

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

This issue marks the beginning of our second year as *Æther: A Journal of Strategic Airpower & Spacepower*. Over the course of 2022, Team *Æther* published the work of 55 authors across 37 long-form articles. Our annual print distribution totaled over 14,000, and the journal tallied approximately 150,000 views and downloads of *Æther* articles worldwide over 10 months. In addition to book reviews and a podcast, we added a new line of digital-only informed commentaries called “Perspectives.” It’s been a busy but rewarding year, and I am extremely grateful for our small but mighty team and the remarkable researchers and practitioners who chose to publish with us in 2022.

Our first offering of 2023 journeys from leaders in the history of airpower to events in Ukraine, Russia, and the Middle East, and along the way considers military strategy and the effects of combat on military service. The Spring 2023 issue leads with a review essay of *Airpower Pioneers: From Billy Mitchell to Dave Deptula* (2023), edited by John Andreas Olsen. General Ron Fogleman, USAF, Retired, who served as the 15th chief of staff of the Air Force (1994 to 1997), met, worked for, or worked with 9 of the 12 Airmen featured in the book. He provides an insightful overview of these leader-innovators and their contributions to US airpower.

A military service is as much about individuals as it is about the institutions that provide a context in which individuals can excel. The lived accounts, even in the guise of a fictional narrative, of people in key Air Force institutions provide important context for today’s reckoning with past grievances and in fact highlight progress the service has made. In our second review essay, Bill Eliason brings the memories of his time at the US Air Force Academy in the late 1970s to bear in his review of Mark Clodfelter’s *Between Two Shades of Blue*, the first work of fiction by this leading airpower thinker.

In our *Ways of War* forum, Alison Russell examines the so-called digital blockade of Russia that began in the early months of Russia’s war in Ukraine, arguing it should more accurately be referred to as a digital corporate boycott. In the second article in the forum, Roy Boone, David Rehbein, John Swegle, and Christopher Yeaw make the case that the capability asymmetry between the United States/NATO and Russia could

trigger a decision by Moscow to employ nonstrategic nuclear weapons in the early stages of a future conflict.

The *On Strategy* forum begins with a look at strategic narratives. Nick Blas explores the role of strategic narratives in society and military strategy and reminds military planners to be cognizant of the importance of these narratives. The forum then turns to the Arctic. Elizabeth Anne Hoettels argues for revisions to the Health Support Services annex to the *DoD Arctic Strategy* to better enable critical Joint health services in the event of an Arctic conflict.

Our third forum, *The Costs of War*, take us to Afghanistan. Kelly Atkinson proposes a theory of mission injury and advises institutional changes to the structure of US military service to mitigate this form of trauma in future conflicts. In *Airpower in the Middle East*, we venture to the eastern Mediterranean region as Joshua Dryden outlines the development of Israeli and Iranian airpower in recent decades, revealing lessons from this protracted conflict that can be applied to other advanced air forces facing adversaries employing similar asymmetric capabilities.

The issue closes with *Par Avion* in which we are pleased to share an article from *Vortex: Studies on Air and Space Power*, published by the French Air and Space Forces. Anne Maurin examines Russia's cosmostrategy and argues Moscow's recent tendency to undertake guerilla actions in space is an attempt to counterbalance its otherwise lagging space industry.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our latest issue. Æ

~ The Editor

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