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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

Major Ben Zweibelson is a frequent contributor to Small Wars Journal concerning design thinking and strategy, and he has nearly 20 years of military service. Ben recently co-authored a chapter on design thinking with LTC Grant Martin in Dr. Christopher Paparone's recent design book, "The Sociology of Military Design: Prospects for Postinstitutional Military Design" by Continuum Publications. Ben is a graduate of the U.S. Army's School for Advanced Military Studies.

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