Strategy and Tactics in Warfighting (WS 2018/19)

Synopsis

A  Introduction

1. Struggling with “strategy”...
   1.1. “Strategy is for flag officers only”
   1.2. “Strategy is political will”
2. Strategy and tactics, or “stratagēma” and “tactica”; definitions and origins
3. “Navies don’t purchase and possess real estate” (Hughes)
4. (Navy-oriented) foreword: “Tactics is the soul of our profession.” (Cebrowski)
5. First “results”
   5.1. Littoral warfare: “A ship’s a fool that fights a fort.” (Nelson)
   5.2. “Fire effectively first!” (Mahan; Hughes, ...)

B  (Mostly Naval) Tactics

6. Chase-Fiske-Lanchester Models
   6.1. (Pre 1775 infantry) Linear combat
   6.2. Fighting sail tactics: ships-of-the-line, columns, shirkers, crossing the T, raking
   6.3. Why (mathematical) models? Game theory and war games
   6.4. The Fiske (1905) salvo model: tables, difference equations and tactical implications
      6.4.1. Concentrating fire?
      6.4.2. Massing matters!
      6.4.3. Surprise! (i.e. “Fire effectively first!”)
      6.4.4. Isolating enemy forces!
      6.4.5. ... and a strategic implication: quantity over quality!
   6.5. The Lanchester (1916) (originally aerial combat) square law for continuous fire
      6.5.1. Solving the model
      6.5.2. Fiske’s tactical/strategic implications?
      6.5.3. Anecdotal evidence or empirical studies? Fighting sail; ground combat; COIN; aerial combat (“Flying Tigers”; Thach Weave; RAF doctrine)
   6.6. Lanchester’s law, the prequel: The Chase (1902) square law

7. Formations: a primer
   7.1. Foxhall Parker
   7.2. Column or line?
   7.3. Turn or corpen?

8. U.S. Navy tactics at a crossroad
   8.1. The advent of the aircraft carrier: a prelude to the missile age
   8.2. U.S. Naval War College war games
   8.3. “Fleet Problems”
   8.4. The circular formation
9. A model of early WWII carrier warfare
9.1. A linear (infantry-style) tactical model
9.2. Screening and surprise: “Fire effectively first!” yet again
9.3. The first four Pacific carrier battles
9.5.1 Coral Sea: American tactical defeat ... but strategic victory (May 6-7, 1942)
9.5.2. “AF” and Midway (June 4-6, 1942)
9.5.3. Eastern Solomons (August 24, 1942)
9.5.4 Santa Cruz (October 26, 1942)
10. Early WWII carrier tactical problems
11. WWII carrier warfare from 1944 onwards
11.1. Air support begins to matter: “Combat Air Patrol” and fighter escorts
11.2. Philippine Sea: “Great Marianas Turkey Shoot” (June 19-20, 1944)
11.3. Resolutions of tactical problems
12.1. (Non CV) Naval battles to decided by guns ...
12.2. Guadalcanal: “Cactus” and the “Tokyo Express”
12.3. A reminiscence of fighting sail: long columns and crossing the T
12.4. “Command and Control” (C2) problems
12.5. The Battle of Cape Esperance (October 11/12, 1942)
12.6. Lessons learned: “training, training and TRAINING” (Nimitz)
13. Night surface action in the Somolons: Phase Two (July 1943 – November 1943)
13.1. ... or by torpedoes?
13.2. Destroyer divisions and “hit and move”
13.3. The Battle of Vella Gulf (November 6/7, 1943)
13.4. The Solomons: a conclusion
14. Leyte Gulf: strategy vs. tactics (October 24-27, 1944)
15. Kamikazes: the missile age has arrived
15.1. The Battle of Okinawa (April 1 – June 22, 1945)
15.2. Destroyers as picket stations
16. Staying power and ship size since WWII
17. Naval warfare in the missile age
17.1. The Hughes (1995) salvo model
17.2. The Battle of the Philippine Sea revisited
17.3. Ship attributes: prototype values
17.4. Planning with the salvo model: the importance of surprise and numbers
17.5. How to defend a Ticonderoga/Aegis cruiser
17.6. Mass for defense
17.8. Tactics subject to an A2/AD mission: disperse to survive
18. Submarine warfare
19. Air-to-air combat

C (Not Only Naval) Strategy
20. Strategy and tactics: telling the difference?
20.1. Some more definitions ...
21. “Missions of the U.S. Navy” (and respective “tactics” and “tactical tools”)
21.1. Warfighting missions
20.1.1. Sea control
20.1.2: Power projection ashore

21.2. Deterrence
21.2.1. Presence
21.2.2. Strategic deterrence

22. Excursion: U.S. Navy presence during the Syrian invasion of Jordan (September 1970)

23. Deception
23.1. Operation BOLO, North Vietnam (January 2, 1967)
23.2. Deception in 2x2 sequential games

24. Naval strategy in the missile warfare age: risk levels and opportunity costs

25. Strategic blunders
25.2. Deployment of Soviet Foxtrot, Zulu submarines during the Cuban missile crisis (1962)
25.3. The Vietnam War: “The way to end this war is to win the damned thing.” (Olds)
25.5. Thatcher naval policy (1981): “The Royal Navy was to become a coast guard.” (Lehman)
25.6. The UK 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review ...

26. Is strategic planning obsolete? “Man plans, fate laughs ...”

References

Introductory Texts and Seminal Contributions


Wayne P. Hughes (1992), The Value of Warship Attributes in Missile Combat, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey CA.


**Other Primary Sources**


Commander Destroyers Pacific Fleet (1943), *Destroyer Torpedo Attack Instructions (Tentative)*, Destroyer Tactical Bulletin No. 4-43, DECLASSIFIED.

Kent S. Coleman (2006), *Halsey at Leyte Gulf: Command Decision and Disunity of Effort*, School of Advanced Military Studies; United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth KS.


Ronald L. Johnson (1989/99), *Lanchester’s Square Law in Theory and Practice*, School of Advanced Military Studies; United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth KS.


**Campaign and Battle Analyses, Battle Reports**


Clay Blair, Jr (1975), *Silent Victory – The U.S. Submarine War Against Japan*, (two volumes), Philadelphia PA, New York NY: Lippincott


Alan Rems (2014), South Pacific Cauldron: World War II’s Great Forgotten Battlegrounds, Annapolis MD: Naval Institute Press.
Michael Sturma 2015), Freemantle’s Submarines: How Allied Submariners and Western Australians Helped to Win the War in the Pacific, Annapolis MD: Naval Institute Press.
Joseph Wheelan (2017), Midnight in the Pacific: Guadalcanal, the World War II Battle that Turned the Tide of War, Philadelphia PA: Da Capo Press.

Recollections

Jim Howe (2018), Red Crew: Fighting the War on Drugs with Reagan’s Coast Guard, Annapolis MD: Naval Institute Press.
Professional Non-Fiction Reading List


Professional Fiction Reading List:

