

The Politics of Special Forces Podcast Show Notes

Episode 7 – SOF and Narratives

Summary

In this episode, our first for 2022, we had a fascinating discussion about the concept of narrative and how it relates to SOF employment concepts. Over the course of the conversation, Dave presents a working definition of narrative as a collection of ideas and concepts that codify meaning to events and behaviours. The conversation then directly connects narrative to the concept of special operations, making a cogent argument for a reconceptualization of what constitutes a special operation and even a special operation force.

About the Guest

Dr. David C. Ellis is a Resident Senior Fellow at Joint Special Operations University (JSOU). He holds a doctorate in international relations and comparative politics from the University of Florida. Dr. Ellis's research on democratization and development in identity conflict spans over two decades. His interests in peacekeeping, conflict resolution, development, and atrocity in ethnic conflict focused his doctoral research on identity, social movements, organization and social learning theory, and economic growth theory. Dr. Ellis served as an intelligence analyst in the USSOCOM J2, deployed to Afghanistan in support of Special Operations Forces from 2010–2011, and joined JSOU in 2016. His current research focuses on the intersection of complexity, organizational learning within the special operations community, and integrated campaigning.

Audio credits

From Storyblocks (<https://www.storyblocks.com/>) and the song is called "A Taste of Victory" by Valentina Gribanova. Produced with Apple's GarageBand by the hosts.

Further Reading

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991)

Ariotti, Margret H. and Kevin T. Fridy, *Informal Governance as a Force Multiplier in Counterterrorism: Evidence for Burkina Faso* (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2020)

Searle, Tom. *Outside the Box: A New General Theory of Special Operations* (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2017)

Urry, John. *Global Complexity* (Malden: Polity Press, 2003)

