



The Evolution of Cyber War: International Norms for Emerging-Technology Weapons

By *Brian M. Mazanec*

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Former secretary of defense Leon Panetta once described cyber warfare as “the most serious threat in the twenty-first century,” capable of destroying our entire infrastructure and crippling the nation.

Already, major cyber attacks have affected countries around the world: Estonia in 2007, Georgia in 2008, Iran in 2010, and most recently the United States. As with other methods of war, cyber technology can be used not only against military forces and facilities but also against civilian targets. Information technology has enabled a new method of warfare that is proving extremely difficult to combat, let alone defeat.

And yet cyber warfare is still in its infancy, with innumerable possibilities and contingencies for how such conflicts may play out in the coming decades. Brian M. Mazanec examines the worldwide development of constraining norms for cyber war and predicts how those norms will unfold in the future. Employing case studies of other emerging-technology weapons—chemical and biological, strategic bombing, and nuclear weaponry—Mazanec expands previous understandings of norm-evolution theory, offering recommendations for U.S. policymakers and citizens alike as they grapple with the reality of cyber terrorism in our own backyard.

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- Sales Rank: #1679124 in Books
- Published on: 2015-11-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.30" h x 1.12" w x 6.23" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 352 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Mazanec certainly has the credentials and background to examine this topic. . . . Well written from start to finish."—Lt. Col. George Hodge, *Military Review*
(Lt. Col. George Hodge *Military Review*)

"Will norms evolve for cyber warfare analogous to those . . . that have helped keep the world free from the use of nuclear weapons since 1945? This thoughtful and careful work parses this hugely important question with care and creativity. Bravo."—R. James Woolsey, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency and chairman of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies
(R. James Woolsey 2015-03-18)

"Dr. Mazanec's pioneering work on cyber norms fills a void in the nascent canon of cyber-conflict knowledge and sets a path forward for further research. Informative and instructive for today's policymakers."—Bob Gourley, former chief technology officer of the Defense Intelligence Agency and the first director of intelligence at the Joint Task Force on Computer Network Defense
(Bob Gourley 2015-03-18)

"Brian Mazanec has produced a stellar work by creating a set of norms and then applying them across different evolutions of weapons platforms."—Jeffrey Carr, CEO of cyber security firm Taia Global, Inc., and author of *Inside Cyber Warfare: Mapping the Cyber Underworld*
(Jeffrey Carr 2015-03-18)

"*The Evolution of Cyber War* is a significant contribution to the required canon for anyone interested in understanding this new prospective weapon of mass destruction."—Keith Payne, former deputy assistant secretary of defense for Forces Policy and current president of the National Institute for Public Policy
(Keith Payne 2015-03-18)

About the Author

Brian M. Mazanec is an assistant director for defense capabilities and management with the U.S. government and an adjunct professor in the School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs at George Mason University. He is the coauthor of *Deterring Cyber Warfare: Bolstering Strategic Stability in Cyberspace*, and his work has appeared in *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, the *National Cybersecurity Institute Journal*, *Comparative Strategy*, *Politics and the Life Sciences*, and the *Journal of International Security Affairs*.

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