit the bricks. Military lawyers have been key to some of the most bandwidth-wasting pseudo-scandals, and have -- sua sponte, as it were -- made a complete hash of rules of engagement. For illustration's sake, the authors provide an intricate, complex graphic of how a private in contact should escalate force. A document that could only have been drafted by someone who sits behind a desk fiddling with powerpoint and has not interacted much with combat arms troopers.

The problem isn't just the lawyers, though. Lawyers are still subordinate to commanders, and too many commanders hide behind their staff judge advocates and punish unfavorable reports, the same risk-aversion technique employed by the ostrich. Perhaps it works for the ostrich (hard to argue with natural selection) but it's bad policy for human beings and human organizations.

The book is brief, and readable, but it is deep and has added more things to my reading list. It has also

explained a few combat-zone "What in the name of Niffelheim were they thinking?" moments. If you, like me, are a combat veteran you will find a grim snort or chortle at least every few pages. Grim because it's not really funny, ha-ha. You need to buy and read this book, and the greater the leadership authority entrusted to you, the more you need to read it. You need to buy it for your SJA, especially if he or she is that freshly-minted captain who's trying to apply 500 years of just war and use of force theory through the funhouse prism of fresh law school. If you are one of the folks the author derides as "certain elements of the JAG Corps...pipe-smoking intellectuals that never were warriors, and despise those who were...." you need to buy all the copies of this book you can find lest your next commander read it, and expect mission-oriented operational thinking from you.

If you're a policy maker or policy staffer, you need this book to see how the organization is failing the men and women trying to make it work, and start to brainstorm solutions.

Finally, if you're still serving as a combat troop, the section on the Law of Self-Defense is clear and concise and may save you, when one of those "certain elements" decides that making an example of you for a combat decision is his path to a fat post-retirement paycheck at Covington and Burling or elsewhere in the al-Qaeda bar.

As every war winds down there are analytical books that are talked about in professional circles, and that empower rising young leaders to avoid the errors they suffered from. After Vietnam, they included *Crisis in Command: Mismanagement in the Army and Self-Destruction, the Disintegration and Decay of the United States Army During the Vietnam Era*. As in the 1970s, we have an excellent force that needs a leadership tune-up. I'm not sure what other books will emerge from our ten years of fighting Islamist terrorism and timid leadership, but one of them will definitely be *Fighting Today's Wars*. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Jane's Review of Son's Book

By Janelpatterson

This book took a lot of courage for the co-authors to write. Now, if only our military, civilian, Congressmen, leaders will read this and change their present policy. Well written and contains a lot of history of our former battles and how they have affected our country. How PRESIDENT OBAMA needs to step up and think about these brave men and women who go to fight for our country. One of these co-authors is my son, James M. Patterson - I found out a lot of info about what he has been doing these past 33 years - true to his duty, he has been very close-mouthed about all his training, etc. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Require Reading

By Jeffrey Armadillo

This book is required reading for anyone seeking to understand the issues of today facing the U.S. military and the individual soldier. Not certain if soldiers should be used for non-military missions, such as "nation building"; the risks and issues regarding such issues as rules of engagement and "risk aversion"; and the legion of legal issues facing the private and the commander in today's battle space? If you answered "Yes" to any of those, and want to understand how we got here and the various roads we can take forward, then purchase this book. Now. Time's a wasting. See all 16 customer reviews...

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