



# **The Marine Corps' Search for a Mission, 1880-1898 (Modern War Studies (Hardcover))**

*Jack Shulimson*

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Heirs to a storied past and glamorized as modern-day knights, the Marine Corps—the elite fighting force in America's military—in fact has not always been so highly regarded. As Jack Shulimson shows, only a century ago the Corps' identity and existence were much in question.

Although the Marines were formally established by Congress in 1798 and subsequently distinguished themselves fighting on the Barbary Coast, their essential mission and identity remained unclear throughout most of the nineteenth century. But amid the crosscurrents of industrialization, technological change, professionalization, and reform that emerged in Gilded Age America, the Corps underwent a gradual transformation that ultimately secured its significant and enduring military role.

In this enlightening study, Shulimson argues that the Marine Corps officers' inextricable ties to the Navy both hampered and aided their attempt to define their own special jurisdiction and professional identity. Often treated like a poor relation, the Marine officers frequently found themselves in direct competition with their counterparts in the Navy and at times the object of the latter's scorn. Shulimson reveals the processes, politics, and personalities that converged to create these tense and sometimes embattled relations, but he goes on to show how Marine officers (with the Navy's blessing) eventually transcended their second-class role.

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