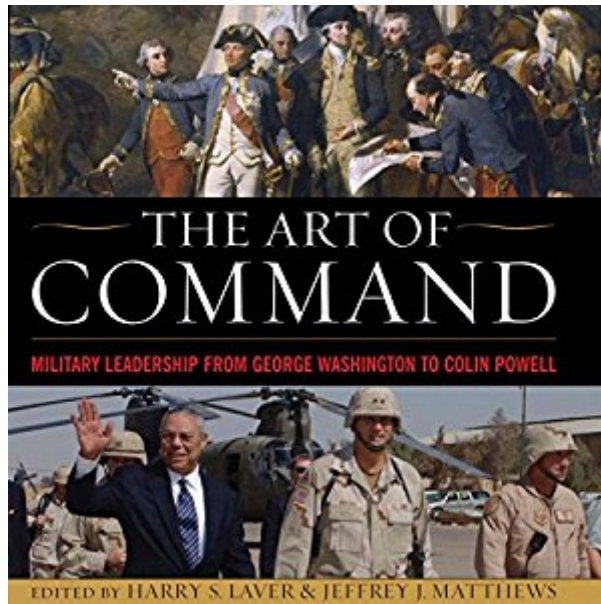


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# The Art Of Command: Military Leadership From George Washington To Colin Powell



## Synopsis

What essential leadership lessons do we learn by distilling the actions and ideas of great military commanders such as George Washington, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Colin Powell? That is the fundamental question underlying *The Art of Command: Military Leadership* from George Washington to Colin Powell. The book illustrates that great leaders become great through conscious effort - a commitment not only to develop vital skills but also to surmount personal shortcomings. Harry S. Laver, Jeffrey J. Matthews, and the other contributing authors identify nine core characteristics of highly effective leadership, such as integrity, determination, vision, and charisma, and nine significant figures in American military history whose careers embody those qualities. *The Art of Command* examines each figure's strengths and weaknesses and how those attributes affected their leadership abilities, offering a unique perspective of military leadership in American history. Laver and Matthews have assembled a list of contributors from military, academic, and professional circles, which allows the book to encompass diverse approaches to the study of leadership.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a good, not great book. While there are some very good stories regarding leaders, the analyses are somewhat superficial. This is likely a function of the word limits provided to the contributors. I felt like I was reading awards citations written by fawning subordinates about leaders who are just a little "too perfect". The fact is that some of these leaders had faults that are simplistically over-looked but important to consider in any serious leadership discussions. This is a

primer for introducing key leaders but should be used with care since it does not provide the depth necessary to critically analyze the leadership used by the subjects. It is a level above "Wiki" knowledge but does not substitute for in-depth biographies.

The book is a good book to help military officers study successful leaders, and possibly motivate these officers to grow, but that's about the extent of its utility. The book is based on the trait theory of leadership, and each chapter illustrates a trait through the story of a general. Two problems; one, most in behavioral science have moved past the trait theory of leadership (about 70 years ago), and two, the bios sometimes feel shoe-horned to fit the trait being described. Not a bad book, but not great either.

My husband needed this for his army college course. I didn't read it but am told the content is actually quite interesting and anyone going to the Army college for CGSG is going to NEED it so be prepared to buy it when the post library doesn't carry it!

I bought this book for a graduate class in leadership, and I have enjoyed reading it. As opposed to other 'texts', it is simply written, so it is easy and pleasant to sit through. The only negative is it does go into a lot of detail about the middle years of each person's careers, which became somewhat monotonous. If the author had summarized these years a bit more, it would have kept my interest better. That being said, learning of each military leaders' early years and development was interesting and worth reading.

The Art of Command highlights specific leader traits from various United States military leaders, dating back to George Washington. This is a simple book; a great read if you've never read a history book, or are unfamiliar with the leaders that are used as examples in the book.

A well organized collection on 9 specific aspects of leadership as embodied by historical figures (Chesty Puller, Eisenhower, Powell, etc.). Strong analysis with support and some counterarguments make this read move swiftly and fully supporting the theme for each chapter.

I bought this book to use in OCS (Officer Candidate School) USARMY in 2009. Book actually was a good read, although I was more reading it to fill the status quo of a required paper. I do not think it has the same literary views like the Art of War.

A visitor to New York can step back in time and touch our Colonial and Revolutionary past with a tour of Fraunces Tavern on 54 Pearl Street in lower Manhattan. In this haunt of old New York you will find a selection of draft beers, oysters, and American history. This is a beautifully-restored colonial tavern that was founded by Samuel Fraunces in 1767. It was in the Long room of Fraunces tavern in 1783 that General George Washington bade an emotional farewell to his officers after winning victory in the American Revolution. He had hoped to retire peacefully to his farm at Mount Vernon. It was not to be. George Washington was the "indispensable man" of the American Revolution. He led the nation in a long struggle against the greatest military power of that age -- the British Empire. The American Revolution has proven to be by far the most successful Revolution in human history. It is the Revolution whose reverberations that continually encourage the cause of human liberty are felt to this day. At the heart of this Revolution was a leader of exceptional integrity. He shared the sufferings of the men under his command at Valley Forge and throughout the Revolution. On March 15, 1783 Washington addressed his officers in Fraunces Tavern thus: "I have never left your side one moment...I have been the constant companion and witness of your Distress, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits...I have ever considered my own Military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the Army." Some of Washington's officers were tempted by the prospect of using their military superiority to overthrow the Colonial government. They wanted him to become an American Caesar. Washington rebuffed those who sought to "overturn the liberties of our Country". He demanded that they do nothing "which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained." At the conclusion of the war the Continental Congress was essentially broke. His officers feared that neither they nor their men would be paid. Washington sought to reassure his officers with a densely written text explaining the nation's financial difficulties. He pulled his spectacles out of his pocket to read more easily and remarked, "Gentlemen, you must pardon me, I have grown gray in your service and now find myself going blind." In 1783 New York was the nation's capitol. George Washington formally resigned his commission on 23 December, 1783. He addressed the president of Congress, Thomas Mifflin as follows: "Having now finished the whorl assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of Action; an bidding an Affectionate farewell to this August body under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life." Mifflin responded, "You have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, through invariably regarding the rights of the civil government through all disasters and changes." If you like *The Art of Command* you will also enjoy

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