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Design Theory and the Military?s Understanding of Our Complex World

By **Ben Zweibelson**

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*Author's Note: Before readers pull their hair out in frustration at yet another 'Design' article with too much philosophy, abstraction, and unorthodox thinking, I offer an intellectual olive branch of sorts. There is a reason hardly any of these Design concepts will ever enter Army doctrine, or become a step within a planning process...**to think about Design requires us to think from a different perspective**- a perspective that lacks the very things we hold dearest to how we function and plan as a military. Design logic requires us to let go of how we are used to thinking, and embrace uncertainty for a bit. If any of the post-modern and highly abstract concepts offered in this article help generate some discourse, creative or critical thinking, then these Design concepts have potentially armed the reader with another arrow for his quiver- albeit a 'crooked' arrow. And when the day comes that one must fire at an unexpected 'crooked' target, their planning quiver will hold just the right munition to fire away...*

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About the Author



Ben Zweibelson

Ben Zweibelson is a retired U.S. Army Infantry Officer with over 22 years combined service to include multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ben is currently the Course Director of Design Programs at the Joint Special Operations University and is pursuing his doctorate in philosophy with the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. He has recently lectured on advanced design theory at the USAF Air War College for their Grand Strategic Studies Program as well as at the Canadian Forces College for an October 2016 Design workshop. He has upcoming design articles in the Canadian Army Journal (Spring 17), the Journal of Military and Strategic Studies (Spring 17), as well as several other military academic journals. Ben resides in Tampa, Florida with his family and can be reached at [**benzweibelson@gmail.com**](mailto:benzweibelson@gmail.com).

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