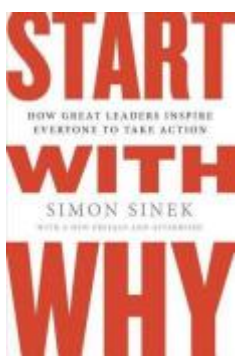




Last year, I wrote a [post](#) in which I highlighted the books I read in 2013; I really enjoyed reflecting on those titles and the insights gained from them, which is why I did it again this year. In addition to preparing me for the academic rigors of the Naval War College, professional reading has helped to broaden my perspectives and hone my judgment as a military leader. I learned ALOT this year from the books on this list, and hope that in writing this post you find a book or two that interests you. If you have any recommendations for me or comments on any of the titles, please add them to comments section below!

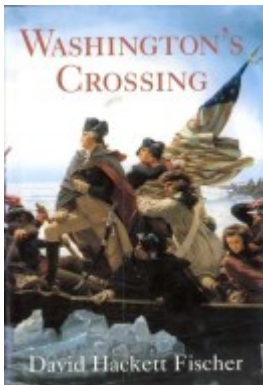
Top 5 of 2014

- 1.) [Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action by Simon Sinek](#)



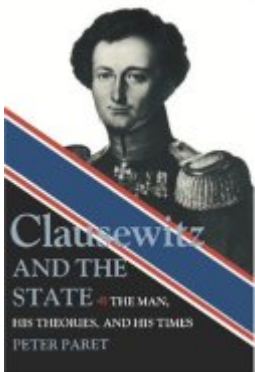
Simon Sinek's book made me reflect on the "why" behind my actions as a husband and father, my continued service to the nation, my writing endeavors, and all the other "side projects" I do. Start with Why has forced me to put my goals into perspective and has helped to shape my outlook on my military career and professional future. Before we look at how we lead, which is what many of us do, I think it's more important to understand why we lead in the first place.

2.) [Washington's Crossing by David Hackett Fischer](#)



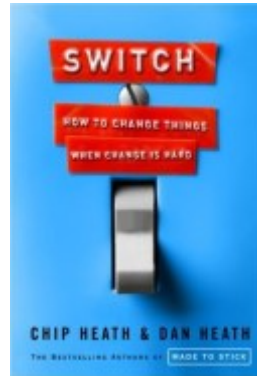
This book brought the early years of the American Revolution to life for me and highlighted the Clausewitzian Trinity of passions, rationality, and chance in this conflict. This book delves heavily into the leadership of George Washington, offering a lot of great lessons for military leaders at all levels.

3.) [Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories, and His Times](#)



After reading *On War*, I wanted to learn more about the context in which Clausewitz wrote as well as his background. After finishing this book, I saw Carl von Clausewitz as a relatable military professional who spent his entire life struggling to understand war after experiencing it as such an early age. His “why” for writing *On War* will be evident to anyone who reads this book. One of my favorite quotes of Dead Carl comes out of *Clausewitz and the State*: “Had I enjoyed the good fortune of continuing to instruct you I should not have tried to burden you with my art of war-but by developing my views would have hoped to awaken yours: you would rise above me and learn to judge me..”

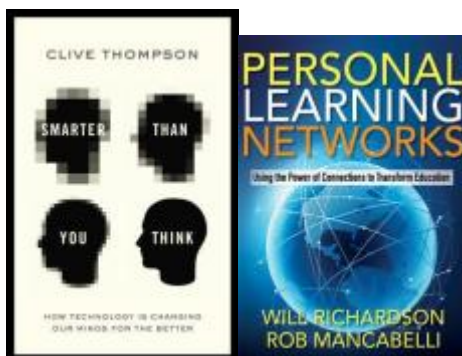
4.) [Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard by Chip and Dan Heath](#)



Even though change is constant in the military, I feel that we fumble the ball more often than we should. This book provides some great insights for leaders when instituting organizational change from the tactical level all the way to up to DoD. This book inspired a post I wrote on Mission Command: [Finding the Path Towards Mission Command: An Exercise](#)

5.) [Personal Learning Networks: Using the Power of Connections to Transform Education by Will Richardson](#)

and [Smarter Than You Think: How Technology is Changing Our Minds for the Better by Clive Thompson](#)



Personal Learning Networks coupled with Smarter than You Think has made me rethink how we educate leaders in the military profession. This book inspired one of my earlier posts this year: [The Power of Our Connections](#)

Below are all the books from 2014:

War, Strategy, and Operational Art:

[Washington's Crossing by David Hackett Fischer](#)

[Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq by Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor](#)

[Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century by P.W. Singer](#)

[Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories, and His Times](#)

[Grant: Memoirs and Selected Letters by Ulysses S. Grant](#)

[War, Strategy, and Military Effectiveness by Williamson Murray](#)

[Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age by Peter Paret](#)

[Strategy: A History by Lawrence Freedman](#)

[Clausewitz and Contemporary War by Antulio J. Echevarria III](#)

[Cyber Security and Cyberwar by P.W. Singer](#)

[In Pharaoh's Army: Memories of the Lost War by Tobias Wolff](#)

Leadership:

[Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action by Simon Sinek](#)

[Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting out of the Box by Arbinger Institute](#)

[The Effective Executive: The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done by Peter Drucker](#)

[Next Generation Leader by Andy Stanley](#)

[Never Eat Alone: And Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time by Keith Ferrazzi](#)

[Thinking in Time by Richard E. Neustadt](#)

Adaptation and Innovation:

[The Roots of Blitzkrieg: Hans Von Seeckt and German Military Reform by James S. Corum](#)

[Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard by Chip and Dan Heath](#)

[Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All by Tom Kelley](#)

[The Chaos Imperative: How Chance and Disruption Increase Innovation, Effectiveness, and Success by Ori Brafman](#)

[Seeing What Others Don't: The Remarkable Ways We Gain Insights by Gary Klein](#)

Religion and Philosophy:

[Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor E. Frankl](#)

[The Misunderstood God: The Lies Religion Tells About God by Darin Hufford](#)

Education:

[Smarter Than You Think: How Technology is Changing Our Minds for the Better](#)

[Personal Learning Networks: Using the Power of Connections to Transform Education by Will Richardson](#)

Fiction:

[God Knows By Joseph Heller](#)

Random Curiosity:

[Plagues and Peoples by William H. McNeill](#)

Currently Reading:

[The Accidental Admiral: A Sailor Takes Command at Nato by James G. Stavridis](#)

[War, Peace, and International Relations: An Introduction to Strategic History by Colin S. Gray](#)

[Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias: The Warriors of Contemporary Combat by Richard Shultz and Andrea Dew](#)

[Defeat into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945 by Viscount William Slim](#)

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