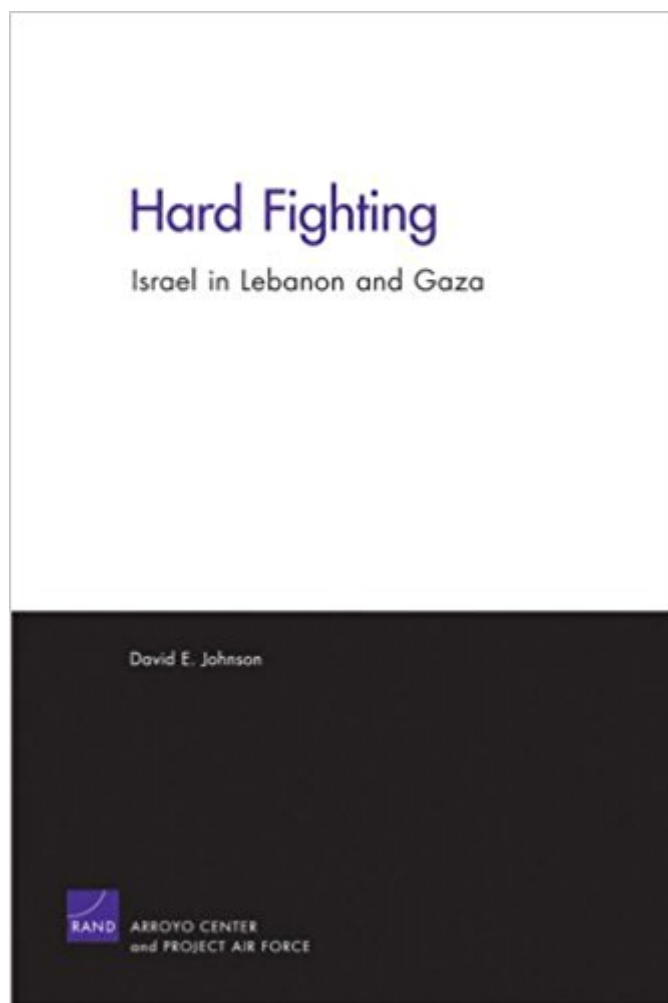


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# Hard Fighting: Israel In Lebanon And Gaza



## Synopsis

Like Israel in 2006, the United States today is likely ill prepared for hybrid warfare. To identify lessons that the U.S. military might learn from the Israeli experience in Lebanon, the author examines the state of the Israeli military before the Second Lebanon War, the lessons it learned during that conflict, the reforms it undertook to address its deficiencies, and how it fared during Operation Cast Lead three years later.

## Book Information

Paperback: 264 pages

Publisher: RAND Corporation (December 23, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0833058509

ISBN-13: 978-0833058508

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,306,269 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 in [Books > History > Middle East > Lebanon](#) #738 in [Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Military Sciences](#) #1177 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Middle East](#)

## Customer Reviews

David Johnson has written an analytically robust, exhaustively researched, empirically rich and illuminating account of the recent Israeli operational experiences in Lebanon and Gaza. . . . This groundbreaking research is an indispensable source of professional knowledge for armed forces seeking to maintain operational competence against the spectrum of irregular, hybrid and conventional opponents. Dima Adamksy, Assistant Professor at the School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy, IDC Herzliya, and author of *The Culture of Military Innovation: The Impact of Cultural Factors on the Revolution in Military Affairs in Russia, the US, and Israel* Johnson offers a trenchant and informed analysis of how Israel successfully transformed its military after its disastrous performance in the 2006 Lebanon War. *Hard Fighting* offers lessons for the United States and other countries that must ensure that their militaries can fight across a wide range of military operations. Daniel Byman, Professor at Georgetown University, research director of the Saban Center at Brookings, and author of *A High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism* Dave Johnson is the only soldier-scholar I know who writes with authority on both

air and ground operations. His earlier books--Fast Tanks and Heavy Bombers and Learning Large Lessons--are brilliant. Hard Fighting is as well; the best book yet on Israel's recent wars in Lebanon and Gaza and full of important insights for the U.S. joint force as it prepares for the future. Lieutenant General David A. Deptula (U.S. Air Force, retired), Former U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance David Johnson presents a thorough and in-depth study of the IDF's learning and evolution in the last/past years. This is recommended reading not only for American officers and analysts but for Israelis as well. Colonel Meir Finkel, Director, Doctrine and Concept Department, Ground Forces Command, Israel Defense Forces, and author of On Flexibility: Recovery from Technological and Doctrinal Surprise on the Battlefield A lucid, informative and insightful assessment of the Israeli military's struggle to adapt to the demands of hybrid warfare, from one of America's foremost military authorities. Must reading for military professionals and senior policymakers interested in anticipating shifts in the character of warfare rather than reacting to them. Andrew Krepinevich, President, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, and author of 7 Deadly Scenarios: A Military Futurist Explores War in the 21st Century

The author examines the state of the Israeli military before the Second Lebanon War, the lessons it learned during that conflict, the reforms it undertook to address its deficiencies, and how it fared during Operation Cast Lead three years later.

A Rand study report on an investigation of Israeli operations in the 2nd Lebanon War and Operation Cast Iron in the Gaza Strip. It is a good review of the doctrinal and other background leading to Israeli performance. However, its conclusions continue the perspective of the Hezbollah and Hamas threat as "Hybrid" as defined by Frank Hoffman as opposed to being just a maturation of an insurgent force into a light infantry force. Thus, it indicates a discovery of the need for such traditional skills as combined arms operations and joint fires coordination.

Since the attacks of 9-11, published accounts of battles of insurgency and counterinsurgency have expanded dramatically. But few record the kinds of lessons that David Johnson highlights in his carefully and clearly written research, "Hard Fighting." Dr. Johnson's comparative analysis shows how the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) assessed its own performance in Second Lebanon War in 2006, found it lacking, and then dramatically adjusted strategy, policy, and doctrine with "Operation Cast Lead," in Gaza in December 2008. Johnson builds a theme for his book early on: the necessity to engage in hybrid warfare. In the first campaign, the IDF faced Hezbollah, a force that had

received "extensive training in Lebanon, Syria, and Iran, and learned how to blend guerilla tactics with conventional military tactics and weapons to create an innovative concept for defending southern Lebanon." In the second case, Operation Cast Lead, the IDF "was markedly better prepared to fight another hybrid opponent: Hamas." The adjustments by the IDF went so far as to re-direct training strategies for its reserve forces as well as to re-orient the force on to training for maneuver warfare. Dr. Johnson sets up a compelling case for the relationship between "levels" of adversaries: non-state irregular, state-sponsored hybrid, and state. Among the most important lessons for US forces, he writes, "The skills and processes needed to prevail against hybrid opponents are different in many respects from those required to conduct a counterinsurgency. They require highly integrated joint, combined-arms fire-and-maneuver skills used in major combat operations, but at lower organizational level (i.e., the brigade combat team level)." There are other critical lessons that flow from this major finding. Dr. Johnson shows the striking feature of hybrid warfare: how terror organizations managed to develop sophisticated tactics of maneuver, with some credible technologies, to challenge a modern force inside its own schema of battle, showing that though one may think at first that his enemy does not resemble conventional army, it nonetheless is organized and deadly. This is a rare book. It holds concise yet detailed wisdom for both tactician and strategist. If asked to advise leaders about what they might read to learn about recent experiences in countering vague and hybrid threats, and they had time for only one book, I would advise them to carefully read this before deciding upon any training strategy. This would apply to active and reserve forces, to maneuver as well as staff functions.

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