

My Share of the Task Study Guide

My Share of the Task by Stanley A. McChrystal

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Plot Summary

"My Share of the Task" is a memoir by General Stanley McChrystal, U.S. Army, Retired, detailing his military service from West Point through the War on Terror.

McChrystal grows up reading biographies and histories of leaders, heroes, and military battles, a passion for reading instilled in him by his mother. His father, a member of the Armed Forces, serves proudly in Vietnam. McChrystal enters West Point in the 1970s, serving at a time when public distrust of the military is at an all time high, and support and pride is at an all time low. Nevertheless, MyChrystal proudly serves, graduating from West Point, and going on to serve in the Airborne and Army Rangers, serving in a variety of official positions, and meeting a number of future generals, like Ray Odierno and David Petraeus.

McChrystal is promoted again and again, and as the 1990s emerge, Islamic terrorism becomes a major driving force behind U.S. foreign policy. Following September 11, McChyrstal is appointed to command special forces group Task Force 714, serving in both Afghanistan and Iraq, where he helps to implement the successful counterinsurgency strategies that changes the course of both wars in favor of the Americans. McChrystal is ultimately appointed to command all NATO forces in Afghanistan, where he begins a campaign to minimize civilian deaths, and make his command transparent. However, Rolling Stone Magazine runs a hit piece, full of false allegations, and critical of the efforts in Afghanistan. McChrystal, shamed by the piece, resigns his command and from the Army, knowing that the controversy is detrimental to the war effort.



Part One, Chapter 1 - Part Two, Chapter 10

Part One, Chapter 1 - Part Two, Chapter 10 Summary and Analysis

Summary

Part One, Chapter 1 - General Stanley McChrystal travels by UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter across Afghanistan on Christmas Eve, 2009, visiting six outposts as per tradition. With McChrystal are his friends and fellow men in uniform, Major Casey Welch, Sergeant Major Mike Hall, Colonel Charlie Flynn, and head of security, Chief Warrant Officer Shawn Lowery. McChrystal, like all of his fellow soldiers, misses home and family. He misses his wife, Annie, and his son, Sam. At the outpost, the garrison of some seventy-five men are initially a little distant and uncommunicative, but eventually loosen up, and get along well with McChrystal and his group. McChrystal meets a young man, whose father had been killed in a raid on an Al-Qaeda safe house in 2005. The young man had since taken his father's place in the ranks.

Part One, Chapter 2 - McChrystal recalls his time at West Point, and an address by a colonel seasoned by combat, who instructed the cadets to always remember their collar stays, because it is attention to detail that counts. McChrystal's own father had joined the military after Pearl Harbor, and had gone on to serve in Korea and Vietnam, ultimately becoming a major general. McChrystal follows in his father's footsteps, and among the members of McChrystal's class are future generals, like Ray Odierno. The new cadets, or plebes, are directed and controlled by upperclassmen. Each hour of the day is strictly scheduled, and the schedule strictly enforced. For the first two years, McChrystal struggles academically, especially with mathematics, physics, and engineering.

At West Point, McChrystal and his fellow cadets feel a disconnect between the American military and American society. In public in uniform, the cadets are harassed. McChrystal also recalls infractions he receives as a cadet, including for drinking on base. Between the poor public perception of the Army, and scandals from Vietnam like the My Lai Massacre, West Point does everything it can to ensure the officers it turns out are of a high caliber. Yet, McChrystal admits he screws up by drinking again at West Point with his friend, Rick Bowman, for which he is disciplined. As the War in Vietnam ends, and Nixon resigns, McChrystal and his fellow cadets follow the events, but do not discuss them, for they are too old for Kennedy's idealism, and Reagan's confidence has yet to make its appearance nationally.

After summer training at Airborne School in Fort Benning, Georgia, McChrystal meets his new tactical officer, Major David J. Baratto, with two tours in Vietnam under his belt. Baratto believes McChrystal is destined to be a good officer. Between Baratto's words of



encouragement, and McChrystal's understanding that there are consequences to be poor behavior, his time at West Point improves considerably. Over Winter break, in 1973, McChrystal meets the daughter of a military friend of his father, Annie Corcoran. By the end of the following summer, McChrystal is in love. He spends his spare time with Annie, and if she is not around, McChrystal devotes himself to reading, a passion inherited from his mother. McChrystal graduates as a second lieutenant on June 2, 1976.

Part One, Chapter 3 - McChrystal recalls the disastrous attempt under President Jimmy Carter to rescue the American hostages being held in Tehran, Iran. At the time, McChrystal is commanding an elite four-man unit, training soldiers in Thailand how to use weapons, in case the Vietnamese invade. McChrystal knows that changes will have to be made in the coming years to the American military, including its special operations forces. McChrystal recalls attending Ranger School after graduating, and how special operations units were always a crucial part of past wars. Following Vietnam, there are innumerable theories about what is wrong with the military, and how to fix it. In March, 1977, McChrystal is assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The Army of the 1970s faces not just public hostility, but a constrained budget, and central edicts. Meanwhile, Annie finishes college, and she and McChrystal are married.

In the autumn of 1978, McChrystal applies for Special Forces training, and is ultimately assigned to Detachment 714, Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), part of the famous Green Berets unit. There, he becomes a team leader. He is ultimately assigned to the Joint Security Area at Panmunjom, Korea, though his desire is to command an infantry unit instead. The ensuing disastrous rescue attempt under President Carter humiliates the military, and the United States.

Part One, Chapter 4 - As the 1980s dawn, the American military begins its renaissance against the backdrop of heightened Cold War tensions. At the time, McChrystal and Annie head to Fort Stewart, Georgia. There, he does staff work for Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Lyons, a Vietnam veteran, for Major General John Galvin. There, McChrystal meets and befriends future General David Petraeus. New combat training, strategies, weapons, and technology, also begin to transform the military, as well as a shakeup in the officers and leaders. McChrystal is ultimately given command of a company of mechanized infantry, in the 24th Mechanized Division, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Pierce T. Graney. Graney is unconventional, but does his job very well. He carefully and thoroughly instructs his men on how to handle machines and vehicles. The unit flourishes under Graney. In October 1983, Sam, McChrystal and Annie's son, is born. In October, 1985, McChrystal is assigned to the 3rd Rangers. Since the failed hostage rescue, the Rangers have been transformed into a modern and elite fighting force.

In August 1987, McChrystal travels to Egypt as staff for training Exercise Bright Star in Egypt, where he meets a man named Ali Abdelsoud Mohammad, who later becomes a member of Al-Qaeda. He is arrested for participation in the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa. In the 1980s, Osama Bin Laden, an influential and very wealthy Muslim, becomes a fundamentalist and a supporter of the efforts against the Soviets in



Afghanistan. Ultimately, Al Qaeda is born in 1988. In June, 1989, McChrystal and his family move to Rhode Island, where McChrystal is selected for the Navy's Command and Staff College. Unfortunately, while there, McChrystal is unable to participate in Operation Just Cause in Panama. Nevertheless, it is an exciting time as Communism is retreating globally, and freedom is on the rise. In June of 1990, McChrystal graduates from Command and Staff College, and is sent back to Fort Bragg. Shortly thereafter, Iraq invades Kuwait. Both the United States and her allies offer assistance, as well as Bin Laden. Bin Laden's offer is rejected, and the United States' offer is accepted, and America leads a coalition of 543,000 troops to eject Iraq from Kuwait. Bin Laden is incensed that Jews and Christians are defending Muslims.

In Kuwait, McChrystal helps to plan operations and target the Iraqi Scud Missile System. Some operations include joint work with British special forces. The war ends on February 28, 1991, in victory.

Part One, Chapter 5 - On March 24, 1994, following a ten-mile run with Sergeant Major Steve Cuffee at Fort Bragg, McChrystal heads to a quarterly training brief. Equipment is being moved to Green Ramp, the marshaling site at Pope Air Force Base. Before the briefing begins, black smoke can be seen from the direction of the air base, and Brigadier General Mike Canavan and McChrystal drive over to see what has happened. An aircraft has crashed. Nineteen men have been killed, and over forty have been injured. An in-flight collision has resulted in a double crash on the runway. This reminds McChrystal that military deaths don't only occur in combat.

McChrystal is next given command of a Ranger battalion. Word comes that President Clinton has determined to remove the regime of Cedras and his junta in Haiti. Sixteen thousand American paratroopers would be jumping in Port-Au-Prince. But just as the invasion gets underway, the show of force helps to make last-minute diplomacy work. McChrystal is then assigned to 2nd Ranger Battalion in Fort Lewis, Washington. Slightly more relaxed than their East Coast comrades, the West Coast rangers are nevertheless incredibly effective in the field. McChrystal helps to oversee training the Rangers in Brazilian jujitsu, so the Rangers will be even more effective in hand-to-hand combat.

In June 1996, McChrystal leaves the Rangers and begins a fellowship at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. A year later, McChrystal returns to the Rangers. Working with Mike Hall, the regimental command sergeant major, McChrystal oversees focus on four priorities: marksmanship, physical conditioning, first aid, and small-unit battle drills. This focus will come to help the Rangers in War on Terror, where over eight thousand operations are conducted by the Rangers. In the summer of 1999, McChrystal is given a fellowship in the Council on Foreign Relations. McChrystal recalls the 1990s as a period of unquestionable American power and supremacy, where America's role in the world was not to be decided by others, but by America. Yet, the rise of radical Islam and terrorism altered that perception. In the summer of 2001, McChrystal is stationed in Kuwait, where he begins to learn more and more about the threats posed by Bin Laden.

Part One, Chapter 6 - Back in the States, McChrystal replaces David Petraeus as Chief of Staff of XVIII Airborne Corps. McChrystal and Lieutenant General Dan McNeill are on



a jump training exercise on September 11, 2001, when word comes of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York. Six days later, President Bush calls for a war on terror. On October 7, despite the belief that the Americans would not commit to military action, Islamic terrorists are stunned by a massive American military onslaught. In coordination with strikes against Taliban camps and leadership, the Green Berets land in northern Afghanistan, and the Rangers parachute drop into Southern Afghanistan, while Army commandos raid Mullah Omar's compound in Kandahar. Operation Enduring Freedom is underway. In May 2002, McChrystal and XVIII Corps deploy their headquarters to Bagram, establishing Joint Task Force 180, which assumes command of all conventional military operations.

McChrystal, and others, find Afghanistan to be a difficult place, barely understood by even the locals. Apart from military power, Western efforts to grow relationships with the natives are few and often frustrated. In the summer, McChrystal is reassigned to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., where he would work on the Joint Staff under John Abizaid. McChrystal is promoted to Major General. When McChrystal arrives at the Pentagon in August, 2002, it is still being repaired from the terrorist attack the year before. The Pentagon is preparing plans for removing Saddam Hussein from power, and in October, the House and Senate pass resolutions authorizing military force. McChrystal recalls the atmosphere as being anxious, but without infighting. He finds his time working with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to be instructive. However, McChrystal recalls that communication between the civilian and military cultures would have made things easier.

As war looms, McChrystal is given the task of meeting with the Armed Services Committees of the House and Senate six days a week. The efforts point to better communication with Congress. Among the potential targets in Iraq is a known terrorist camp, but a prewar raid is called off. In March 2003, the United States leads an invasion of Iraq, and effectively and superbly dismantles Saddam Hussein's control on the country. But by late August, the postwar occupation is under strain from insurgent and terrorist attacks.

Part Two, Chapter 7 - Abu Musab al-Zarqawi becomes a battlefield hero to the terrorists and insurgents in Iraq. Efforts to capture or kill him are frequently foiled. Zarqawi uses these failures against the Americans and the Allies, to raise ire against them. McChrystal becomes commander of Task Force 714, which, among its roles as a special operations unit, is to track down Zarqawi. McChrystal helps to oversee the force's transformation from a unit to a network, even more elite and effective than it had been. He assumes command in October, 2003. John Abizaid is promoted to command CENTCOM. Abizaid gives McChrystal more freedom as commander of TF 714, provided Abizaid can easily communicate with McChrystal. He learns that the operators of TF 714 are intelligent, strong, and good men, who prize their mission, and love America.

McChrystal also heads to Iraq, to visit TF 714 members in the field. Along with McChrystal are Command Sergeant Major C.W. Thompson, aide-de-camp Air Force Major Dave Tabor, Lieutenant Colonel Austin Miller, Colonel T. T., and Navy Petty Officer



Vic Kouw. In Iraq, things are disorganized, and multiple groups and agencies are to blame. Hard decisions have to be made, but they are not being made. In a few places, things are better, such as in Mosul, under the command of then-Major General David Petraeus. His 101st Airborne Division has made tremendous progress in combat, and in sowing relationships with the locals. The city of Tikrit is under the command of Major General Ray Odierno. Tikrit is Saddam's hometown, and Saddam is thought to be hiding out somewhere in the city. Moving on, McChrystal learns that there is a disconnect between TF 714 headquarters, and their forward operating teams. Better communication is needed. Meanwhile, through October, Zarqawi orchestrates a series of bombings and attacks. He targets humanitarian organizations with the intent of isolating the Americans. By November, Operation Winter Strike, targeting eastern Afghanistan, is launched. McChrystal begins sleeping in his office, so he is always where he needs to be to command. McChrystal encourages his subordinate officers to do that same. Although Winter Strike does not gain any strategic victories, it is tactically brilliant, and is a step in the right direction.

Part Two, Chapter 8 - Word comes from Rear Admiral Bill McRaven in December 2003 that intelligence has been gathered on Saddam, and he is captured. There is a sense of joy and triumph, as well as humiliation for Saddam's allies. A Sunni insurgency begins to grow, Zarqawi shifts Al Qaeda's focus to Iraq -something which McChrystal admits to not fully appreciating at the time. While the terror cells and insurgency groups isolate themselves from one another, coming into contact only as necessary, Bin Laden and his leadership, continually on the run, also becomes more and more isolated. Because of this, the cells grow more independent, and Bin Laden more symbolic than anything else. Each group therefore adapts to local conditions, and become self-subsistent. McChrystal knows this means that no singular stroke will destroy Al Qaeda, so efforts must be made against both the leadership and the local franchises.

Over time, infighting erupts between the CIA, State Department, Department of Defense, and others in Washington. Abizaid explains at a meeting in Washington that the U.S. has lost its focus, and needs to redouble its efforts. CIA Director George Tenet especially seems determined to refocus. A new joint interagency task force (JIATF) would be formed to handle things. JIATF would bring together analysts from all the agencies under one tent, in Afghanistan or Iraq. Information sharing would be momentous and very important, putting everyone on the same page. Working together is frustrating, but very productive. TF 714 and JIATF continue building networks across Afghanistan and Iraq. Through the winter of 2003 and the spring of 2004, Saddam's Baathists are rolled up, and Zarqawi becomes the main focus. Zarqawi intends to ignite civil war between the Sunnis and Shias in Iraq. McChrystal knows a long and hard fight is ahead of them, one which might force America away from her values and her ideals, and challenge her politically and morally, and so the counterinsurgency must be swift and deadly.

McChrystal has his men read up on counterinsurgency strategies of the past and present. McChrystal has two concerns for his forces: first, how they conduct themselves will matter; and secondly, detainees present an operation risk, inasmuch as their intelligence and information might be flawed, which would then hurt TF 714 operations.



Shortly thereafter come the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, and the murder of four American contractors in Fallujah.

Part Two, Chapter 9 - By April 2004, the situation in Fallujah deteriorates rapidly. The ambush of the American contractor convoy, vicious and disgusting, is a major display of resistance. A massive American military assault is prepared in response. McChrystal arrives in Baghdad, back from the United States, on April 5, as Marine battalions breach Fallujah's outer rim. The First Battle of Fallujah is underway. Propaganda accuses the Americans of war crimes and atrocities. Political pressure mounts, and President Bush orders the assault to be stopped. The rest of Iraq erupts into violence as well. Kidnappings, including of Americans, are on the rise.

Despite growing anger among the military, McChrystal and others attempt to keep discipline and order. Foreign fighters, spurred on by religious hatred, begin flowing into Iraq. The withdrawal of the Marines from Fallujah makes it a hotbed for such activity, and little information can be gleaned from the city. The use of Predator drones and UAVs becomes commonplace. Abizaid knows that Fallujah is a dangerous place, and the enemy must feel the heat. A safe house known as Target Big Ben becomes the objective of a TF 714 raid, but it is called off when armored vehicles are not allowed to be used. Finally, in mid-June, Big Ben is pummeled with precision weapons. Throughout the summer, Zarqawi's leadership is targeted, crippling his command. The choice to control the city was a strategic mistake for Zarqawi. Despite these successes, the terrorists and insurgents grow more and more ruthless.

Part Two, Chapter 10 - Zarqawi's international influence is troubling to McChrystal and the Americans. A change in organization and leadership occurs for the United States. General George Casey, Jr., becomes the head of the American-led military coalition, redubbed Multinational Force -Iraq. Casey's father had been killed in Vietnam, and Casey and McChrystal have known each other for years. Casey and the new leaders come to find that TF714 is playing a larger role in the war, and new campaigns are planned. McChrystal draws on the example of Lord Horatio Nelson and the excellence of the British Navy, wherein Nelson cultivated technical mastery and independence among his men. While TF 417 strays outside its traditional role because there is no other group to do the network building they are, many begin to criticize the group's self-appointed increased roles. TF 417 under McChrystal focuses on collaboration and information sharing. Technology is readily used and adapted. Targeting cycles for finding, fixing, finishing, exploiting, and analyzing targets is ratcheted up to faster speeds, because hours can make the difference. Cultural changes will have to be made in the practices of even more organizations to communicate and coordinate effectively, McChrystal knows. Trust, he knows, is key. Partnerships are grown and cemented. Through time, McChrystal comes to oversee a brigade-sized force of intelligence people throughout Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, in September 2004, Lieutenant General John Sattler assumes command of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, with the target being Fallujah. McChrystal and Sattler begin working closely to coordinate the coming assault. Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki exhausts diplomatic options with Zarqawi, and the assault is scheduled



for November. Marines do a leaflet drop, urging civilians to leave the city. Most do. Before the assault, Zarqawi adopts the name of Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). McChrystal, meanwhile, recognizes that the Allied coalition needs an effective program to work with trusted Iraqi allies and security forces. Relentless blows against AQI would force it back onto the ropes, unable to sustain itself. In December, Bin Laden takes to the air waves to stake the future of Al Qaeda on Iraq, declaring it the central battleground in the fight against the United States.

Analysis

General Stanley McChrystal's memoir of his service in the United States Army, "My Share of the Task: A Memoir", details his service for America from his inducting at West Point to his command of all forces in Afghanistan. McChrystal begins life with an avid passion for reading, a passion instilled in him by his mother. McChrystal is a typical American teenager and young adult, getting into trouble, even at West Point, before realizing that he has to shape up in order to make something of himself. He does this by committing to his studies, and training in Ranger and Airborne School, where he progresses through the ranks, serving in a variety of positions. Along the way, McChrystal talks about how various other officers, including Colonel Graney, give him invaluable lessons in leadership. McChrystal is very humble, noting as he goes along, who taught him what, and why -and that these lessons would prove essential for his own leadership role in the future.

Nevertheless, McChrystal is repeatedly frustrated as he misses out on various wars, operations, and instances of combat, confined to staff work, desk jobs, or college back in the States. Yet, through the 1990s, as Islamic terrorism is on the rise, and terrorist attacks multiply, it is clear what U.S. foreign policy will become. Yet, the terrorist attacks of September 11 thrust the United States into a new kind of war, one which the American military, modern and elite, rapidly adapts to meet. While initial victories in Afghanistan and Iraq are quick, the postwar occupations bring about insurgencies, civil war, and population unrest. McChrystal knows that the insurgents have to be beaten back, and the hearts and minds of the people won in order to have victory in either Afghanistan, or Iraq. Throughout this, even when the situation is bleak, the pride, morality, and patriotism of McChrystal and the United States Armed Forces show through clearly.



Part Two, Chapter 11 - Epilogue

Part Two, Chapter 11 - Epilogue Summary and Analysis

Summary:

Part Two, Chapter 11 - Suicide bombings by foreign fighters increase through 2004 and 2005. As TF 714's role expands, as does that of JIATF, which decentralizes into East and West groups. A solution is sought to curtail the foreign fighters flooding Iraq. A pattern emerges of men without a violent past, seduced by glory and propaganda on computer screens, as well as by scandals like Abu Ghraib, to fighting in Iraq. AQI has careful and meticulous managerial practices, and handles potential suicide bombers like rounds of ammunition being stored in one place or another. Meanwhile, the Second Battle of Fallujah winds down. At the same time, a rift occurs between Casey and his staff, and TF 714. While Casey's staff blames Baathists as the cause of the widespread insurgency, McChrystal knows it is primarily Zarqawi and foreign fighters. At the same time, Casey is overseeing the election processes in Iraq. There is less violence on election day than anticipated.

Resources for the military, growing scarce, are contested between conventional and unconventional forces. In order to have use of the resources, such as a Predator drone, those resources would have to be in use, and so McChrystal steps up pressure on his groups to conduct more raids and operations. By May 2005, which sees sixty suicide bombings, Casey is determined to do something about the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq. Major operations along the country's western border are to be conducted. McChrystal argues that this will require conventional military participation as well as unconventional military participation. Casey agrees. To help out TF 714, McChrystal brings more Rangers and SEALs to Iraq, including from Afghanistan. American forces work to secure the Western Iraq border, while more forces work to clear the Euphrates River Valley. While many insurgents flee, others put up a determined fight.

By August 2005, the offensive is also bearing costs for the Americans, including for TF 714. Stress and mounting deaths lead to the men being shaken, but alright, and McChrystal addresses his operators directly, saying he is in the fight with them. He tells his men they cannot afford to lose. The sustained campaigns show that by the late autumn of that year, suicide bombings are down dramatically. AQI begins suffering other setbacks as well, such as when tribes they formally controlled with tyrannical rule, turned against them to fight alongside the Americans. Yet, AQI reprisals are swift and deadly. But a sliver of hope emerges for other tribes under AQI's brutal control.

Part Two, Chapter 12 - On June 29, 2005, McChrystal attends a meeting in the White House Situation Room with President Bush, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. President Bush is very interested in the operations, and listens intently, especially when it comes to Zarqawi. McChrystal



assures President Bush that they will get Zarqawi. McChrystal then heads to a military meeting in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. McChrystal recalls visiting Gettysburg as a child, with his family. Gettysburg, the decisive point of the Civil War, occurred in a grim time for the Union, and McChrystal parallels that with Iraq.

McChrystal and his men begin to study Zarqawi's life, and his relations and associations. The situation in Iraq continues to go from bad to worse. An associate named Abu Zar is taken into custody, and McChrystal places emphasis on the need for intelligence from detainees. To do this, the right kinds of facilities and interrogators are needed. Detainee facilities are constructed in Balad, which are as internally transparent as possible, to avoid accusations of abuse. Lapses and violations are dealt with harshly. By January 2006, Abu Zar begins talking, and the intelligence is actionable. Meanwhile, sectarian violence continues to escalate in Iraq, including in Sadr City near Baghdad. More and more insurgents are rounded up as time goes on, and many of them talk freely and openly, either out of vainglory and self-importance, or out of anger for the targeting of Shia civilians. TF 16 and TF 714 continue to throw blows at AQI, even as AQI continues to sow civil war. Yet, McChrystal and his operators are closing in on Zarqawi.

Part Two, Chapter 13 - As May 2006 rolls around, a detainee named Mubassir finally spills his guts about Zarqawi. Intelligence is acquired, and video surveillance is set up. Meanwhile, Baghdad becomes a bloodbath under sectarian strife, even as the Iraqi parliament begins to function, selecting Al Maliki as prime minister. McChrystal's operators track relations and associations of Zarqawi's to a meeting in a house in Hibhib, north of Baghdad. McChrystal, hoping to capture Zarqawi, learns that a ground attack would be difficult at best. McChrystal settles on bombing the house, and sending in a team to arrest anyone who tries to flee. Zarqawi is mortally wounded in the bombing, dying minutes later under the eye of American operators. The next day, Zarqawi's death is announced.

Part Two, Chapter 14 - By the summer of 2006, Ramadi has emerged as the worst and most violent city in Iraq. There, TS 714's operations fell to a company of rangers, commanded by then-Captain Doug P., part of a SEAL squadron that was in charge of Anbar. Because nighttime raids were often anticipated by insurgents, P. begins leading his men on daytime raids. McChrystal, a three-star general, even accompanies them on a raid, despite the dangers -fighting on daytime raids is unavoidable. There, he sees the professionalism and excellent conduct of his men.

Army Colonel Sean McFarland is placed in command of five Marine and Army battalions at Ramadi. Over time, partnership, trust, and cooperation between conventional and unconventional forces grows, including under McFarland. McFarland announces his troops are going to retake Ramadi, and hold it, not withdraw to operating bases outside the city. Instead, they will become members of the city, nesting among the population. This is done very successfully -and in what becomes known as the "Awakening", Sheikh Abdul Sattar and his tribes throw their lots in with the Americans, turning against AQI. General Casey wants to further counterinsurgency operations, and brings in Graeme Lamb, a Scottish military friend of McChrystal's. Tough and to the point, McChrystal is



also impressed by Lamb's knowledge, for he is a reader. The counterinsurgency strategy implemented includes gagging the different types of enemies faced, from those who might be pushed toward reconciliation with the government in Iraq, versus those that would be irreconcilable - the extremists - that would have to be captured and killed. Those that didn't want to commit to either side would be warned to stay out of the fight, and not to cross the Americans. Civilian casualties must be minimized, and the actions of American teams would not only have to produce actual results, but produce second and third-order effects, such as changing the thinking of groups.

In the United States, in November 2006, the Republicans lose control of Congress to the Democrats. Public perception of the war is at a low. Rumsfeld is replaced as Secretary of Defense by Dr. Robert Gates from Texas A&M University, who had spent his life in the CIA. President Bush, Gates, and others, begin to plan a new strategy for Iraq, which includes more troops, and seizing on the initiative of the Awakening. Meanwhile, more and more Iraqi groups begin to understand that the Americans and their allies are not their enemies, but their friends. It is truly Al Qaeda that poses a threat to the Iraqi way of life. Word comes from President Bush that seven brigades - five Army and two Marine - would reinforce Iraq, totaling 30,000 troops. McChrystal calls Bush's decision courageous. The Surge, as it has become known, would focus not just on counterinsurgency, but stopping Iranian and Syrian proxies and supplies from entering Iraq to disrupt the country.

Part Two, Chapter 15 - On February 10, 2007, General David Petraeus assumes command from General Casey. Abizaid also ends his tenure as commander of CENTCOM. While the media and politicians eat up the shakeup in leadership for political reasons, McChrystal knows that no one person is to blame for the insufficient strategy in Iraq prior to that time. Graeme, meanwhile, has organized a reconciliation team, which includes former TF16 commander, John Christian, a good friend of McChrystal's. McChrystal also begins meeting weekly with General Petraeus. Petraeus has an eye for goodness and good work, and he throws his weight behind the Awakening movement, and the Sons of Iraq program. Among the subjects discussed is releasing strategic prisoners in the attempt to change the hearts of their constituencies and groups. Petraeus's commanders also rely on objective criticisms of their operations from other parties, such as Emma Sky, a British political adviser attached to Odierno's staff. Small signs of improvement in Iraq begin to show.

Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, British forces engage and take out Dudallah the Lamé, a major jihadist figure. In Iraq, Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker also work to seal a political partnership and friendship with Prime Minister Al Maliki. Over time, the Surge bears tremendous fruit, including incredible reductions in violence. By June 2008, stronger gains have been made, and McChrystal's work in Iraq is done.

Part Three, Chapter 16 - McChrystal is promoted to command the NATO effort in Afghanistan, and assumes command in June, 2009, having been part of Joint Staff for the previous year. Chairman Mike Mullen gives McChrystal the initiative of destroying the enemy network in Afghanistan. McChrystal studies and learns about Afghanistan, including her history. Meanwhile, Barack Obama becomes president, and McChrystal



and others look forward to his promises of bipartisanship and new energy. This seems true when Obama keeps Gates on as Secretary of Defense. But trust erodes when Obama sends only 17,000, instead of 30,000, requested reinforcements to Afghanistan. Further reinforcements are sent in owing to political decision-making. McChrystal finds the mistrust that arises thereafter to be disappointing.

Part Three, Chapter 17 - McChrystal understands his mission in Afghanistan is not just to defeat Al Qaeda, but to conduct an integrated counterinsurgency with the local populations, as had been done in Iraq. McChrystal knows that he will have to convince people, at home and abroad, that Afghanistan can be won. At Gates's direction, McChrystal establishes International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command (IJC). Stretched thin between Iraq and Afghanistan, McChrystal has to find ways to be effective and proficient. In Afghanistan, the Coalition forces, though predominantly American, are much more varied. Out of 61,000 troops in the ISAF, 28,850 are American, the rest multinational. Among the people McChrystal meets is Afghan President Karzai, and American ambassador Karl Eikenberry. Karzai is happy and optimistic about McChrystal's command, but cautious about the future.

McChrystal and his command team then travel around Afghanistan, to listen to the soldiers and leaders, about their concerns and suggestions. McChrystal heads out to meetings with both locals and ISAF forces without sunglasses, body armor, or a helmet, to demonstrate the calm of American presence, to act as guests and not occupiers. Chief among complaints is a feeling that the Afghan government is either ineffective or uncaring, not delivering on its promises. Further word comes from Obama that no more troops will be sent to Afghanistan until successes can be had with the troops already present. McChrystal is disappointed by this decision. By the summer of 2009, the Taliban have become a very localized presence in Afghanistan. Insurgencies of various groups have broken out all across Afghanistan, and McChrystal realizes the threat in Afghanistan is similar and different to the threat faced the previous years in Iraq. Minimizing civilian casualties would be key, and McChrystal issues the difficult directive telling soldiers and Marines to not call in support fire if there were civilians present, even if the ensuing fight would then last for hours. The Taliban leadership, meanwhile, sees it is losing the fight to the Americans, and begins to order its members not to carry out vengeance against civilians, at least ostensibly. The Americans thereby make an argument to the people that they can win, that their future is better and brighter, and that it could be delivered.

Part Three, Chapter 18 - McChrystal tells his subordinates that they are to behave as car mechanics: to diagnose problems, and do what has to be done to fix them, rather than becoming emotionally attached to one plan of action or another. McChrystal reminds his men that they don't own the car. Interaction with the people, and protecting the people, will be key to growing the relationships with the people. Among them is the idea of increasing popular support of the government by providing safe zones, in which lives, economic affairs, and other cultural and societal events may take place, modeled after the French strategy of General Lyautey in Madagascar and Morocco. In particular, the Helmand province presents serious difficulties. Local elders insist that security is paramount to all else. British troops, including the elite Black Watch, combat Taliban



insurgents in Helmand. American Marines would now be sent into Helmand, to ease the British burden. Success comes slowly, but surely.

In August, McChrystal travels to Belgium to meet with Gates and Mullen and others, and to deliver a sixty-page report on the war. Recommendations are made for changes, structural and cultural. 80 of 364 key Afghan districts would have to be controlled in order to ensure Afghanistan's survival and stability. McChrystal also studies the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and what went wrong during those years, thereby learning from the mistakes, and not repeating them. The Afghan elections also occur in August, with thirty-two candidates running for president. On election day, Taliban attacks are high, but cannot sway or disrupt the election. Karzai is reelected.

Part Three, Chapter 19 - In September 2009, progress is being made. To the Afghan population, things like completed bridges are physical proof of progress and friendship. But a military strike in Kunduz province has reportedly killed a large number of civilians, and McChrystal calls Karzai to apologize, and to get to the bottom of things. The village elders are angry the media is focusing on the attack, rather than on the parties to blame, the Taliban insurgents. McChrystal believes, as time goes on, that the war can indeed be won.

News comes that Bob Woodward of the Washington Post has leaked the report about Afghanistan. McChrystal is very unhappy about this. In a follow-up strategic assessment, McChrystal calls for growing the size of the Afghan security forces, and an additional 40,000 Coalition force members. Plans to transfer detention facilities to Afghan control are also made. Meanwhile, Vice President Joe Biden seeks to adopt a counter terrorism only strategy, while the military favors a hearts-and-minds counterinsurgency approach, which puts the military and the White House at odds once more. Graeme later comes to Afghanistan to help work with the Coalition forces there, but over time, friction arises between the United States and Afghanistan. In late November, during a National Security Council session, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declares she supports sending 40,000 more troops to Afghanistan. Obama later agrees to only 30,000 troops, with a prerequisite timeline for withdrawal. With the propensity for more violence coming, McChrystal realizes he will be sending men to their deaths, and he takes this responsibility incredibly seriously.

Part Three, Chapter 20 - In January and February 2010, the counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan get under way, including in Helmand province. The local elders vow to support the Americans if civilian casualties are minimized, if the corrupt police are not allowed to return, and if the Americans stay. President Karzai approves the start of the American-led efforts. The go-ahead culminates eight months of planning, and on February 13, the operation officially begins. Fighting intensifies quickly, and civilians are killed unintentionally. Karzai himself goes to meet with local leaders and populations, helping to secure their hearts against the Taliban, and with the Americans. Subduing Helmand, the Coalition turns its attention to Kandahar. Karzai, owing to politics, begins to obstruct American and Coalition efforts, ordering night raids to stop, and by countering Allied efforts here and there.



In May, 2010, Karzai goes to the United States to meet with Obama and other U.S. leaders. At Karzai's request, Eikenberry and McChrystal also go for the trop. Karzai even visits Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and is shaken by the wounded Americans there. Karzai even visits the graves of the dead in Arlington. In late June, Rolling Stone publishes an article, not as a source of transparency as McChrystal has hoped, but one condemning his command and the operations in Afghanistan. McChrystal, horrified and saddened by the article, resigns. His and Annie's life in the Army is over.

Epilogue - An investigation into the Rolling Stone article discredits it. McChrystal discusses leadership being important, that it is not good or evil, that it is the art of influencing others, that success is rarely the work of one leader, that the best leaders are genuine, and the best leaders are people who can change. Leaders are, ultimately, human.

Analysis:

As the situation in Iraq goes from bad to worse, McChrystal realizes that several things must occur. First, Al Qaeda in Iraq, the Taliban, and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan must be continually pummeled and beaten back. Secondly, the people who live in both Afghanistan and Iraq must be courted, befriended, and must come to trust the Americans as friends and guests, not conquerors and occupiers. Through massive American military operations, in conjunction between conventional and unconventional forces, terrorist and insurgent groups are pummeled and thrown back. With the commitment of 30,000 additional combat troops to Iraq under the orders of President Bush, the United States military launches an even greater series of operations, in which AQI is crippled, and the course of the war in Iraq is turned. As things quiet down in Iraq, things heat up in Afghanistan.

McChrystal is ultimately promoted to command all forces in Afghanistan. Here, he sows a personal relationship with Afghan president Karzai, and instructs the men under his command to sow personal relationships with the locals. Tribe by tribe, the Afghans see the Americans are their friends, and not their enemies, and begin to throw their lots in with the Americans and Coalition Forces. But even as such successes appear for McChrystal, his desire for transparency in command comes back to shatter his command, as a falsified hit piece in Rolling Stone Magazine causes enough controversy to compel McChrystal to resign.



Characters

Stanley McChrystal

Stanley McChrystal is the author and principle figure in his memoir, "My Share of the Craft". McChrystal is a member of the United States Armed Forces, in specific, the U.S. Army Rangers and Airborne. McChrystal is the wife of Annie, and father of Sam. McChrystal is a graduate of West Point, and progresses through the ranks in the Armed Forces, ultimately coming to command Task Force 714 in Iraq and Afghanistan, where a counter-terrorism and counterinsurgency network and infrastructure is built up to combat Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda in Iraq, and the Taliban. McChrystal oversees operations, even going on raids against the enemy, choosing not to ask his men to do something he himself will not do.

McChrystal is ultimately given command of all forces in Afghanistan, where he implements a very successful counterinsurgency strategy. McChrystal ensures that there are as few civilian casualties as possible, that relationships with the locals are strong and trustworthy, and that his command is transparent. Unfortunately, a falsified hit piece on McChrystal and the American effort in Afghanistan, published in Rolling Stone Magazine, causes enough controversy that McChrystal resigns his command, and retires from the Army.

Annie Corcoran McChrystal

Annie McChrystal, nee Corcoran, is the loving and devoted wife of General Stanley McChrystal, and the mother of Sam. Annie is patient, kind, and loyal to her husband and her family, traveling with her husband around the country, and even overseas, as his assignments change. She is there for McChrystal through wars and personal trials, and remains close by even during the Rolling Stone scandal.

Sam McChrystal

Same McChrystal is the son of General Stanley and Annie McChrystal. He is a kind and supportive son, and is sad to see his father go away on tours of duty.

President George W. Bush

President George W. Bush is the 43rd President of the United States of America, who oversees the beginning of the War on Terror following the attacks on September 11, 2001. Bush works closely with the military, taking care to understand their position on issues, and paying close attention to how their operations are conducted.



President Barack Obama

President Barack Obama is the 44th President of the United States of America, who oversees the continuation of the War on Terror from President Bush. While the military commanders, including McChrystal, are hopeful for continued good relations with the White House, their trust is soon disappointed. Obama refuses to send all of the requested reinforcements to the field in Afghanistan, making political, rather than strategic decisions.

David Petraeus

David Petraeus is a general in the U.S. Army, and is a friend and comrade of McChrystal. Petraeus rises through the ranks, ultimately coming to command all forces in Iraq. There, Petraeus helps to oversee the counterinsurgency strategy that wins the war in Iraq.

Ray Odierno

Ray Odierno is a friend and general in the U.S. Army. He serves in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and is a longtime friend of McChrystal.

President Hamid Karzai

President Hamid Karzai is the president of Afghanistan, who both works with, befriends, and complicates the relationship with the American and Coalition military forces. Karzai is described as a dutiful man, who works closely with McChrystal in Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki

Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki is the leader of Iraq. He works in concert with the United States and Coalition forces in Iraq, especially during the Surge.

President Ronald Reagan

President Ronald Reagan is the 40th President of the United States. He oversees a renaissance in the U.S. Military following the low points of Vietnam and the Iranian Hostage Crisis, helping to transform the military into a modern, effective, and elite organization.



Objects/Places

United States of America

The United States of America is the world's lone superpower, and is a nation in the Western Hemisphere. It is the country for which General Stanley McChrystal fights to defend, and is the country that Islamic terrorists target on September 11.

Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. is the capital of the United States of America, and is where the White House and the Pentagon are located. It is where General Stanley McChrystal serves part of his tenure in the military, both as staff member and commanding general.

New York City

New York City, the largest U.S. city, is located in the state of New York in the United States of America. New York City is the location of the World Trade Center, which is bombed in 1993, and destroyed on September 11, 2001, by Islamic terrorists.

The Pentagon

The Pentagon is the intelligence and command hub of the United States Armed Forces. It is where General Stanley McChrystal serves and works as commander for part of his career.

Iraq

Iraq is a nation in the Middle East, dominated by dictator and terrorist sponsor Saddam Hussein. Iraq is invaded by American and Coalition forces, which overthrow Saddam. The ensuing occupation drags on, until a successful Surge and counterinsurgency strategy turn events in America's favor. McChrystal serves as commander of Task Force 714 in Iraq.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a country in the Middle East, dominated by the terrorist sponsoring Taliban, who support Al Qaeda, which launches terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Afghanistan is subsequently invaded by American and Coalition forces, and the Taliban and Al Qaeda are toppled. McChrystal ultimately becomes the commander in Afghanistan.

Books

Books are read at a staggering rate by General Stanley McChrystal, a passion instilled in him by his mother. McChrystal reads history and biographies, drawing on leadership lessons, and learning from the past to handle the present.

Audiobooks

While deployed, General Stanley McChrystal listens to audiobooks on his iPod, continuing to learn and understand the past and the present.

Weapons

Weapons of an assorted nature are wielded and stockpiled by the terrorists and insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan. Weapons caches are targeted by the United States and Coalition military forces for capture and destruction.

Cot

A cot is what is used by McChrystal to sleep on, and is kept in his command offices in Iraq and Afghanistan, so that he can sleep and stay where he needs to command as much as possible.

Themes

War

War is the single most major, dominant, and overarching theme in General Stanley McChrystal's book, "My Share of the Task: A Memoir". It is around war that McChrystal's life as a soldier develops, for he is trained to fight and learns to lead along the way. War presents itself in two ways in the memoir.

In the first way, war is presented as a means to change and grow. The sad and dismal aftereffects of involvement in Vietnam, coupled with the public's distaste for the military, and the humiliation following the failed rescue attempt on the Iranian-held American hostages, leads to the need for soul-searching and reflection in the military. The failures and instability in Iraq and Afghanistan prior to 2006 and 2007, leads the American military, and commanders like McChrystal, to adapt and transform and adapt for the better.

War also appears as a physical example of human failures, with the knowledge that war -and even simple military service in preparation for war -can lead to death. This is the burden that McChrystal carries as he leads and learns. He knows that men will die no matter what, but he must do his job to ensure as few die as possible, and that the sacrifices of those men will not be in vain. War also stands to prove that leaders will be important, that man will never be without conflict, and that the right decisions must ultimately be made in order to persevere.

Honor and Discipline

Honor and discipline are major and overarching themes in General Stanley McChrystal's book, "My Share of the Task: A Memoir". Honor and discipline are instrumental and critical to McChrystal, and to American soldiers. Honor, which includes integrity, morality, and doing the right thing, matters tremendously; and discipline, which includes training, order, and control, is invaluable on the field. Both, thematically, factor in to McChrystal's character as a man, and to the credit and character of the United States Servicemen and Women. "Armies without discipline are mobs," McChrystal writes in Part Two, Chapter 9, p. 135; "killing without legal or moral grounds is murder."

Throughout the memoir, McChrystal emphasizes honor and discipline as being key to the American military. The American warrior is at once both moral, and effective. Indeed, leadership heavily relies on honor and discipline, and McChrystal learns these things along the way. He later uses honor and discipline in his own leadership, making sure those who serve under his command are both honorable and well-trained. It is combination of these ideas that makes the American soldier a different quality caliber than any other soldier in the world, and it is these skills that McChrystal puts to good use when he assumes command of Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, McChrystal makes



sure detainees are treated appropriately, the local populations are respected, and the Afghan government becomes a working partner. In return, the Afghan populations rally around the Americans, and throw in their lots alongside them.

Civilian-Military Culture Divide

The Civilian-Military Culture Divide has long been studied, a gap attempted to be bridged, sometimes for the better, and sometimes for the worse. The Divide demonstrates a civilian culture and military culture being two different things in most ways, especially at the level of government. The military is given responsibilities and the conditions in which to achieve set objectives by civilian controllers. Essentially, the military is given a job, and told what resources it can do the job with. The Civilian-Military Culture Divide impacts McChrystal's life in three specific ways.

The first way has to do with the Civilian-Military Culture Divide, apart from official interactions between the government and the military. In specific, the first way has to do with direct contact and opinions of the military, by the civilians of the United States. When McChrystal enters West Point, popular opinion of the military is at an all-time low. Soldiers and Marines are cruelly treated by many American civilians through the 1970s. But by the 1980s, a renaissance among the military, and pride in country among civilians, helps to raise the military to an exalted status in the eyes of American civilians. Veterans returning home from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as opposed to Vietnam, are treated with dignity, respect, and applause.

The second way the Divide occurs, in a successful fashion, has to do with the close working relationship between President George W. Bush and the military during the War in Iraq. President Bush takes an active interest in military affairs, enjoying popularity among the men and women serving. He sends 30,000 combat troops to Iraq to help implement a counterinsurgency strategy and to turn the war in America's favor.

The third way the Divide occurs, in an unsuccessful fashion, has to do with the disconnect between President Obama and the White House, and the American and Coalition Military Forces in Afghanistan. Instead of sending 30,000 more combat troops to Afghanistan as requested by military commanders, President Obama, owing to politics, only sends 17,000, in addition to decreased funding. The military is therefore forced to do its job with less than needed.

Style

Perspective

General Stanley McChrystal tells his memoir "My Share of the Task" in the first person omniscient perspective, from his own point of view. This is done for at least two reasons. The first is that the story told is factual memoir, and are the experiences of McChrystal himself. Therefore, there is no one better than McChrystal to tell his own story. The second reason is that McChrystal is able to directly communicate his firsthand experiences, firsthand, to the reader. This allows the reader to learn and understand and see things exactly the way McChrystal saw and experienced them.

Tone

General Stanley McChrystal tells his memoir "My Share of the Task" in a tone that is reflective, honest, and proud. Because the book is a memoir, the tone is clearly reflective in terms of remembering, recalling, and analyzing past events. McChrystal is very humble, and is quick to point out his flaws, as well as his successes. Yet, because McChrystal was also a member of the finest military force the world has ever known, pride, in both the military and in the men and women who served under him, is clearly present in his words and his writing.

Structure

General Stanley McChrystal structures his memoir "My Share of the Task" into three parts, with each part revolving around a specific time in his life. Each part is further subdivided into chapters, which cover a specific period of time, and events that take place in that period of time. The third part of the memoir, for example, details McChrystal's command in Afghanistan. Each chapter therein covers the years from 2009 to 2010, and the specific operations and events that occurred during that time period.

Quotes

I was raised to respect soldiers, leaders, and heroes. They were who I wanted to be. They were why I was there.

-Part One, Chapter 2, p. 8

It is difficult to explain a soldier's feeling about missing a combat action. Soldiers don't love war but often feel professional angst when they have to watch one from the sidelines.

-Part One, Chapter 4, p. 51

Watching war from afar is torturous for most soldiers, especially when comrades are fighting in difficult terrain.

Part One, Chapter 6, p. 76

In preparing for the conference, I distilled two thoughts. First, how we conducted ourselves was critical, and the force needed to uniformly believe that. Doing less would dishonor the service of those I led. Second, I was convinced that detainees presented an operational risk: If we got it wrong, TF 714 would be taken out of the fight and might even be disbanded.

-Part Two, Chapter 8, pp. 123-124

Armies without discipline are mobs; killing without legal or moral grounds is murder. But after the first shot, the first bloody corpse, war is no longer theory.

-Part Two, Chapter 9, p. 135

"An individual death, like a pebble dropped in water, might make but a brief hole; yet rings of sorrow widened out therefrom. We could not afford casualties."

-Part Two, Chapter 11, p. 185

I had told the men that day what I believed and what had come to be my life: It's the fight. It's the fight. It's the fight.

-Part Two, Chapter 11, p. 187

In every case it will not be about what's easy, or even what we normally associate with conventional military standards. It will not even be about what is effective. It will be about what is the MOST effective way to operate -and we will do everything to increase the effectiveness even in small ways.

-Part Two, Chapter 12, p. 213

At the heart of the story is Afghanistan itself, a complex swirl of ethnic and political rivalries, cultural intransigence, strains of religious fervor, and bitter memories overlaid on a beautiful, but harshly poor, landscape.

-Part Three, Chapter 16, p. 277

A leader decides to accept responsibility for others in a way that assumes stewardship of their hopes, their dreams, and sometimes their very lives. It can be a crushing burden, but I found it an indescribable honor.

-Epilogue, p. 394

Topics for Discussion

Discuss the theme of war in General Stanley McChrystal's memoir, "My Share of the Task". How does war appear in the memoir? How does McChrystal's life as a soldier revolve around war? What does he do to prepare for war? How does he conduct wars? Is he successful in his missions? Why or why not?

General McChrystal refuses to blame any one man or situation for the bad conditions in Iraq and Afghanistan prior to the counterinsurgency strategies employed in those places. Why? What reasons does he give? Is he correct in not blaming any one or any one thing? Why or why not?

Discuss the theme of honor and discipline in General Stanley McChrystal's memoir, "My Share of the Task". What is honor? What is discipline? Why are they important? How does McChrystal instill these values in his men and in his time as commander? Is he successful? Why or why not?

Describe the relationships between the United States Armed Forces and the White House under both presidents George W. Bush, and Barack Obama. How do these relationships differ, and why? Which president do you believe better handles the Civilian-Military Cultural Divide? Why? Provide evidence to support your claim.

Discuss the theme of the Civilian-Military Cultural Divide in General Stanley McChrystal's memoir, "My Share of the Task". What is the Divide? In what ways does it occur? Why do you believe this Divide exists? Is it for the better, or for the worst? Why?