

## Are Some Militaries Better at Counterinsurgency than Others?

### Description

Are the US Marines better at counterinsurgency than the US Army? How about the British Army? If so, why, and if not then what else might explain success and failure in different COIN campaigns over time?

In this episode of the *Irregular Warfare Podcast*, Kyle Atwell and Nick Lopez discuss whether some military organizations are more effective at COIN than others with Dr. Colin Jackson and Dr. Austin Long.

Colin and Austin start by framing where COIN falls in current national security priorities. They then move on to debate whether some military organizations are more effective at COIN than others, what characteristics support learning and influence success in COIN, and what lessons we can derive from recent COIN experiences for how to organize for and fight COIN warfare in the future.

[Dr. Colin Jackson](#) is the chair of the Strategic and Operational Research Department at the Naval War College and a US Army Reserve officer. He served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia (2017–2019), overseeing all strategy, security cooperation, budget oversight, and contingency planning. He also served as the senior DoD representative to the US-Taliban peace talks. He earned his PhD from MIT, where his [dissertation](#) focused on organizational learning dysfunction in COIN.

[Dr. Austin Long](#) is a policy advisor on the Joint Staff, is a former associate professor at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, and served as an analyst and advisor to the US military in Iraq (2007–2008) and Afghanistan (2011 and 2013). He is the author of the book [The Soul of Armies: Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Military Culture in the US and UK](#), which motivated this podcast episode.

The *Irregular Warfare Podcast* is a collaboration between the [Modern War Institute](#) and Princeton University’s [Empirical Studies of Conflict Project](#). You can listen to the full episode below, and you can find it and subscribe on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), [Spotify](#), [TuneIn](#), or your favorite podcast app. And be sure to [follow the podcast on Twitter!](#)

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