

## Invitation – Military History Zoom Presentation



**'Niche Wars:**  
Australia in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001-2014'

**Speaker: Professor John Blaxland**

MHHV Zoom Speaker Event  
Wednesday 5 May 2021 7:00PM-8:00PM



### 'Niche Wars – Australia in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001-2014'

**Speaker: Professor John Blaxland**

**Wednesday 5 May 2021 @ 7:00pm to 8:00pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time)**

Book your ticket: <https://www.mhhv.org.au/event/niche-wars-australia-in-afghanistan-and-iraq-2001-2014-speaker-professor-john-blaxland/>



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### The presentation

Professor John Blaxland will examine Australia's experience of military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq from 2001 to 2014 (the Niche Wars). These operations saw over 40 Australian soldiers killed and hundreds wounded. But the toll since has been greater. For Afghanistan and Iraq the costs are hard to measure.

Australia invoked the ANZUS Alliance following the Al Qaeda attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001. But unlike the calls to arms at the onset of the world wars, Australia decided to make only carefully calibrated force contributions in support of the US-led coalition campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. Why is this so?

Amongst the issues canvassed will be: Why were these forces deployed? What role did Australia play in shaping the strategy and determining the outcome? How effective were

they? Why is so little known about Australia's involvement in these campaigns? What lessons can be learned from this experience?

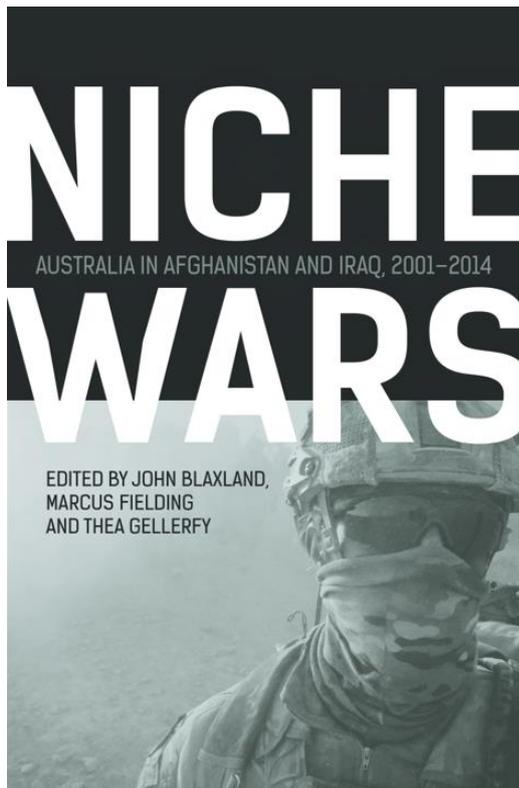
## About the presenter



**John Blaxland** is Professor of International Security and Intelligence Studies at the Australian National University (ANU). He is also a former military intelligence officer and former Head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at ANU and occasional media commentator. His publications include *Niche Wars: Australia in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001-2014* (2020); *In From The Cold: Reflections on Australia's Korean War, 1950-53* (2020); *A Geostrategic SWOT Analysis for Australia* (2019); *The Secret Cold War* (2016); *East Timor Intervention* (2015); *The Protest*

*Years* (2015); *The Australian Army From Whitlam to Howard* (2014); *Strategic Cousins* (2006); *Revisiting Counterinsurgency* (2006); *Information era Manoeuvre* (2003); *Signals: Swift and Sure* (1998); and *Organising an Army* (1989).

## The book



*Niche Wars* commences with a scene-setting overview of Australia's military involvement in the Middle East over more than a century. It then draws on unique insights from many angles, across a spectrum of men and women, ranging from key Australian decision makers, practitioners and observers. The book includes a wide range of perspectives in chapters written by federal government ministers, departmental secretaries, service commanders, task force commanders, sailors, soldiers, airmen and women, international aid workers, diplomats, police, journalists, coalition observers and academics.

*Niche Wars* makes for compelling reading but also stands as a reference work on how and why Australia became entangled in these conflicts that had devastating consequences. If lessons can be learned from history about how Australia uses its military forces, this book is where to find them.

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