

The State of U.S. Army Doctrine: A Selective Review of Doctrine Research



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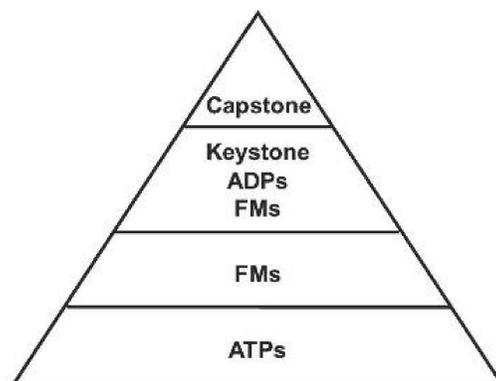
Introduction

Doctrine is essential to the functioning of an organization the scale of the U.S. Army.

- The Army defines doctrine as “fundamental principles, with supporting tactics, techniques, procedures, and terms and symbols, used for the conduct of operations and as a guide for actions of operating forces, and elements of the institutional force that directly support operations in support of national objectives” (Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2012)
- Academic interest in doctrine has waxed and waned over the previous four decades. In an effort to encourage further study of doctrine’s importance and understand the state of the literature, this paper is a selective review of the current literature of two significant army doctrine manuals, ADP 3-0 *Operations* and FM 3-24 *Insurgency and Countering Insurgency*.
- Overall, this paper finds that the scholarly literature on both ADP 3-0 and FM 3-24 highlights weaknesses in their conceptual frameworks and in the case of FM 3-24 emphasizes that it was flawed from its conception

Source: Army Doctrine Smart Book

Army Doctrine Hierarchy



- Shows higher to lower relationship
- ADP 1 and ADP 3-0 are capstone doctrine
- ADPs – Contain overarching fundamental principles
- FMs – Contain tactics and procedures
- ATPs – Contain techniques

See the introductory figure in ADP 3-0, *Operations*, for a general construct to the organization of the slides on pages 7 through 27.

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Operations ADP 3-0	Insurgency and Countering Insurgencies FM 3-24
Core Critiques	Core Critiques
Conceptual Dissonance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stemming from the Army’s Choose to move away from “Full Spectrum operations ” replacing it the “Decisive Action”. 	Conceptually Lacking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This manual does not account for non-violent insurgencies, which statistically are the most successful
Lack of Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The doctrine falls short of its purpose by failing to define the “Enemy” in any coherent way, while simultaneously not finding an operational modality unique to the Army. 	Flawed Conception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This manual was created in a institutional eco-chamber which hindered its’ ability to be effective.
Readability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The doctrine has forgone a nuanced view of operations for a dry taxonomy of terms. This has resulted in a understanding rate lower than <i>War and Peace</i> according to Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease scale . 	View of Indigenous Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view of Indigenous people groups taken by the doctrine is steeped in a long history of colonialism and actively hinders the mission it sets out to complete.

Headquarters, Department of the Army. (2019). *Doctrine Primer* (ADP 1-01).

Headquarters, Department of the Army. (2019). *Operations* (ADP 3-0).

Headquarters, Department of the Army. (2014). *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies* (FM3-24).