War and Society History: A State of the Field Review

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In her 2011 SHAFR presidential address, Marilyn B. Young set out a marker for her fellow historians. "I think our continuous task must be to make war visible, vivid, an inescapable part of the country's self-consciousness," Young asserted, "as inescapable a subject of study as it is a reality."[2] In subsequent years, pioneering scholars of U.S. history have heeded Young's call, mining untapped archives, applying innovative approaches, and producing fresh interpretations. As a result, war and society has emerged as a vibrant subfield of American history.

This development should interest *Passport* readers. The linkages between U.S. foreign relations scholars and their war and society counterparts are numerous. Yet the two subfields have less cross-pollination than one might expect, as even a cursory comparison of the panels at SHAFR's annual conference and the Society for Military History's (SMH) annual gathering makes clear. More broadly, although military history has long benefited from interest among non-specialists, war's defining role in shaping U.S. history is frequently understudied in American classrooms. As Michael Sherry recently noted, "war constituted modern American history as much as race, class, gender, religion, capitalism—you name it—just as each threaded through the others. Too few historians fully engage that fact."[3]

This essay examines recent developments in war and society scholarship. Taking a big tent approach that brings together diverse and wide-ranging research linked by a defining preoccupation with the impact of war in modern U.S. history, I argue that the subfield is undergoing a dynamic period of growth and transformation. With apologies to those working on earlier eras, this essay focuses on studies of the 20th century and 21st century—a reflection of the rich body of work on this period and my own research interests.

Thirty years ago, both diplomatic history and military history were subfields in transition. The "cultural turn" had infused the field of American history, and diplomatic and military historians—once pillars of the discipline—faced the prospect of marginalization. Diplomatic history, Charles S. Maier asserted in a widely read critique, was "languishing."[4] Military historians were also concerned. "Military history has never been a popular specialty among academics; on the contrary, it has always been something of a pariah in U.S. universities," John A. Lynn wrote in 1997. "We used to be condemned because we were believed to be politically right-wing, morally corrupt, or just plain dumb."[5] For Lynn, their situation was going from bad to worse; noting the emphasis on studies of race, class, gender, and labor on hiring committees and in the pages of the *American Historical Review*, he concluded, "the fact is that they are out to get us, and military history has been compelled to receive the 'cutting edge,' like a bayonet in the guts."[6]

Over the past three decades, diplomatic historians embraced the changes sweeping the discipline. In the early twenty-first century, multiarchival, multilingual research became the norm as scholars embraced international and transnational approaches that decentered the United States. Borrowing from cultural historians, fresh research explored American ideology and identity and interrogated race and gender. The breadth and diversity of this scholarship reasserted the subfield's vitality to the field, and, in the process, transformed it into an arena generally referred to as "U.S. in the World."[7] As Ryan M. Irwin noted in a 2022 survey of the field, "U.S. diplomatic history no longer exists."[8]

Over the same period, U.S. military history experienced a similar—albeit less thorough—shift. Eschewing traditional "drum and bugle" studies of military battles, campaigns, and leaders, pioneering scholars instead focused on how war and militarization have shaped American society and culture. Dubbed "new military history" or "war and society," this scholarship has become a mainstay of the field. "These historians understand the relationship between societies, militaries, and conflict as determinative, inseparable, and mutually constructive," writes Kara Dixon Vuic. "In the context of the United States, in particular, they see military and wartime needs as fundamental to all foreign and domestic policies."[9]

The rise of war and society scholarship has not gone uncontested. Critics fear that traditional military history is disappearing. "In the majority of Western universities the study of war is largely ignored, perhaps because we fear that the mere act of researching and thinking about it means approval," Margaret MacMillan writes.[10] Similarly, Max Hastings recently decried the "spectacular eclipse" of military history. Criticizing the emphasis on "culture, race and ethnicity," Hastings argues that North American universities are "infected with an intellectual virus that causes them to reject study of subjects that seem to some faculty members distasteful."[11]

Such criticism correctly draws attention to the worrying decline in the number of U.S. college students taking history courses. But it is out-of-step with the increasingly inclusive approach of the contemporary field of military history. As Robert Citino and Tami Davis Biddle wrote in a 2014 Society for Military History White Paper, "perhaps the best way for military historians to make their case to the broader profession is to highlight the range, diversity, and breadth of the recent scholarship in military history, as well as the dramatic evolution of the field in recent decades."[12] A decade later, the direction of the field was clear. "Although some believed, and continue to maintain the fields constitute separate, even hostile sub-disciplines," Brian McAllister Linn noted in a 2024 state of the field essay, "the broad tent of the Society for Military History … reflects the consensus and cooperation among most practitioners."[13]

One focal point in the literature is race. War and society scholars, writes Beth Bailey, "recognise the ways that multiple identities—most particularly racial identities—shape both individual experience and broader historical events."[14] A common theme in this scholarship is how military service has historically been linked to African American claims for full citizenship in the struggle against segregation. "For African Americans, serving America meant establishing their central place in the national community and reaffirming their foundational place in the state," writes Adriane Lentz-Smith in her study of Black soldiers during the First World War.[15] Yet Black military service entailed a longstanding trade-off: supporting a white supremacist national project in exchange for social progress at home. "This trade had never fully balanced out;" Lentz-Smith concludes, "the tally always added up to favor Jim Crow."[16]

The Second World War features prominently in studies on the impact of war on American race relations. Recent research complicates the popular understanding of World War II as a watershed moment for civil rights activism, illuminating both the opportunities the conflict created and the limits that it imposed.[17] As Kevin Kruse and Stephen Tuck write, "the impact and legacy of war were decidedly ambiguous, at times empowering black activists, at times constraining them, at times emboldening those seeking to preserve racial hierarchies, and at times making surprisingly little difference at all."[18] In his study of African American soldiers serving in the Pacific Theater, for example, Chris Dixon shows how shifting racial hierarchies in a transnational context complicated African Americans' wartime struggle against white supremacy, underscoring the challenge of reconciling racial and national identity.[19] More broadly, although the foundational racist division in the U.S. military was the Black-white divide, who counted as white or "colored" was a moving target, creating a complex of color lines that were neither static nor inevitable. As a result, as Thomas Guglielmo demonstrates, a heterogeneous mix of people that included

Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, and Puerto Ricans, "zigged and zagged between whiteness, nonwhiteness, and nominal whiteness, between insider, outsider, and a murky middle ground."[20]

War and society scholars are also exploring the significance of American race relations during the Cold War era. Kimberley L. Phillips tracks how African Americans' sustained efforts to advance citizenship claims through military service in the 1940s and 1950s were undermined by frustration with both structural racism in the U.S. military and the glacial pace of domestic civil rights reforms. The rise of the Black Power activism in the 1960s, Phillips argues, fueled Black opposition to military service in the Vietnam War.[21] By the end of the decade, racial tension in the U.S. military had reached a crisis point, leading one Brigadier General to declare in 1971, "you show me a commander or leader who says he doesn't have race trouble, and I'll show you a dumb son of a bitch."[22] Beth Bailey has examined the army's response, which involved extensive efforts at reform, including incorporating new methods of training and education, revising regulations that defaulted "white," and implementing affirmative action programs. Although racial tension did not disappear, these initiatives "did vastly improve the conditions of people of color in the US Army," Bailey writes. "And the reforms did accomplish their goal: they stabilized the institution."[23]

In addition to race, recent war and society scholarship interrogates how gendered assumptions about America's place in the world shaped Americans' wartime experiences. Recent scholars explore how women's work for the military was connected to their changing place in the nation.[24] Their scholarship shows how home-front beliefs about appropriate gender roles shaped relations between U.S. men and women serving abroad, as well as interactions between Americans and the local population. "These women were not sideshows to American wartime and military experiences," Kara Dixon Vuic writes in an analysis of women's work in 20th-century military entertainment. "They played a central part in national efforts to construct wartime gender roles, maintain an effective fighting force, mobilize home front support, render the military and its work palatable to the American public, and manage the American military presence in foreign countries."[25] Like Americans of color, women turned to the military as a pathway to equality. As Roth writes, "By establishing women's service on a foundation of equal pay for equal work, military leaders ostensibly offered American women—particularly young single women—access to economic citizenship unavailable in the civilian world."[26] At the same time, servicewomen confronted institutional barriers in the U.S. military that limited their advancement, as well as pressure to adhere to conventional women's roles in society. As a growing body of scholarship illuminates, these struggles were intensified for women of color.[27]

War and society scholars are also interrogating how ideas about masculinity shaped wartime power relations. In her study of how the U.S. military managed sex between GIs and French women during the Second World War, Mary Louise Roberts connects sexual intimacy to deepening U.S. influence over French economic and political life. "Paying female civilians to have sex taught millions of GIs to expect subservience from the French," Roberts writes. "Similarly, watching women sell their bodies—or worse still, hearing their stories of rape—forced French men to recognize their own diminished position in the world. In these cases, the French female body realigned power relations between the two nations."[28]

Other scholars examine how wartime demands shaped American men's understanding of the relationship between masculinity and citizenship. James T. Sparrow, for example, examines how the citizen-soldier emerged as a powerful masculine ideal during the Second World War.[29] Yet such developments did not go uncontested. As Mathew L. Basso demonstrates in his study of Montana's copper mines, the privileged position of military men in American society fueled the development of a defensive working-class masculinity centered on white male power.[30]

The intersection between war and American culture in shaping gender norms has also garnered attention. In his innovative study of men's adventure magazines in the early Cold War era, Gregory A. Daddis argues that "macho pulps"—which boasted a collective circulation of hundreds of millions of copies in the mid-1960s—set male expectations by portraying American soldiers as John Wayne-like heroes whose courage and toughness inevitably led to martial glory on the battlefield and sexual conquest in the bedroom. In the context of the expanding U.S. intervention in Vietnam, this narrative, "bestowed upon young men a warped knowledge of war and sex," Daddis writes, "one that helped make violence against the Vietnamese population seem acceptable, if not a routine feature of overseas military service."[31]

Another important theme in recent war and society scholarship is the significance of war and militarization in fueling American state formation. Such growth resulted in both unprecedented government demands levied on the American people and new mechanisms for ordinary Americans to make claims on the state. Michael S. Neiberg and Christopher Capozolla examine this process during the First World War, a period of intense debate over federal and state power, the political obligations of the American people, and the role of the United States in the world.[32] "As the state made ever stronger claims on its citizens, wartime events prompted one of the twentieth century's broadest, most vigorous, and most searching public discussions about the meanings of American citizenship," Capozolla writes. Even as the wartime federal government extended its power, he continues, disparate groups of Americans "folded themselves into government structures, transforming the state in whose name they spoke."[33]

Other scholars examine the implications of the federal government's enormous expansion during the Second World War. Andrew Preston has shown how Franklin D. Roosevelt's effort to construct new forms of social and economic security for the American people through New Deal programs facilitated the emergence of an expansive doctrine of U.S. *national* security during the war years.[34] James T. Sparrow interrogates how the wartime state worked to construct legitimacy as it asserted new forms of authority, which, in turn, fostered new social arrangements. "By cloaking new obligations to the state in [a] fusion of liberalism (with its valorization of freedom and equality) and nationalism (with its demand for unity, order, and loyalty)," Sparrow writes, "the federal government could expand its power radically without triggering opposition."[35] At the same time, Americans emerged from the conflict with new expectations of what the federal government could, and should, provide. Complicating narratives that offer a clean break between wartime and peacetime, Laura McEnaney's work explores how Americans' "war liberalism" shaped domestic social change in the mid-twentieth century. War, she writes, "was their primary language of entitlement, their way into worthiness."[36]

Building on Michael Sherry's foundational study *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s*, recent scholars, including Paul A. C. Koistinen, Rebecca U. Thorpe, and Michael Brenes, are also examining how the military shaped the U.S. political-economy in the post-World War II era, as defense spending intersected with pork barrel politics to foster the emergence of new political interest groups, the rise of corporate power, and union-backed defense-related jobs for millions of Americans—particularly the growth of "Sunbelt" cities in the U.S. Southwest.[37] This scholarship illuminates how military Keynesianism garnered bipartisan support in Congress—and defied conventional "liberal" and "conservative" political positions—as legislators on both sides of the aisle recognized the benefits of defense contracts and military bases in their home states. Defense spending, Michael Brenes writes, "created local economies where the proverbial coffee shop, pharmacy, or department store was just as reliant upon military spending as the workers in the plants."[38]

War and society scholars are also writing institutional histories that interrogate how the U.S. military has both shaped, and been shaped by, the American social landscape. With tens of millions of American men serving in uniform over the course of the 20th

century, the military played a unique role in contemporary debates. As Beth Bailey writes, "despite the frequent claim that the U.S. military is not and should not be a site of social experimentation, it is and it has been, if for no other reason than that it does not and cannot stand fully apart from the society it defends."[39] Brian McAllister Linn's work, for example, examines the army's efforts in the 1950s to transform into a fighting force that could meet the threat of atomic war.[40] Bailey explores how the free market ethos of the 1970s shaped the army's shift to an all-volunteer force.[41] And David Fitzgerald details how the army struggled to define its identity in the decade between the end of the Cold War and the start of the War on Terror.[42] These studies reveal how the military's institutional mission could not be insulated from broader social developments. As Fitzgerald writes of the divisive political battles of the 1990s, "the culture wars were in essence a debate over the idea of America, so an institution that saw itself not only as defending the nation but as its embodiment on the battlefield was bound to find itself caught up in some of these disputes."[43]

Scholars have also examined how the emergence of the "warfare state" affected Americans in profound, and unequal, ways. Amy Rutenberg shows how the Selective Service System used draft deferments during the 1950s and early 1960s as a tool of social engineering. Known as "manpower channeling," the policy coerced men into higher education programs and occupations considered to be in the national interest and encouraged marriage and fatherhood. This approach, Rutenberg argues, privileged middle-class white men, and, by undermining traditional patriotism associated with military service, fueled opposition to the draft in the Vietnam War era.[44] Other scholars explore the welfare benefits of military service, such as the G.I. Bill, revealing the power of the military to foster upward social mobility for some Americans, while denying it to others.[45] Olivier Burton shows how these benefits resulted from social movement activism, as veterans mobilized to demand federal support, while Mark Boulton examines the less generous benefits offered to Vietnam War veterans.[46] In the late 20th century, the "military welfare state" became an increasingly important recruitment tool. As Jennifer Mittelstadt illuminates, federal government cutbacks to social welfare programs exacerbated inequalities in American society, giving soldiers—especially from impoverished communities—access to benefits that were often unavailable to their civilian counterparts.[47]

Another side of this scholarship focuses on veterans' health issues. Jessica A. Adler examines the creation of the veterans' health system—and its impact on civilian health care—in the decades following the First World War.[48] John Kinder explores how disabled veterans have shaped debates over the human cost of America's wars.[49] And David Kieran shows how concern over veterans' mental health during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars was connected to political and cultural debates about whether the wars were necessary, as well as broader discussions over evolving civil-military relations and how the U.S. should engage the wider world. "The wounds of war are … not only physical conditions and the concerns of medical science;" Kieran writes, "they are also cultural phenomena that shape how Americans think about the nation's wars and foreign policy."[50]

War and society scholars are also exploring the militarization of culture and society. One avenue of research is U.S. military occupations abroad, such as Susan L. Carruthers' study of the immediate aftermath of the Second World War in Europe.[51] A related area of interest is U.S. military bases. Social scientists are at the forefront of efforts to document American military bases and assess their impact, including Catherine Lutz and David Vine.[52] Their research has been complemented by a growing number of historians, whose work on overseas U.S. bases sits at the intersection of U.S. foreign relations, the military, U.S. empire, and contested processes of Americanization.[53] Other historical work focuses on the domestic impact of military installations. Gretchen Heefner's study of Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile sites in the Great Plains, for example, shows how the expansion of the national security state affected the rural American West. "The Cold War

turned towns and communities across the country into defense dependencies, often in ways unseen," Heefner writes. "The result is a defense-based economy reliant on conflict, or the threat of conflict, for sustenance."[54]

Correspondingly, recent scholarship explores the impact of war and militarization on domestic institutions. Stuart Schrader studies how Cold War counterinsurgency doctrine influenced domestic U.S. policing practices.[55] Michael S. Sherry examines the late-20th century reframing of law enforcement as a "war" on crime.[56] Elaine Tyler May discusses how widespread fear of nuclear war and communist infiltration in the early Cold War fueled a popular fixation with security, evident in the proliferation of gated communities, guns, and vigilantism.[57] And Mary Dudziak's work analyzes the significance of the open-ended framing of the War on Terror.[58] "If we abandon the idea that war is confined in time we can see more clearly that our law and politics are not suspended by an exception to the regular order of things," Dudziak writes. "Instead, wartime has become normal time in America … [and] the politics we have during this time are our normal politics."[59]

A final theme in war and society scholarship sits at the intersection of memory, commemoration, and patriotism. John Bodnar critiques the popular framing of the Second World War as "the Good War," connecting Americans' interpretations of the conflict to an ongoing struggle to define national identity—from calls for American global dominance, such as Henry Luce's influential essay "The American Century," to sharp critiques of American exceptionalism, like Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*.[60] Scholars have also explored the impact of the Vietnam War on American society and culture. Patrick Hagopian studies how veterans shaped public memory of the war, while Michael J. Allen examines how activism to retrieve American prisoners of war and those missing in action fueled Americans' sense of betrayal by the U.S. government.[61] Christian G. Appy's wide-ranging work explores the influence of the Vietnam War on American national identity in the late 20th and early 21st century.[62] And Viet Thanh Nguyen's richly interdisciplinary work uses the Vietnam War as a case study for understanding the "ethics of memory." "Wars cannot be fought without control over memory and its inherent opposite, forgetting (which, despite seeming to be an absence, is an actual response)," Nguyen writes. "Nations cultivate and would monopolize, if they could, both memory and forgetting."[63]

Pioneering historians are also focusing on America's wars following the terror attacks on September 11, 2001. John Bodnar examines the contentious debate over patriotism that emerged amid the shock of 9/11 and the onset of the War on Terror. Americans were divided, Bodnar argues, between competing understandings of patriotism: advocates of a war-based patriotism demanded military vengeance against the nation's enemies, while proponents of an empathetic patriotism called for recognition of America's flaws and sought to minimize the harm the United States inflicted abroad. "Patriotism in America after 9/11 became a distinct theater of operations in the global war on terror" Bodnar writes, "pitting conflicting impulses of hatred and love against each other."[64]

As this short survey has illustrated, war and society scholarship is rich and varied. Looking to the future, it seems likely that war and society scholars will continue to build bridges with other subfields in U.S. history. For historians of race, with much of the existing scholarship focused on the African American experience, there is considerable work to be done to recover the experiences of other groups of Americans. Likewise, scholars of gender have only scratched the surface, particularly regarding the experience of LGBTQ Americans.[65] Pioneering scholars are also connecting an interest in war and society with environmental history.[66] Migration is also emerging as a fruitful arena of scholarly inquiry. War and militarization, writes Ellen D. Wu, have been "catalysts for the sprawling, varied patterns of migrant entry, exit, exclusion, and inclusion that have characterized the United States since the nineteenth century."[67]

In her 2011 SHAFR presidential address, Marilyn Young concluded, "it is … our work to speak and write so that a time of war not be mistaken for peacetime, nor waging war for making peace."[68] Like Young, war and society scholars are illuminating how war

has shaped American history. In an era of intensifying American militarism, their work deserves our attention.

Notes:

1. I would like to thank Gregory A. Daddis, Dario Fazzi, and Andrew Gawthorpe for their helpful feedback on this article.

2. Marilyn B. Young, "'I Was Thinking, as I Often Do These Days, of War': The United States in the Twenty-First Century," *Diplomatic History* 36:1 (2012): 2.

3. Michael S. Sherry, "War as a Way of Life," *Modern American History* 1:1 (2018): 93.

4. Charles S. Maier, "Marking Time: The Historiography of International Relations," in *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. Michael Kammen (Cornell University Press, 1980). See also Robert J. McMahon, "Toward a Pluralist Vision: The Study of American Foreign Relations as International History and National History," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd ed., ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

5. John A. Lynn, "The Embattled Future of Academic Military History," *The Journal of Military History* 61:4 (1997): 778.

6. Lynn, "The Embattled Future of Academic Military History," 781.

7. For a useful overview, see the roundtable on Thomas W. Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *The Journal of American History* 95:4 (2009): 1053–73.

8. Ryan M. Irwin, "Requiem for a Field: The Strange Journey of U.S. Diplomatic History," *Passport: The Newsletter of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations* 54:2 (2023): 26. For an influential call to recenter U.S. policymakers, institutions, and processes in studies of U.S. foreign relations, see Daniel Bessner and Fredrik Logevall, "Recentering the United States in the Historiography of American Foreign Relations," *Texas National Security Review* 3:2 (2020), https://tnsr.org/2020/04/recentering-the-united-states-in-the-historiography-of-american-foreign-relations/.

9. Kara Dixon Vuic, "Grand Narratives and Gendered Wars and Societies," *War and Society* 42:1 (2022): 82.

10. Margaret MacMillan, *War: How Conflict Shaped Us* (Profile Books, 2020), 5.

11. Max Hastings, "American Universities Declare War on Military History," *Bloomberg*, January 31, 2021, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-01-31/max-hastings-u-s-universities-declare-war-on-military-history. See also, Victor Davis Hanson, "Uses and Abuses of Military History," *The New Criterion* 41:5 (January 2023): 4; Steven Mintz, "In Retreat: Why the Study of Military History Remains Essential," *Inside Higher Ed*, March 15, 2023, https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/columns/higher-ed-gamma/2023/03/15/retreat-why-study-military-history-remains-essential; Peter Berkowitz, "Our Elite Schools Have Abandoned Military History," *Wall Street Journal*, April 30, 2011. For a useful riposte to Hastings, see William Hitchcock and Meghan Herwig, "There is More War in the Classroom than You Think," *War on the Rocks*, September 7, 2021.

12. Tami Davis Biddle and Robert M. Citino, "The Role of Military History in the Contemporary Academy," Society for Military History White Paper, November 30, 2014, 3.

13. Brian McAllister Linn, "Forty Years On: Master Narratives and US Military History," *War and Society* 42:1 (2023): 26. For additional state of the field essays, see Michael S. Neiberg, "War and Society," in *Palgrave Advances in Modern Military History*, ed. Matthew Hughes and William J. Philpott (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Robert M. Citino, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 4 (2007): 1070–90; Wayne E. Lee, "Mind and Matter-Cultural Analysis in American Military History: A Look at the State of the Field," *The Journal of American History* 93:4 (2007): 1116–42.

14. Beth Bailey, "Race and the History of the Modern US Military," *War & Society* 42:1 (2023): 5.

15. Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Harvard University Press, 2009), 5.

16. Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles*, 5. See also Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Le'Trice D. Donaldson, *Duty Beyond The Battlefield: African American Soldiers Fight for Racial Uplift, Citizenship, and Manhood, 1870-1920* (Southern Illinois University Press, 2020). On the experience of Native Americans, see Thomas Grillot, *First Americans: U.S. Patriotism in Indian Country after World War I* (Yale University Press, 2018).

17. See Kimberley L. Phillips, *War! What Is It Good for?: Black Freedom Struggles & the U.S. Military from World War II to Iraq* (University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Christine Knauer, *Let Us Fight as Free Men: Black Soldiers and Civil Rights* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Matthew F. Delmont, *Half*

American: The Heroic Story of African Americans Fighting World War II at Home and Abroad (Penguin Books, 2022).
18. Kevin M. Kruse and Stephen Tuck, eds., *The Fog of War: The Second World War and the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 7.
19. Chris Dixon, *African Americans and the Pacific War, 1941–1945: Race, Nationality, and the Fight for Freedom* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).
20. Thomas A. Guglielmo, *Divisions: A New History of Racism and Resistance in America's World War II Military* (Oxford University Press, 2021), 4. See also Thomas A. Bruscino, *A Nation Forged in War: How World War II Taught Americans to Get Along* (University of Tennessee Press, 2010); Matthew L. Basso, *Meet Joe Copper: Masculinity and Race on Montana's World War II Home Front* (University of Chicago Press, 2013). On the experience of Mexican Americans, see Steven Rosales, *Soldados Razos at War: Chicano Politics, Identity, and Masculinity in the U.S. Military from World War II to Vietnam* (University of Arizona Press, 2017).
21. Phillips, *War! What Is It Good For?*
22. Quoted in Beth Bailey, *An Army Afire: How the US Army Confronted Its Racial Crisis in the Vietnam Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 2023), 1.
23. Bailey, *An Army Afire*, 7.
24. Kara Dixon Vuic, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010); Heather Marie Stur, *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era* (Cambridge University Press, 2011); Elizabeth Cobbs, *The Hello Girls: America's First Women Soldiers* (Harvard University Press, 2017); Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense : American Women and World War I* (University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Kara Dixon Vuic, *The Girls Next Door: Bringing the Home Front to the Front Lines* (Harvard University Press, 2019); Tanya L. Roth, *Her Cold War: Women in the U.S. Military, 1945-1980* (University of North Carolina Press, 2021).
25. Vuic, *The Girls Next Door*, 3.
26. Roth, *Her Cold War*, 5.
27. See, for example, Elizabeth R. Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits: The Lives of Mexican American Women on the World War II Home Front* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Charissa J. Threat, *Nursing Civil Rights: Gender and Race in the Army Nurse Corps* (University of Illinois Press, 2015); Sandra M. Bolzenius, *Glory in Their Spirit: How Four Black Women Took On the Army during World War II* (University of Illinois Press, 2018).
28. Mary Louise Roberts, *What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II* (University of Chicago Press, 2013), 7. Earlier studies of American military occupations attuned to gender relations include Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender, and Foreign Relations, 1945–1949* (Yale University Press, 2003); Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Harvard University Press, 2006).
29. James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (Oxford University Press, 2011).
30. Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*.
31. Gregory A. Daddis, *Pulp Vietnam: War and Gender in Cold War Men's Adventure Magazines* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 6–7.
32. Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford University Press, 2008); Michael S. Neiberg, *The Path to War: How the First World War Created Modern America* (Oxford University Press, 2016).
33. Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 9. See also Katherine C. Epstein, *Torpedo: Inventing the Military-Industrial Complex in the United States and Great Britain* (Harvard University Press, 2014).
34. Andrew Preston, *Total Defense: The New Deal and the Invention of National Security* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2025).
35. Sparrow, *Warfare State*, 12.
36. Laura McEnaney, *Postwar: Waging Peace in Chicago* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 7.
37. Michael S. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (Yale University Press, 1995); Paul A. C. Koistinen, *State of War: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1945-2011* (University Press of Kansas, 2012); Rebecca U. Thorpe, *The American Warfare State: The Domestic Politics of Military Spending* (University of Chicago Press, 2014); Michael Brenes, *For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2020).
38. Brenes, *For Might and Right*, 6.
39. Beth Bailey, "Thinking about Military History as a History of Social Change," *Journal of Military History* 88 (July 2024): 626.

40. Brian McAllister Linn, *Elvis's Army: Cold War GIs and the Atomic Battlefield* (Harvard University Press, 2016).
41. Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009).
42. David Fitzgerald, *Uncertain Warriors: The United States Army between the Cold War and the War on Terror* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).
43. Fitzgerald, *Uncertain Warriors*, 5.
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