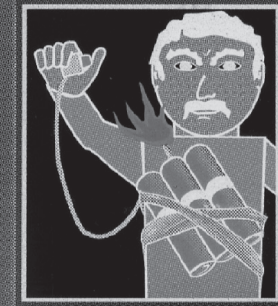
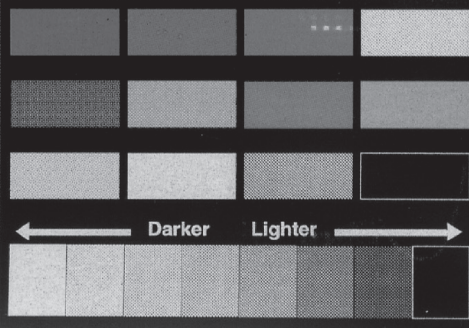


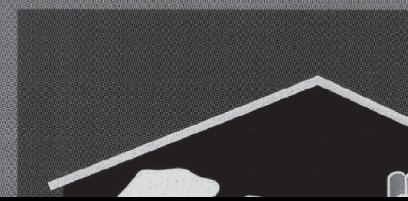
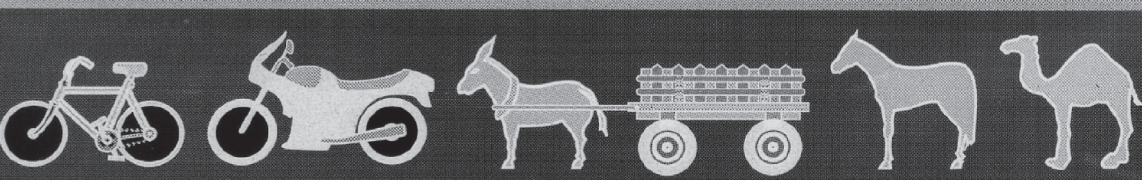
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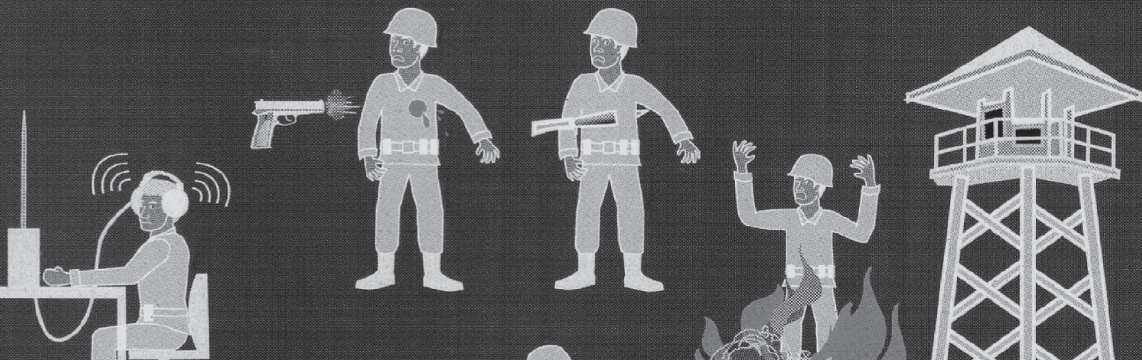
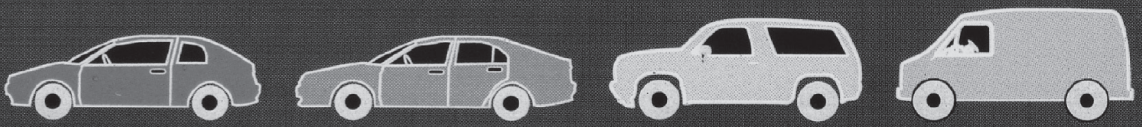
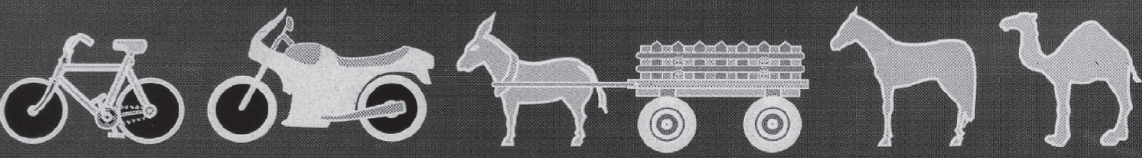
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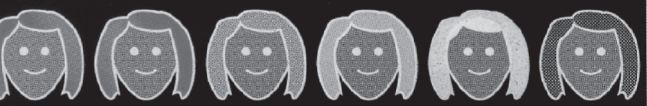
HAIR STYLE



# HUMAN TERRAIN Teacher's Guide



HAIR COLOR



## Chapter One

# The Culture of War



Soldiers train at a mock Iraqi village at 29 Palms Marine Corps Combat Center, California  
Source: [Global Media Project](#)

**“We’re not killers. We’re professional killers. We don’t kill women and children. We kill those people who are trying to kill us.”**

*Sergeant Frank Tramano*

**“No better friend;  
no worse enemy.”**

*Major General O’Dell*

## Chapter Summary

In Iraq and Afghanistan, as the conflicts shift from conventional warfare to counterinsurgency, military officials recognize the need for ‘cultural awareness’ of the local populations. As Major General Douglas V. O’Dell, Jr noted, “We’re in a different war. We are in a war that is as much a cultural struggle as it is a military struggle.”

In 2004, [Robert Scales](#) (a former commandant of the [Army’s War College](#)) [told reporters](#) that the Iraq war “was fought brilliantly at the technological level, but inadequately at the human level.” According to Scales, the fundamental nature of war has changed. [Psychosocial warfare](#) is now as important as physical combat operations. In order to wage effective psychosocial warfare, Scales argues, the U.S. military must devote substantial resources to research and education.

### Military Operations Other Than War

The U.S. military popularized the acronym [MOOTW](#) (Military Operations other than War) in the 1990s. MOOTW involves using military capabilities for a range of purposes that do not include traditional warfare (e.g., peacekeeping, arms control, assisting in response to domestic crises). According to the [RAND Corporation](#), there were 846 MOOTW-type engagements between 1916-1996 in which the U.S. Air Force played a significant role. Cultural awareness is at the heart of MOOTW, because these operations frequently involve the military interacting on the ground with local populations.

In response to these perceived shortcomings, the U.S. military has poured millions of dollars into the development of an improved cultural understanding of the Muslim world. These efforts take a wide variety of forms, and include simulations where soldiers must navigate [mock Iraqi villages](#) and [negotiate with Afghan elders](#).

These exercises train soldiers in counterinsurgency tactics: [“Cultivating trust and cooperation...at the same time they wage war on the insurgents.”](#) The military has even invested in [virtual trainings](#) that use computer models and avatars to represent cultural scenarios.

## Classroom Objectives

- Understand how the nature of warfare has changed over time, especially as represented by the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Explain concepts such as urban warfare and counterinsurgency
- Provide examples of military cultural awareness trainings

## Discussion Questions

- How does “modern warfare” differ from “traditional warfare”?
- What do you think “cultural awareness” means in the context of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan?
- According to General Scales, victory in modern warfare is defined as “capturing the psycho-social high ground.” What does this mean? Is psychosocial warfare as dangerous as traditional warfare?

## Extra Readings

- [Army Criticized for Not Learning from Past Wars](#)
- [Marine Commander Wants More Forces in Afghanistan](#)
- [COIN Knowledge Center](#)

## Chapter Two

# War Becomes Academic



Soldiers practice negotiations with Iraqi elders

Source: [Global Media Project](#)

**“We need to base our actions on the truth that we find. Not on the truth we find from talking to each other as Americans, but on the truth we find from talking to Iraqis— what they see and what they think.”**

*Lt. Col. Andrew R. Kennedy*

## Chapter Summary

While cultural awareness in the military has gained significant momentum in the post-9/11 world, it is not an entirely new concept for the U.S. military. According to the [New York Times](#), a draft of the FY 1970 Department of Defense budget included \$115,000 for “design, production, and evaluation of program of audiovisual instruction for development of cultural awareness.” Counterinsurgency operations throughout the cold war frequently involved [“applied military anthropology.”](#)

The Vietnam War also taught the U.S. military important lessons about the value of cultural awareness. [Gerald Hickey](#), an anthropologist who spent time in Vietnam as a researcher for the [RAND Corporation](#), wrote that military leaders overrode the expertise of anthropologists and instead applied a conventional war approach to the conflict. Hickey (whose role as an anthropologist in a war zone is still considered highly controversial) believed that a strategic application of cultural awareness could bring peace to Vietnam.

Cultural awareness exercises today are designed to provide soldiers with the tools to communicate with Afghan and Iraqi citizens, negotiate information sharing about insurgents and possible threats, and cultivate support on the ground. Cultural awareness is seen as a crucial negotiating tool in a conflict that is being fought at the level of individual villages and communities. Critics worry, however, that programs such as these serve only to 'weaponize' culture, using it as a tool for counterinsurgency and intelligence gathering.

### A Brief History of CORDS

CORDS ([Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support](#)) was a program implemented by the South Vietnamese government and the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam during the Vietnam War. The goal of CORDS was to undermine communist guerillas from North Vietnam, in large part by winning the "[hearts and minds](#)" of South Vietnamese villagers. The CORDS pacification program had several key components: collection of cultural intelligence; direct military action; and implementation of economic and social programs to gain the sympathy of the South Vietnamese and cultivate support for the government of South Vietnam. The effectiveness of CORDS is still debated. After the implementation of CORDS the number of guerillas declined and some sources suggest that it became increasingly difficult for them to gain support. The architects of CORDS claim that the program ultimately failed because it was "too little, too late"—it was not fully implemented and U.S. military strategy as a whole did not reflect this counterinsurgency mentality. Others argue that the Thieu government of South Vietnam was so unpopular that there was no way CORDS could feasibly build support among rural populations.

**“Can you take guys like the Marines and our airborne soldiers [and] ... turn them into diplomats? No, they’re fundamentally killers.**



**They’re professional killers because they do it for the sake of the country. But when you say, every marine is a rifleman, what do you do with a rifle? You shoot somebody else.”**

*Bing West*

Flyer at Twentynine Palms Source: [Global Media Project](#)

## Classroom Objectives

- Explain the military's interest in cultural awareness for soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Understand how military cultural awareness efforts have evolved
- Analyze the criticisms of military cultural awareness efforts

## Discussion Questions

- Why might there be tensions inherent in providing cultural awareness trainings for combat troops?
- Will the military's cultural awareness trainings militarize culture and peacekeeping or create a more humane military? Could both outcomes be possible?
- Are cultural awareness initiatives producing useful information for the military? Do these programs 'weaponize' cultural knowledge?

## Extra Readings

- [Military Specialists Try to Improve Cultural Understanding](#)
- [Pentagon Fights Bombs with...Social Science?](#)
- [Networks: Terra Incognita and the Case for Ethnographic Intelligence](#)



U.S. soldiers search for NLF members during the Vietnam War.

Source: [National Archives and Records Administration](#)

## Chapter Three

# Academic Counterinsurgency

**“Instead of reading resistance as inevitable resistance to foreign occupation, you start to think of it as some kind of cultural miscommunication and you start to ask naïve, misshapen questions...If you ask the wrong question, you get the wrong answer and more people on both sides will die.”**

*Hugh Gusterson*



A Human Terrain Team member meets with village children.

Source: [Human Terrain System](#)

## Chapter Summary

Human Terrain System (HTS) is a U.S. Army program that embeds social scientists, such as anthropologists, with troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2003, officers in Iraq began to [complain](#) that they did not have adequate knowledge of local cultures. The Pentagon recruited [Montgomery McFate](#), an anthropologist working with the Navy, who in 2005 compiled a database of information about local cultures. In 2006, retired Special Operations Colonel [Steve Fondacaro](#) began working with the project and advocated for embedding social scientists with combat brigades. Secretary of Defense [Robert Gates](#) authorized a \$41 million expansion of the program in 2007.

The Human Terrain System program reflects the Army's focus on [counterinsurgency warfare](#)—the most recent update of the [Counterinsurgency Manual](#) was published in December 2006. Human Terrain System has been described as “[a CORDS for the 21st century](#),” a reference to the controversial counterinsurgency program implemented during the Vietnam War.

Human Terrain System is highly controversial, and the program has many critics. In 2005, one year before the first Human Terrain Team (HTT) was deployed, the [American Anthropological Association](#) (AAA) launched an investigation into the ethics of anthropologists' involvement with the military and intelligence. On October 31, 2007 the AAA board issued an executive statement opposing the Human Terrain project. According to the AAA, Human Terrain [violates](#) their code of ethics—specifically, the requirement that anthropologists do no harm to the people they are studying.

### The AAA Investigation

The AAA launched an investigation into anthropologists' involvement with the military, security, and intelligence communities in 2005. The subsequent report did not take a stance in support or opposition to such work, although it did discuss the ethical dilemmas of anthropologists' engagement with military efforts. In 2006, the AAA convened the Commission on the Engagement of Anthropology with the U.S. Security and Intelligence Communities (CEAUSSIC), whose role is to provide information and recommendations about anthropologists' engagement with the military. In 2007, the AAA executive board issued an official [statement](#) opposing Human Terrain System. The AAA is particularly concerned with anthropological research being used as a military intelligence asset. The statement concludes that AAA should "recognize the problem of allowing HTS to define the meaning of "anthropology" within [the Department of Defense]." The AAA maintains a [blog](#) to allow continued discussion about this controversial issue.

**“Culture is not like Nescafe, it’s not something you can just add water and stir.”**

*Jackie Lyden*

## Classroom Objectives

- Understand the development of Human Terrain System, including its historical precedents
- Discuss the strategic, ethical and practical arguments used in favor and against HTS
- Explain the relationship between HTS and concepts such as “hearts and minds” or “counterinsurgency”

## Discussion Questions

- Compare/contrast military and anthropological understandings of culture.
- Do you think social scientists in HTS can avoid becoming involved in counterinsurgency and the gathering of military intelligence?
- Where should academics focus their efforts—in making war more humane, or in making war less likely? Can both be achieved simultaneously?



## Extra Readings

- [Network of Concerned Anthropologists](#)
- [The Counter-Counterinsurgency Manual](#)
- [David Price Interviews Roberto Gonzalez on the Human Terrain System](#)



Human Terrain Team members teaching English in Afghanistan  
Source: [Human Terrain System](#)

## Chapter Four

# Collateral Damage



Michael Bhatia, Nicole Suveges, and Paula Loyd, members of the Human Terrain Team  
Source: [Human Terrain System](#)

## Chapter Summary

[Michael Vinay Bhatia](#) joined Human Terrain Team One in 2007, where he worked with the 4th Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division in Khost Province. Prior to joining HTS, Bhatia was actively engaged in the [discussions](#) surrounding the military's cultural awareness efforts. While [Bhatia's decision to join HTS](#) was controversial, he was motivated by a desire to understand the complexities of the conflict in Afghanistan on the ground. In addition, as he wrote in an email, "While the program has proven to be controversial and widely reported, I am optimistic that given the right participants, the program has a real chance of reducing both the Afghan and American lives lost."

**"Contrary to some of the criticism, I am not involved in covert research or activities, or in lethal targeting or interrogation. To no doubt, I will confront many challenges there, as I am already preparing for both the real and ethical minefields."**

*Michael Bhatia*

Bhatia became the first [casualty](#) of HTS on 7 May 2008, when his convoy was hit by a roadside bomb. Bhatia's [death](#) had far-reaching consequences for Human Terrain, and it intensified the controversy surrounding HTS. His death was also politicized and, despite his belief in internationalism, Bhatia was regarded in some circles as a "fallen comrade in the war on terror."

Since Bhatia's passing, two other HTS scientists have died. [Nicole Suveges](#) was killed on 24 June 2008 while serving with an HTT in Iraq. [Paula Loyd](#) was killed on 5 November 2008 while working on an HTT in Afghanistan. Like Bhatia, Loyd has also become symbolic of the controversial nature

of HTS. Loyd was discussing fuel prices with an Afghan man named Abdul Salam, when he doused her with oil and set her on fire. The leader of Loyd's Human Terrain Team, Don Ayala, apprehended Salam and—when he learned of the severity of her injuries—Ayala shot and killed Salam. Ayala is now facing ["the first murder charges filed against a military contractor in Afghanistan or Iraq under a 2000 law that allows such prosecutions."](#)

### Anthropology and Imperialism

Based on its origins, the field of cultural anthropology has been regarded as the "handmaiden of colonialism" and, as such, its history deserves some consideration. As European countries expanded into the non-Western world, anthropologists traveled to the new colonies to observe local populations and classify them in a way that supported colonial structures and beliefs—particularly, the rigid distinction between "The West" and the primitive "Other." Anthropologists were [not indispensable](#) to colonial endeavors; nonetheless, the concept of the [objective outside observer](#) was [closely tied](#) to anthropologists' involvement with colonialism. The postcolonial period challenged this relationship between anthropologists and their subjects, and opened the way for a rethinking of the field (although as early as the [1600s](#) certain anthropologists had already begun criticizing imperialism). Cultural relativism (as opposed to Western universalism) is now central to the field of anthropology, and many anthropologists believe that practitioners should play an active role in combating imperialism and injustice.

**"Well there's no substitute for being there which I think is something that Michael understood completely. Culture at a distance is second best."**

*Montgomery McFate*

## Classroom Objectives

- Describe some of the day-to-day operations of a Human Terrain Team
- Understand the "ethical minefields" posed by social scientists' involvement HTS
- Explain the uncertain boundaries between peacekeeping and warfare as represented by HTS

## Discussion Questions

- Is there such a thing as a “just war”?
- Are there conflicts in which academics’ collaboration with military is justified? Obligated?
- What do you think the consequences of Bhatia, Suveges, and Loyd’s deaths will be for the future of HTS, and military cultural awareness projects generally?

## Extra Readings

- [Iraq’s Human Terrain Team \(HTS blog\)](#)
- [Laboratory for Human Terrain](#)
- [Hearts and Minds](#)



Michael Bhatia in military uniform

Source: [Global Media Project](#)

## Chapter Five

# Requiem



Barack Obama unveils his strategy for Afghanistan  
Source: [Global Media Project](#)

**“How do you make war less likely rather than more humane? When you start with that question, then you proceed to some very different conclusions about where we should put our research efforts.”**

*Catherine Lutz*

## Chapter Summary

The controversies surrounding Human Terrain System, along with accusations that military cultural awareness programs have been used for intelligence gathering, pose important questions about the future of cultural awareness in the military. HTS has been plagued by the [controversy](#) surrounding its rising death toll and chronic mismanagement. In May of 2010, the House Armed Services committee decided to [withhold](#) all funding for HTS until the Army submits a program assessment. Over the next several months, key members of HTS, including Steve Fondacaro and Montgomery McFate, were dismissed or resigned from the program.

Outside of HTS, other programs associated with cultural awareness have met a similar backlash. On 14 March 2010, the New York Times [reported](#) that [Michael D. Furlong](#) (a Defense Department official) established an illegal network of private contractors in Afghanistan and Pakistan to help track and kill militants. Allegedly, this network was [originally established](#) to help the military gain a better understanding of the cultural and historical landscape of Afghanistan, but the data was ultimately used for intelligence purposes. Furlong is now under [investigation](#) by the Defense Department.

The debate surrounding cultural awareness in the military continued to grow as President Obama developed his new plan for the war in Afghanistan. On 1 December 2009, Obama [called for](#) the deployment of an additional 30,000 troops and aimed for a

### Obama's Strategy for Afghanistan

Barack Obama unveiled his administration's [strategy](#) for Afghanistan on 27 March 2009. He called for the deployment of an additional 4,000 troops to Afghanistan to bolster local Afghan forces and combat terrorist havens in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Obama's [goal](#) is to "disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaida in Pakistan and Afghanistan and prevent their return to either country in the future." Obama has argued that the United States erred by focusing on Iraq instead of Afghanistan after 9/11. The administration also plans to provide additional support to Pakistan's democratic government as long as it works to combat extremists along the border with Afghanistan. Obama's long-term strategy involves fostering diplomatic cooperation with Russia, China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.

withdrawal of forces to begin in 2011. Based on the proposals of [General Stanley McChrystal](#), [counterinsurgency](#) was established as a major component of the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. McChrystal was [removed](#) from his post as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan in June 2010, however, after [Rolling Stone](#) magazine published comments made by him and his staff criticizing the Obama administration's handling of the war in Afghanistan. [General David Petraeus](#) now serves in the role previously held by McChrystal. Finally, in July 2010 the online organization [Wikileaks](#) published tens of thousands of [leaked classified documents](#) about the war in Afghanistan. The documents have brought increased scrutiny to the conflict. They collectively suggest that achieving victory in Afghanistan will be a significantly more difficult goal than initially indicated by military leadership.



U.S. soldier on patrol in Afghanistan

Source: [U.S. Army's Office of the Chief of Public Affairs](#)

**“The human terrain  
is the decisive  
terrain.”**

*General David Petraeus*

## Classroom Objectives

- Discuss the future of the Human Terrain System, and cultural awareness in the U.S. military generally
- Consider the relationship between cultural awareness efforts and military operations. Is it possible for cultural awareness and 'kinetic' operations to remain separate? Should they remain separate?
- Debate the future of the war in Afghanistan: should U.S. military forces stay (for how long) or withdraw (when)?

## Discussion Questions

- Do you think cultural awareness was a passing "fad" in the military that will be dismantled (e.g., after the Vietnam War), or will it become established as a central component of modern warfare?
- Can cultural awareness "deter war"? Does it make war less violent, or does it justify the use of violence?
- How might Human Terrain System and other cultural awareness programs impact the future of peacekeeping? Of war-making?

## Extra Readings

- [Obama's War](#)
- [US Launches New Afghan Counterinsurgency Strategy](#)
- [Scholar-Soldiers in Afghanistan Are on Dangerous Terrain](#)

# GLOSSARY

**American Anthropological Association:** The largest professional organization of anthropologists in the world. The AAA has taken a stance against anthropologists' involvement with U.S. military efforts.

**Bhatia, Michael Vinay:** A Human Terrain System social scientist whose work prior to HTS concentrated on conflict resolution. Bhatia was the first casualty of HTS when his convoy was struck by a roadside bomb on 7 May 2008.

**CORDS:** Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support. CORDS was a civilian pacification program implemented by the South Vietnamese government and the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

**Counterinsurgency (COIN):** Political and military strategies used to defeat or suppress an insurgency. Counterinsurgency operations often include urban fighting, propaganda and other psychological operations, military/paramilitary efforts, and economic or civic activities.

**Counterinsurgency Manual:** Otherwise known as U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24, the Counterinsurgency Manual lays out the U.S. Army and Marine Corps' counterinsurgency strategies. The COIN Manual was released in December 2006 and was overseen by General David Petraeus and Marine Lt. Gen. James N. Mattis.

**Cultural Awareness:** An understanding of the conventions, worldview, and belief systems of a particular society.

**Fondacaro, Steve:** Steve Fondacaro was the Project Manager of the Human Terrain System program until June 2010. Fondacaro, along with Montgomery McFate, are most closely identified with the conception of HTS in 2005.



**Gates, Robert:** Robert Gates is the current Secretary of Defense. He took office on 18 December 2006.

**Human Terrain System (HTS):** A United States Army program that embeds social scientists with combat brigades in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**McChrystal, Stanley:** General Stanley McChrystal was the Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Commander of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan (USFOR-A). McChrystal resigned on 23 June 2010.

**McFate, Montgomery:** A cultural anthropologist and defense/national security analyst. McFate helped to develop the Human Terrain System program.

**Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW):** An acronym popularized in the 1990s, MOOTW involves using military capabilities for a range of purposes that do not include traditional warfare (e.g., peacekeeping, stabilization operations, assisting in response to domestic crises).

**Petraeus, David:** General David Petraeus served as the 10th Commander, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) from 16 September 2008 to 30 June 2010 and Commanding General, Multinational Force–Iraq (MNF-I) from 26 January 2007 to 16 September 2008. He currently serves as Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Commander of U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A), a position to which he was appointed on 4 July 2010.