

Anna Simons

Academic positions

Professor emerita (NPS)	2019-present
Professor, Department of Defense Analysis Naval Postgraduate School	2007-2019
Associate Professor (NPS)	2000-2007
Visiting Associate Professor (NPS)	1998-2000
Associate Professor of Anthropology UCLA	1998-2000 (on leave)
Associate Director, African Studies Chair, Masters in African Area Studies Program UCLA	1996-1998
Assistant Professor of Anthropology UCLA	1992-1998
Visiting Instructor in Anthropology Duke University	Spring 1992

Education

Harvard University, PhD in social anthropology	1985-1992
Harvard College, A.B., biological anthropology	1976-1979

Publications

Books

with Joe McGraw and Duane Lauchengco, *The Sovereignty Solution: A Commonsense Approach to Global Security*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011.

The Company They Keep: Life Inside the U.S. Army Special Forces. New York: The Free Press, 1997.

Networks of Dissolution: Somalia Undone. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995.

Monographs

21st Century Challenges of Command: A View from the Field, Strategic Studies Institute, May 2017.

21st Century Cultures of War: Advantage Them, The Philadelphia Papers [FPRI e-book], April 2013.

Got Vision? Unity of Vision in Policy and Strategy, What It Is and Why We Need It, Strategic Studies Institute, August 2010.

Articles and chapters

“The Military and Society: A Refresher” in Dakota Wood (ed.), *U.S. Index of Military Strength*, Heritage Foundation, 2024.

“Finessing primacy – some military considerations before subversion does us in,” *Small Wars Journal*, August 11, 2021. Parts I and II.

“The company I kept: twenty years at the Naval Postgraduate School” in Kerry Foshier and Lauren Mackenzie (eds.), *The Rise and Decline of U.S. Military Culture Programs 2004-20*. Marine Corps University Press, 2021.

“Cynicism: a brief look at a troubling topic,” *Small Wars Journal*, February 16, 2021.

“The weight-training puzzle: six shooters, ‘six packs, or men with a sixth sense – what does SF need?” *Small Wars Journal*, November 5, 2020.

“Teaching for Andy Marshall,” in Andrew May (ed.), *Remembering Andy Marshall: Essays by His Friends*. Washington, DC. 2020.

“How to Thwart Subversion and ‘Death by a Thousand Doubts,’” Ajai Sahni (ed.), *The Fragility of Order: Essays in Honour of K.P.S. Gill*, Kautilya, 2019.

“SOF & Diversity: Boon or Bane?” *Special Operations Journal*, 5:1, 2019.

“Foreword” for Tone Danielsen, *Making Warriors in a Global Era: An Ethnographic Study of the Norwegian Naval Special Operations Commando*. Lexington Books, 2018.

“Getting Tribes: A Corrective,” *The American Interest*, May 2018.

“‘Scalpel’ or ‘Easy Button’? Neither – And Some Further Considerations,” in Gitte Hojstrup Christensen (ed.), *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Special Operations Forces, Conference Proceedings*, Royal Danish Defence College, No. 4(a), 2017.

- “The Sovereignty Solution: Not Radical, But Measured,” William Natter and Jason Brooks (eds.), *American Strategy and Purpose: Reflections on Foreign Policy and National Security in an Era of Change*, New York: Council for Emerging National Security Studies, 2014.
- “Non-Western Threats and the Social Sciences,” *Orbis*, Fall 2014.
- “The ‘Beware: Poison’ Approach to Security,” FPRI e-note, May 2014.
- “Rebalancing US Military Power,” *Parameters*, Winter 2013-14.
- “Crooked Lessons from the Indian Wars,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 36, 2013
- “Soft War = Smart War? Think Again,” FPRI e-note, April 2012.
- “How Critical Should Critical Thinking Be? Teaching Soldiers in Wartime,” in Robert Albro, George Marcus, Laura McNamara, & Monica Schoch-Spana (eds), *Anthropologists in the SecurityScape*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2011.
- “Asymmetries, Anthropology, and War,” *Pointer* (Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces), 37 (2), October 2011.
- “Anthropology, Culture, and COIN in a Hybrid Warfare World” in Paul Brister, William Natter, and Robert Tomes (eds.), *Hybrid Warfare and Transnational Threats: Perspectives for an Era of Persistent Conflict*. New York: Council for Emerging National Security Studies, 2011.
- “Sovereignty – The Ultimate States’ Rights Argument,” *The Telegram*, No. 5, July 2011.
- “Understanding Culture,” “What’s Ethnography?” “The Young Male Problem” in Michael Freeman and Hy Rothstein (eds), *Gangs & Guerrillas: Ideas from Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism*, Naval Postgraduate School Technical Report, 2011.
- with Don Redd, Joe McGraw & Duane Lauchnegco, “The Sovereignty Solution,” *The American Interest*, March/April 2007.
- with David Tucker, “The Misleading Problem of Failed States: a ‘socio-geography’ of terrorism in the post-9/11 era,” *Third World Quarterly*, 28 (2), 2007.
- “Making Enemies: An Anthropology of Islamist Terror (Part II),” *The American Interest*, September/October 2006.
- “Making Enemies: An Anthropology of Islamist Terror (Part I),” *The American Interest*, Summer 2006.

- “Seeing the Enemy (or Not)” in Anthony McIvor (ed), *Rethinking the Principles of War* (Naval Institute Press) 2005.
- “The Evolution of the SOF Soldier” in Bernd Horn (ed), *Special Operations for Canada* (McGill-Queen) 2005.
- “The Military Advisor as Warrior-King and Other ‘Going Native’ Temptations” in Pamela Frese and Margaret Harrell (eds), *Anthropology and the United States Military: Coming of Age in the Twenty-first Century* (Palgrave Macmillan) 2003.
- with David Tucker, “SOF and the War on Terrorism,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 14(1), Spring 2003.
- “The Death of Conquest,” *The National Interest*, Spring. 2003.
- “Intervention in Failed States: What the U.S. Military Can and Can’t Do,” *National Strategy Forum*, Spring 2003.
- “The Backbone or the Box? The Choice between Principled and Prescriptive Leadership,” in Don Snider and Gayle Watkins (eds), *The Future of Army Professionalism* (McGraw-Hill) 2002.
- “The Women in Combat Debate,” *Parameters*, 31 (2), 2001.
- “Purity is Danger: An Argument for Divisible Identities,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 12 (3-4), 2000.
- with Scott E. Brower, "The ACRI Command and Control Challenge," *Parameters*, 30(4), 2000/01.
- "Women Can Never 'Belong' in Combat," *Orbis*, Summer 2000.
- "War: Back to the Future," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 1999.
- "Making Sense of Ethnic Cleansing," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 22, 1999.
- with P.H. Liotta, "Thicker than Water? Kin, Religion, and Conflict in the Balkans," *Parameters*, 28 (4), 1998/99.
- "How Ambiguity Results in Excellence: The Role of Hierarchy and Reputation in U.S. Army Special Forces," *Human Organization*, 57, 1998.
- "Government" in Thomas Barfield (ed), *Blackwell Dictionary of Anthropology* (Basil Blackwell) 1997.
- "Political Anthropology" in *Blackwell Dictionary of Anthropology*.

- "Hardly Innocent: Armed Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia," *Bulletin of the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars*, Fall 1997.
- "Somalia: The Structure of Dissolution" in Leonardo Villalon and Phillip Huxtable (eds), *The African State at a Critical Juncture* (Lynne Rienner Publishers) 1997.
- "Democratisation and Ethnic Conflict: The Kin Connection," *Nations & Nationalism*, 3, 1997.
- "Somalia: A Regional Security Dilemma" in Edmond Keller and Donald Rothchild (eds), *Africa in the New International Order* (Lynne Rienner Publishers) 1996.
- "The Beginning of the End" in Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius Robben (eds), *Fieldwork under Fire: Contemporary Studies in Violence and Survival*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- "Somalia and the Dissolution of the Nation-State," *American Anthropologist*, 96(4), 1994.
- Comment**
- "Firewalling: Direct vs. Indirect Approach," <https://www.stratagem.no/firewalling/>, November 4, 2019.
- "Yes, Mr. President – Sovereignty!" The American Interest website, October 10, 2017.
- "How Tactics Used in Iraq and Afghanistan Can Make the U.S. More Vulnerable in Future Wars," Task & Purpose website, June 23, 2016.
- "Ground Combat Units' New Addition: Women?" *The National Interest* [website], September 28, 2015.
- "Intellectual Capital: A Cautionary Note," *Parameters*, Summer 2015.
- "Women Don't Belong in Combat: Opposing View," *USA Today*, April 26, 2015.
- "Why Integrate Women into Ground Combat Units?" War on the Rocks website, April 22, 2015.
- "Women in Ground Combat Units: Where's the Data?" War on the Rocks website, April 15, 2015.
- "Here's Why Women in Combat Units Is a Bad Idea," War on the Rocks website, November 18, 2014.
- "Building to Strength," USNI blog [website], October 2014.

- "The Menace of Menace," *The American Interest* [website], June 5, 2014.
- "Hope as a Moral Hazard," War on the Rocks website, April 22, 2014.
- "Rebooting Country Studies," War on the Rocks website, December 31, 2013.
- "Why Our Syria Policy Is Still a Muddle," *The American Interest* [website], September 26, 2013.
- "Syria: Whose Credibility?" *The National Interest* [website], September 6, 2013.
- "But What Can You Do For Us? The flaws of America's "new" security assistance policy," *The American Interest* [website], April 11, 2013.
- "The Dynamics of Internal Conflict," *International Security*, 25 (4), 2001.
- "Changing Social Norms," *Current Anthropology*, 38 (1), 1997.
- Reviews**
- Montgomery McFate, "On *Military Anthropology*," *Parameters*, Autumn 2020.
- Robert Maginnis, "*Deadly Consequences*," *Parameters*, Fall 2014.
- Afyare Abdi Elmi, "*Understanding the Somali Conflagration*," *Northeast African Studies* 12 (12), 2012.
- Martin Van Creveld, "*The Culture of War*" and M. Potts & T. Hayden, "*Sex and War*," (review essay), *Armed Forces & Society*, October 2010.
- "The Comanches and Us" (review essay), *The American Interest*, March-April 2009.
- Lorry Fenner and Marie deYoung, 'Women in Combat: Civic Duty or Military Liability?', *Parameters*, 32 (4), Winter 2002-03.
- Bettina Schmidt and Ingo Schroder, 'Anthropology of Violence and Conflict', *Ethnos*, 2001.
- "Front Men and Back Women" (literary review), *SAIS Review*, 20 (2), 2000.
- S.P. Reyna and R.E. Downs, 'Deadly Developments: Capitalism, States and War', *American Anthropologist*, 2000.
- Catherine Besteman, 'Somalia Unraveled', *American Ethnologist*, 2000.
- James Bradford, 'The Military and Conflict between Cultures', *Armed Forces & Society*, 2000.

David Turton, 'War and Ethnicity', *Armed Forces & Society*, 1999.

Thomas Ricks, 'Making the Corps', *Christian Science Monitor*, December 15, 1997.

Linda Bird Francke, 'Ground Zero: The Gender Wars in the Military', *Los Angeles Times*, August 10, 1997.

Mark Pedelty, 'War Stories: The Culture of Foreign Correspondents', *American Anthropologist*, 1997.

"Two Perspectives on War" (review essay), *Current Anthropologist*, 38, 1997.

Jonathan Stevenson, 'Losing Mogadishu: Testing U.S. Policy in Somalia', *Armed Forces & Society*, 1996.

Opinion pieces

Op-ed on embassy bombings, *The Washington Post* (8/29/98)

Op-ed on women in combat, *The New York Times* (4/23/97)

Op-ed on intervention, *The Washington Post* (11/17/96)

Sunday Focus piece on Rwanda, *The Boston Globe* (7/24/94)

Sunday Focus piece on South Africa, *The Boston Globe* (10/1/94)

Op-ed on Somalia, *The Washington Post* (8/15/93)

Analysis on Somalia, *African News* (12/21/92)

Op-ed on Somalia, *The Washington Post* (12/5/92)

Sunday Focus piece on Somalia, *The Boston Globe* (11/29/92)

Op-ed on Somalia, *The Washington Post* (5/15/91)

Reports

2023

"SOF & China: 10 years later" for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2022

"The Military Officer of 2050" for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2019

"Corrosive Cynicism: Implications for the Officer Corps" for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2017

Long Term Strategy Seminar results ("Existential Fears") for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

"War in Religion" for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2015

"Ended Battle: NPS Effort" for NSWDG

Long Term Strategy Seminar results (“Strategic Ambush”) for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2014

“21st Century Retention Challenges for the Navy: Generational Changes, Attitudinal Effects, and their Impact on Operations” for Navy N-1

“(Some) 21st Century Challenges of Command: A View from the Field” for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2013

Long Term Strategy Seminar results (“SOF and China”) for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2012

“21st Century Cultures of War: Advantage Them” for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2011

Long Term Strategy Seminar results (“SOF 2030”) for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2010

“Interoperability in an Irregular Warfare World” for OSD-DSCA

2008

“Irregular Warfare & Anthropology: Case Study India” for OSD-Policy Planning

Long Term Strategy Seminar results (“Regional Stabilization”) for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2007

“Irregular Warfare & Anthropology: Case Study Somalia” for OSD-Policy Planning

2006

Long Term Strategy Summer Seminar results (“Strategic Shock”) for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2005

“Axis of Trouble: Young Males, Factional Politics, and Religion” for Long Term Strategy Project/Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2004

“Improving Human Intelligence in the War on Terrorism: The Need for an Ethnographic Capability” for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

“Failed States and Terrorism” for USSOCOM

“The Nuclear Taboo” for Long Term Strategy Project/Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

2003

“The Military Officer of 2030” for Office of Net Assessment (OSD)

“Culture and the Practice of Deception” for Colloquium on Foreign Denial and Deception

Courses taught (Naval Postgraduate School)

Anthropology of conflict; military advising; low intensity conflict – Africa; political anthropology – methods of social control; anthropology of Africa; comparative SOF

Multi-day/short courses on Anthropology of Conflict/Military Advising/Africa

5th SFAB; 3rd Special Forces Group (multiple); 101st Airborne Division; 5th Special Forces Group (multiple); 10th Special Forces Group (multiple); 82nd Civil Affairs Battalion (multiple); NAVAFA Staff (Naples); 98th Civil Affairs Battalion (multiple); 1st Special Forces Group; Naval Special Warfare Group (Coronado); Asymmetric Warfare Group (multiple), Special Forces Training Group (multiple)

Center for Civil-Military Relations seminars (faculty member)

Niamey, Nigeria, April 2017

Monrovia, Liberia, April 2011

Yaounde, Cameroon, August 2009

Nouakchott, Mauritania, April 2008; January 2004; January 2002

Freetown, Sierra Leone, August 2006; September 2005; September 2002

Ougadougou, Burkina Faso, April 2005

Regional CT seminar, N’djamena, Chad, September 2004

Freetown and Bo, Sierra Leone, June 2004

Makeni and Kenema, Sierra Leone, September 2003

Windhoek, Namibia, January 2003

Conakry, Guinea, January 2002

Regional Security Education Program (faculty member)

Iwo Jima, February 2018

Bataan/24th MEU, March 2017

Makin Island, July 2014

Bataan/22nd MEU, February 2014

Bataan Expeditionary Strike Group, January 2007

Editorial and other boards

CTX (2019-present; 2011-2019 co-executive editor)

Studies in Conflict & Terrorism (1998-2018)

Armed Forces & Society (2002-2018; book review co-editor, 1999-2002)

Orbis (2012-present)

Parameters (2014-2021)

Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces & Society (1999-2018, elected councilmember)

Previous employment

Between graduating from college and entering graduate school I worked as an assistant to the Governor of Arizona, Bruce Babbitt (1981); as an assistant speechwriter for President Jimmy Carter (1980-1981); and as a reporter for *The Arizona Daily Star* (1979). In the early 1980s, I spent three and a half years traveling and working abroad (including two years spent traveling on the local economy in Africa).