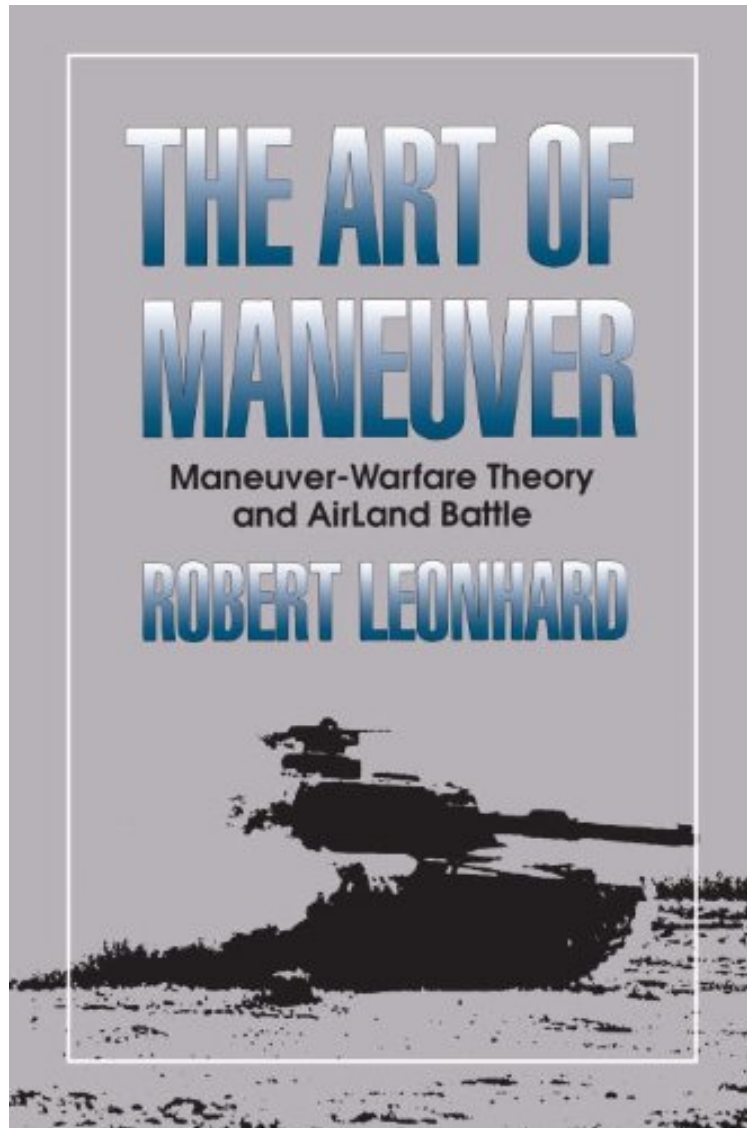


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The Art of Maneuver: Maneuver Warfare Theory and Airland Battle

Robert Leonhard

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Robert Leonhard : The Art of Maneuver: Maneuver Warfare Theory and Airland Battle before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Art of Maneuver: Maneuver Warfare Theory and Airland Battle:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Important to anyone interested in real world military strategy. By Sylvester Reveals some of deep problems with our military, showing how social conventions and ego have more impact on professional military organizations than anything else. And although Leonhard doesn't say so directly he

implies through his own experiences that these problem continue because most military practitioners cannot imagine anything other way of operating. I am at the moment a private in the Army, and if I could I would build on what Leonhard has to say. But for now I simply recommend this book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.
Solid Book
By Donald H. Sabathier
This is not a new book covering new ground. For those of us who were in the Army or Marines and went through Officer Advance Courses or Command General Staff and Infantry or Armor maneuver tactics, this is normal stuff. That being said, it is a good book. Don't expect to blast through it. It is not a rousing story of men in combat. Think about what you are reading as you go through the book and try to apply the principles to your present circumstances. It is worth the time and effort.

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful.
Seriously flawed - probably not the best investment in time
By Utah Blaine
Before I throw Col. Leonhard under the bus, I should make it clear that I've never served in the military in any capacity. It may well be that there is a great deal more to what Col. Leonhard writes that would be self-evident to a serving officer (in terms of background and world view) that I'm missing due to my lack of background. In my own discipline (physics), anyone can pick up a volume of the Landau and Lifschitz series and read through it, but I can guarantee that you aren't going to appreciate all the subtleties without dedicating a lifetime of study and experience to the field. I approached this book as an interested, reasonably well-read non-specialist who has read a great deal of Bill Lind's writings online, read about the Gulf War (e.g. Col. Summers account), the 2003 invasion of Iraq, etc. and I wanted to learn in detail what the experts view of maneuver war is and how it is different from the doctrine that Lind calls 2nd generation warfare. In short (and with the above caveats in mind), this work can only be characterized as a huge disappointment. There are, in my view, two fatal flaws in this work. First, at least half the text is taken up with Col. Leonhard's personal rantings about shortcomings in Army training, doctrine, AirLand battle, etc. In particular, he repeatedly rants about AirLand battle doctrine is flawed. By the 27th time he states this, I think the reader gets the picture. One of the other reviewers states that this book is a tough read, but contains a great deal of info. I agree with this assessment, but it is a tough read because it is poorly written. The prose could have been tightened up, and more than half the discussion in the book removed as irrelevant. Second, his conclusions often contradict his general thesis, or in several cases his conclusions really leave more questions than answers. He spends several hundred pages pointing out the flaws in the (then current - published in 1991) US Army Airland Battle, then as a case study talks about the invasion of Panama in 1989 and describes it as a great success for maneuver warfare. As an example of the latter phenomenon (answers versus questions), he goes to great length to explain the historical development of AirLand battle and how it was a response to the Soviet threat to Western Europe. He then rails about the flaws of the AirLand battle (and attrition warfare in general) and the superiorities of maneuver warfare, but then he never addresses the fundamental issue of how NATO should stop a Warsaw Pact invasion of Western Europe within the maneuver warfare paradigm. He never proposes an alternative to the AirLand battle, only criticizes it because it veers from the maneuver warfare paradigm. He vaguely alludes to some type of offensive, pre-emptive action, but I'm not sure how successful this would have been against the huge Warsaw Pact army. In the end, Leonhard left me with the impression that the AirLand battle paradigm was probably the right one and that his rantings about maneuver warfare are greatly overblown. The bottom line is that there is some good info in this book (hence the three stars), but it really isn't that well written or detailed in spite of some of the glowing reviews. I can't really recommend that anyone take the time to read it. Everything that I learned from this book can be discerned in about 10 minutes by reading the Wikipedia entry on maneuver warfare. I'm going to get Bill Lind's book and perhaps look around for some additional references to broaden my knowledge. This book is a real disappointment.

The Art of Maneuver is an important theoretical study of an issue that is currently the subject of much discussion in professional military journals and symposia.

About the Author Robert Leonhard is an active duty army officer currently serving as Professor of Military Science at West Virginia University. He is the author of *The Principles of War for the Information Age*, *The Art of Maneuver*, and *Fighting by Minutes*. He lives in Morgantown, West Virginia.