



By Megan Jantos

If you’ve spent any time on social media you will find that there are people who instantly attract your attention. You could be quickly scrolling through your digital platform of choice and when you see their posts you can’t help but read, like, share, or comment. If you’re really paying attention you’ll likely notice the presence of a particular emotion such as

belonging, anger, joy or fear.

In Robert Greene’s book, [*The Art of Seduction*](#), he teaches readers how to influence others using human psychology. The two-part book outlines nine seductive archetypes and the process by which each character may use their unique wiles to draw others close. Greene highlights numerous historical and literary examples to underscore his premise.

High-profile people are often polarizing, especially when these types of influencers are in the military. What is different for Army influencers is the scrutiny and risk that comes with a military affiliation. Not only are these folks doubling down publically on their reputation, but they must also consider the real-world risk to operations created by leading via social media.

I plan to explore these topics and more at this year’s Association of the United States Army Annual Meeting during a panel titled “Risky Business: Army Leadership in the Information Age.” I’m beyond excited to interview four of the most irresistible military influencers October 14, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. This star-studded event is scheduled to include social media personalities Steve Leonard (@DoctrineMan, Kelsey Cochran (@LadyLovesTaft), BG Pat Donahoe, and, for the first time, a public appearance by a member of the U.S Army W.T.F! Moments admin staff.

As we organized the panel, I couldn’t stop wondering what made each of these digital leaders so influential. Lucky for me, Greene’s book provided me some insight into why audiences love—and sometimes love to hate—these influencers. From this context, I will introduce you to our panelists through an archetypal interpretation.

The Natural

Panelist: [Steven Leonard a.k.a. Doctrine Man](#)

Secret Power: The ability to combine adult experience and wisdom with a childlike manner.

Why is he so irresistible? Even as a cartoon Doctrine Man is relatable. According to the [New York Times](#), this caped crusader attracts service members who identify with his campaign against large institutions flying on autopilot over a rapidly changing and dangerous world. His honest and playful content gives audiences who’ve been at war for almost two decades some much needed comic relief.

The Ideal Lover

Panelist: [U.S Army W.T.F! moments Rep](#)

Secret Power: The ability to satisfy broken dreams, ideas about people or reality that they had in their youth that could not be satisfied.

Why do they have more followers than Army Times? USAWTFM is perhaps the most successful seducer in U.S. Army history. The news often helps sell the adventurous story told by Army recruiting videos. But, the sexy footage of rappelling Soldiers and colorful prose detailing the next best tech only depicts part of the story. Good, bad-and ugly-USAWTFM tells the rest.

The Dandy

Panelist: [1LT Kelsey Cochran a.k.a. Lady Loves Taft](#)

Their Seductive Power: Those who are more fluid and ambiguous, who create their own persona, excite us.

How did she become the most (in)famous 1LT in the Army? Lady defies the traditional Army categorization. She tweets with freedom most military members only long for. Her discussions of [sexuality and mental health](#) break taboo. Lady [sees her digital presence as a way to humanize service members](#). She cleverly walks a tightrope of insolence and esprit de corps that prevents audiences from looking away.

The Charismatic

Panelist: [BG Pat Donahoe](#)

Secret Power: *The type that enters a room and steals the attention.*

Is there even a question? It’s no surprise that people take notice when a general enters the room. However, attracting and maintaining genuine engagement in the digital sphere differs from leader to leader. While the most prominent Army figures typically have a social media presence, they don’t usually manage their own accounts. Donahoe keeps crowds engaged with authentic, self-generated content that few others within his cohort can match.

To learn more about how these influencers manage reputational and operational risk in the information age, follow the hashtag #AUSADigital2019 on Facebook and Twitter. FTGN will broadcast live from [Facebook](#). Have questions for our panelists? Tweet us or direct message on Twitter [@FTGNotebook](#).

Megan Jantos is a communication advisor to military leaders and working women. She believes effective communication—a firm handshake or well-aimed bullet—can solve any problem. You can find her on Twitter @MeganJantos, crushing weights at the gym, or helping the nearest person unleash their potential.

This article represents her own opinions, which are not necessarily those of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the federal government.

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