

Military, War, and Society

in the (mostly) 20th century United States

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Hours: T/Th 2:30-4:00
and by appointment

In this colloquium, we'll explore the growing field of "new" military history—which, in fact, has its origins before (most of?) you were born. We'll discuss the origins and development of the field, as well as its relations to the broader field of military history and to broader trends in historical questions and methods from the 1980s to the present.

I'm trying to avoid the book-a-week, talk-about-it-until-we-all-hate-it model by mixing in other sorts of assignments that I hope may be enjoyable as well as useful. More detail below, but in summary: each of you will be responsible for the class Blackboard blog twice (I know it's an outdated format, but it nonetheless seems best for our goals); each will select a representation of war or of the US military to teach to the seminar, thinking of it as a potential exercise for an undergraduate class in military history; you'll compose a short journal-type review of one of the assigned texts. For your final project you will write a 10 to 15-page historiographical essay on a specific subtopic in the field (based on a list of books and articles that I approve in advance).

Course Requirements

PARTICIPATION: The success of this course--and its usefulness to you--depends on careful preparation, spirited participation, and collegiality. Don't just read the assignments; analyze and critique them. Take a position and come to class ready to make an argument or raise a question. I expect all to bring their strengths to our common endeavor. **Attendance** is required, as much of the work of the seminar will be conducted in class discussions. If you are too ill to attend class or have an emergency that prevents you from coming, email me in advance if at all possible.

For each class meeting, prepare a question you think will prompt useful discussion of the assigned work and email it to me by noon of the day the class meets. In addition, when you come to class, have in mind a title I could have used on the syllabus for this session/set of readings.

CLASS BLOG: I've set up a class blog on Blackboard. We'll use it for a few full-class assignments (Introductions, etc.) and it's open for you to post anything you'd like to share with the class. But each member of the class will be responsible for the blog twice during the semester: once individually, and once for the entire class at once. Use your slot(s) to raise questions about the week's reading—questions that should help to frame our discussion—but also to point out connections and themes that intrigue you overall. Link to reviews of the book; possibly suggest other related readings. But be creative, as well—go beyond the boundaries of academic publication if you'd like. Art, music, maps,

video clips . . . anything that you think might either broaden or focus our conversations. I expect everyone to read blog posts before class each week.

PRESENTATIONS: We're going to use individual presentations to discuss representations of war or of the US military or other sorts of primary texts that might help us analyze some aspect of the US military. Each of you will do a presentation over the course of the semester. Your choice of text—music, film clip, poem, visual image--it's pretty much open, though if it's anything that takes more than a few minutes for the class to watch or read I'd suggest furnishing it ahead of time. Each of you will teach your chosen "representation" to the class; you'll have half an hour of class time to work with. We'll talk more about the assignment and possible texts in class. If you're interested in representations of the US military, you might look at a work like Huebner's *The Warrior Image: Soldiers in American Culture from the Second World War to the Vietnam Era* for ideas about questions one might ask. Think of this as the chance to experiment with an assignment you might use in an undergraduate class and to get feedback on it.

REVIEW: One short professional review of an assigned text, similar to what would appear in the *Journal of American History*. Approximately 600 words, which is slightly more than you'd really be allowed. We'll discuss this assignment in more detail.

FINAL PAPER: Write a 10-15 page historiographical essay. You select the books, with my help if you'd like, but I must approve the list in advance. You may rely primarily on the class reading list, but you should include at least a couple of additional works. The paper should focus on a theme, question, or topic, and analyze approaches to it. I will give you more information and guidelines in class.

Readings

I'll expect you either to buy or to use library copies of all books assigned in full (all are or will be on reserve or available as ebooks through KU library). Journal articles are available through KU databases or on Blackboard if KU doesn't have access, and when brief segments of books are assigned they'll be available either on reserve or on Blackboard.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

August 28

Introductions; Debates and Justifications

Please read these in the order below:

John A. Lynn, "The Embattled Future of Academic Military History," *The Journal of Military History* v. 61 #4 (October 1997): 777-789

David A. Bell, "Military History Bites the Dust: Casualty of War," *New Republic* (7 May 2007): 16-17 (Blackboard)

Robert M. Citino, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," *American Historical Review* v. 112, #4 (October 2007): 1070—1090

Martin Evans, "Opening up the Battlefield: War Studies and the Cultural Turn," *Journal of War and Culture Studies* v 1, # 1 (2008): 47—51

Roundtable, *Journal of American History*, v. 93 #4 (March 2007) (Lee & Biddle only)

SMH White Paper, "The Role of Military History in the Contemporary Academy"
<http://www.smh-hq.org/whitepaper.html>

During this class period you'll sign up for a presentation and blog/meeting leader dates.

Assignment:

Blog entry (all), to be completed after the class meets:

Introduce yourself (and read each other's entries before subsequent class)

Cultural History of War

September 4

Drew Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (2009)

Mark Smith, "Introduction" and "Cornelia Hancock's Sense of Smell" in *Smell of Battle, Taste of Siege* (2014)

Recommended:

John Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (1987)

Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War* (1989)

Craig Cameron, *American Samurai: Myth, Imagination, and the Conduct of Battle in the First Marine Division, 1941-1951* (1994)

Military Institutions: Culture and Transformation

September 11

Brian Linn, *Elvis's Army: Cold War GIs and the Atomic Battlefield* (2016)

Recommended:

Meredith Lair, *Armed with Abundance* (2011)

P.W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (2011 edition)

Lisa Ellen Sylvestri, *Friended at the Front: Social Media in the American War Zone* (2015)

September 18

Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (2009)

Aaron O'Connell, *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (2012):
"Introduction"; Chapter 3

Recommended:

Jennifer Mittelstadt, *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (2015)

William Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy* (2016)

Christopher Cappozola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (2010)

John Whiteclay Chambers III, *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America* (1987)

Military, War, and the State

September 25

Margot Canaday, "Building a Straight State: Sexuality and Social Citizenship in the 1944 GI Bill," *Journal of American History*, 90:3 (2003): 935-57.

James Sparrow, "'Buying Our Boys Back': The Mass Foundations of Fiscal Citizenship in World War II," *Journal of Policy History* 20:2 (2008): 263-86.

Mark R. Wilson, "The Military-Industrial Complex," in *At War: The Military and American Culture in the Twentieth Century and Beyond*, ed. David Kieran and Edwin A. Martini (2018), 67-86.

George Roeder, *The Censored War: American Visual Experience during WWII*, Chapter I, "Rationing Death"

Select one of the recommended books listed below and be prepared to give an overview of its argument and role in the general conversation about military, war, and the state for the class (in conjunction with another class member). I have copies of each if you need/want to borrow one:

- Kathleen Frydl, *The G.I. Bill* (2009)
Paul Koistinen, *State of War: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1945-2011* (2012)
Rebecca U. Thorpe, *The American Warfare State: The Domestic Politics of Military Spending* (2014)

October 2

Dave Kieran, *Signature Wounds: The Untold Story of the Military's Mental Health Crisis* (2019)

Assignment: Propose topic and potential list of books for final essay

Recommended:

- Stephen Ortiz, ed., *Veterans' Policies, Veterans' Politics* (2012)
Suzanne Mettler, *Soldiers to Citizens* (2007)
John M. Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies: American War and the Problem of the Disabled Veteran* (2015)
Thomas Childers, *Soldier from the War Returning* (2009)
Chris Appy, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam*

October 9 NO CLASS

October 16

Gretchen Heefner, *The Missile Next Door: The Minuteman in the American Heartland* (2012)

Military and Social Change

October 23

Jacqueline E. Whitt and Elizabeth A. Perazzo, "The Military as Social Experiment: Challenging a Trope," *Parameters* (Summer 2018)

https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/issues/Summer_2018/4_WhittPerazzo.pdf

Kara Dixon Vuic, "'I'm afraid we're going to have to just change our ways': Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy in the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War," *Signs*, Summer 2007.

Beth Bailey, "The U.S. Army and 'the Problem of Race': Afros, Race-Consciousness, and Institutional Logic," *Journal of American History*, forthcoming December 2019.

Beth Bailey, "The Politics of Dancing," *Journal of Policy History*, Winter 2013

Charissa Threat, "Does the Sex of the Practitioner Matter? Nursing, Civil Rights, and Discrimination in the Army Nurse Corps, 1947-1955," in Bristol and Stur, eds., *Integrating the U.S. Military* (2017)

Recommended:

Paula Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (1991), "Introduction"; Chapter IV ("New Day Coming: The Federal Government and Black Education in the 1930s and '40s")
David Farber and Beth Bailey, "The 'Double V' Campaign in World War II Hawaii: African Americans, Racial Ideology, and Federal Power," *Journal of Social History*, Summer 1993.

October 30

Kara Vuic, *The Girls Next Door* (2019)
Prof. Vuic will attend a portion of our class.

Recommended

Leisa Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps* (1996)
Linda Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies* (Introduction; Chapter V)
Heather Stur, *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era* (2011)
James Westheider, *Fighting on Two Fronts: African Americans and the Vietnam War* (1997)
Allan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire* (1990)

Occupation/Overseas Bases

November 6

Susan Carruthers, *The Good Occupation*
Mary Louise Roberts, "The Price of Discretion: Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and the American Military in France, 1944-1946," *American Historical Review* 115:4 (October 2010): 1002-30.
Daniel Immerwahr, "Take Three: The Moon Landing," *Modern American History* (on Blackboard)

Recommended:

William I. Hitchcock, *The Bitter Road to Freedom* (2008)
David Vine, *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World* (2015)
Maria Höhn and Seungsook Moon, *Over There: Living with the U.S. Military Empire from World War Two to the Present* (2010)
Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965* (2007)

Environment

November 13

J.R. McNeill and David S. Painter, "The Global Environmental Footprint of the U.S. Military, 1789-2003," in Charles E. Closmann, ed., *War and the Environment* (2009), 10-31.

In Ed Martini, ed., *Proving Grounds* (2015): "Introduction"; Neil Oatsvall, "Weather, Otters, and Bombs"; Leisl Carr Childers, "Incident at Galisteo" (KU ebook, unlimited access)

David Biggs, *Footprints of War: Militarized Landscapes in Vietnam* (2018): Sutter, "Foreword"; Biggs, "Introduction"; Chapter 5 ("Creative Destruction")

Commemoration and Representation

November 20

Micki McElya, *The Politics of Mourning: Death and Honor in Arlington National Cemetery* (2016)

Matthew Thomas Payne, *Playing War: Military Video Games after 9/11* (excerpt)

Recommended

Kristin Ann Hass, *Sacrificing Soldiers on the National Mall* (2013)

Andrew Huebner, *The Warrior Image: Soldiers in American Culture* (2011)

Karl Malantes, *Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War* (2011)

Andrew Wiest, *The Boys of '67: Charlie Company's War in Vietnam* (2012)

November 27

THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 4

Marci Reaven, curator of the original New York Historical Society exhibit on the Vietnam War, will lead us on a tour of its visiting incarnation at Kansas City's World War I Museum. WE WILL MEET EARLIER IN THE AFTERNOON AT THE MUSEUM. PLEASE PLAN AHEAD. Read the following in advance as preparation for the tour and the discussion that will follow.

Fred H. Allison, "Remembering a Vietnam War Firefight: Changing Perspectives over Time," *Oral History Reader*, 2nd Edition (2006), 221-229.

Edward T. Linenthal, "Anatomy of a Controversy" and Richard H. Kohn, "History at Risk," in Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past* (1996)

Recommended

G. Kurt Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way* (1995)

December 11 Class Dinner

December 16 Final Paper Due