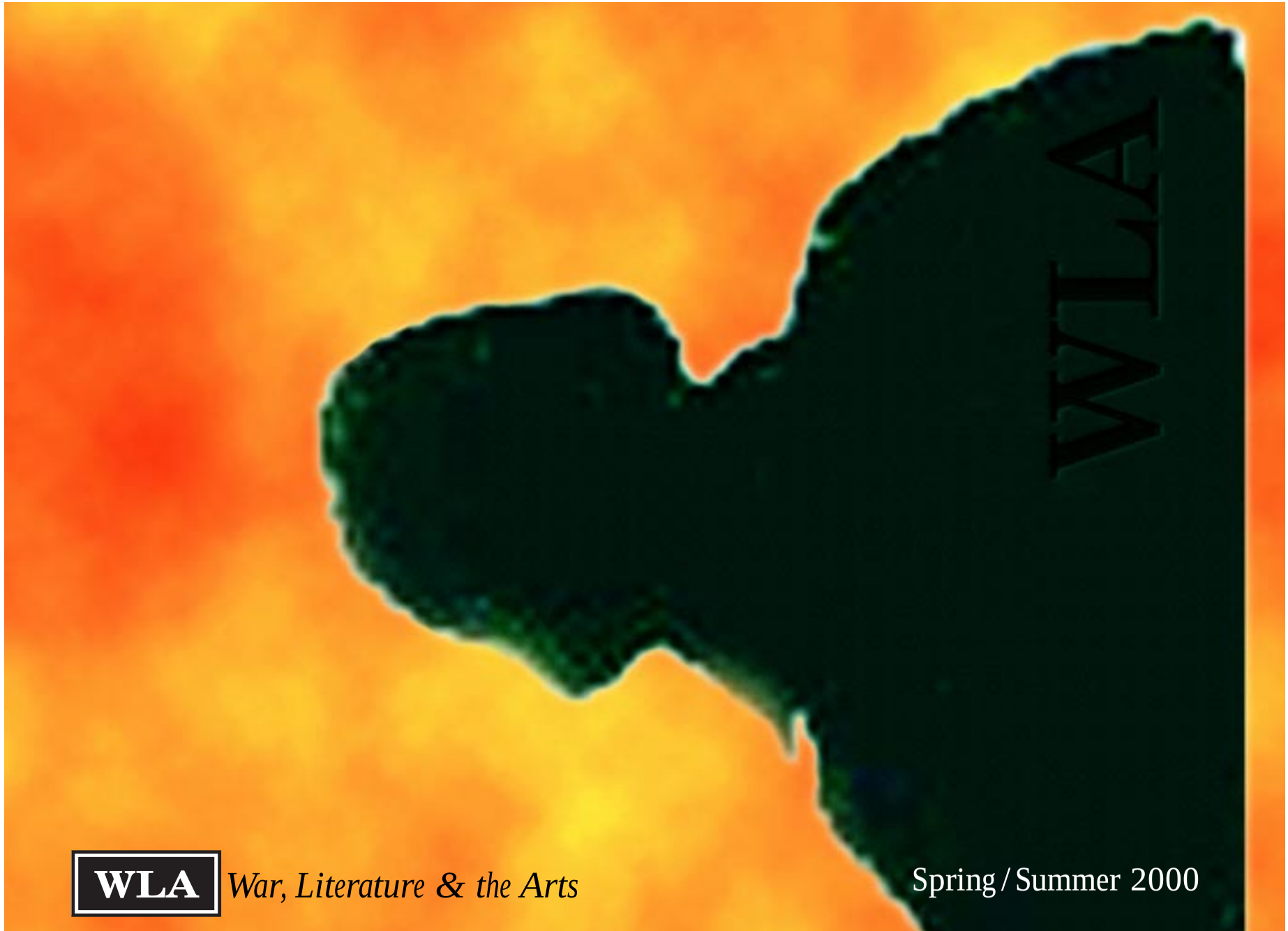


WLA *War, Literature & the Arts*

Spring / Summer 2000



WLA

War, Literature & the Arts
An International Journal
of the Humanities

Volume 12, Number 1
Spring / Summer 2000

WLA

War, Literature & the Arts:
An International Journal
of the Humanities

This journal was founded in 1989 and is published semiannually by the Department of English and Fine Arts at the United States Air Force Academy. The journal is indexed in *The American Humanities Index, Literary Criticism Register, The MLA American Periodical Verse,* and the *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature* and is a member journal of the *Council of Editors of Learned Journals.*

Opinions expressed in the journal are not necessarily those of the editors or the United States Air Force. Upon publication, copyrights revert to the authors. WLA does, however, reserve the right to include selected submissions in its online version of the printed journal.

Send poetry manuscripts:
Will Hochman
Saint Joseph College
West Hartford, CT 06117-2791
email: whochman@sjc.edu

Address all other correspondence to:
Donald Anderson, Editor
Department of English and Fine Arts
2354 Fairchild Drive, Suite 6D45
USAF Academy, CO 80840-6242
email: donald.anderson@usafa.af.mil

http://www.usafa.af.mil/dfeng/wla.htm
phone: 719.333.3930 / fax: 719.333.3932

ISSN: 1046-6967

WLA

War, Literature & the Arts:
An International Journal
of the Humanities

Volume 12, Number 1
Spring / Summer 2000

Department of
English and Fine Arts
United States Air Force Academy
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Contents

Personal Essay

Doug Heckman	162	Quarry
William Newmiller	168	The War I Didn't Worry About

Poetry

Joseph T. Cox	28	Purple Hearts
Paul Elisha	157	Four Poems

Invited Lecture

Philip Caputo	19	Goodnight, Saigon: Lecture at the United States Air Force Academy
Robert Morgan	137	Hemingway and the True Poetry of War: Keynote Address at the United States Air Force Academy

Fiction

Paul West	63	Hitler's Pianist and Other Portraits

Critical Essay

John Mark Mattox	30	Henry V: Shakespeare's Just Warrior
W. D. Ehrhart	54	Howard Fast's "Korean Litany"
Tracy E. Bilsing	76	The Process of Manufacture: Rudyard Kipling's Private Propaganda
Katherine Kinney	101	Cold Wars: Black Soldiers in Liberal Hollywood
Subarno Chattarji	173	Representations of Vietnam in some poems of John Balaban, Kevin Bowen, and Bruce Weigl

Interview

Neiberg, Bowie, and Anderson	4	Philip Caputo: *A Rumor of War*: A Conversation with Philip Caputo at 58

Commentary

D.A. Boxwell	122	*Kulturkampf*, Now and Then

Reviews

190 *Doing Time: 25 Years of Prison Writing: A Pen American Center Prize Anthology*

194 *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post-Cold War*

200 *The Book of War: Twenty-five Centuries of Great War Writing*

202 *Scenes From the End: The Last Days of World War II in Europe*

205 *Literature at War: 1914-1940: Representing the "Time of Greatness" in Germany*

209 *Hart's War*

Michael S. Neiberg,
Thomas G. Bowie, Jr.
Donald Anderson

A Rumor of War A Conversation with Philip Caputo at 58

> This book does not pretend to be history. It has nothing to do with politics, power, strategy,influence,national interests, or foreign policy; nor is it an indictment of the great men who led us into Indochina and whose mistakes were paid for with the blood of some quite ordinary men. In a general sense, it is simply a story about war, about the things men do in war and the things war does to them.
>
> —from the "Prologue," *A Rumor of War*

A Rumor of War was first published in 1977 and has remained in print ever since. As a member of the first ground combat unit committed to fight in Vietnam, Marine Lieutenant Philip Caputo landed at DaNang during the spring of 1965. Ten springs later, as a newspaper reporter, Mr. Caputo was present at the Fall of Saigon. Entanglement with the Vietnam War, coupled with the lucidity and urgency of his prose, has, in Caputo, created art and truth of the highest rank. Ted Solotaroff spoke for many readers when he defined *A Rumor* for *The New York Times Book Review* as "the troubled conscience of America speaking passionately, truthfully, finally."

Caputo has followed *A Rumor* with seven more books—five novels: *Horn of Africa* (1980), *DelCorso's Gallery* (1983), *Indian Country* (1987), *Equation for Evil* (1996), and *The Voyage* (1999); a collection of novellas, *Exiles* (1997); and a second memoir, *Means of Escape* (1991). In addition to these books, Caputo has for many years been a working journalist. In

fact, it was a serious wounding in Beirut in 1975 that allowed Caputo time to complete *A Rumor*, over the 11 months of his recuperation. As a journalist, Caputo has written for the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *Esquire*. His early journalistic career was with the *Chicago Tribune*, during which time he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting.

Mr. Caputo visited the United States Air Force Academy on April 27, 2000 for an invited lecture to cadets enrolled in the Academy's core military history course. During the visit, Mr. Caputo graciously consented to this interview.

WLA: Why did you want to be a writer? Was there a special prompt?

Caputo: I don't believe you *want* to be a writer in the sense that you want to be, say, an engineer or a doctor. Writing is a vocation in the real sense of the term—a *calling*. I don't believe you have much of a choice. Maybe a person *needs* to be a writer. I started writing a lot of articles in high school for the school paper, and I remember I liked doing it. But in actual fact when I was in high school and for the first two years I was in college, I really wanted to be an aeronautical engineer. Then I discovered I had absolutely zero aptitude for such things as calculus, which sort of blocked that avenue.

One thing that tends to drive people to become writers or to *need* to be writers—Hemingway talks about this—is some sort of wound. Really happy, well-adjusted people don't become writers. At least they don't become what we think of as literary writers. I think that what I experienced *in* Vietnam and then the kind of semi-ostracizing of most returning veterans made me—all of us—somewhat of outsiders to our own society. Those experiences turned me into a writer. No matter what kind of writing I had done beforehand—in school or college—the fact was I had a pretty ordinary middle-class background. My parents weren't divorced; I didn't lose a parent; we weren't hungry; we weren't poor. Whatever other things drive people to become somewhat separated from their society, I have not experienced. But during Vietnam and after Vietnam I did.

WLA: Then during your combat tour in Vietnam, you didn't know you were writing a book?

Caputo: No. I kept a diary, which we weren't supposed to do.

WLA: That was official? No diaries?

Caputo: In case you were captured.

WLA: You were able to put such vivid memories into *A Rumor of War*. How detailed a diary were you keeping?

Caputo: It wasn't all that detailed actually, and it wasn't a daily diary because conditions made that impossible. What I did do was a concession to the regulations. It wasn't a little book that I carried with me into the bush. It was more like an 8 1/2"x 11" composition book that I kept back at base camp in my footlocker. I might spend three weeks out in the boondocks and never record a word in it, and then when I came out of the bush, I'd jot a few things about what had happened.

I wrote a lot of letters home, and while I shielded my parents from the more ghastly details, they were fairly detailed letters. I've still got them. Some of them were 8 and 9 pages long. I went to those when I wrote the book. The one thing I found is that when you have had a dramatic or traumatic experience at a fairly early age, the experience is really indelible. You *see* everything—even as time passes. I've made two return trips to Vietnam recently and I was surprised about how much of the landscape I recalled. The only areas I couldn't recall were because an area had been replanted or some other change had come about. There had been this bare, damaged hill. No vegetation, foxholes, barbed wire. By the time I returned it had been replanted, and there was a little pagoda I didn't recognize. But once I climbed the hill, I remembered. These are very vivid memories—very, very, vivid. It's not hard to learn how to recall them.

WLA: Were the memories different for the composing of your latest Vietnam War writing—the novella, *In The Forest of the Laughing Elephant*? Not only would the memories be more distant, they seem of a different nature than those that might have prompted *A Rumor of War*.

Caputo: I think that *A Rumor*, as far as we're talking about emotional truth of the war itself, does the job. *In The Forest* is really meant to be more of an allegory. It really wasn't about the war itself. It has been rare that I've had that much fun writing a story even though *In the Forest* is a gruesome piece. I loved writing that story.

I had heard these tales during the time I was in Vietnam—about tigers. I was teaching out in Iowa in 1990 when I started the novella. Then, for various reasons I wasn't able to get back to it for the next five years. But I just picked right up where I'd left off, as though the five

years hadn't passed. *In the Forest* is meant to be an allegory: "America in Vietnam." The six soldiers a microcosm of America's involvement. The novella is also a story about America's—maybe even mankind's—relationship with the natural world. The desire in Sgt Coombes is to conquer and overcome, whereas, Han, the native guide goes with the flow, so to speak, and survives. Han teaches this lesson to the single surviving American: Bledsoe. That's the lesson Bledsoe learns—that there's a point at which you submit, where you *must* submit to survive. Bledsoe learns you can be humble without being humiliated. I mean to illustrate that when Han and Bledsoe back away from the tiger with their heads bowed.

WLA: Is that the story Bledsoe says he needs to tell his friends?

Caputo: Basically, though I don't really know what he's going to say to his friends at base camp. I wanted to leave a bit of mystery. I knew, as I said, that he's got to tell them something, after all that's happened.

WLA: What made you think of a leper colony? What a surprise in the story.

Caputo: The idea was from direct experience. In April or May of 1965—we hadn't been in Vietnam six weeks—we were out on patrol, in the boondocks. We saw some roofs up in a tea plantation, and my company commander told me to see if there were any Viet Cong around. I entered the ville and it seems nobody's there. Empty and eerie. I've got two squads surrounding the ville, one squad—me, a radioman and a corpsman searching the huts. There was this big stucco-walled building with names of priests written on it in French. I thought it was a monastery at first. Then a woman comes out from nowhere—this Vietnamese woman, with a hand missing—and then somebody else comes out from some other hiding hole. His fingers are gone. I said to the corpsman, "This post must have been hit with a mortar attack," and he said, "Oh no sir, that's leprosy." We rounded everybody up and I said, "Let's get the hell out of here." That memory lingered in my head.

I got to the point in *In the Forest* where Coombes and his troops get to the leper colony. To this point, Coombes is in, so to speak, a state of grace with the jungle. He's figured out how to survive in there. He's lost his sense of western time. He's into it. I knew there would be a moment when he'd fall from grace, but I didn't know how. Then this memory of the leper colony came to mind. I thought it was kind of perfect. There

would be a missionary and Coombes would kill him. That was like the seed of the idea, and I took it from there. The French priest in the novella is an invention.

Vietnam was rich in legends and spooky stories. All kinds of creepy tales. You'd hear stories about blonde-haired, blue-eyed French Legionnaires spotted with the Viet Cong. So I said to myself: suppose it could happen. Suppose some guy was out there in some isolated jungle valley where he caught leprosy and lost his marbles and had no idea there were any Americans, that his war was over with. I played with that. *In the Forest* was not meant to get at the factual texture of the war. It was meant as an allegory.

WLA: But it does get to the emotional truth of the war.

Caputo: It probably does unintentionally.

WLA: *A Rumor* and *In The Forest* may share more personal emotional truth than you admit.

Caputo: Well, sure. The dirty little secret of most autobiography is that a lot of it is fictionalized, or it's semi-fictionalized, and nobody ever says so. Michael Herr's *Dispatches*, which I think is a brilliant book, purports to be autobiographical, but Herr has told me, and he's told other people, "I've made a lot of that shit up." But out of real stuff.

WLA: A noble lie.

Caputo: You could say that. I think you know when you're taking real materials and working them. Let's put it this way: you're thinking back, you remember this chunk, and you remember that chunk of an experience, and you've got to connect the dots. That's the art of it—the connecting. You have to summon things up from your subconscious to create coherence of fragments of memory. Compare it to a paleontologist piecing together a prehistoric animal, a saber-toothed tiger, say. Assembling the fragments he might say, O.K., this is a piece of rib, therefore the whole rib must have looked like this, and then he manufactures a rib. It's like that. You know when you stop making a saber-toothed tiger and you're turning it into a rhinoceros.

In the *Means of Escape*, there is a scene that takes place in a bar in Peshawar, Pakistan. In this scene, there is an old British guy who is an old British correspondent, expatriate. I met a guy like that in a bar in Pakistan. I recalled meeting the guy. I remembered he smoked heavily

and a few words of what he said. Those few words of what he said were significant to me, because he was talking about what they called "The Great Game" in Afghanistan. It all went back to the days of the Russians. He gave me a little seminar. But I didn't recall that whole colloquy, that whole conversation word for word or anywhere close to word for word, and so I made up a lot of the dialogue in the book. There would be fragment here or a word there and I would work with it.

WLA: Maybe imagination is just a tool to make sense of memory.

Caputo: Well said. I think, perhaps that's exactly what imagination is. All you have to do is take a single day in your life, and just imagine yourself—somebody says make a movie of this day in your life—and then videotape every moment of it, and then just show the video tape. There's no coherence. It's not art. There's no art to it.

WLA: Maybe another way to say that is if art and life weren't different, we wouldn't need art.

Caputo: Makes sense.

WLA: Who comes to mind as an influence in your writing? Conrad? Mailer? Hemingway?

Caputo: Certainly Conrad. Mailer, not at all. I like the *Naked and the Dead*, but I'd say the writer I'm most conscious of, the one who I sometimes, if I read him, can hear him speaking, actually talking to me, is Conrad.

WLA: Any book in particular?

Caputo: Almost any book Conrad wrote speaks to me. When I read that guy I swear I have these weird feelings, that somehow or another I've known him in some other life. Hemingway much less—though I would have called Hemingway an influence many years ago. And I did consciously think of Hemingway when I was writing certain passages in *A Rumor of War*. I was thinking of a comment he made—something about capturing the sequence between motion and fact that *makes* emotion, creates the emotion on the page. I can't remember how he said it exactly, but I'm close. You should never have to say "Joe is happy," "Joe is sad," "Joe was this," "Joe was that," if you can write down with perfect fidelity *what* made Joe happy.

WLA: Like "Big Two-Hearted River"?

Caputo: "Big Two-Hearted River" is the real example. I was conscious of that story in several scenes and passages in *A Rumor of War*. I tried to paint a scene I hoped would put the reader in the jungle so the reader would know what I'd felt.

WLA: Remind us of how old you were when you wrote *A Rumor*.

Caputo: I started when I was 25. I was 34 when I finished. Not that I worked on it for 9 years day and night. Sometimes I didn't look at it for a year.

WLA: It's a book that holds up. You must be proud of it.

Caputo: I am proud of that one. It continues to sell and seems as though it will continue so.

WLA: You've mentioned Conrad and Hemingway. Are there contemporary writers you admire?

Caputo: I really like Tim O'Brien's stuff and not just because he has written about the war. I think he's a real original in *Going After Cacciato* and *The Things They Carried*. They are very different books and both powerful works. Tim's got this whimsical, almost boyish, quality about him. And it comes across in the writing. It's hard when I sometimes hear him reading to realize that the guy is over 50 years old. There's something about the prose—it has a sense of wonderment and a playfulness of imagination I very much admire. I would say especially in *Cacciato*. I know the first time I read *Cacciato*, which is when it first came out, I thought, "What is going on here?" It really kind of threw me. Two-thirds or one-third of the way through the book, I went back and just started all over again. And then something dawned, and I said, "Oh I get it."

So, I like O'Brien's stuff. And I like Don DeLillo—a lot. He has the big vision. And his language is stunning. The way he writes, and his ear, especially for street talk. I could hear those people speaking in *Underworld*. When I walk around the Bronx, I can hear it. It's very mannered, but you realize it's got to be mannered on the printed page because it sounds different in your head. Hemingway's dialogue seems very real, but if you read it aloud, it sounds very artificial. So somehow it has something to do in your head. I admire DeLillo. But my favorite is Cormac McCarthy.

WLA: Which book? *Blood Meridian*?

Caputo: No. I was on the National Book Award Committee that awarded the National Book Award to *All the Pretty Horses,* so I've got to say that would be my favorite. *Blood Meridian* after a while, although it was very interesting, just got to be too much for me. The body count—I told my wife, "This is Sam Peckinpah meets William Faulkner." I asked couldn't we have a little romantic interest, just something to break the violence up. It was just one killing and murder after another. I liked the trilogy. I think McCarthy's my favorite. I like to read Jim Harrison and there's another guy who I think has written one of the great novels of the 20th century that for some reason has gone almost unrecognized and that's Thomas Sanchez who wrote *Rabbit Boss*—a real epic. I love that book. I'm trying to think if there's anybody else.

WLA: Do you read any short stories?

Caputo: I've just started to do that again. Nabokov—I've read him before. I've also just started to write some short stories, which I've never done before. I guess I wanted to get used to the form by reading. So I started to read Nabokov again. I've read Raymond Carver. I like some of his stories, but I often feel they attenuate fact. I'm not a fan of the minimalist or what is called the K-Mart school of literature. Everything happens in the kitchen or at the mall. I'm not hot on that kind of thing. I haven't read too many short story writers or short stories in recent years.

WLA: Your new book is a departure. What you do in *The Voyage,* that voice is so different.

Caputo: I meant it to be different. In previous books, my theme was mainly war or its aftereffects, its aftermath. The first two novellas, in *Exiles*, were my first baby steps out of that theme.

WLA: You say you did some research for *The Voyage*, but you must be sailing these days?

Caputo: I've done some sailing. I'm not that good at it. My wife is the real sailor. She's the one who really knows how, and my father-in-law knows. I did a fair amount of research—book research. I also hired out as a crewman on yacht deliveries—1800-mile passages from, say, the French West Indies to Newport, Rhode Island. It was kind of fun.

WLA: If you pick up Henry James and read a passage from any of the books, you know it's Henry James. I'm just restating the admiration I have for this totally different role in your voice. The prose is so certain in that book.

Caputo: There were a lot of times I didn't feel all that certain. I wanted the book to sound—because of when it took place—I wanted it to sound at least somewhat 19th-century without being ridiculous about it. In Pynchon's *Mason & Dixon* or in Patrick O'Brien's sea stories, the talk sounds 18th-century. I wanted my dialogue to work like that, but I didn't want it to sound silly or egregious. Much of the time during the writing I wasn't sure about myself. I didn't want to sound anachronistic and at the same time sound like a parody of a Victorian novel.

WLA: So do you worry when you get out of your well traveled area? Tim O'Brien struggles in this way. I've heard him talk about it a number of times—every time he goes the direction he wants to go, the critics boo and hiss and claim they don't admire the switch. O'Brien says he has fun, but then he ends up coming home. He tells the war story again because he's got to keep on telling it.

Caputo: I see Tim's point, but I couldn't go back to telling war stories now even if I wanted to. I don't know what else I could say about it. For me war is a topic that's exhausted. It holds no mystery for me. I believe there's a certain amount of mystery that a subject or character has to have for a writer. That's what you're pursuing when you write—the mystery.

WLA: Are you saying that if *you're* not discovering something your readers are likely not to discover something?

Caputo: I have to feel as though I've embarked on some sort of exploration. Who cares what the critics say? Those jerks are going to say something no matter what you do. *The Voyage* got some wonderful reviews. It also got a couple that were the worst I've ever received in my life. One was so savage that my wife actually had to restrain me. It was a review in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. The by-line said the reviewer taught at Temple University and I was out the door. I said, "I'm going to pound the piss out of that guy. I won't shoot him, I want to feel his bones break." I was just beside myself. My wife calmed me down. I wrote a letter to the editor of the Book Review section of *The Philadelphia*

Inquirer. I had never done that before. Actually, it turned out to be a good letter after my wife tempered the excesses.

Unlike *The Voyage*, *Exiles* received universally positive reviews. It was like *A Rumor of War*. I said to my agent, "I got a couple of real slams for the novel, why did *Exiles* get treated so well? And he said, "You don't know why? You have been in this business long enough. *Exiles* is short. It's short, it's novellas. All of those jerks know novellas won't sell. And that makes them happy! So of course they're going to be nice to you!"

WLA: What is the mystery you were going for in *Standing In*, the opening novella in *Exiles*?

Caputo: *The Voyage* was derived from a story my father-in-law told me and so was *Standing In*. My father-in-law had gone to get a haircut, and somehow or another, this barber starts telling this tale about how during the Vietnam war in 1970 he had been a commercial airline flight attendant. On a particular flight, this couple kept staring at him in such a way that it disturbed him. When he approached them, they said, "You're a dead ringer for our son," and they showed him a picture and sure enough he was. The couple told him where they lived. He was unhappy with his job as a flight attendant and he ended up living with the couple. Whereupon, he tells my father-in-law that it turned out to be a sort of a body-snatching deal. The couple's son had been killed in Vietnam. The kid had been a pilot, and had crashed. He had been shot down. There were no more details. I said, "What a story." And I thought about these people for maybe two years. Finally I asked my father-in-law to ask the barber if I could interview him. I wanted to talk to him. How did he allow this odd arrangement to occur? Was the dead son's girlfriend in on the deal? It was gothic. My father-in-law reports back that the barber will talk to me. I call the guy up and he says, "Yes, I'll meet you." Then he calls to say he can't make it. I said, "Let's take a rain check." He says, "No, I don't think I want to talk about this." He was insistent on that. I said to myself, either these events didn't occur or there is something else going on. So I was left hanging. The mystery was why would a guy submit himself to this kind of passive lull. For what reason? The motive of the parents would be kind of obvious—the resurrection of a son. They would have had to have been a bit off kilter, but I wanted to figure it out—explore it.

WLA: Have you written your way out of Vietnam?

Caputo: Yes. As a matter of fact tonight—at this lecture—I'm going to announce that I've talked my way out it too. Since 1978 I've spoken at schools, universities—some 35 of them—and I don't know how many TV networks and such, over the years. I thought: here I am at the United States Air Force Academy and three days from now, April 30, is the 25th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam war—the official Fall of Saigon. I said to myself, "This is it." I feel like Chief Joseph—"I will fight no more forever."

WLA: Are you out of the journalism business?

Caputo: Not at all. In fact I'm a contributing editor now for a magazine called *National Geographic Adventure*. *The New York Times* has just called me to do a magazine piece. I still love journals.

WLA: Do you like deadlines?

Caputo: I do. I like the fact that unlike a book, a journal article is bing, boom, bang. It's over and you go on to the next project. You get out, you talk to people, see the world. It's more fun than the cloistered feeling of putting a book together.

WLA: In your moving away from your experiences in Vietnam, was there there any sort of defining moment?

Caputo: No ceremonies or rituals that I engaged in. There's an odd process you go through in coming to terms with yourself that is hard to describe. I think it begins with a kind of a resolve that you're going to move on. As you move, if you allow some sort of schism inside yourself, you'll become victimized by your own flaws and devils, often without realizing it. You make the effort to move on, I guess. On the other hand, there may be nothing more mysterious to it than becoming middle-aged and your testosterone levels drop. A certain kind of peace or contentment arrives. Maybe I believe that peace and contentment are achievable by an act of intellect or will. My favorite readings are the Roman Stoics—Epictetus, the meditations by Marcus Aurelius. There's just something about them and that cool quiet, truthful perceptiveness of how to live your life in a wise way that seems to speak to me.

WLA: You make a similar point in *Means of Escape* where it's no longer seeking escape so much as it is a kind of accommodating or accepting, a looking out the window to see if the tides are out or whatever.

Caputo: It reminds me of something I heard from a woman, 27-years-

old, who married a friend of mine who was at that time 57 and had been married four times before, and had been a bartender, a saloon keeper and had had more women in-between his marriages and during his marriages than you could probably count. I was just asking his wife, "Diane, what made you do this? You're young, you're beautiful. What's the point?" She is from Arkansas and has a wonderful accent. "Well," she said, "there is something to be said for exhaustion." So that may be what happens at the end of *Means of Escape*.

WLA: So you're escaping Vietnam tonight when you speak?

Caputo: I'm saying goodbye to Vietnam, to my war. I really have nothing new to say. I'm weary of talking about Vietnam because I can't think of any new perspective I can shed on the experience. I can't truly say that I'll never write about it again, or that it might not surface 10 years from now as the subject for a story. Although I think that for the subject of a story it probably would be like *In the Forest of the Laughing Elephant*. Vietnam might be a setting, but the story wouldn't be about the war per se.

WLA: Could it be that you feel you ought to get credit for some of the other things that you've done with your life and writing than Vietnam?

Caputo: Yes. That would be nice. I would love to get credit for some of the other things I've written, but I don't think I'm ever going to. I'm 58, so it's getting a little late now in the afternoon, career-wise. I think I especially realize it with the last book which has done all right, despite the critic I was going to kill with my bare hands. *The Voyage* is not a war book and the reviews were generally favorable, and the sales respectable. If you write a book like *A Rumor of War*, and that's your first shot out of the gate, you never get out from under it. It would be pleasant if I were asked more questions like I've been asked tonight—what do you like to read? what do you think of Don DeLillo? Instead, I'm invited to seminars to talk about war. Twice I ended up on stage with Joe Heller. We had to talk about war novels. It was as though we had no other abilities or no other interests than war. It wears after awhile.

WLA: With that in mind, was it hard to go back and write the postscript for the 25th anniversary edition of *A Rumor*?

Caputo: No. The postscript was easy to write—in fact, I plagiarized my lecture tonight from it rather liberally. It was fairly easy to write,

comfortable.

WLA: It didn't seem like plowing old ground?

Caputo: No. It was a retrospective thing. I had never written about the writing of the book, so it wasn't really a struggle for me. I enjoyed it.

WLA: What's undone that you feel you want to write?

Caputo: Just yesterday I signed a two-book contract with Knopf. There's a book I'm going to do, a novel, set in Kenya and the Sudan, about the war in Sudan and about the bush pilots who are defying the Sudanese blockade, flying aid to the victims of the war on the front. The book is also about people who are attempting to fight the slave trade which, believe it or not, is actually going on as we speak in that part of the world. But by redeeming slaves—buying them back—these Christian organizations are actually encouraging the war.

WLA: What do they do with the bought slaves? Take them home?

Caputo: No. They bring them back to the villages from which they were captured and they say, "O.K., here we are. I own you now, and now I don't." There are all sorts of wonderful moral questions about an endeavor like this. There's plenty of evidence that these people who mean so well are encouraging the slave trade to flourish. Had the slave trade in Sudan been left to market forces, it would have withered away by now because slaves were going for $15 a head.

WLA: Oh—and if they get bought back for $30?

Caputo: $50, try $50 to $100. There are all the moral complexities about attempting to do good, but, despite your good intentions, making a bad situation worse. That's the project that I'm working on.

WLA: You've chosen to write it as a novel rather than as an exposé—a journalistic piece like the one you wrote about the Army Ranger deaths at Camp Rudder? ["The Black Badge of Courage," *Esquire*, September 1995]

Caputo: You can get into the moral questions with nonfiction too, but I don't think you can breathe the same kind of life into them. I figure as I near 60 I've got to take one last stab at writing a great novel. I've written a couple of good ones, but I know as well as anybody that none of them should be called great novels. This one at hand has all of the

themes that interest me—foreign adventure, danger, "war." And: huge moral questions. I want to take a shot at this thing. You never know what will happen. I would like to write a novel that would be a sister or brother to *A Rumor of War*. I would like to write one novel that someone might be reading a hundred or two hundred years from now.

WLA: There'd be a bookend quality to it—people making a bad situation worse through good intentions. Vietnam and Sudan.

Caputo: Now that you mention it. I hadn't thought of it that way. Bob Stone who did not serve in Vietnam (though he worked later as a correspondent there), has been asked about Vietnam. He said it would always be with him. He says that no matter where he goes or what he writes about, even if the word Vietnam never occurs, it will always be somehow haunting him in what he writes. That would probably be true of me. It happened with my first novel, *Horn of Africa*: the moral landscape was Vietnam, though the story took place in Ethiopia. It was Vietnam.

Michael S. Neiberg, **Thomas G. Bowie, Jr.**, and **Donald Anderson**, all teach at the United States Air Force Academy. Michael S. Neiberg is author of *Making Citizen-Soldiers: ROTC* and the *Ideology of American Military Service* (Harvard University Press 2000). Thomas G. Bowie Jr. is Managing Editor of **WLA** and was the guest editor of *This Thing Called Vietnam*, a special issue of **WLA**, published in 1998. Donald Anderson is editor of WLA. He's editor, too, of *Aftermath: An Anthology of Post-Vietnam Fiction* (Henry Holt, 1995).



Photograph Credit: Gary Mills

Philip Caputo

Goodnight, Saigon

This lecture was delivered to cadets enrolled in the core Military History course at the United States Air Force Academy, April 27, 2000

It feels appropriate for me to be speaking here tonight about Vietnam. Three days from now marks the 25th anniversary of the Fall of Saigon—the end of the longest war in U.S. History, the fourth most costly in terms of American blood shed, and our most divisive conflict since the Civil War.

I covered the final weeks of the Vietnam War as a correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*, and, as most of you know, I fought in it with the U.S. Marine Corps in 1965 and 1966. Tonight, I'm going to talk about my memoir of Vietnam, *A Rumor of War*, and about Vietnam's legacy—the lasting effects it's had on our society and culture. But I want you to understand that I'm no dispassionate historian. For me, the war has been and always will be a deeply personal, emotional experience. In fact, it was the most important thing that ever happened to me. Like thousands of veterans, I underwent a kind of death and re-birth in the rice-paddies and jungles. Sixteen of my comrades were not so lucky—their names are now etched on that stark, black-granite wall in Washington. Whenever I recall those names and the faces that went with them, I'm reminded of the words a French officer spoke years after the armistice ending World War One: "The war, old boy, is our youth, secret and interred."

Since *A Rumor of War* was published—23 years ago next month—I've made appearances like this one at high schools, universities, and military academies all over the country. My views about Vietnam have been aired on TV and radio, and in the newspapers. I've done an awful lot of talking about it, maybe too much, so I've decided to make this the forum for my valedictory speech on the subject. After tonight, I'll have no more to say about it. Like the old Billy Joel song, I'm saying "Goodnight, Saigon."

I started writing *A Rumor of War* in 1967, when I was 25 and still in the Marine Corps—a company commander at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. I knew I had a story to tell, but had a devil of time figuring out how to tell it. Nearly nine years passed before I wrote the last line, in a small cabin in the town of Deep Creek, Montana. Not that I worked on the book day and night for all that time. I was earning a living as a newspaper reporter and supporting a family. I had to set the manuscript aside for months at a time. Complicating matters, I couldn't make up my mind what form the story should take. It began as an autobiographical novel and ended up as a memoir, and underwent several metamorphoses in between.

But throughout that long process—it was sometimes an ordeal—I kept one purpose in mind, a kind of literary mission, if you will. That mission was set out for me by Joseph Conrad, who said the writer's task is "by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is above all to make you see." I wanted to write a book that would make its readers see the war as we warriors saw it, and by seeing it, to feel the heat, the monsoon rains, the mosquitoes, the fear; to experience the snipers, booby-traps, ambushes and firefights, as much as was possible on the printed page. More than anything, I wanted to communicate the moral ambiguities of a conflict in which no one on either side was completely in the right or completely in the wrong, a murky, miserable war where devils and angels traded places so often you could not tell one from the other, even within yourself.

The reason I had given myself that task has some bearing on what I'll say later. From the mid-60s through the early 70s, Vietnam, a place few Americans had heard of before 1964, was on everyone's lips. It was all over the papers, on the radio and the nightly news. Words, words, words—probably 1000 times as many words had been spoken about Vietnam as there were bullets fired in it. But the national discussion was really a debate of the deaf, hawks shouting at doves, doves at hawks, neither listening to what the other side had to say, because each side was convinced it monopolized the truth. For the hawks, the war was an altogether noble cause to save the Vietnamese from communism, for the Left, it was a mistake at best, a crime at worst. The people who were not heard from, or whose voices were drowned out in the din were the men who had been there. No one, it seemed, wanted to know about the tumults in the warrior's heart, no one wanted to hear the voices calling from out of the heart of darkness, the belly of the beast, because,

perhaps, such cries would confuse an already too-confusing issue. The two sides had settled comfortably into the bunkers of their ideological opinions, and neither was interested in venturing out into the emotional and moral no-man's land where we warriors dwelled.

My purpose was to put them there. *A Rumor of War* was designed to be a vicarious tour of combat duty for readers who had never been to Vietnam. When they came to the end, I hoped they would look into the mirror, or better yet, into their souls and, regardless of how they came down on the issue, ask themselves a few questions: "Now what do I think? What do I feel now? How would I have behaved if I had been there?"

I also had a further ambition: to write a book that would reach beyond its time and place toward the universal; a book that would tell a tale not only of that particular war but of war itself, and the truth of war, and what poet Wilfred Owen called the pity of war.

When it was completed, in the fall of 1976, the manuscript was sent to several publishers, and was rejected by all until it landed on the desk of Marian Wood, then a senior editor at Henry Holt and Company. Ms. Wood, who'd taken part in antiwar protests, candidly admitted to me that she did not want to read my story. It sat on her desk for, if I recall correctly, at least two weeks before her conscience needled her into picking it up. When she finished it, she was committed to it, and persuaded her boss to publish it. *A Rumor of War* came out in May 1977, a little more than two years after the Fall of Saigon. By that time, Americans were sick of Vietnam. It was not a subject you brought up in polite company—kind of like talking about sex at a Victorian dinner party. The country wanted to forget about the first lost war in its history; the war that had tarnished America's cherished image of itself as a nation that always was on the side of right.

Holt's editors and I expected the book to sell a few thousand copies at most, then sink out of sight. We'd made a happy misjudgment. It turned out that the American public was eager to hear from those who had seen the war first hand. We were stunned by the book's reception: it made the *New York Times'* and publishers weekly best-seller lists, was picked up for a TV mini-series, sold to fifteen countries abroad, and received reviews so praiseworthy that I was as embarrassed as I was gratified. To date, *A Rumor of War* has sold well over 2 million copies worldwide, and continues to sell about 20,000 copies a year in the U.S., which suggests that Vietnam, though it must seem as remote D-Day to

younger Americans, is not a subject that's entirely faded from American consciousness.

I don't, however, consider the book successful because it sold well and got a few raves from the critics. It was successful because it did what I intended—put the reader in the war. Along with several other works of fiction and nonfiction published at about the same time—Tim O'Brien's *Going After Cacciato* and Michael Herr's *Dispatches* are two that come immediately to mind—it made the warrior's voice respectable and the war a legitimate subject for literature. All those early books, and those that came after, helped change the tone and direction of the Vietnam debate, from a stale exchange of ideological rhetoric to a more open and honest discussion of the war's meaning, its legacy, its effects on all of us.

There was a time when I believed that America would never come to terms with Vietnam. It hasn't yet, but it's come a very long way in the past 20-odd years, and I think the literature of the war, the novels, and memoirs, the works of literary nonfiction, poetry and drama, have been invaluable in that endeavor. History and journalism have played their role, of course, but facts are the province of those fields; truth is the province of art, not so much intellectual truth as emotional truth, the verities of the human heart, which are as important as facts; for in the end, the war was to our country what it was too me, a profound *emotional* experience. Beyond that, it was a national tragedy in the classical sense of the word—an event arising from a union of fate and human folly that ends in death—in this case, the deaths of 58,000 Americans and 3 million Vietnamese, North and South, military and civilian.

Before I touch on the war's legacy, I'll mention in passing that I've returned to Vietnam twice, once in 1990, and again last spring. I made peace with my former enemies on the first trip, when a poet who had served as a platoon commander in the North Vietnamese army in 1966 learned that I had been a platoon commander the same year in the same area, a valley southwest of DaNang. His name was Ngan Vinh and he read a poem he'd written, "After the Rain in the Forest." It was about carrying a wounded comrade to safety through a monsoon rain. I was stunned, because the first thing I'd published about the war, back in 1967, was a poem called "Infantry in the Monsoon." It was about carrying wounded buddies through the rain. After I read the few lines I could remember, Vinh filled two glasses with vodka and invited me to drink a toast with him. I did. When our glasses were empty, he embraced me with tears in his eyes and said, "You and me, Philip, we are brothers in

arms." That's when the war ended for me.

I made peace with myself on the second trip, one year ago this month. On an assignment for *National Geographic Adventure Magazine*, I spent two weeks walking over the battlefields where my battalion had fought and where those sixteen men whose names are now on the wall in Washington were killed in action. I looked some old devils in the eye and wrestled with troubling memories on that pilgrimage. Toward the end, I climbed a high mountain with another North Vietnamese poet, Nguyen Quang Thieu, a man too young to have fought in the war, but old enough to remember B-52s dropping bombs near his village outside Hanoi. Before we went to sleep atop that mountain—it's called Nui Ba-Na, and it's now a resort where tourists escape the stifling heat of Vietnam's lowlands—Thieu asked me to tell him what I dreamed. The next morning I told him that I'd dreamt that I was being crushed by a huge python; but I wrestled with it and broke its grip. Thieu said nothing at first. Two days later, as we explored a battlefield where my battalion had lost sixty men in a firefight with North Vietnamese regulars, he gave me his interpretation: "The python was the past. By coming here, you have broken its hold."

Looking to the present and the future, we have to ask ourselves, has America broken the grip of past? On both my trips to Vietnam, I observed that the Vietnamese, who suffered far more than we—recall those casualty figures: 3 million dead as opposed to 58,000—are far less obsessed with the war. Maybe that's so because they won. Lost causes seize the imaginations of the losers. You only have to look to our own South, where the Civil War lived on for decades after it had ceased to be even a memory in the North. In fact, it's still alive there—as the controversy over the flying of the Confederate flag in South Carolina attests.

But the shame of defeat does not alone explain the tenacity of the python's grip on our collective soul and psyche. Nor does the tarnishing of our self-image that I mentioned earlier.

Vietnam cannot be seen in isolation from the whole era that's called the Sixties though it really began in 1963, with the assassination of President Kennedy, and ended with the Fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975. In this context, Vietnam was not just a foreign war, like, say, Korea or the Persian Gulf; it was the epicenter of a social and cultural earthquake that shook and, in some cases, destroyed, American institutions, customs, values, and beliefs. It created the America we live in today, for better and for worse.

I'm not going to discuss the fabled Vietnam syndrome—the paralysis that afflicted our military and foreign policies in the wake of our defeat. Military and foreign policy are not my fields of expertise.

My concern, as a writer, is with the impact it's had, and continues to have, on the way we live, the way we see ourselves in the world. My concern also is with its effects on our myths, by which I don't mean fairy tales or superstitions, but the sacred, fundamental tenets of faith that hold a society together, whether it's an Amazonian tribe or a post-industrial super power.

On this point, scholar John Hellmann has some cogent things to say in his analysis of Vietnam War literature, *American Myth and the Legacy of Vietnam.*

Vietnam is an experience that has severely called into question American myth. Americans entered Vietnam with certain expectations that a distinctly American story would unfold. When the story of Vietnam turned into something unexpected, the true nature of the larger story of America itself became the subject of intense cultural dispute. On the deepest level, the legacy of Vietnam is the disruption of our story, of our explanation of the past and our vision of the future.

I believe the disruption of our story began when the antiwar movement abandoned the argument that Vietnam was a grievous error in judgment and adopted the more extreme argument that it was, like racism at home, symptomatic of grave flaws at the very heart of American life. The core values of American society were called into question—self-discipline, self-restraint, above all, the belief that American ideals were exceptional and worthy of dissemination around the world. Authority, from the family to universities to the government, was undermined to the point that the very idea of authority was discarded by what was then called the "New Left." A silly, facile, solipsistic slogan became the mantra du-jour: "Do your own thing."

Most Americans—those whom President Nixon called the silent majority—by no means shared these ideas, nor did they approve of the antiwar movement's excesses. There were also people like me, who opposed American policies in Vietnam but did not doubt the validity of American values and institutions. But as the war dragged pointlessly on, the views of the New Left gained currency, at least in universities and in the media.

What had begun as a rupture between hawk and dove widened into a schism between a vocal radical minority and ordinary citizens, often

disparaged as ignorant hard-hats and bigoted rednecks by the former. I recall seeing that schism played out in microcosm, when I covered an antiwar demonstration at Northwestern University in 1970. Students, joined by some faculty members, were protesting the U.S. invasion of Cambodia. The entire campus had been shut down. Flying an upside-down American flag alongside the black flags of the anarchists and the red banners of revolution, the demonstrators mounted makeshift barricades to shout epithets at the police, antiwar chants to whomever would listen. Suddenly, a stocky, dark-haired man in his early fifties waded into the crowd and seized the U.S. flag, declaring in a voice quavering with rage that he was an electrician and a former Marine who had fought for that flag on Iwo Jima, seen it raised on Mount Suribachi, and he was damned if he would allow a mob of long-haired, pot-smoking hippies to desecrate it. He was the Lone Ranger of Middle America amid the hostile Sioux of the New Left. A few demonstrators cried out that the man should be allowed to have his say, but the rest shouted him down, and then the cops waded in with nightsticks. Looking back, the whole scene was almost a cliché of the divisions that were then tearing the country apart.

The Left, arrogantly convinced of its moral superiority, and often unrestrained in its passion to transform American society top to bottom, deserves a great share of the blame for fostering those divisions. But the establishment cannot be let off the hook. What was the establishment? Basically, it was the same elite that had run the country since its founding: almost exclusively white, male, protestant, and northeastern—a kind of Ivy-League aristocracy. It was also liberal. You should remember that—Vietnam was a liberals' war. Robert McNamara. McGeorge Bundy. Dean Rusk. They too could be morally superior, arrogant, and unrestrained in their methods, defoliating Vietnam's forests with Agent Orange, dropping on that impoverished nation a tonnage of bombs several times greater than the tonnage dropped by both sides in all of World War Two. What was worse—and the historical record now shows this—these leaders knew from the very beginning that the war probably could not be won, and yet they went ahead with it, because they had become so trapped by the orthodoxies of the Cold War that they could see no alternative. And yet—here's one of the tragic elements—the Cold War was a just and necessary crusade. At the same time, it blinded our leaders to certain realities, like the kind encountered in Vietnam. They compounded the consequences of that first step into the quagmire by withholding the

facts from the American people, except when they lied outright. The American public, no less than the Vietnamese communists, became the victims of a disinformation campaign that eventually broke the covenant of trust between the government and the people.

Pursuing an impossible strategy, unable to figure out how to win the war or how to get out of it, the establishment lost its legitimacy, its right to rule. It also lent credibility to the radicals' assertions that none of the establishment's values were worth anything. Not that average Americans joined the New Leftists in the streets. No, they saw the figures of the establishment and of the antiwar movement as two faces of the same elite, each pursuing its own agenda while sending the sons of the working class to do the fighting and dying. It's no wonder that millions rallied to populist demagogues like George Wallace.

Today, American society is far calmer than it was then, but it would be dangerously inaccurate to say that the disruption of our story has been ended. Rather, it has been covered by the cozy blanket of our unprecedented prosperity and by the collapse of the Soviet Union that brought a close to the Cold War.

Modern America is far more tolerant—or far less bigoted, however you want to put it—than it was thirty or forty years ago. That's one of the good things, indeed, the best thing, to come out of the Vietnam period. I am 58 years old, and I remember seeing Colored Only signs hanging over drinking fountains in Virginia in 1964, the year the civil rights act was signed into law. But America is at the same time a more balkanized place. The schism opened during the Vietnam era has spread and spider-webbed, like the cracks in a windshield, so that the great American tribe is now divided into several adversarial sub tribes: Hispanic versus Anglo, gay versus straight, pro-choice versus pro-life, and on and on. Political correctness, which a friend of mine described as the fascism of the Left, has poisoned our universities and our politics with dangerously utopian visions of the future and revisions of our history that transform Columbus and the Pilgrims into villains, and the whole saga of America into a shameful rather than an inspiring narrative. Distrust of government, one of the worst legacies of Vietnam, not only persists; it seems stronger than ever, aggravated by a blood-thirsty media intent on exposing every flaw it can find in every American leader unfortunate enough to attain national prominence. I heard very loud echoes of the Sixties in the hearings to impeach President Clinton, echoes that told me that the "intense cultural

dispute" mentioned by Hellmann is not over.

At the risk of sounding like some tin-pot Jeremiah, I'm not as happy with post-Vietnam America as I would like to be. There is something dreadfully wrong with a country in which school shootings occur roughly every two months. I think that the undermining of authority, by which I mean the authority of a moral code that everyone agrees on, contributed to horrors like the massacre at Columbine High School. I think that the left-wing radicals who exploded bombs on college campuses in the 1960s opened the gates for right-wing extremists like Timothy McVeigh to come marching with their bombs. And does anyone really believe that the plague of smack and crack on our inner-city streets has nothing to do with the fashionableness of drug use in the 60s and 70s? When old myths are discarded and old convictions are lost, it shakes a society to its very foundations. The Left that grew out of the antiwar movement, now in positions of power in politics, law, and education, has largely succeeded in re-shaping America but I believe that the baby was thrown out with the bath water. Today's neo-conservatives, many of them neo-Leftists who converted, don't deserve a pass either. They seem to confuse conservatism with materialism, as though freedom means nothing more than the freedom to make millions on the NASDAQ with a minimum of government interference.

What I hope to see is an America in which the idea of service, to country and to one's fellow man and woman, is valued once again. An America with renewed faith in the uniqueness of its ideals, but tempered with humility and common sense, which were lacking during the Vietnam era. A less cynical America with the bond of trust between government and people restored. An America that stops making savage partisan battles out of events like, say, a custody dispute over a Cuban refugee boy. We need leaders in this country less interested in fighting antiquated culture wars and more interested in finding a common agenda, in pursuing a common endeavor. It may be up to your generation to build that America. If and when you do, then I'll know we have emerged at last from what Henry Kissinger calls the "long shadow of Vietnam," that we have finally come to terms, not only with that now distant war but with its aftermath as well.

Joseph T. Cox

Purple Hearts

In late gray light, you slide from the truck,
grimace, scowl, grimace, grimace,
dragging the bloody boot through the wet snow,
limp and limping up the back stairs.

Half your foot and four toes literally flattened
by the cast-iron stove and Uncle Al's clumsiness.
Without flinching you soak the bloody pulp
in steaming Epson Salts, red tendrils coagulating
in your stoic's soup.

No house call, of course,
nor stitches, nor splint, just six more weeks
of stubborn bad temper. The usual shadow.

I almost felt the thaw of pity, maybe
even forgiveness for bruises hidden under cotton,
even the dislocated shoulder we couldn't hide from her.

No, what I felt was a cliché, "What goes around . . . ."
A cold Calvin confirmation, that shared stock company
of pain, Melville's universal cuff come home,
a sense justice that shamed us all.

Mostly she blamed the war: their last offensive
over the frozen sheaves of the Hurtegen Forest,
your unit's cowardice, you left for dead,
found by Earnest, later blinded, your only ally
to this day.

We all inherited the austere silence,
and the stubborn defiance that let you live.
The foot healed, and we hardly noticed your limp.

Joseph T. Cox is Headmaster of The Haverford School in Haverford, Pennsylvania. A thirty-year career Army officer, Colonel Cox commanded from the platoon to battalion level and finished his career as a tenured Professor of English at West Point. He has a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and has published poetry in numerous journals.

John Mark Mattox

Henry V: Shakespeare's Just Warrior

Despite the wide spectrum of perspectives that Shakespeare's commentators bring to bear on *Henry V*,[1] they seem to agree that the play is riddled with complexities as large as its popularity. On the one hand, Shakespeare presents Henry V as involved in a war that, in terms of both its declaration and its prosecution, clearly invites a moral-philosophical critique. On the other hand, he represents Henry as "an ideal king"[2] who is altogether "politically, morally, and humanly aware." As a result, "the warlike Harry" (Prologue, 5) is also the "mirror of all Christian kings" (2.chorus.6). These two designations seem, on the surface at least, to be terribly incongruent. Although it may be said that "the play's aim is to celebrate heroic actions under a heroic king,"[4] it is likewise clear that Shakespeare does *not* intend to portray his hero merely as a great conqueror of the Alexandrian variety.[5] Rather, he seeks to portray him as a hero who pursues noble aims in a way that does not offend Christian moral sensibilities. The surest way to walk this tightrope, and indeed the method that I propose that Shakespeare employs, is to demonstrate Henry V to be a monarch who conducts his warfare in accordance with the demands of the Western just war tradition. It is this aspect of Shakespeare's portrayal of Henry V that transforms and elevates him from the status of being *merely* England's greatest warrior to the status of England's consummate *just warrior*.

Just War

The theory of just war, as it has emerged over the past 2500 years of Western history, typically is presented under two major headings: *jus ad*

bellum and *jus in bello*. *Jus ad bellum*, or "the justice *of* war," specifies those criteria that define the right of one nation or sovereign power to engage in violent action against another. In the context of this time-honored tradition, a nation is justified in entering a war if, and only if, it (1) has a just cause, (2) the justice of which is of such magnitude that it outweighs the justice of its opponent's cause, (3) enters the conflict with honorable intentions, (4) has authority to fight by reason of its possessing recognized war-making powers, (5) pursues war only as a last resort, (6) publicly declares its intent to fight, (7) has reason to believe that the resort to war will produce a resolution of the conflict in terms favorable to the nation entering the war, (8) the prosecution of which will result in the realization of greater moral good than would result if the war were not fought, and (9) approaches the war with the ultimate objective of attaining peace for all involved. In contrast, *jus in bello*, or "justice *in* war," specifies the limits of moral conduct in the actual prosecution of a war. That is, the *jus in bello* component of the just war tradition stands as witness to the claim that "it is not permitted to employ unjust means in order to win even a just war."[6] *Jus in bello* is generally characterized in terms of two tenets: (1) that the state should apply the minimum force necessary in order to accomplish its just aims and (2) that the state should consider those persons duly recognized as combatants to be the sole objects of its violent action.[7]

I do not propose that Shakespeare consciously incorporates these criteria into his portrayal of Henry in an overt effort to show that Henry's actions as king and as a military leader correspond *point by point* with the demands of the just war tradition—a tradition well established by Shakespeare's time. Nevertheless, one familiar with the tradition cannot but be astounded at the striking correspondences that *do* in fact exist between the two. While one need not claim for Shakespeare the title of international jurist or military moral philosopher, one can still be impressed by the keen awareness that he appears to possess concerning the theory of just war as it developed from ancient times and as it was observed in both Henry's and Shakespeare's day. In what follows, I propose to examine Shakespeare's portrayal of Henry V in light of the just war tradition. In the process, I shall attempt to demonstrate two claims: first, that in the case of those tenets for which Henry's war making can be shown to accord with the just war tradition, Shakespeare forthrightly establishes Henry's compliance; second, that in the case of those tenets that pose obstacles to establishing Henry's status as a just

warrior, Shakespeare takes deliberate pains to minimize the effects of any ill reflection upon Henry.

Jus ad Bellum

Just cause. This is indisputably the premier tenet of all *jus ad bellum* thought. It is that the reason for resorting to war in search of a resolution of an international dispute must itself be a just reason. Traditionally, just causes have included the defense of the innocent against armed attack, the recovery of persons or property wrongly taken, or the punishment of evil. Not only does the idea that a just war must be founded on a just cause permeate the whole of the just war tradition, but it also extends throughout the length and breadth of Shakespeare's treatment of Henry's war-faring enterprise. Particularly, Shakespeare capitalizes on the notion that the throne of France has been wrongly withheld from Henry and that this fact constitutes itself an evil worthy of punishment.

As soon as Henry appears (act 1 scene 2), his first act is to implore the Bishop of Canterbury to "justly and religiously unfold/Why the law Salic that they have in France/Or should or should not bar us in our claim" (1.2.12-14). By his thus imploring the bishop, one might well conclude that Henry is not actually looking for advice, "but for a public statement of the justice of his cause."[8] However, even if Henry has, for all practical purposes, already determined to go to war, Shakespeare clearly suggests that Henry will not proceed with his practical aims without first ensuring that his decision is justified in principle. In a clear indication that Henry seeks to hear not merely what he wants to hear, but rather a true and just rendition of the English claim, Henry solemnly urges Canterbury, "God forbid, my dear and faithful lord,/That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading,/Or nicely change your understanding soul/With opening titles miscreate, whose right/Suits not in native colors with the truth" (1.2.15-20).

One might be inclined to argue that Henry's apparent concern with the justice of the cause is nothing more than a facade—part of a deliberately crafted attempt to put a righteous, if not happy, "spin" upon a morally questionable undertaking. After all, Shakespeare does present Henry as a surprisingly skillful rhetorician throughout the entire play. As the Bishop of Canterbury observes in his private conversation with the Bishop of Ely, "List his discourse of war, and you shall hear/A fearful battle rendered you in music" (1.1.46, 47). Nevertheless, the fact remains

that Henry raises the concern over the justice of his cause not in a public forum, but in the secrecy of his privy council. If his interrogation of Canterbury in that setting were something engineered for the purpose of persuading his closest advisors, Shakespeare certainly provides us with no textual warrant for such an interpretation. From all appearances, the members of his court require no persuasion, as evidenced by the fact that they raise no moral objection whatsoever to war with France. Indeed, the only concern that the court voices pertains to the Scottish threat; and, as we shall see, this concern has nothing at all to do with the question of whether Henry's cause is just. Moreover, the offer by the church, in the persons of Canterbury and Ely, to finance the war effort certainly constitutes more than a merely tacit endorsement of the justice of the cause. The more plausible reading requires one to assume that Shakespeare's Henry sincerely desires a true appraisal on the matter, regardless of what public face he might later give to it. Indeed, the audience given to Canterbury in the privy council seems to constitute a detailed revisiting of the matter of just cause stemming from an earlier conversation when, as Canterbury relates to Ely, "there was not enough time to hear,/as I perceived his Grace would fain have done,/The severals and unhidden passages/Of his true titles to some certain dukedoms,/ And generally to the crown and seat of France,/Derived from Edward, his great-grandfather"(1.1.89-94)[9]. Indeed, Henry "does not charge recklessly into war but makes sure that his campaign is justified according to every standard."[10] If anything, Shakespeare would have us understand that "the guilt of bloodshed lies on the French for resisting his claim and not on him for prosecuting it."[11]

Moreover, Westmoreland urges Henry that his "brother kings and monarchs of the earth" (1.2.127)[12] of unspecified identity "know that your Grace hath cause" (1.2.130)—meaning, of course, a *just* cause—to pursue the battle. Shakespeare is silent on the matter of how or why they should know this, possibly suggesting thereby that the claim is self-evidently true. Whether or not the facts justify these royal bystanders in assuming such a position is by no means clear. However, Shakespeare appears to regard this epistemological issue as one altogether separate from the evidently settled issue of the justice of Henry's war-faring cause.

Comparative justice. This tenet is closely related to that of just cause. The theory of just war rests on the philosophical assumption that, although war exists as an ethical possibility, there also exists a *strong*

presumption against the resort to war as a means to be used by sovereign states in resolving their international difficulties. "Comparative justice" requires, in addition to a state's having a just cause for the prosecution of war—a position that, for good or ill, both parties in a dispute are likely to claim—that the claims of an aggrieved party also must be of such magnitude that the presumption against war is overridden.

Henry clearly manifests an appreciation for the philosophical necessity to override this presumption—if he is to claim to be a just warrior at all—when he says to Canterbury, "For God doth know how many now in health/Shall drop their blood in approbation/Of what your reverence shall incite us to" (1.2.20-23). Hence, he strictly charges the Bishop, "Therefore take heed how you impawn our person,/How you awake our sleeping sword of war./We charge you in the name of God, take heed,/For never two such kingdoms did contend/Without much fall of blood, whose guiltless drops/Are every one a woe, a core complaint/'Gainst him whose wrongs gives edge unto the/swords" (1.2.20-31). Given this acknowledgement of the horrors of war, one certainly can conclude that, even if Henry cared *nothing at all* about the justice of his cause, he is by no means oblivious to the moral implications of his contemplated venture.

Whether the present war objectively qualifies as a just war or not is rather a secondary concern as pertaining to a reasoned evaluation of the war's relative justice. Of significant theoretical consequence, however, is the fact that Shakespeare takes pains to portray Henry, first, as "a man who fights only for legitimate causes"[13] and second, as one who recognizes that whatever justification he gives for going to war must override the presumption against war. One of the important ways in which Shakespeare seeks to accomplish this task is by confronting Henry with circumstances that one could readily conceive as sufficient to provoke to war a ruler with less moral fiber but that are insufficient to provoke Henry. For example, when Montjoy delivers the Dauphin's "gift" of tennis balls along with the stinging invective clearly designed to incite Henry, "he reveals remarkable self-restraint."[14] He does not kill the messenger, nor does he base his decision to go to war on the fact that he has received a personal insult. Rather, he demonstrates the truth of his earlier claim that "We are no tyrant, but a Christian king,/Unto whose grace our passion is as subject/As are our wretches tettered in our prisons" (1.2.249-251). By the same token, he manifests by his discourse that just as he is willing to cast into prison those wretches deserving of his

discipline, he is also willing to acknowledge that there does indeed exist a point beyond which he need no longer turn the other cheek to sovereignties persisting in the offense of justice—namely, that threshold at which the presumption against war is overridden.

One might be tempted to conclude that Henry's response to Montjoy indicates the Dauphin's insult to be, if not the actual cause of the war, then at least the "straw that broke the camel's back." However, it should be noted that Henry is "well prepared" (1.2.242) to hear and to respond to the message from France even before Montjoy enters the scene. Hence, rather than fighting over an insult per se, Henry merely takes the occasion of the Dauphin's insult to deliver the news that England will assert her royal claim on the battlefield. Fighting for an insult is not a sufficient cause, but if in the process of fighting for a just cause he has occasion to answer an insult, there seems to be no philosophical reason why he should not.

Right intention. Although, as a practical matter, the claims of just cause and of comparative justice in favor of the aggrieved party presuppose the ability of the aggrieved party to produce tangible evidence of wrongdoing on the part of the opposing party, which wrongdoing could be justifiably righted or compensated for by engaging in war, just war theory traditionally has claimed that the outward disposition of the party contemplating the resort to war is not a sufficient guide as to whether the resort to war is actually justified. At least as early as St. Augustine, the just war tradition has held that the inward disposition of the aggrieved party's members is as important as—if not more important than—any visible evidence of intention. As Shakespeare acknowledges by the mouth of Williams, "All offenses...come from the heart" (4.8.48). The intent of the party contemplating resort to war must be in accord with the just cause and must not involve the mere desire for territorial expansion, intimidation, or coercion. It should be devoid of hatred for the enemy, implacable animosity, or a desire for vengeance or domination. Hence, overt indications of right intention would include, among other things, the pursuit of peace negotiations in an effort to terminate the conflict as quickly as possible, the avoidance of potentially unreasonable demands, as might be the case with a requirement for unconditional surrender, etc.

Because the disposition of the heart is itself something never available to direct, empirical inspection, Shakespeare takes pains to ensure that Henry's discourse provides verbal evidence of the righteousness of his

inward dispositions. When Henry asks Canterbury, "May I with right and conscience make this claim?"(1.2.101), his concern seems to be one that transcends the question of justice in the merely technical, legal sense. What Henry really seeks, in the intensely intimate setting of the privy council where he is joined by them "of the spirituality" (1.2.138), is to elevate the debate above the level of minute legal technicalities—that if strained at, might be found to justify war with France—to the loftier level of moral discourse.

Having settled on the decision to invade France, Henry pauses, in an apparent attempt clearly to establish the rectitude of his intentions by demonstrating that his royal priorities are properly ordered, to announce to his court that "we have now no thought in us but France,/Save those to God, that run before our business"(1.2.315, 316). Shakespeare gives us no reason to suppose that Henry considers that the two concerns will find themselves at odds. If there be any question about duplicity on Henry's part as to whether his true interior goodness and his outward appearances contradict each other, Shakespeare has Canterbury lay that matter to rest with the assertion that a remarkable bestowal of divine grace has "whipped th' offending Adam out of him" (1.1.28-30) so that any possibility of enmity between Henry and God is out of the question.

Competent authority. The decision to go to war can be made only by one who, by virtue of his or her position in the social framework, is generally recognized as possessing authority to make such a declaration. Traditionally, this is a person or body with no political (i.e., earthly) superior, which person or body acts as the duly authorized representative of a state—in short, God's lieutenant on earth. This, of course, is a perfect description of a mediaeval European monarch like Henry.

Shakespeare's labored presentation, from the mouth of Canterbury, as to why the Salic Law[15] poses "no bar" (1.2.39) to Henry's claim is important for two reasons. The first and most obvious reason is that he needs a legal basis upon which to assert his claim of heirship to the disputed territories in France. The second reason, while less obvious, is probably even more important: to assert his status as one who legitimately occupies the position of one with no earthly superior—the only kind of person who justly can declare war. If he does not legitimately occupy his own throne, then—far from being one empowered to declare war—he can claim to be nothing more than a renegade leader bent on wreaking havoc among the community of civilized nations.

In his first response to the King of France, Henry, holding to the belief that the successes he seeks ultimately are dependent upon the will of God, directly appeals to God to underwrite his decision to go to war, and invokes the name of Deity[16] in an oath that he swears to the Dauphin that he will avenge himself and establish most unambiguously his "rightful hand in a well-hallowed cause" (1.2.306). To have a just cause is one thing; but to possess divine authorization to go to war, as Henry appears to claim, is to put to rest all questions of whether to prosecute the war. Moreover, the claim ultimately has the philosophical effect of making moot all other points concerning the justice of the cause. Why, after all, fret over legal technicalities and fine-grained interpretations when God has sanctioned the cause? Is not Henry a man without earthly superior, hence one of God's appointed lieutenants on earth? Ironically, perhaps, the question brings us philosophically full circle: Henry is a man without earthly superior and hence one of God's lieutenants *if, and only if,* his claim to the throne of England is itself legitimate. If, on the one hand, Henry legitimately occupies the English throne, the fact that his royal claim descends through the maternal line notwithstanding, then it would seem that his claim should be likewise sufficient to establish his claim to the French territories he seeks. On the other hand, if Henry's claim to the English throne is illegitimate, then he is not a man without an earthly superior, not one who justly can be called one of God's lieutenants on earth, and not one who possesses the authority necessary to wage war. The French never, by Shakespeare's account, question Henry's right to wage war; Shakespeare merely has them challenge Henry's claim to ancestral territories in France. By so doing, in a subtle but crucial move, Shakespeare forces the French into a position in which they cling hopelessly to a logical contradiction: they cannot acknowledge Henry's right to the throne and thus his right to wage war—rights that they never appear to question—without acknowledging the veracity of Henry's territorial claim. All that appears to be left for the French, then, is the woefully un-philosophical position that Henry cannot have his lands in France without a fight; and that is precisely the position that Shakespeare has the French occupy.

In response to Henry's query concerning both the justice and the righteousness of the cause, Canterbury seeks to allay all fears by providing the king the ultimate, fail-safe justification for action: the pronouncement of holy writ. On the authority of a passage from the Book of Numbers,[17] the Bishop places, as it were, a divine seal of

approval on Henry's search for authorization to go to war: "When the man dies, let the inheritance/Descend unto the daughter" (1.2.104, 105). This passage, of course, is not a direct justification for war at all. It merely authorizes Henry to assert—on grounds that, because scriptural, ought to appeal both to English and to French reason—his title to any rights of inheritance that could be shown to devolve upon him through the female line—Salic law or no Salic law. By appealing to scripture, Shakespeare can afford to sidestep many of the strictly rational concerns over the question of Henry's authority to prosecute the war. However, it is far from clear that *this* particular passage of scripture is sufficient to provide Henry with the divine authorization that Shakespeare seems to claim for him. In order to find in this passage the needed justification for war, one would have to argue successfully that the breaches of this point of law were so grievous as to provide not only a just cause for war, with all its attendant miseries, but also a justification to override the presumption against war. Nevertheless, the Bishop spares the King the necessity of establishing these points by making for him the logical leap from rights of inheritance, past authorization for war, and directly on to the not-so-philosophical rhetoric of conquest: "Stand for your own," says the Bishop, "unwind your bloody flag,/Look back into your mighty ancestors./Go, my dread lord, to your great-grandsire's tomb,/From whom you claim; invoke his warlike spirit/And your great-uncle's, Edward the Black Prince,/Who on the French ground played a tragedy,/Making defeat on the full power of France" (1.2.106-112). To this, Ely contributes nothing in the way of argumentation, but much by way of exhortation, when he evokes additional images of "these valiant dead" (1.2.120) whose *heir*, if not descendant, King Henry is. In the final analysis, while Shakespeare clearly recognizes the philosophical necessity of establishing Henry's authority to declare war, he is, on this point, long on rhetoric but short on substantive argumentation.

Last resort. While it is true that war is traditionally regarded as the *ultima ratio regum*,[18] neither king nor any other sovereign authority is justified in engaging in war if there be any other means of avoiding it. That is, the prevailing circumstances must clearly indicate that no means short of war would be sufficient to obtain satisfaction for just grievances or wrongs against the state.

Shakespeare represents the French as making a token effort to appease Henry in an effort to avoid war. As the town of Harfleur is besieged, "th' Ambassador from the French [by which we are to understand an

ambassador from the king, and not merely an emissary from Harfleur] comes back./Tells Harry that the King doth offer him/Katherine his daughter and with her, to dowry,/Some petty and unprofitable dukedoms [evidently, dukedoms other than those at issue in Henry's claim]./ The offer likes not"(3.chorus.29-34). In terms of just war theory, one can understand Henry as not liking the offer because (1) it does not provide adequate compensation for the loss of the full rights of inheritance which he claims and hence (2) does not afford a satisfactory resolution of the issue that resides at the core of the conflict. Shakespeare thus gives his audience every reason to believe that, in the absence of a satisfactory offer, Henry's grievance—already established as just—cannot be resolved by any measure short of war.

Public declaration. In order for a war truly to be the last means available for the resolution of international difficulties, it must be one that the sovereign authority is willing publicly to declare. At least two compelling reasons exist for this requirement. First, a public declaration gives occasion for the aggrieved nation to state the reasons that impel it to war as a demonstration that all other means short of war for peaceful resolution of the conflict have been utterly exhausted. Second, the preparation of a public declaration serves as an occasion for national reflection concerning whether all means short of warfare truly have been exhausted prior to the commitment of the nation's resolve, its energies, and its resources to the war-making enterprise. The public declaration can also come in the form of an ultimatum that sets forth those remedies short of war that are still available, with the requirement that the offending party avail itself of a resolution of the conflict via those remedies prior to a specified time.

It is this latter form of declaration—recognized in the traditional international observances of Europe since before the days of Cicero,[19] and prior to that in the revealed directives for the conduct of war enshrined in the Mosaic Law,[20] as an adequate answer to the demands of this just war requirement—that Henry employs in his contest with France. Standing before the French throne, Exeter, acting as Henry's emissary and invoking a clear claim to divine authorization for Henry's actions (2.4.84), bids the King of France, "resign/Your crown and kingdom, indirectly held/From him, the native and true challenger"(2.4.100-102). When questioned by the King concerning the consequences of noncompliance, Exeter issues the ultimatum: what will unavoidably follow is "Bloody constraint, for if you hide the crown/Even in your hearts, there will he

rake for it" (2.4.104, 105).

Reasonable probability of success. According to the just war tradition, wars that present little or no hope of serving as vehicles for obtaining satisfaction for just grievances are not morally justifiable. This tenet is particularly interesting in the light of the apparently overwhelming odds that Henry is likely to face in France—not to mention the concerns that weigh upon him relative to an opportunistic Scottish invasion of England during his absence. In the face of concerns like these, Ely provides Henry with two justifications for taking on the French in spite of the odds: (1) "The blood and courage that renowned them [i.e., Henry's notable ancestors and kinsmen who had stood victorious against the French]/Runs in your veins;" and (2) "my thrice-puissant liege/Is in the very May-morn of his youth,/Ripe for exploits and mighty enterprises"(1.2.123-126). While these reasons contribute nothing (or perhaps even less) to the aim of establishing the justice of Henry's cause, they do go a long way toward establishing the positive likelihood of Henry's success. Others are willing to forge a stronger link between the notions of just cause and reasonable chance for success than is evident in Ely's words. For example, in addition to noting that Henry's brother kings and monarchs recognize the justice of his cause, Westmoreland also points out that they recognize that Henry possesses both "means and might"(1.2.130, 131) for prosecuting the war. This is so because, by Westmoreland's account, "Never king of England/Had nobles richer [hence the means], and more loyal subjects [hence the might]" (1.2.132, 133).

Notwithstanding the assurances of reasonable probability of success by both the clergy and by the nobility, Henry, alive to the ever-present Scottish threat that has asserted itself at opportune times in the past, a threat that Henry feels he has every reason to believe will reassert itself by filling the power vacuum left in England by the deployment of Henry and his army to France, requires additional assurances: "For you shall read that my great-grandfather/Never went with his forces into France/ But that the Scot on his unfurnished kingdom/Came pouring like the tide into a breach/With ample and brim fullness with his force,/Galling the gleaned land with hot assays,/Girding with grievous siege castles and towns,/That England, being empty of defense,/Hath shook and trembled at th' ill neighborhood" (1.2.152-160).

Although Canterbury, apparently anxious to see the war proceed,[21] downplays the significance of the concern over Scottish adventurism,

both Ely and Exeter concede that the matter is not a trifling one. "[T]he weasel Scot," says Ely, will surely come "Playing the mouse in the absence of the cat" (1.2.177, 179). "It follows, then," reasons Exeter, "the cat must stay at home" (1.2.181). However, that need not mean that Henry cannot deploy his army to France. It simply means that, in order to ensure that the Scots cannot render uncertain Henry's otherwise reasonable possibility of success in France, the home guard will have to be organized and prepared to meet the likely threat. To this, Canterbury, ever ready to advance the war with France, urges the king, "Divide your happy England into four,/Whereof take you one quarter into France" (1.2.222, 223). This proportion of Henry's forces will be sufficient to "make all Gallia shake" (1.2.224), and it will leave three quarters of Henry's forces to defend the home front against the Scots. "If we, with thrice such powers left at home,/Cannot defend our own doors from the dog,/Let us [*then*] be worried"(1.2.225-227)—but not about France. Even in the light of the Scottish threat, there is no point, Canterbury implies, on which Henry should fear that he lacks reason to assume that his offensive actions in France will be anything other than a resounding success.

Henry repeatedly expresses feelings of great optimism about the likelihood of an English victory over the French. This is particularly striking in light of the unfavorable numerical odds with which he is confronted. The justification for his optimism is essentially an Augustinian one: the battle is in the hand of God, such that the ratio of enemy to friendly troops is of no particular consequence. Henry's task, then, is to do all in his power to ensure that God is on his side. He enumerates his acts of devotion in fervent, private prayer on the eve of Agincourt: among other things, he repeatedly has sought divine pardon for his father's usurpation of Richard II; he has provided charitable relief to five hundred of England's poor; and he has endowed two "chantries" for England's priests. To this he adds that he will do yet more to prove his devotion as he seeks for a manifestation of divine favor in the form of victory on the battlefield (4.1.300-316).

As a practical matter, if there were any residual questions concerning means, Canterbury speaks in no uncertain terms to dispel all doubt: "we of the spirituality/Will raise your Highness such a mighty sum/As never did the clergy at one time/Bring in to any of your ancestors" (1.2.138-141). The likelihood of Henry's success is thus further assured by the financial backing of the visible church. With this guarantee, Henry will

not have to engage in a fight with Parliament for money at the same time that he is engaged in his fight with France.

Proportionality. The application of this tenet involves what is essentially a moral calculation of expected outcomes. The threshold requirement is that the *moral good* expected to result from the prosecution of the war must exceed the amount of evil that naturally and unavoidably follows from the prosecution of war. As with many moral calculations, although the results may be neither known nor knowable in advance, anything less than a sincere effort to gauge the relative weight of good and bad outcomes that the war is likely to produce would not meet the demands of this tenet.

This tenet presents Henry (and Shakespeare) with two formidable problems. First, it is not clear that Henry's cause is such as to be proportional; Shakespeare gives us no reason to believe that the dukedoms at issue are crying out for deliverance from the French by the English. For example, certainly the town of Harfleur does not hail the arrival of the English as the arrival of an army of liberation. Second, Henry changes his stated objective for going to war. In act one, he merely seeks lordship over his inherited dukedoms in France (1.2.255, 256). In act two, however, he demands the *crown* of France (2.4.110-102). If, on the one hand, Henry has simply changed his objective, there seems to be no particular motivation for it in the name of just cause. If, on the other hand, he hereby takes the position that he is willing to subdue the entire French kingdom if that is what is necessary to secure the dukedoms at issue, then he seems to have overstepped proportionality.

These problems might on the surface lend themselves to the interpretation that Shakespeare's true agenda includes exposing Henry as a woefully unjust warrior. However, if this interpretation be correct, Shakespeare certainly does not exploit the opportunity to make anything of this violation of proportionality. He merely presents Henry's statements in quite a matter-of-fact fashion and sidesteps the issue of proportionality altogether. If anything, the fact that he offers no argument in the play in behalf of proportionality suggests that he recognizes the problem, recognizes that a plausible defense of Henry on this matter would be difficult to come by, and—consequently and in keeping with his aim of presenting Henry as a just warrior—elects to sidestep the issue altogether.[22]

Peace as the ultimate objective of war. The restoration of happiness and the avoidance of future violence—in short, peace—must be *the* end

for which the war is fought. Henry's compliance with the requirements of this tenet is rather straightforwardly established by virtue of the fact that his objective is a limited one; at no time does he provide the least indication that he intends to embark upon a war of unlimited conquest (after the manner of, for example, Alexander the Great or Ghengis Khan). Henry seems resolutely willing to commit such violence as is necessary to achieve his objective. Indeed, "when the blast of war blows," (3.1.6) he is willing to "imitate the action of the tiger"(3.1.7) and expects his men to do the same. Nevertheless, this same Henry acknowledges with equal ease that "In peace there's nothing so becomes a man/As modest stillness and humility" (3.1.4, 5); and as soon as he accomplishes his objectives, this is precisely the kind of man he expects to become.

The Nine Tenets

The nine tenets of *jus ad bellum*, or similar expressions of them in different combinations, traditionally are taken to specify the individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for engaging in a just war. Furthermore, they jointly form the *permissibility* criteria for a just war. That is, given that the conditions specified by the nine criteria are met, a state is thereby considered to have acquired moral *license* to engage in war, although not necessarily the moral *obligation* to do so. Nevertheless, one is tempted to see in Henry a man whose rhetoric suggests that failure to avenge himself of French wrongs would be tantamount to moral deficiency—if not moral failure—on his part as a monarch.

Although these *jus ad bellum* criteria seek to establish the moral grounds for initiating a war, the just war tradition requires that these criteria continue to hold throughout the duration of the war, or else the war will cease to be just. Shakespeare evinces thoughtful recognition of this point through his ongoing attempts to remind his audience that Henry's war is just. For example, throughout the play, Shakespeare provides Henry with opportunities to demonstrate the rectitude of his intentions. One prominent case in point arises when Henry uncovers the conspiracy of Scroop, Cambridge, and Grey. As Henry pronounces the sentence of death upon the three conspirators, who, given the opportunity would have taken Henry's life in exchange for French gold, Henry sheds light on his inward disposition with these telling words which indicate his resolve to place the affairs of state before his personal welfare: "Touching our person, seek we no revenge,/But we our kingdom's safety

must so tender,/Whose ruin you have sought, that to her laws/We do deliver you" (2.2.183).

Although it may appear to constitute nothing more than a piece of typical war rhetoric, Henry's exhortation to his men at the siege of Harfleur to "Follow your spirit, and upon this charge/Cry 'God for Harry, England, and Saint George!' " (3.1.36,37) is also interpretable as a subtle reminder to his men that—as he has maintained throughout—this painful conflict is one which fulfills the *jus ad bellum* requirements of just war. The point is three-fold: (1) that a soldier fighting for God can only be fighting for a just cause; (2) that God endorses Henry's cause; and, therefore, (3) that a soldier fighting for Henry, England, and Saint George *is* in fact fighting for God. Indeed, throughout the war effort, Henry acknowledges various tokens of divine favor that suggest the continuance of the divine authorization of Henry's enterprise: "We doubt not of a fair and lucky war,/Since God so graciously hath brought to light/This dangerous treason lurking in our way/To hinder our beginnings. We doubt not now/But every rub is smoothed on our way,/Then forth, dear countrymen. Let us deliver/Our puissance into the hand of God,/Putting it straight in expedition./Cheerly to sea. The signs of war advance./No king of England if not king of France" (2.2.193-203).

Shakespeare's apparent sensitivity to this point again becomes evident when, immediately upon learning that he is victorious at Agincourt, Henry exclaims, "Praised be God, and not our strength, for it!" (4.7.92). What Shakespeare accomplishes here is, among other things, to reaffirm the divine (and therefore indisputably competent) authority under whose banner Henry claims to have entered into the war. If God indeed has underwritten Henry throughout the war, then it cannot be but that the war has been just throughout. However, Shakespeare reminds his audience that not only the visible war has been just throughout, but that the invisible intentions within Henry's heart have been similarly just. Fluellen says, "I need not to be ashamed of your Majesty,/praised be God, so long as your Majesty is an/honest man"(4.7.119-121). If there remains any doubt as to whether Shakespeare intends us to understand that Fluellen's assessment of Henry's inward disposition is an accurate one, Henry himself dispels that doubt with the reply, "God keep me so" (4.7.122).

Finally, Henry brings the *jus ad bellum* discussion full circle when, at the peace negotiations with the French court, he informs the Duke of Burgundy that "If...you would the peace,/...you must buy that peace/

With full accord to all our just demands"(5.2.69-72). By the same token, Shakespeare offers as evidence of Henry's true desire for peace the fact that he does not insist on an unconditional surrender—one that utterly disregards the interests of the French. Henry does not seek the annihilation of the French, their enslavement, or anything of the sort. Indeed, he appears willing to accommodate any and all French interests that do not detract from his own. Hence, he says to his negotiating team, Exeter, Clarence, Gloucester, Warwick, and Huntington, "take with you free power to ratify,/Augment, or alter, as your wisdoms best/Shall see advantageable for our dignity,/Anything in or out of our demands,/And we'll consign thereto" (5.2.88-92). Because of Henry's magnanimous attitude after the cessation of hostilities occasioned by a resounding English victory, one can only assume that, consistent with the requirements of the just war tradition, Henry's ultimate objective is the restoration of peace—a peace agreeable to English demands, but a peace nonetheless.

Jus in Bello

At no point in the play does anyone—even the French—ever question the justice of the war or of Henry's right to wage it. Moreover, if anyone *does* harbor unvoiced concerns over the justice of the cause, no one ever questions Henry's right to raise an army or to command the obedience of his troops. "Even in his decisive debate with Williams and Bates on the morning of Agincourt (4.1), where the implications of his power are most searchingly discussed, the king's right to command obedience is never in question.... Henry's soldiers, in spite of their pessimistic views of the military situation, accept them without reserve."[23] In response to the disguised Henry's assertion that the King's cause is "just and his quarrel honorable," (4.1.132), Williams' unequivocal reply, "That's more than we know" (4.1.133), is amplified by Bates' rejoinder that such a knowledge is also more than the common soldier should seek to obtain. "[W]e/know enough," says Williams, "if we know we are the King's sub-/jects. If his cause be wrong, our obedience to the King/wipes the crime of it out of us" (4.1. 134-137). The philosophical basis for Williams' claim is in concert with the traditional just war notion that "soldiers are always presumed to be shrouded in *invincible ignorance* as far as *jus ad bellum* is concerned."[24] This idea of invincible ignorance dates back at least as far as the writings of Francisco de Victoria,[25] who

died eighteen years before Shakespeare's birth.[26]

However, as Henry points out in the course of his discussion with Williams and Bates, the fact that a soldier bears no moral responsibility for the justice or injustice of the war itself does not shield individual soldiers from the burden of moral responsibility as pertaining to their personal conduct in the war. Indeed, "Every subject's duty is/the King's, but every subject's soul is his own" (4.1. 182, 183). Thus, Shakespeare carefully acknowledges the *jus ad bellum/jus in bello* distinction, a distinction central to the whole of just war theory.

The fundamental assumption of *jus in bello* is that a war which is initiated on just grounds can cease to be a just war if it is not fought in a just manner. Traditionally, two tenets specify the criteria for *jus in bello*. These tenets define the just application of force within the context of an existing conflict.

Proportionality. The *jus in bello* tenet of "proportionality" differs from the *jus ad bellum* tenet by the same name in that the former pertains to actions taken *once a war has begun* whereas the latter pertains to considerations expected to be entertained by a state *before* that state determines to engage in war. In the present context, "proportionality" refers to the requirement to apply the minimum force necessary, consistent with "military necessity," for bringing the conflict to a justly peaceful resolution as quickly as possible. Means that cause gratuitous suffering or otherwise cause unnecessary harm fall outside the scope of that which is considered to be a "proportional" application of force. This tenet includes the prohibition against torture and traditionally has served to facilitate the placing of limitations on such things as, for example, the kinds of weapons that can be used.

Discrimination. This tenet enjoins belligerent parties in armed international conflict to distinguish between combatants and noncombatants, with the former normally constituting the only acceptable objects of violent action. Discrimination includes the establishment of a definition of noncombatancy and the avoidance of direct, intentional harm to noncombatants. It also presumes that appropriate efforts will be made by all parties involved in the conflict to protect noncombatants from harm. Traditionally, noncombatants have included wounded soldiers, prisoners of war, clergymen, women, children, the aged, and the infirm, all of whom were presumed not to be engaged in the war effort.[27]

In *Henry V*, as in war in general, *jus in bello* problems with proportionality and discrimination tend to run hand-in-hand, because *jus in bello*

choices often involve a concurrent disregard for proportionality and for the distinction between combatants and noncombatants. One classic example of this is Henry's speech to the men of Harfleur. Henry begins, "This is the latest parle we will admit./Therefore to our best mercy give yourselves" (3.3.2, 3). So far, this has all the appearances of an ultimatum that observes the bounds of proportionality. However, when Henry states the alternative to willing compliance by the men of Harfleur, the ultimatum takes a turn that to modern ears sounds frightfully disproportionate: "If I begin the batt'ry once again,/I will not leave the half-achieved Harfleur/Till in her ashes she lie buried" (3.3.7-10). As shocking as this might seem to the modern auditor, it would not have been so to the auditor of Shakespeare's day. As Rauchut astutely observes concerning the traditional war-faring practices of the Middle Ages, "a town guilty of obstinate defense was customarily denounced by the besieger and either destroyed or dealt severe retaliation."[28]

Of particular significance for Henry, who at every turn claims divine warrant for his warfaring, is the fact that this practice is treated specifically in Deuteronomy Chapter 20, which provides divinely issued instructions for the siege of cities that do not surrender willingly.[29] Implicitly, then, Henry can hardly be held accountable for what otherwise might seem like wartime atrocities when God Himself has authorized them. Henry then takes explicit measures to distance himself from any charge of disproportional or indiscriminate conduct at Harfleur. He does this by acknowledging that if he gives his soldiers leave to level the city, he might actually find himself powerless to restrain their conduct so as to be within the bounds of proportionality. However, since he likely will be unable to stop it, he "solves" the problem by absolving himself of responsibility for it. To the men of Harfleur he says, "What is 't to me, *when you yourselves are cause*,/If your pure maidens fall into the hand/Of hot and forcing violation?" (3.3.19-21, *italics added*). As Traversi observes, "The process of evil, once unleashed, follows courses fatally determined; but Henry, as usual, having described them in words which lay every emphasis on their horror, disclaims all responsibility for them, just as he had once disclaimed all responsibility for the outbreak of war. The whole matter, thus taken out of his hands, becomes indifferent to him."[30]

Conversely, Shakespeare takes full advantage of those opportunities that allow him to present Henry as a man who acts with regard to the demands of *jus in bello*. For example, when Bardolph commits the "war crime" of stealing a pax from a church—an unauthorized act of plun-

der—Henry makes no effort to stay his old friend's execution. Rather, he announces that "We would have all such offenders so cut/off; and we give express charge that in our marches/through the country there be nothing compelled/from the villages, nothing taken but paid for,/none of the French upbraided or abused in dis-/dainful language" (3.6.109-114). He even provides a justification that is at once pragmatic and philosophical in its import: "for when lenity and cruelty play/for a kingdom, the gentler gamester is the soonest/winner" (3.6.114-116).

Shakespeare again downplays the moral issues surrounding Henry's order to kill the French prisoners. While one might infer that Henry kills the prisoners in reprisal for the French slaughter of the boys left to attend the English supply trains, the text may not actually justify the inference. According to the text, Henry gives the order to kill the prisoners *not* in response to word of the death of those in the supply trains, but in response to the sounding of an alarm that he understands to indicate that "The French have reinforced their scattered men" (i.e., that they have re-formed from an earlier assault and are preparing to assault again, 4.6.37). It is not until the opening lines of scene seven that we learn that the French have killed the boys, and it is not until the end of scene seven that we find Henry expressing his outrage over the killings with the announcement of his intention to "cut the throats of those [French prisoners] we have" (4.7.64), to which he adds with great vehemence that "not a man of them that we shall take/Shall taste our mercy" (4.7.65, 66). Whether Henry actually knows that this has happened or whether Fluellen merely infers that the reason for the king's order to slay the prisoners is as a reprisal for the killing is not clear.[31] The best case that could be made on moral grounds on behalf of the King is that he acted in reprisal, and this is the case that Shakespeare makes via Fluellen's remarks: "Kill the poys and th luggage! 'Tis expressly/against the law of arms. 'Tis an arrant piece of/knavery, mark you now, as can be offert, in your/conscience now, is it not?" (4.7.1-4). Note that here Shakespeare specifically points to the French breach of the traditional law of land warfare—the *sine qua non* for any claim that seeks to justify a reprisal. The justification continues with Gower: "'Tis certain there's not a boy left alive, and/the cowardly rascals that ran from the battle ha'/done this slaughter. Besides, they have burned/and carried away all that was in the King's tent,/wherefore the King, most worthily, hath caused/every soldier to cut his prisoner's throat. O, 'tis a/gallant king!" (4.7.5-11).

How does Henry justify a reprisal? He does it with the absolution that comes from divine sanction combined with French injustice; since God sanctioned Henry's war—and has prospered him every step of the way—and the French caused the war through their unjust withholding from Henry of that which was rightfully his, they can only expect that their breaches of the principles of *jus in bello* will be answered in the sternest possible terms.

Although proportionality and discrimination generally are the only two *jus in bello* criteria specified in traditional just war discourse, there are, from time to time, other *jus in bello* issues that receive attention. One of these has to do with the matter of keeping good faith with the enemy. From early antiquity, just war thinkers have raised questions concerning whether, and if so in what way, it is permissible to deceive an enemy in the course of prosecuting combat. While some deceptions, ruses, and stratagems of various kinds generally have been acknowledged as appropriate for use in warfare, Shakespeare would have us know that Henry altogether avoids the sometimes muddy waters associated with which deceptions are permissible and which are not. Speaking of his divinely appointed victory, Henry states, "When, without stratagem,/But in plain shock and even play of battle,/Was ever known so great and little loss/On one part and on th' other? Take it, God,/For it is none but thine"(4.8.112-116). Here again, Shakespeare takes occasion to place a divine stamp of approval upon all that has transpired, perhaps even a stamp that might serve to set aside the contentious issues surrounding Henry's killing of French prisoners.

It is, of course, not at all clear that the historical Henry was by any means a just warrior. Many reasons exist for questioning the moral rectitude both of his motives and of his conduct with respect to the demands of the just war tradition. On the other hand, we have, as I have attempted to show, substantial reason to suppose that *Shakespeare's* Henry V is a king whom the playwright would have us adjudge as a just warrior. In reaching this conclusion, one need not suppose that Shakespeare methodically studied the just war tradition in an effort to identify its various tenets for application to Henry—and this in spite of the fact that, as we have seen, there exists a remarkable correlation between the traditionally accepted tenets of just war and those aspects of Henry's wartime practice that Shakespeare chooses to highlight. We merely need to accept the premise that one who desired to portray a head of state as a just warrior would be led, by the imposition of reason, to demonstrate just warfaring in the way Shakespeare's Henry demonstrates it.

Notes

1. Quotations of *Henry V* follow The New Folger Library Shakespeare *Henry V*, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine (New York: Washington Square Press, 1995).

2. Victor L. Cahn, *Shakespeare the Playwright: A Companion to the Complete Tragedies, Histories, Comedies, and Romances* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 489.

3. Ibid.

4. A.R. Humphreys, ed., *Henry V in William Shakespeare, Four Histories* (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 681.

5. See, for example, the intriguing conversation between Fluellen and Gower at 4.7.

6. Richard Shelley Hartigan, "Noncombatant Immunity: Reflections on its Origins and Present Status," *The Review of Politics 29*, No. 2 (April, 1967): 204.

7. The traditional list of jus ad bellum and jus in bello criteria typically varies in minor degree from author to author. The reason for this is not so much a basic disagreement as to what, in the case of jus ad bellum, constitutes a just war or what, in the case of jus in bello, counts as the minimally acceptable standards of conduct for those engaged in wartime hostilities as it is presentation. Some authors are wont to combine two or more traditionally accepted just war notions under a rather more general heading, while others opt for a greater range of distinctions. For examples of some representative lists of jus ad bellum criteria, see the May 3, 1983, Pastoral Letter on War and Peace issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Catholics and Nuclear War, ed. Philip J. Murnion (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1983), 277-280. See also James Turner Johnson, "The Just War Idea and the Ethics of Intervention," address delivered at the United States Air Force Academy on November 17, 1993, The Joseph A. Reich, Sr., Distinguished Lecture on War, Morality, and the Military Profession, number six (Colorado Springs: United States Air Force Academy, 1993), 22-25. By way of comparison, Hartigan summarizes the jus ad bellum criteria thus: 1) the war must be declared by the legitimate public authority; 2) a real injury must have been suffered; 3) the damage likely to be incurred by the war may not be disproportionate to the injury suffered; 4) there must be reasonable hope of success; 5) all possible means of peaceful settlement must have failed; 6) those prosecuting the war must have the right intention; and 7) only legitimate and moral means may be employed in prosecuting the war. (Note that this latter tenet is, properly speaking, a jus in bello tenet.)

8. Derek Traversi, *Shakespeare from Richard II to Henry V* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), 169.

9. Note also Exeter's assertion (2.4.87) that Henry's claim from Edward III is justi-

fied by both the law of nations (such that he is justified in seeking it by force of arms) and of nature (i.e., by lineal descent).

10. Cahn 1991, 491.

11. Humphreys 1994, 676.

12. The words quoted here are actually the words of Exeter, but they constitute the antecedent to the pronoun "They" used by Westmoreland, who is the next speaker.

13. Cahn 1991, 489.

14. Eugene M. Waith, Shakespeare: *The Histories, A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 162.

15. "The code of laws known at the salic law is a collection of the popular laws of the Salic or Salian Franks, committed to writing in barbarous Latin, in the 5' [sic] century.... It was by a very doubtful construction that the salic law in the 14' [sic] century was held to exclude the succession of females to the throne of France, but on the accession of Phillip the Long, it was given this interpretation, and the fact that Edward III rested his claim to the throne on female succession no doubt led the French to place this meaning on the law and to adhere to it for all future time" (Edward Joseph White, *Commentaries on the Law in Shakespeare* [St. Louis: The F.H. Thomas Law Book Co., 1913], 283, 284).

16. The extent to which Henry and the English characters in the play make such invocations—especially when the that number is compared to similar invocations by the French—is significant. "The language of religion is almost all England's and Henry's. Of the fifty-nine uses of 'God' in the play, only three are by Frenchmen. Of the seven uses of 'Christ', 'Christian', and 'Christian-like', none are by Frenchmen. God is made to seem, by virtue of this monopolised reiteration, to belong to the English; the responsibility for the violence and aggression of the war is displaced onto the implicitly Godless French subjects of attack. He sanctions violence through his agencies of authority on earth." (Derek Cohen, *Shakespeare's Culture of Violence* [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993], 77).

17. Numbers 27:8 (King James Version). The entire verse reads thus: "And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter." In this Chapter, Moses sets forth the divinely appointed laws of inheritance of which this is one.

18. i.e., the ultimate argument of kings.

19. See Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Officiis*, trans. Clinton Walker Keys (Cambridge:

Harvard University Press, 1987), I.xi, p. 39.

20. See Deuteronomy 20:10-14.

21. This claim, of course, raises with full justification the question of Canterbury's true motivation for wanting the war to proceed. Interesting though that question may be, it is not one that need detain us in a consideration of the theory of just war as pertaining to Henry V. The Bishop has no war-making authority. Hence, even if his motivation be not only morally deficient, but altogether evil, the moral status of his motivation has no bearing, in and of itself, on the justice of the contemplated war.

22. I am indebted to my colleague, Professor Sandra Visser, for her views on this issue.

23. Traversi 1957, 187.

24. Paul Christopher, *The Ethics of War and Peace* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1994) 169, italics added.

25. This phrase appears (albeit in a slightly different context) in Franciscus de Victoria, *De Indis* [On the Indians], trans. John Pawley Bate in *The Classics of International Law* (Washington: Carnegie Institute, 1917).

26. My claim is not that Shakespeare necessarily had any personal acquaintance with the writings of de Victoria, but merely that the notion that soldiers are absolved of moral responsibility for acts committed in war at the behest of the sovereign was current in Shakespeare's day.

27. Murnion 1983, 280; Johnson 1993, 23.

28. E.A Rauchut, *Shakespeare Quarterly 42* (1991): 55.

29. See Deuteronomy 20:10-14 (King James Version): "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make the answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee."

30. Traversi 1957, 183.

31. The epistemological problem created by the fact that the King gives the order prior to the point at which the audience is fully apprised of the King's awareness that the French have killed English noncombatants has not escaped critical notice: "The slaughter of the French prisoners, which aroused some conflicting sentiments in Holinshed's narrative, is presented in Henry V with all the ambivalence of theatrical and historical contradiction. Gower and Fluellen (iv.vii) assume that the massacre is a reprisal for the killing of the boys guarding the English luggage train. In fact, we know from the previous scene, Henry knew nothing of this when he gave the order: a command which seems rather to arise out of Exeter's romantic and sentimental account of the deaths of York and Suffolk" (John Turner in Graham Holderness, Nick Potter, and John Turner, *Shakespeare: The Play of History* [Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988], 80, 81). This problem is exacerbated by the fact that, according to Cahn, the historical Henry "ordered prisoners and noncombatants killed before the French reorganized" (Cahn 1991, 503).

John Mark Mattox is a U.S. Army major serving in Belgium at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. He holds a B.A. from Brigham Young University, an M.M.A.S. from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Indiana University.

W.D. Ehrhart

Howard Fast's "Korean Litany"

Though the Korean War did not produce a body of poetry comparable in size to either World War Two or the Vietnam War, it has, contrary to both popular and scholarly perceptions,[1] served as a source of poetic inspiration for a number of writers, veterans and non-veterans alike.

In a previous issue of *War, Literature and the Arts* (Fall/Winter 1997), I discussed the poetry of Korean War soldier-poets William Childress; Rolando Hinojosa; James Magner, Jr.; Reg Saner; William Wantling; and Keith Wilson. Most prominent among those poets who did not serve in Korea but who wrote poems about the Korean War are Thomas McGrath, whose "Ode for the American Dead in Korea" first appeared in *Figures of the Double World* in 1955, and Hayden Carruth, whose "On a Certain Engagement South of Seoul" first appeared in *The Crow and the Heart* in 1959.

One of the most ambitious attempts to address the Korean War in verse, however, is Howard Fast's *Korean Lullaby*, a fourteen-page pamphlet containing three separate poems that almost certainly appeared while the war was still being fought.[2] In the issue of **WLA** mentioned above, though my primary concern then was on soldier-poets who had actually fought in Korea, I dismissed Fast rather more hastily than I should have. At least part of his *Korean Lullaby* has more to recommend it than I had previously suggested—or even recognized until I reread it with greater care at the urging of Philip K. Jason of the U.S. Naval Academy and my co-editor on *Retrieving Bones: Stories and Poems of the Korean War*.

All three poems are stridently antiwar, and not just in a general sense. Fast makes it clear that he quite specifically opposes American intervention in Korea. Anyone familiar with Fast will not be surprised by the stance he takes. A successful and prolific novelist, Fast had already published more than two dozen books by 1950 and would go on

to write *Spartacus* and *The Immigrants*, both of which would become popular movies (the latter on TV), and scores of others (most recently *Greenwich*, which he published in 2000 at the age of 85).[3] In 1943, however, he joined the Communist Party. Though he left the party in 1956, he was an active member during the Korean War, and since the war was being waged against North Korean and then Chinese Communists, it was a matter of Communist Party doctrine to oppose it. Not surprisingly, the pamphlet's publisher, the American Peace Crusade, was denounced as a "Communist Front Organization" by Secretary of State Dean Acheson in February 1951, an assessment that was largely accurate.[4]

Korean Lullaby seems to be Fast's only published excursion into the world of poetry, and the first and third poems in the pamphlet are strong arguments that one should be grateful Fast mostly avoided poetry. Both "Korean Lullaby," the title poem, and "A Song of Peace" are, says Jason, "undistinguished, manipulative rhymed verse," and "polemical" as well.[5] In "Korean Lullaby," for instance, Fast twice rhymes four lines in a row, having the unintended and almost comical effect of bringing to mind Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven." Elsewhere in the poem, he argues that the war is really being fought by western capitalists to fuel the economy and stave off depression, and he puts "free world" in quotes to make sure we get his point. "A Song of Peace" is not quite as ham-fisted with its politics, but as a poem it is no improvement over "Korean Lullaby."

Given these two poems, it is all the more startling to encounter "Korean Litany" wedged between them, for "Korean Litany" is as different from these other two poems as one could possibly imagine—in form, in content, in quality, and in impact. Written entirely in free verse, it is actually seven poems in one, each in the voice of a dead American soldier. Though Fast had no combat experience of his own—during World War Two, he was assigned to the Office of War Information—the voices he assumes are for the most part both compelling and convincing. While one can see Fast's politics at work in these poems, their deceptive simplicity and heartbreaking humanity transcend ideology and make them truly works of art.

All in all, "Korean Litany" works so effectively one wonders how it could be possible for Fast to have written anything as bad as the two poems that precede and follow it in *Korean Lullaby*. However that happened, "Korean Litany" is a poem—really seven poems under one title—that deserves to be treated as a major contribution to Korean War

literature. Instead, the poem has been all-but-lost. Only a few copies of the original pamphlet still exist, tucked away in research libraries. It is not in the Library of Congress, and a survey of rare book dealers I recently conducted turned up not a single copy. To my knowledge, no part of the pamphlet has ever been reprinted.

In the case of "Korean Litany," this is a shame that is happily and finally corrected. Here then, for the first time in half a century—and with the kind permission of Fast himself—is the full text of "Korean Litany."

Vernon Blake, Rifleman:

My age reads, as long as the wood lasts,
twenty-three, and read my name,
I, Vernon Blake, who died in action
from a sniper's bullet—and rests in peace,
or less than peace perhaps, in Korean soil.
And fortunate perhaps, for only one question
twists a little with the maggots.
You see, the American way of life
was all at one with me, ten generations on each side
all from this soil, and the house I lived in,
Chester, Vermont, white clapboard,
and easy with all those generations.
I ate, drank and slept and played,
studied a little, grew strong and tall and proud;
I saw it when my mother looked at me,
and my father's eyes were full of pride,
and I wrote to him, "I make a good soldier,
and all those days we tramped the fields
and brush together were not wasted—"
We went for rabbit and squirrel, and once a long shot
at a deer. How my mother loved us both!
"Two men," she said, "the Bible notwithstanding,
my own prescription for a happy home."
And I fought her when she wanted my college diploma,
framed in the livingroom—why didn't she
have four children, tall and strong and proud like me?

I would have answered her question eventually,
for I had no doubts and no questions.
It was in her that the doubts grew, like a cancer,
"Why, why, why, why? Why are you there, my son,
and not with me?" I would have framed the answer,
given time, framed it proudly for her to hang on the wall—
for there must be an answer.

Harry Morgan, Machine Gunner:

My old man never had much sense,
working on an assembly line all his life,
the candle burned at both ends, squeezed in the middle,
and always yapping of the pride of class
a worker has. "What future where the world is yours?"
I'd ask him. "You got only a past, old man,
and the smart money goes to the smart fingers.
Get smart, old man, get smart.
I'll take a buck and you—you keep your commie line."
He could have said a lot of things,
and talked of damn young punks,
but it wasn't easy for him to put in words
the things he felt, and the one letter he sent,
I never answered. "Only remember," he wrote,
"the men you fight are your brothers,
working with their own hands, as I work with mine,
and you with yours." Where are my hands,
old man? Both of them blown off by a mortar shell,
and me looking at the stumps as I bled to death.

Arthur Dembrowski, Chemical Warfare:

Dug up quickly, you would see,
snub nose, sandy hair and a broad face;
we never like what we see in our own mirror,
and I only started shaving three months before the service.

A girl would like or not like that face,
making a better judgment than mine—
but even love was postponed, this crazy kid
making a pal of a three year old, my brother,
sixteen years between him and me,
me the child of my mother's youth,
and he of her last bearing time.
The way it was, I never loved anything
the way I loved that kid,
and we were better friends than most brothers.
With his little fat hand in mine,
we'd walk on my furloughs, and they'd say,
"There's Dembrowski and his buddy."
I was a flame thrower, and out of one burning house
crawled a Korean child, blistered and singed
all over his skin. I picked him up
and cradled him in my arms, talking to him
when a bullet blew off the back of my head.

Al Carlton, Medic:

When I crawled up to a Korean wounded
to heal him, and got a bullet in my gut,
I hated for the first time in nine months,
dying wastefully and painfully, whimpering,
"Oh Jesus—what a lousy way!"
And he, with one arm torn off,
lay watching me and whispered,
"Hey, Yank—what for you come here?
Go home. Go home." And then we bled together,
blood mixing with blood,
and the last thing I thought of
was blood brothers, and then I died
by the side of the man who killed me.

Gerald Cartwheel, Tankman:

The day my tank rolled through a village,
flattening those flimsy houses,
I saw a woman caught under a beam,
screaming as the tank rolled over—
on that day, I wrote to my congressman,
my free and democractic right,
"Was I sent here to do this kind of thing,
or tell me why, or have I no right to know,
or do you know?" I sought no easy answer,
knowing—as others don't—
that things are not all black and white.
Others ribbed me, scoffed, and said,
"Tell it to the chaplain, bub."
I wonder what the answer would have been,
and whether I would have felt at ease,
cooking in a burning tank
and screaming for my mother.

Aaron Klein, Rifleman:

I did what I did, and followed orders through,
and died with one hundred and sixteen men,
all together, brave men who fought and died,
and left a wife and child, and a mother
who will die too, this being too much pain
for her to take and live with,
and I was brave, and asked no questions,
and never asked to know what I,
a Jew and kin to those six million
whom Hitler slew, was doing here, in this strange land,
making a desert and a graveyard
of a sunny place where people lived and worked—
and never asked what good dead children did
in freedom's struggle. And if I thought,
am I or the man across the ridge and facing me,

fighting freedom's fight? I never changed
the thought to words or deeds—
then why do I rest so poorly,
in this strange soil?

Jamsie Anderson, Quartermasters:

I used to laugh and say,
"I got no future, but lots of past."
Well, take my past and put it you know where,
all of it, cleaning toilets and shining shoes—
not like them that sat and sighed
for a glass of beer at five o'clock,
just that to walk on them soft heaven clouds.
That ain't no heaven for me,
promoted to driving a half-track through Korean mud;
and then they'd say, "You're turning evil, Jamsie,
evil as all hell." Oh, no, never, not no evil
in my now, but just a little plain damned common sense.
"Then keep it to yourself," they said. "Black man's
got no business talking common sense."
But never was a man could take his common sense
and force it to behave, and mine kept plaguing me.
Oh, what a lot of questions I could ask
of them strange men who blew me all apart.
Not white men, boss men,
no southern accent there,
but colored men like me,
with eyes as full of pain—
lifted me tenderly,
and buried me in Korean soil. I'd ask them calm and gentle,
not evil, but just with common sense.

•

Notes

1. See, for instance: "The Korean War and American Memory" by James R. Kerin, Jr., unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1994, 42 & 182, or "Death's Aesthetic Proliferation in Works of Hinojosa" by Donald A. Randolph in *Confluencia*, 1.2, Spring 1986, 42.

2. While *Korean Lullaby* carries no date or copyright notice, it could not have been published in 1950, since a *New York Times* article dated February 1, 1951 (8) describes the American Peace Crusade, the publisher of record for the pamphlet, as a "new organization." But the contents of the booklet itself clearly suggest that it was published prior to the truce in July 1953.

3. Biographical and bibliographical information on Fast comes from Chapman and Jorgenson, eds., *Contemporary Authors*, New Revision Series, 54, 145-151, Anthony Manousos in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 9, 277-281, and www.Amazon.com.

4. Acheson is quoted in the New York *Herald Tribune* of February 21, 1951, which is reproduced in Martin Duberman's *Paul Robeson: A Biography*, 1989, 704. His accusation was confirmed many years later by Ellen W. Schrecker of Yeshiva University in a November 23, 1999 e-mail to Marilyn B. Young of New York University. According to Schrecker, though many prominent Americans involved in the American Peace Crusade were not members of the Communist Party (Cornell Professor Philip Morrison, for instance, who assembled the first atomic bomb on Tinian Island in 1945; Cal Tech Professor Linus Pauling, who had been given the Medal of Merit for his World War Two contributions to rocket research; and former Minnesota Governor Elmer Benson), others such as Fast certainly were. Among other things, the American Peace Crusade advocated withdrawal of American troops from Korea and United Nations representation for the Chinese People's Republic. See also David Caute, *The Great Fear*, 469 &471.

5. Ehrhart and Jason, *Retrieving Bones*, xxxiv. Though the introduction to the book is co-authored, the description of Fast's poems was written by Jason.

W.D. Ehrhart is a research fellow in American Studies for the University of Wales, Swansea, U.K. He was guest-editor of **WLA** (Fall/Winter 1997), *I Remember: Soldier-Poets of the Korean War*. His books include an autobiographical trilogy about the Vietnam War and its aftermath, as well as numerous books of poetry. He is a frequent contributor to **WLA**.



Photograph Credit: Peter Cunningham

Paul West has recently published three books, *O.K.*, a novel about Doc Holliday; *The Dry Danube*, a novella about Hitler as a failed art student in Vienna; and *The Secret Lives of Words*, a personal dictionary and etymology, and a Book of the Month Club Selection. "Hitler's Pianist and Other Portraits" is a continuation of West's earlier book, *Portable People*.

Paul West

Hitler's Pianist and Other Portraits

Colonel Doolittle's Amputee

After Colonel Doolittle had draped some prewar Japanese medals around the nose of a bomb, the Mitchells took off from the deck of the *Hornet* and headed for the mainland of Japan. They were taking off in a hurry because a Japanese ship and two fishing boats had already been sighted. The distance was some 650 miles instead of the allotted 500, which would allow the Mitchells to bomb and then find their way to Chinese airfields. Now, after bombing, they would have to take pot luck, landing wherever they could. Only one Mitchell faltered; a sailor had slipped. and thus entered his arm into the orbit of a propeller, which severed it, causing the pilot to forget to set his flaps. His plane sank, then recovered, and the squadron departed.

Oddly enough, as the Mitchells neared their targets, they watched Japanese planes giving them no heed, Japanese fishermen waving to them, and even Japanese civilians–unversed in aircraft recognition–signaling from the streets. They seemed almost welcome. The one person who, on seeing them, panicked, happened to be Admiral Tojo, on an aerial inspection tour. Knowing a Mitchell when he saw one, he knew at once what was afoot and sent out radio signals, too late. In the hasty, unpredictable world of contingency, what Tojo saw was the Mitchell whose propeller had severed that sailor's arm, but Tojo had not seen the dried blood on the blades and would not have reported if he had.

The Tears of Miss Ricks

Miss Ricks, known only by that name for as long as she lived, attached herself to us on Friday afternoons, her attaché case crammed with goods of the Earth. She would knock, at once step inside, hoisting her big box onto the soft chenille cloth. We sat around it like voyeurs from the Arabian Nights, each to a side of the table, looking for old favorites, I for the silver-plated mated hairbrushes, my sister for the doll that opened up to reveal yet another identical doll smaller, my mother (I think) eyeing ruby-encrusted candlestick holders. Imagine the weight of all this, the muscles of Miss Ricks who lugged it around year long, on and off buses, some trains, with no help from porters or redcaps. We removed our choices, ogled them, then put them back, possibly month after month breaking Miss Ricks's heart. *You never buy*, her face intoned, but we were not going to resist our view of the promised land, not so long as she kept coming, and I began to imagine that, one week, she would rest the suitcase on a specially prepared eiderdown of bees' fur, into which it sank never to be regained, relieving her of that insatiable lifelong burden, from which if she was lucky she sold a few crumb brushes a year, some sets of yellow dusters, a couple of manicure sets. I imagined the tears of Miss Ricks, blown to bits by an enemy bomb, her dry goods tossed miles high to where no purchaser held court for her, the mineral produce of her entire life no more than a case of samples.

Walter von Goggle-eyed

Ideal the black sough of deep woods for young boys firing arrows from bows, camping out under a canopy of dank chlorophyll, or even bringing home to mother a sheaf of bluebells, bleached stems conducting to azure tops. It was here I fell from a high branch, landing on my head among the fungi and rotten leaves, with no apparent harm (through some have wondered). It was between Indians and girls that a trio of us just wandering with fresh-cut staves broke through the edge of a clearing to see what we at first failed to understand: an astronaut descending with parachute high out of sight, the skein just visible. But he did not move, up or down. He stayed suspended, perhaps awaiting us for some obscure purpose. Yet he only swayed a little, some mother's son about

twenty, his face full of buoyant uncouthness in which shock and reassurance mingled. There he hung, presumably self-slaughtered, and, after a sullen pause in which we decided to do nothing to help him, we breathed deep and began to swing him this way or that. As we told it later, we *swang* him, hearing only the creak of rope and branch amid the huge frigid suction of the woods. Our stomachs felt empty and chill as we did so. But the longer we swung him the higher he went, parcel in blue serge (no doubt his best suit for the occasion, even a cheap silver tie). Then, by tacit agreement, we let him subside, in ever smaller motions until he hung again much as we'd found him, dead of love, hate, debt, cowardice, shame. Who knew? Someone had almost knocked his block off while he, central to this measly tableau, was just perhaps afraid of making nothing happen. Was he a local, or was he (as we deformed the correct pronunciation of nearby villages–Mosba, Fretch, Killer, Spunk, and Hayfway) –an outsider? Walter von Goggle-eyed I at once named him, remembering a name from somewhere. Even a rhyme formed, published later:

> There was a young man from nearby
> Who found he wanted to die.
> Lacking all hope
> He purchased some rope
> And sputtered his last goodbye.

He surely got a better epitaph than that, after they had cut him down and smoothed him out. It turned out he was a conscientious objector, panicked by the draft. At least they didn't find him swinging or swung.

Reg Morgan

Morgan's magic shop–creaky beams, subdued lights, bottles of wine never sold, at the front nearest the street brand new air rifles and little capstan–shaped pellets–was a suitable place in which to rehearse a mystery. Mrs. Morgan, mother of the gorgeous Winona, had two sons, one of whom became a wireless operator in the RAF. On his shoulder he bore the insignia of his trade: a radiating crab of light, sending its beams into all quarters, just showing you what, with earphones and a Morse tapper, he could do when they bombed those German dams. Was he in

Hobday's plane that night? No, or he would have come back. It was all right, though, because Mrs. Morgan, already given to ethereal impulse, said he was coming through anyway on his own unmilitary wavelength, missing in action but found in the ether, all crackling good cheer and hearty greetings. Would my mother care to listen to him? My mother said no thank you, she knew what other worldly chatter was like. In fact, Mrs. Morgan began to hold a regular seance in which Reg ("Redge"), her son, urged them all on, not to forget him but to endure with him his transit through the other world as an insubstantial wireless operator. I never got over how appropriate it was for him to be still transmitting, as if he had found a superior method the air force might be glad to hear about. He was never seen again, but only heard from, in a big way.

Mr. Yates

Mr. Yates the Latin teacher who replaced Miss Knight had come fresh from the war; or, rather, not so fresh he had just come from war. He at once became the heartthrob for Misses Hannington (French) and Moffat (history), but eluded all women thanks to some withdrawn, tentative inwardness he specialized in. He got near his pupils instead. His way with Latin was gentle, almost breath-held, not as if he were dispensing ancient formulas, but as if this live, mercurial thing placed in his hands alone would save us all. There was a magic in Latin, almost a religion of it, and you could tell it had seen him through many a tight corner in its compact, sibylline fashion, never wasting a word, never (to us) seeming in the right word-order and therefore immune to the ravages of colloquial speech. How eloquent he was when telling us about Descartes (who was *he*?), who said *cogito, ergo sum*. It means, he said, "I think, therefore I am." This was magical all right. "Notice how in English we begin with our personal pronoun, presupposing what we intend to prove, whereas Latin, putting the pronoun at the end ("*o*"), suggests there is thought going on, *cogit*, and adds the *I* word third. It's as if Latin weren't quite sure of things, certain there was consciousness going on, but a straggler about the I bit, which of course relates to the rest of the idea: *therefore I exist*. What do you make of that?" We had discovered reticence among the dead languages. He died soon after, of some hidden tropical disease he'd been sent home with, Cartesian to the end.

My Father and the Luftwaffe

Had my father been a feckless sergeant, he would not have survived his years of war, 1914 to 1918. Now it was the next war after that. Each night, as Nazi bombers raced their unsyncopated engines (whirr-whirr) above our house, he and I would go and stand outside, each with a brisket sandwich in hand, to peer upward as searchlights combed the skies for one of those silver seeds. I called them kellies, which I knew as rolls of silver paper enclosing a small ball bearing: you then sealed the tube, twice, rattled the kelly in a matchbox, and out it came with beautifully rounded ends. Sometimes, divergent shrapnel from anti-aircraft shells pattered down around us, lethal confetti: other times spent rounds, from some absently firing machine gunner in a turret landed not far away. Our ex machine-gunner himself had some fellow feeling for this airman. The brisket had a damp bouquet, the bread a dry lean. My mother had made sandwiches earlier and gone to bed, so there we were, we could have been drinking together (I too young) or extolling the fury of aerial bombardment in flourishes of hyper-virile bravado. None of that. We just, in an impersonal way, looked up and marveled, cursing and gasping. It was as if we knew nobody could get at us in the night, so long as we made targets of ourselves out there beside the privet hedge, the drainpipe up which the spider climbed. We heard neighbor dogs howling and whimpering, even the distant *crump* of a bomb, but only on one night did the bomb-aimer actually salvo his load from high above the village, excavating an entire field but otherwise destroying nothing at all: too chicken, we said, to fly over us en route to the target of the big city.

"*Germans*," my father commented, swapping his last crust for his pipe (showing a light was a forbidden offense). "They used to be made of sterner stuff than that. Shall we go in?" We had faced down the Luftwaffe, stared its bombs away (mostly), and consumed our brisket with slow-motion thoroughness, daring them to catch us napping, little knowing that, when they landed back at their stolen French airfields to swagger and boast over wienerschnitzel and warm beer, they had over floated a man and his boy ribbing their military swank. It could all have gone otherwise, but we flunked them long before they got home to Hunheim. I had been blooded, I suppose, a child having his nose rubbed in a fox's blood after the hunt. Yet that image seemed somehow wrong, with us the target like the fox. This was the blind leading the blind, the half-blind veteran getting his own back by daring them to do it again a quarter-century later. *Debellare superbos*, my cub's Latin had taught me: we were making the haughty less warlike through sheer scorn.

Friedrich Reck-Malleczewen

Here, creeping at last, half a century later, out of the rotten bowels of war, comes almost the last aristocrat, with a reckless, high-toned diary, man of the East Prussian nobility who settled in Bavaria, Poing the name of his place, where he emulated the domestic form of emigration once recommended by the poet Gottfried Benn. He loathed the Nazi mob, but mostly kept clear of it inside his pastoral idyll, dreaming of, not Hitler's, but the thousand-year Reich of the Holy Roman Empire. He may even have agreed with Spengler, the cultural pessimist, who had traced the rise of the *Massenmensch*, the "mass-man," back to Bismarck and beyond and blamed the formlessness of Germany for its woes. But Reck as we will have to call him, shrinking from Malleczewen, saw the gluttonous pessimist in the man, pathologically vain and forever toadying to Hitler's industrialist.

His journal, begun in 1936, ends in October 1944, with his arrest, isn't really about the Third Reich but, rather like Saint-Exupéry's *Citadelle*, recites events and memories, moments of illumination and sieges of indignation. "A man must hate this Germany," he wrote, "with all his heart if he really loves it." For this ironic stance, he paid at Dachau. A schoolboy sings a crucifix out of a classroom, snarling "Lie there, you dirty Jew." He smells the cattle-cars leaving from rural Bavaria. He had missed his chance to assassinate back in 1932, able only in 1944, after Stauffenberg had flubbed his, to chide the generals: "Ah, now, really gentlemen, this is a little late." Of course. That is what you get for disagreeing even if you publish only half a century later. One has only to think about the McCarthy period, as if Senator Joe had managed to shoot, hang, or behead the real communists, only to sweep away a whole generation of those who merely disagreed, like the Sophie Scholls, guilty of leaflets, awaiting the opening click of the door into the guillotine room. His diary is called *Diary of A Man in Despair*.

Win Min Than

Squadron leader Forrester wakes to the sound of ice tinkling against a glass borne by perhaps the smoothest, sleekest face he has ever seen. Ungesturing at the glass, wholly mesmerized by the genteel sycophancy of the face in which a bit of shame mingles with pride, he tries to blurt, but his throat will not oblige. So he drinks, eyes still on the eager, submissive-looking neat face, with the whisper of someone educated at the best of girls' schools. Miss Win Min Than, as she introduces herself, will see to him, feed and rear him, get him to church and back to form. She knows all the jargon, the hearty British devil-may-care, and will lead him out of the funk in which he rots. His Mosquito has crashed in the desert; Blore, his Cambridge educated navigator has perished, trekking into the far desert in search of something unutterable. Or did he shoot himself? Forrester is not sure. Did he, Forrester, shoot himself as well, and can this be the skimpy afterlife that equips exquisite handmaidens with strange, inadequate-sounding names? Even if only comforting him with glasses of tinkling water, Win Min Than will touch him magically, he just knows it. Along comes Brenda de Banzie, hearty theist, who vows to see him honorably linked to God. Squadron Leader Forrester is Gregory Peck.

As stories go, it has epic reach, especially in its opening scenes. The flying is good, the just deserts in the desert better. In what seems no time, at least in the spiritual avalanche that in *The Purple Plain* passes for interiorized "recognition," as Aristotle put it, Squadron Leader Forrester goes in search of a ruby, or perhaps Win Min Than equips him with it. Yes she does. The love affair begins to boil, but only as warm catalysis over cold rocks. This is Burma after all, and the time that of the famed Burma Road. All liaisons are bound to be temporary, and Win Min Than, that honed, almost simpering epitome of Burmese beauty–slender, winsome, keenly spiritual–knows it. Yet she risks her all, as if life's profoundest experience has leaped upon her, never to come again. An air raid ensues. Things revert to so-called normal, and the tenderly adjusted octave of wartime infatuation slumps into diurnal uproar.

H.E. Bates, *aka* Flying Officer X, whose wartime stories I almost eagerly mopped up, does well in this regard, letting us intuit the lovers, unanimity as our own, as Forrester cottons on to what's exotic and she espouses his virile version of the mundane. She wafts away from our

minds only to haunt our imaginations, having given facial image to all the Asian Heroines that Greene and Malraux tried to bring to life. Win Min Than the svelte, sari-clad wisp animates the movie and (retrospectively) the book by summoning up into herself the fragility of Asian woman merged with her own perhaps unique ethereal regality. Merely to see her look, at and through and beyond him, is to grasp something all penetrating in at least Bates's concept: the East looking at the West and not quite liking it, yet, in that sympathetic aversion, finding a source of love.

So where has this bedside angel gone? Was she found, introduced, and wasted all in one go? I doubt it, but I have seen no other movies of hers, reinforcing my notion that she was indeed magical, and the mirage she conjured up in the Squadron Leader's hospital room was her only rosebud. That correctly accented whisper of British English is a rare thing in this age of mumble and slur. How come she spoke so well? Who, if not the equally phonetic Nimet, host of *The New York Times* radio station, WQXR, groomed her for the part and got her thinking she was more imperial in her concise grandeur than Mr. Peck's phoney Air Force? Brenda de Banzie understands best when, after the air raid, she explains that Asiatics don't brood inwardly, they let their emotions out. Perhaps Win Min Than felt that flood and slid away with it.

Glenn Miller

The only band-leader killed when an Allied bombardier salvoed his bombs onto a plane beneath him over the English Channel, Glenn Miller is bound to be hard to sift from myth. Did he buy Jaguars and Rolls-Royces with shoeboxes full of money? Did coolie hats full of cocaine sit on his credenza? Doubtful; the movie of his life has sanitized all such fol de rol. The problem, if any, remains with the so-called Glenn Miller sound, much touted in the movie as he shuffled trombones and saxes, accidentally finding the right combination when a trombonist split a lip. Then it came about! That velvet, swaying, almost plaintive swooning sound. With it came poise, as when, during a concert in the London blitz, a doodlebug flew over, pulse-jetting like someone with hiccups, fell silent, then exploded. The band played, waited, then resumed, the epitome of cool.

How was it then that, in our teens, when each of us collected a band,

some of us two (I Basie and Goodman), nobody collected Miller? I used to think it was because the Miller band owed so much to Glenn Gray's Casa Loma Orchestra, to the concept of suburban dance music at the Long Island Casino. The sound was too streamlined, too velveeta. I thought, even in unusual pieces such as *American Patrol* (the number they play in the movie as the V1 arrives, hovers, and falls). Nowadays I think it's not so much a mode as a lack. There are no rough edges, no honky tonk, no airshaft misery; the music swoops in and gets you like somebody handcreaming the insides of your bedroom slippers. You would like to resist. You try to. There are no blues, not even as much as in Tommy Dorsey's band or that of Harry James. Something bureaucratic and diplomatic comes through, a generic suavity, and overmodulated sinuousness. Say it's music at the end result of a process it does not allude to. Too cut and dried. Or molded and oiled. You might dance all night to it, to the fabled "sound," but you wouldn't give it a 78.

These thoughts sadden me. I have not grown up into a liking for the super-competent Miller, not compared with my old favorites Basie and Goodman. Herman and Barnet, not to mention the harmonic swell Ellington. No empty cans clattering in an alley, no cats mewing, no dissonance in the brass. His career has the right trajectory for a hero, but misses the bite I like. He is one of the heroes of Prometheus, and indeed of Clio (History), but not of Melpomene (Tragedy) or St. Cecilia. His version of *At the Woodchopper's Ball* seems to fly on auto-pilot all the way. He's a long way from Bessie braying *Gimme a pigfoot*.

White Mischief

I have always liked the music that goes with this roll of fluffy celluloid, especially when the major domo cum bandleader stands censoriously by while the trumpeter does his best. Jock is supposed to have shot Joss for tampering with Greta Scacchi, his much younger wife. How tedious. I much prefer the rumors of fascism in Happy Valley, with Joss Erroll, old chum of Oswald Mosley, the British fascist, bumped off by a sexy Girton girl, a crack shot gifted at mahjong. Erroll, it's said, had links with a cabal of peacemaking British officials intent on a deal with Hitler. He had a kraalful of political dirt, anathema to Churchill. In 1940, three Scottish potentates met in the Highlands to decide Erroll's fate and handed the matter over to special forces at 2300 hours, 12 September. Into and out of Joss's bed the hit-girl went, later changing her looks at a

Nairobi hairdresser's. She flagged down Joss's car and plugged him.

That this air-fairy stuff comes from papers devised by a former Kenya hand, the scribe of a conscience-ridden old Navy commander, bothers me little, just so long as I can watch Sarah Miles hoicking her skirts to scoop honey for dead Joss's chops, and Trevor Howard eyeing La Scacchi through his bathroom peephole after gifting her with a tiny pistol. Pistol. *Get it*? Two pieces missing from the movie: The one-legged Kenya hangman whom Jock cheated, and Jock's suicide at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool, England. What a Scottish play.

Hitler's Pianist

Dancing with Djuna Barnes in 1914, Putzi suffered a burst blood vessel in his penis, but their torrid affair ended in 1936 because Djuna was not German whereas Putzi had a German father, an American mother.

Harvard-educated, and destined to supervise the family art publishing houses in Berlin and New York, Putzi von Hanfstaengl was born in 1887, well-connected on both sides: Hanfstaengl had served as privy counselors to the Dukes of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and his mother's family, the New England Sedgwicks, had produced two Civil War generals, one of whom had helped carry Lincoln's coffin. Putzi grew up among a host of illustrious visitors, including Sarasate, Richard Strauss, Fridtjof Nansen and Mark Twain. Socially adroit and esthetically primed, he was just the man to escort the young Hitler to concerts and elegant soirées. Politically ambiguous, however, Putzi first befriended and financed Hitler, who was infatuated with Putzi's first wife Helene, but then fell out with Goebbels and, after escaping, spent most of World War II in nominal detention as an adviser on German affairs in Washington, D.C.

This lantern-jawed, six-foot-four turncoat was not only a pianist, however; he often functioned as Hitler's clown or fool, and just as often as mentor, taking him to see the female boxers in Luna Park or to visit the home of Richard Wagner. It was Putzi who explained American cheerleaders to Hitler, wrote marches for the SA band, set "Sieg Heil, Sieg Heil" to the tune of Harvard's "Fight, Fight, Fight," and concealed him from the police after the failure of the Munich putsch. Even after Hitler was jailed, Putzi continued to support him, doodling in power-politics on the fringe of the gathering Nazi movement, winning Hitler's

confidence more and more, removing adverbs from the first draft of *Mein Kampf*, yet seldom taken seriously except as a nuisance by the Nazi leaders, even after Hitler appointed him chief of his foreign-press department in 1933. Putzi is that interesting phenomenon, the two-faced intellectual, hopelessly dependent on his intellectual inferiors, able to gain power but unable to use it. He emerges as a passenger, an egregious and engaging courtier, resisting the dictates of his conscience, and brought to his senses only when put on Goebbels's blacklist in 1936. Increasingly, during his years with Hitler, Putzi tried to warn him against the viciousness and psychosis of the Nazi gang, little realizing it was precisely these qualities that Hitler needed and prized in his henchmen. Putzi idealized "Uncle Dolf," to his almost terminal cost, never quite able to efface the spell engendered in him when Hitler spoke in public, and the seedy official transformed himself into the mesmerizing savior. "It was like the difference," he said, "between a Stradivarius lying in its case, just a few bits of wood and length of catgut, and the same violin being played by a master." He and Hitler talked music all the time, indulging in detailed critiques of various performances of *Die Meistersinger*. He worked so hard in so appalling a cause, this kingmaker-esthete, urging Mussolini to visit Hitler (which he did), trying to set up Hitler with the attractive daughter of the American ambassador for a date (Putzi knew nothing of the Eva Braun liaison), and urging him to take more exercise, to cut out sweets. A minor snowball trailing Hitler's comet, he sings, versifies, brown-noses, teases, plays piano, edits, marches, ascends platforms, panders, trots to the jailhouse, fends off Goebbels and Goering, and in spite of all keeps track of the foreign press–especially of cartoons and caricatures that made fun of Hitler. He actually collected these up into a book, with his Führer's permission.

The last scene in Putzi's entr'acte is the most dramatic of all. Ordered to fly to Spain, supposedly to protect the interests of German correspondents there, he is to parachute over the Red lines between Barcelona and Madrid. Or so the pilot says. Putzi refuses the lethal order. The pilot fudges up a bit of engine failure and lands at Leipzig. Putzi gets out, pretends to call Berlin, and is flown back to his starting point, where he takes the night train to Munich, connecting to Zurich. In no time at all he is telling Carl Gustav Jung all about the Nazi menace. He spends the remainder of the war as a White House aide, publishes two books, and dies in 1975, the epitome of double-think whose best epitaph remains a deleted section of Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*, in which she depicted their

romance, from a first walk across Brooklyn Bridge to his jilting the heroine, who considers suicide but then throws herself at him again only to be sardonically told she is trying to become pregnant. Barnes saw Putzi for the last time in London in 1938, when he told her, as she then tells a friend, that Hitler's genitals are tiny: not even a mouse's ration.

Putzi's White House years would not prove as enthralling as his Nazi ones (unless he stayed a Hitler sympathizer all through). So this would be an evocation of the pre-war years, when Spain rather than Germany was the focus; when the world was blasé and rosy-spectacled, no more willing to believe that something was rotten than Putzi himself, who at least merits a final walk-on as sybarite-optimist, egg-head collaborator, bifocal jester. A grim background forms behind him, made up of such other bifocals as Adam von Solz zu Trott, the Oxford-educated German diplomat whom Hitler hanged along with some two hundred others for his part in the 1944 Plot. This way Putzi could so easily have gone.

The Thin Red Line

Not so much a bloodline, this, skeletally lining a hand or a life, as a tableau of men's faces contorted in pseudo-bellicose anguish: shrieking aloud because they cannot bear, or understand, the uproar surrounding them. Terrence Malick has (maybe after Captain Starles who late on talks Greek at speed) subverted James Jones's epical novel into a mesmerizing series of upset voices that work almost like a chorus, though done in rueful monologs, some of which display severe questing broken-hearted wonderment. It is hard not to be disturbed by this movie in which greenhorns grit their teeth and open their minds. Some of the elegiac ruminations achieve a high level of misery and shame, war being presented as something Japanese as well as Americans should wash their hands of. The same anguished questions about light, death, nature, love, savagery, the absurd, would recur even if the subject was peace, but here the movie rasps and jars, upsetting anyone with the least tendency to enjoy the goings-on. In this sense it amounts to a wondrous anathema, likely to put you off not only war but enjoying war movies, or even enjoying other people's enjoyment of them. It rules them out, and our hearts go with the cashiered Starles (Silver Star, Purple Heart, off to the Judge Adjutant) and not Bellona's bridegroom, Nolte, who all his career has waited to charge up a hill covered with corpses and call it his own.

I had not intended to write about this film until watching it again after buying a cheap copy. Its hold amounts to a glutinous, brilliant spell, certainly as binding as Tolstoy's *The Cossacks* or *All Quiet on the Western Front*. I keep trying to pin down exactly what Malick has done with voices, and conclude it must be something stereophonic and serial, as if unknown elegiac poets were interrupting the action with miserable voice-over, addressing the dead or those who survive with battered brainpans, a condition akin to traumatic stress disorder. Early in my teaching career, when so many academic colleagues spurned the teaching of Vietnam vets, I took on one or two, for literature, introducing them to authors they didn't know (Jünger, Barbusse, Hillary, Bader, Hanna Reich, Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg, even Rupert Brooke) in hopes of providing a *planche de salut*, a sounding board of comparative safety. It more or less worked. I had had a three-year military career myself, instructing young air force officers, but in peacetime of course, and owed them something. *The Thin Red Line* is likely to stir such feelings in the viewer, whether James Jones is spinning in his grave or not.

William Higgins

The details fall away like blackheads from a skin. The image that abides, if even that, is of me looking downward, at the end of a rope, features oddly aquiline, a heavy-set lieutenant-colonel set upon by the crazies of a mouthful called The Organization of the Oppressed of the World. What on earth happened to plain English? Dragged from my car in Tyre, I was taken north toward the Litani River in a car with Iranian diplomatic plates, then almost abandoned when a UN helicopter flew over low in search of me. So I ended up in Jibchit, easy meat for an amateur hangman, destined to be "the opening gift" in a sadistic videotape.

Imagine the froth on their lips as they prepared to film. Nothing to stop them using the so-called Austrian method, though the cord was not as thin as the one Hitler liked to use. Strangulation, no quick drop. Of course. I was the movie star. I began with an American flag stitched to my tunic, graduate of Auburn and Pepperdine Colleges, master's degrees at both. So they hanged two masters. Widow, Robin, a major in the Marines, almost catching me up. Ha. When we head for distant planets, will we hang people along the way? Wasn't it in this neck of the woods they hanged Mossadeq from a tripod on a table? What a postage stamp for the future! Why not some profiles of the strangled on the first-class mail?

Tracy E. Bilsing

The Process Of Manufacture Rudyard Kipling's Private Propaganda

One of Rudyard Kipling's *Epitaphs* on the Great War, "Common Form," offers the theme of his involvement with Britain's propaganda effort during the Great War: "If any question why we died/Tell them because our fathers lied" (Hibberd and Onions 113). These lines have always suggested Kipling's disgust with England's complacent attitude towards preparedness for battle, noted in the losses incurred in the Boer War. Resting on the Empire's laurels, the older generations "lied" about the need for an army that would safeguard the Empire should it be threatened. And should an army be necessary, what awaited England's soldiers, according to the "fathers," was glorious victory on the battlefield. Read against Kipling's experiences in World War I, specifically the loss of his only son John, however, "Common Form" gains a poignantly ironic twist. During the Great War, Kipling helped to create a strong national propaganda that pushed young men (including John) into battle. Propaganda at its most devious and manipulative is a manufactured lie.[1] After John's death, Kipling came to realize that through his pamphlet writing, speechmaking, and recruiting he had manipulated the idea of war into a glorious crusade against the Germans. His public propaganda initially paralleled his own private doctrine of war, but with John's death, Kipling had to balance the public figure, who could not retract the "old lies"[2] with the intensely private man, who with all his might wanted his child alive again.

Deeply interested in any aspect of politics and the military, Kipling foresaw the war with Germany as early as 1897, and despaired of England's chances. In his poem "The Islanders," Kipling blasts the British, pointing with great irony and bitterness to the "[. . .] flannelled

fools at the wicket and the muddied oafs at the goals" (*Kipling's Verse* 301) as the type of men who would lead England's armed forces in war. He evokes the public school ethos (one which he helped to create in *Stalky & Co.*) and indeed predicts the type of soldier who was to conduct the war. "India's full of Stalkies," Kipling wrote,

> Cheltenham, and Haileybury, and Marlborough chaps—that we don't know anything about; the surprise will begin when there's a really big row on. Just imagine Stalky let loose on the South side of Europe with a sufficiency of Sikhs and a reasonable prospect of loot—consider it quietly. (qtd. in Birkenhead 228-9)

With this astonishing image in mind, perhaps, Kipling set out to work for England during the war.

In September 1914, Kipling was invited, along with fifty-three other noted literary figures, to a secret meeting held at Wellington House.[3] Appointed by the Prime Minister as the head of a fledgling propaganda department, C.F.G. Masterman wanted to secure these authors' help to counter anti-British propaganda that was being distributed worldwide. Masterman chose Kipling because of his strong Imperialist views and because he had written propaganda during the Boer War. A cartoon of that time shows Kipling holding a dripping pen next to the famous Lord Kitchener who is holding a bloodied sword. The caption reads in part: "When the Empire needs a stitch in her/Call for Kipling and for Kitchener" (Buitenhuis 7). Masterman, completely unprepared to head the nation's Bureau of Propaganda, nevertheless created what was to become "an essential weapon in the nation's arsenal" (Sanders and Taylor 11). Indeed, it is to the rather dubious credit of Wellington House that "most of the principles and many of the techniques of modern propaganda were worked out in such detail that subsequent practitioners would do little more than elaborate on them" (Messinger 2).

Initially, the anti-German messages sent from Wellington House were directed toward neutral nations, but as the war progressed, Masterman and others came to understand the imperative to mobilize opinion at home. As the zeal with which the British initially supported the war waned, the need to gather recruits and support for the war became the driving force behind the manipulation of the home front sensibility. Gary Messinger, author of *British Propaganda and the State in the First World War*, notes that although "the church, the press, business, political

parties, and philanthropy were the [initial] major producers" of home front propaganda, the national government became increasingly involved in "a major psychological offensive against its own citizens" (2, 6). Messinger's use of the term "offensive" links the government's manipulation of public opinion directly to battle, suggesting the emotional war waged by noncombatants on the home front.

The principal method of distributing propaganda was the pamphlet. In *The Great War of Words: British, American and Canadian Propaganda and Fiction 1914-1933*, Peter Buitenhuis asserts that the pamphlet was a popular method of circulation because it was "cheap, and easy to produce, and simple to distribute" (21). The rhetoric of these pamphlets, Buitenhuis notes, comes from the "evangelical" tradition of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and the "school story" (21-2). Both Bunyan's and Kipling's works were immensely popular during the war, and writers of pamphlets (including Kipling) drew from these works the ideas of sacrifice, spiritual progression and sportsmanship to appeal emotionally to the population of Britain (22). Kipling's pamphlet *The New Army* is an example of the rhetoric used in this war to shift the imagination away from horror towards glory.

Sent by Wellington House to tour the camps of the New Army (made up of volunteers), Kipling wrote about the men in training with the intent to praise, to glorify, and ultimately to recruit more men. Of soldiers training on Salisbury Plain, Kipling wrote, "they were all supple, free, and intelligent, and they moved with a lift and drive that made one sing for joy [. . .]. [T]hey were all truly thankful that they lived in these high days." The pamphlet concludes as Kipling asks,

> What will be the position in years to come of the young man who has deliberately outcast himself from this all-embracing brotherhood? What of his family and, above all, what of his descendants, when the books have been closed and the last balance struck of sacrifice and sorrow throughout every hamlet, village, parish, suburb, city, shire, district, province and Dominion throughout the Empire? (qtd. in Buitenhuis 25-6)

Kipling's emotionally charged rhetoric fired the imagination of the country at the same time as it muffled its sensibility through the manipulation of civilian emotion. In no sense were the British prepared for the realities of trench warfare, for their minds were enchanted by the

manufactured fantasy of the war and its fighting men. Not only did Kipling tour the camps, but he also offered his services as speechwriter, and as an immensely popular speaker at recruiting rallies. And near the end of the war, although shattered by his son's death, Kipling continued his propaganda work as a commissioner of the Imperial War Graves Commission where he assured England that her sacrifice of a generation of young men was not in vain. The inscription that Kipling wrote, "Their Names Liveth For Evermore," guarantees the dead a place in history as warriors of a glorious cause.

Aside from direct appeal for recruitment, the other major topic of these pamphlets was reports on German atrocities. The infamous Bryce Report was a 660-page pamphlet published in 1915 by the British (Sanders and Taylor 142-3). Also known as *The Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages*, this piece of graphic reportage is a monument to opinion manipulation. Although it was proven, after the war, to be composed of unsubstantiated evidence, its highly emotional content (graphic examples of atrocities and case studies) mobilized the nation against the Germans when it was published. Indeed, Kipling wrote "Swept and Garnished" (October 1914) in reaction to earlier newspaper reports of atrocities, and the plight of the Belgians is mentioned in both "Swept and Garnished" and "Mary Postgate" (March 1915). Similarly, the attack on the *Lusitania* and the execution of Nurse Edith Cavell also provided Wellington House with highly emotional content for its campaign against the Germans.

Another successful method of spreading the message of war was the poster. Civilian sensibilities were saturated by 12.5 million of them by 1916. "Constant direct appeal" for recruitment was the main topic of these posters; however, they soon addressed the need for "war loans, labour recruitment, and food economy" (Sanders and Taylor 105). "Your country needs YOU," declares the caption underneath a portrait of an intense Lord Kitchener pointing a large and intimidating forefinger at whoever should view the poster. One of the major themes of recruiting posters was the "exploitation [. . .] of male pride in the face of family expectation" (138). A famous poster depicts a man with a forlorn and ashamed expression on his face as his children play with toy soldiers at his feet. The caption reveals the source of his shame, as one of the children asks, "Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?" This question recalls Kipling's query in his pamphlet and foreshadows Kipling's own desire to see his son go to war. Ironically, this question also sets up

the schism between fathers and sons represented by the nation's "fathers" and between Kipling and John.

So overwhelming was the propaganda that the government released that soldiers returning home felt a huge gap in communication with loved ones, because the truth of the horrors of war was propagandized before it was allowed to enter British sensibility. Good morale was a manufactured and closely guarded state in England. Civilians were fed war news filtered through government censors. Exhibition trenches set up in Kensington Gardens for the edification of the noncombatant were the "laughing stock of the Army" (qtd. in Fussell 43). Perhaps most detrimental to the common understanding of war, however, was that the bodies of the English dead could not be buried at home. In *Postcards From the Trenches: Negotiating the space between Modernism and the First World War*, Allyson Booth notes that "for soldiers, the erasure of corpses from the home front constitutes an erasure of home itself" (30). The erasure of the effects of war on the home front and the maintenance of the myth of the Great War were major causes of the enormous gulf that developed between combatant and noncombatant. On a national level, the government manipulated the public's sensibility in order to maintain support for the war. Linked with national censorship of war news was the manipulation of the private sphere of the combatant and noncombatant alike. The personal letters of soldiers were opened, read, and censored to ensure that no disturbing (or classified) information would reach the domestic front. Even so, the soldiers found it quite difficult to reveal what they experienced, for the language would not accommodate brutalities experienced on the front. Later, field postcards replaced letters, minimalizing language to checkmarks in appropriate boxes while at the same time doing away with the pressure on the combatant to find appropriate words to write home. The flow of (sensitive) information was controlled in this manner as well, for no room was left on the card for anything but a signature. Indeed, John Kipling's brief, chatty letters (and field postcards) to his mother and father mostly consist of requests for socks and other warm clothing, quick accounts of training sessions and dirty French accommodations. Ironically, a quick aside in one letter reveals the total innocence with which John, and most of the British forces, entered into the war. John writes from France: "It is hard to realize that the war is going on so near; if it wasn't for the occasional booming of guns it would be like England" (Gilbert 201). John's letter is indicative of the early response to the war, a response readily accepted by the home front.

Perhaps the easiest victims of war propaganda, at least on the home front, were women, for they were subjected to a net of misinformation that was woven long before the Edwardian era. The women of Britain were expected to conform to social, moral, and sexual codes that constricted thought, action and emotion. When the war began, more pressure was placed upon women, for even more than before they had to represent all that Britain was fighting for—home and hearth. Ironically, as symbols of these values and as "guardians" of the home front, women were also expected to do their part for the war effort. Many women went to work. Many women gave up their sons and husbands. Sacrifice was the ideal of patriotic duty, and few mothers (and fathers) under the ritualized dogma of propaganda could reject this call. To give up a son to service was the greatest contribution to the war effort of all. Propaganda posters of the time placed the pressure on women to send their loved ones off to war.

Conspicuous in recruiting posters was the image of the woman. In *The Old Lie: The Great War and the Public School Ethos*, Peter Parker argues that although "women's role as far as the propagandists were concerned was to stand on the sidelines and encourage recruitment; [it] is also significant that women were used in the most cynical way by propagandists" (179). Britannia, the female embodiment of England, was most powerfully depicted with one breast bared as if to suggest that the men whom she had "suckled" must in turn fight and die for her. Women in posters also pointed the way to the battlefield and said, "GO!"; women asked other women to "Help and send a man to join the Army today" (179). The use of women in posters helped to widen the gulf between the combatant and the noncombatant as the fighting men came to perceive women as one of the causes of the continuation of the war. Unfortunately, these militant images of women were those that endured in the imagination of the civilian and veteran after the war. Kipling was to use the image of the militant woman in his propagandized characterization of Mary Postgate as an example of what the civilian must do in the advent of war.

In "Asylums of Antaeus: Women, War and Madness—Is there a Feminist Fetishism?", Jane Marcus contends that the images of women in posters "cannot be seen as women's images of themselves, but rather as such effective patriarchal projections that ordinary soldiers and university-educated poets could blame the women at home for the deaths of comrades" (141). Instead of being depicted as "virgin warriors" as the

suffragettes (as well as those other women who wanted to work for the war effort) presented themselves, the department of propaganda remodeled women's images into those "crucial and needed roles of mother and nurse" (134, 137). By recasting women's roles through the highly visible poster, the government effectively contained the suffrage movement and directed feminine power to the war's ends. Marcus also notes that the images of nurses and mothers in the posters offer a double message that links these supposedly nurturing roles with death, which caused a certain ambivalence in the soldiers upon their return from the front.

Rudyard and Carrie Kipling were also caught up in the net of misrepresentation as they sent their son John off to war even though he was wrenchingly young (only 17) and had poor eyesight. Kipling had to make a special request to his friend Lord Roberts to commission John into the Irish Guards. So conditioned were the Kiplings, along with the rest of Britain, that even though "Kipling's realistic mind [did not nourish] any genuine hope of his son's survival, [. . .] it never occurred to father, son or mother that there was any alternative to immediate service" (Birkenhead 267). An example of this strong resolve can be seen in one of Kipling's letters to his son. "Dear Old Man," he begins as he recounts a meeting between himself, Carrie, "Mademoiselle" (a former governess of John), and Rider Haggard.

> She was immensely interested in your [military] career. "But *why*," said she, "is he in the Irish Guards?" [. . .]. Then she couldn't understand why you were in the Army at all. "*If* there is no compulsion," she said, "why should John enter the Army?" "Precisely *because* there is no compulsion," says Mother. (Gilbert 181)

Kipling helped to create this ritualized response to war through his pamphlet writing and recruiting, and it is from the perspective of the jingoistic propagandist that he wrote "Swept and Garnished" and "Mary Postgate." When we place "The Gardener" (1926) beside these stories, however, we can see not only the progression in Kipling's response to the war, but also his growing understanding of a civilian consciousness at war. He, too, suffered the transformation that took place in England because of the war, drawing him towards the noncombatant experience of the home front clearly depicted in "The Gardener." Although he was a war correspondent and visited the front in this capacity, his vision of the war was muted and his letters to his son from the field suggest that

he was not afforded a close up view of the fighting lines. Kipling wrote from Verdun:

> I've had rather a good time. Been to several nice places including a bombarded town; had a squint at the Crown Prince's Army in the Argonne; seen Rheims (they weren't bombarding it for the moment) [. . .]. The men I saw in the trenches were mostly Saxons and didn't want trouble even when the French stirred 'em up. (Gilbert 196)

Even though Kipling's war stories are for the most part set on the front, or in the fray, one reviewer notes his "savagery is of [an] essentially cultivated kind. They are the kind of battle story which is usually written by sedentary poets who live in the country and are fond of children" (qtd. in Birkenhead 226). Certainly, Kipling was a poet, lived in the country and loved children, but his "intellectual brutality" (226) reflected in graphic depictions of war came from an active appreciation for war he had had since he lived in India, not from sedentary living. The fact that he was not fighting on the front during the war, however, gave him an uncommon perspective that he uses effectively in each of the stories.

Because he remained on the home front, Kipling came to understand the ambivalence primarily felt by women who sent sons or husbands or lovers off to war, and this is what sets these stories apart from his other war stories. Nowhere is this ambivalence more clearly seen than in the story "The Gardener." The intense, psychological portraits of women in "Swept and Garnished," "Mary Postgate," and "The Gardener" reveal not only the national propaganda that was working against women, but also a private propaganda within feminine experience that was equally as crippling to the woman who attempted to find a place in a male-dominated, war-torn world.

Kipling's female protagonists are women who rely upon their own private propaganda manifested in domestic ritual[4] to assure themselves security in the face of chaos. Similarly, Kipling relied on the arcane ritual of the Masons to help him cope with his son's death and with his own bitterness concerning the war, which is fully revealed in his character Helen Turrell in "The Gardener." However, once the "reality" of war intrudes upon his protagonists' domestic space, the strength of this feminine propaganda is tested. Ironically, Kipling uses government propaganda (misinformation) to destroy the feminine in his earlier

stories. Not until "The Gardener," written eight years after the war, do we see Kipling destroying private propaganda with a "merciless sea of black crosses"(188), the de-propagandized truth of the "war to end all wars" in an attempt to reconcile the losses he experienced through his involvement with the war.

Kipling's protagonists reveal his own conversion in the understanding of war. Each of the women is somehow detached from her "son," indicating a "masculine" facet of her personality. We can say that Kipling, as a father (in a father's traditional role), is detached from his child even though he was known for his deep love for children. Kipling's public aloofness is reflected in his stoic acceptance of John's death. He wrote to Lord Dunsterville:

> I don't suppose there is much hope for my boy, [. . .] and the little that is left doesn't bear thinking of. However, I hear that he finished well [. . .] it was a short life. I'm sorry that all the years' work ended in that one afternoon, but—lots of people are in our position, and it's something to have bred a man. (qtd. in Birkenhead 269)

Yet beneath this ritualized acceptance of fate revealed in the letter, the words "my boy" betray the agony of the parent outside of gender. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar assert that Kipling "saw the ultimate tragedy of the war as a shattering of the father-son bond," and as "the absence of [. . .] a [. . .] son became a central presence in his life, he began to define himself as a debilitated inhabitant of a psychic no man's land comparable to the literal no man's land" where John was killed (288). Kipling's "The Gardener" clearly reflects this conversion from innocence to disillusionment both in his fiction and in his life.

Suzanne Raitt and Trudi Tate, in their introduction to *Women's Fiction of the Great War,* note that "In writing by both women and men, maternity is oddly displaced from gender and re-emerges as a fantasy of tenderness and power" (10). Reflecting these fluid gender boundaries, Kipling's protagonists are "non-mothers," but this non-mother characterization works against them in their ritualized propaganda, and the fantasy of power that emerges can be destructive. For instance, Frau Ebermann in "Swept and Garnished" believes that she has firm control not only over her own life and daily ritual, but she also controls what information she accepts. Her bout with influenza strips her of her

control and this allows her private propaganda to be destroyed. Although the proud mother of a German soldier, the Frau "had never been a child lover in any sense" (227). Her detachment from her motherly instincts makes the appearance of the ghost children in her flat all the more devastating to her because she tries, unsuccessfully, to fall back on the ritual associated with mothers to try to get rid of the children. Perhaps the most intricate characterizations of the non-mother, however, come in "Mary Postgate" and "The Gardener."

Mary Postgate, companion to the elderly Miss Fowler, is important within Kipling's progression. In her character we see the nation's zealous patriotism and deep grief. Mary is hired as a companion, but she assumes the role of mother for Wynn Fowler, Miss Fowler's orphaned nephew. She raises him up and sends him to war, and like too many young men in the war, he is killed. Mary avenges his death by watching (and allowing) a supposedly German soldier die a slow death in a wooded copse by Miss Fowler's house. Although de-feminized by Kipling, Mary plays the part of Wynn's mother, always "his butt and his slave" (236). The affection between them is overshadowed by Wynn's verbal derision of her, but Mary, who has not performed the ritualized "woman's business [. . .] to make a happy home for a husband and children" (249), becomes both father and mother to Wynn. Her deep love for Wynn is evident when she reaches her arms out to his plane as he flies overhead on a training mission. Her gesture is also one of sacrifice, evoking the nation's sacrifice as well as Kipling's sacrifice of his only son. Her reaction to Wynn's death and the resulting fantasy of power in the German soldier's death foreshadows Kipling's stoicism and his strengthening hatred for the Germans because of John's death.

Helen Turrell is perhaps the character closest to Kipling's own personality. Helen's sacrifice of her son and her grief after the news of his death mirrors Kipling's own grief process. Indeed, he drew upon his own despair in his portrayal of Helen's intense, but ritualized reaction to her son's death. With characteristic complexity, Kipling develops Helen's personality through her private relationship with her son (whom she publicly claims as a nephew), and also through her adherence to public propaganda. "The Gardener" grew out of a visit that Rudyard and Carrie made in 1920 to the battlefields on which the Irish Guards had fought. Kipling had promised to take a picture of a grave for a bereaved mother, like the character Mrs. Scarsworth, "And after this distressing pilgrimage which had deeply moved them both, Caroline entered

prosaically in her diary: 'The gardener gives notice—no reason assigned' " (Birkenhead 291). Kipling, who often read and made comments in Caroline's diary, must have gotten the title and the theme of his story from this entry, for it hints at private truth and the need for spiritual progression. In the context of the story, the gardener, a Christ figure, "gives notice" to Helen that she relinquish her private propaganda in order to be able to grieve as Michael's mother. Helen Turrell is as intensely private as Kipling was, and she relies upon her personal ritual to detach herself emotionally from her son. Her relationship with Michael is based upon a lie (her own manipulation), and it is not until she is faced with his death that she can face her own truth. Kipling was a victim of the commands of sacrifice, duty, and endurance, the watchwords of propaganda, because his vision of war was manufactured by information that was fed to the British by their own government. Not until John's death did Kipling fully comprehend the truth behind the "old lie."

Setting is particularly important for Kipling's propaganda stories "Swept and Garnished" and "Mary Postgate." In these stories the setting helps to define the protagonists, and it also allows these women to experience an "intellectual" war of the kind that Kipling was waging at home. Both were written in the aftermath of the reports on German atrocities, and the domestic space of Frau Ebermann's flat delineates her unsympathetic character. She is surrounded by her "mathematically square" pieces of imitation lace, "yellow cut glass handles of the chest of drawers, the stamped bronze hook to hold back the heavy puce curtains, [. . .] the mauve enamel, New Art finger plates on the door [. . .] [and] a green plush sofa" (227, 230). These trappings suggest a decadence that revolted Kipling and which he felt had taken over the youth of England, so it is ironic and revealing that he should imbue his enemy protagonist with the accoutrements of the "enemy" at home. In contrast to the Frau's home is Mary Postgate's conservative British domestic space. She, too, is the mother figure at home, yet she is as active as the Frau is complacent. The story is set in a small village peopled by village types. The rector, Nurse Eden (the village nurse), the doctor, and Mrs. Gerritt (the publican's wife), among others, serve to represent the community of Britain. The home front represented by the village is a safe, normal, comfortable place, a manufactured vision of the home that was to be thrust upon soldiers and civilians alike. Mary Postgate's domestic space is filled by Wynn and Miss Fowler, her charges who echo Kipling's patriotic call to

Britain: "He must go" (104). As soon as Kipling sets up the domestic space of these two protagonists as places of safety however, the war intrudes, politicizing the private space of the home front, suggesting that the war is inescapable, and that the responsibility of winning belongs not only to the soldier on the front, but also to the "guardian" of the home.

In both of the early stories, the feminine space of the home is turned into a surreal war zone that allows these women to experience the "reality" of war. In order to allow the war to intrude, Kipling suspends consciousness. Frau Ebermann is in the throes of influenza and hallucinates the ghosts of the Belgian children who "set themselves to climb, boots and all, on to the green plush sofa" (230), destroying the aura of safety she has come to rely on. Allyson Booth notes that

> civilian modernist writers reproduced the combatant tendency to understand life and death as experiences between which one fluctuates. While for modernist precursors [like Kipling], the past often insinuates itself in the form of ghosts [. . .] later modernists [like Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, and Elizabeth Bowen] often embodied the persistence of the past within corpses, which were experienced as threats to the ability of survivors to construct *stable* senses of their own identities. (57)

No longer will Frau Ebermann be able to look to her private space to gauge her own sense of order. It has become a political arena for the de-propagandizing of the truth. Similarly, Kipling shifts the atmosphere in "Mary Postgate" to allow Mary to fulfill her potential as a British woman on the home front; she has done her duty by sacrificing Wynn and continues to work for the war effort. The scene in which she destroys Wynn's effects is a ritualized ceremony of cremation. The "sacrificial" fire of the destructor illuminates the head of a German soldier who lies with his head "*tout cassée*" behind a laurel (114-5). She remains at the destructor, her mind on Wynn and the German, "the thing beneath the oak" (116). Mary constantly pokes the fires of the destructor, "wield[ing] the poker with lunges that jarred the grating" (116). The description suggests battle, the enemy is sufficiently repulsive, and Mary, permeated with the thoughts of Wynn and Edna Gerritt (a child killed in town, supposedly by a bomb dropped by the German),[5] glows and hums as she goes about her war work. Her space,

like Frau Ebermann's, is politicized. Kipling has shattered the safety of the home front by bringing the war in, allowing Mary to fulfill her domestic status as guardian of the home front.

Later, in "The Gardener," Kipling was to split the world of the home front and the war zone, perhaps because the war zone of France had reverted to a homeland again. Nevertheless, a shift does occur, as Helen Turrell is "waked up to some sort of second life" when she goes to look for Michael's grave. Alteration of place is necessary to Helen's recovery because Helen's village had "evolved a ritual to meet" any experience of war, much as Helen has evolved a ritual of lies to meet any experience within her life (182). At this point, Kipling is interested more in de-propagandizing the ritual in which he had become a player as well, and this private ritual is where the complexity of the story lies. Thus, when Helen is thrust into the horror of Haagenzeele, her safety is withdrawn, and she must look into the actuality of war represented by the cemetery itself. One can only speculate what Kipling must have felt when, as a commissioner of the War Graves Commission, he had to help decide the locations and the layouts of the national cemeteries that would not hold the body of his son. The awed response of the noncombatant is echoed in Kipling's description of Helen's first glimpse of the cemetery: "She *did not know* that Hagenzeele Third counted twenty-one thousand dead already" (188, emphasis mine). Kipling uses the safety of the home front in these stories to augment the horrors of war which come to include the manufactured images of war which he helped to create.

Because "Swept and Garnished" and "Mary Postgate" are blatant pieces of propaganda, Kipling creates protagonists as coded types who exist in a ritualized atmosphere and who respond to propaganda in ritualized fashion. Perhaps it is these characters that Mary Butts describes when she notes of Kipling, a favorite author, "He [. . .] wrote of women as though they were not quite human beings, creatures only of the flesh, the flesh touched by a kind of bad magic; creatures always in their essence, inferior to men" (Blondel 447). Frau Ebermann of "Swept and Garnished" is a German hausfrau complacent in her life of ease and assured of her son's success as a soldier. Her attitude is fed through reports from the daily papers: "Another victory [. . .]. Many more prisoners" (228). She also receives letters from her son at war which inform her that the only children killed at war are those who are careless enough to step out in front of horses and guns which pass through the towns. To the complacent Frau, this is "good information" (233).

Ironically, the Frau is also representative of the attitude towards the press in England at the beginning of the war, a complacent attitude challenged by Katherine Mansfield in her stories. Kipling wrote this story in reaction to the Bryce reports that detailed supposed German atrocities against the Belgians. Despite the manufactured quality of the reports, however, Kipling and the rest of Britain believed in them wholeheartedly (Wilson 130), and they only increased his fearful distrust and hatred of the Germans.

In "Swept and Garnished," Frau Ebermann is set up as an example to the British of the cold-hearted German soul, because she is not only satisfied with obviously false reports but is also not "a child lover in any sense" (227). The good Frau, experiencing a bout with influenza, lies in her sick bed "in misery of body and soul, [. . .] waiting for some tremendously important event to come to pass" (227, 229). She feels as if her life is in order because she has compartmentalized her emotions like she has the knick knacks in her apartment, and that "If it pleased our dear God to take her [. . .]—He should find all her belongings fit to meet His eye"[6] (228-9). This misunderstanding of the scripture augments Kipling's characterization, for the Frau manipulates the Bible to suit her needs.

Frau Ebermann relies upon the material objects of her private, feminized space for safety; "in all her distresses she had not allowed the minutest deviation from daily routine and ritual" (228). Her ritual is a constructed response that allows her to accept the reports from her son without second thought. However, when this domestic security is taken from her, as it is with the other women in these stories, she must face what it is that she has denied because of her reliance upon her own propaganda. However, even though "Frau Ebermann looked and saw" (223) the horrors of war represented by the ghostly visitation of the "utterly wearied" (229) young victims of war, she returns to her own feminine ritual to offset the terrible knowledge that she refuses to accept. Kipling's omission of the gory details of the violence wreaked on these children suggests the muted understanding of war general to the civilian population at the time. He reveals to us the violence of war through the lens of the home front, a domesticated lens. We see Frau Ebermann at the end of the story, a Lady Macbeth figure,

> busily cleaning the floor with the lace cover from the radiator, because, she explained, it was all spotted with the blood of five children—she was perfectly certain there could not be more than five in the whole world—who had gone for the moment, [. . .] and Anna was to find them and give them cakes to stop the bleeding, while her mistress swept and garnished that Our dear Lord when He came might find everything as it should be. (234)

The lace cover, which was "mathematically square with the imitation marble top of the radiator" at the beginning of the story, and which binds Frau Ebermann with her own private space and domestic ritual, is now used by the woman in an attempt to regain her sense of order. She also resorts to the "motherly" ritual of providing a panacea for small hurts in children. Kipling does not allow redemption for the Frau. Indeed, Kipling's propaganda is the unsympathetic characterization of the German woman. She is what has bred the German war machine. She is as culpable as her son is for the deaths of the children, and she fulfills the prophecy of the scripture alluded to in the title of the story, for her house is empty of the truth, and she must now live with the "unclean spirits" of her own perversion of the truth, making her "last state [. . .] worse than the first."

"Mary Postgate," written shortly after "Swept and Garnished," is also a piece of propaganda; however, its aim is quite different from that of the previous story. If "Swept and Garnished" is anti-German, "Mary Postgate" is whole-heartedly pro-British and reflects the early zeal of the home front war. Indeed, Kipling's characterization of Mary seems to suggest a "call to service" for the women on the home front. Mary Postgate becomes the epitome of British womanhood reflected in the recruiting posters, and Kipling holds her up as the "lioness" of England. This propagandized image of the female noncombatant at war seems standard, and in support of this vision, May Sinclair noted that "The British woman at her best is very like the British soldier" (qtd. in Raitt and Tate 6). Mary, like Frau Ebermann, is a stereotyped female, a spinster and a lady's companion who expertly takes on the domestic and social duties prescribed by the pre-war community and inherited from her elderly charge, Miss Fowler: domestic accountant, the "odd" place at dinner, public aunt to the village children, community volunteer, and finally, a pseudo-mother to Wynn, Miss Fowler's orphaned nephew. Even though Mary's life is defined by her sex, as most women's were at the time, Kipling seems to de-sex her in a number of ways, neutering her, in order that he may make her conversion into a soldier on the home front seem less manipulative. For example, when Miss Fowler asks her if she ever thinks about the "things that women think about," Mary replies, "I'm not much of a conversationalist [. . .]. But I've no imagination, I'm afraid" (106-7). What Mary does have however, is "a trained mind, which did not dwell" on that which might shock her, and she is "colorless" in speech and

physical demeanor (103). She seems like a soldier in colorless khaki that is trained to obey orders and not to think about himself too much.

Kipling drains any sort of feminine attributes from her as if to suggest that the ritual of the feminine mind set has no place in a war. Instead, it is to be replaced by the "old lies" of the British gentleman soldier on the front. Therefore when Wynn, Mary's beloved "son," enlists in the war which "did not stay decently out of England and in the newspapers" (104), she sacrifices him for the good of the country. As Wynn goes off on a training flight, Mary "lifted her lean arms toward [the] little blur" of the plane as if in supplication to the higher call of duty, much as Mrs. Grant did (107). Part of the rhetoric of national propaganda transformed the finality of death into a quasi-religious offering. Women who have lost sons, husbands, lovers to the war need not feel any sense of grief, for their deaths aided the sacred cause of the war. At Wynn's funeral, when Mrs. Grant "[flings] herself weeping on Mary's flat chest [crying] 'I know how it feels,' " Mary rejects her grief as comic and completely unnecessary: " 'And when he died, she cried all morning' " (107). This scene is mirrored later by Helen Turrell in "The Gardener," but with a much different outcome. Mary's ritualized response is then transferred into the act of disposing of Wynn's effects in a haunting ceremonial reminiscent of Kipling's own ritual for the dead.

Lord Birkenhead recounts that when one of Kipling's loved ones died, "he ruthlessly eliminated from his life anything which could remind him" of that person's physical existence (270). After the deaths of his parents, Kipling burned all their letters, and any "family papers that came his way" (253). Similarly, after John died Rudyard and Caroline declined trips to favorite vacation retreats and turned away gifts that might remind them of John. Much in the same way, Mary and Miss Fowler ruthlessly eliminate Wynn's personal effects. The destruction of Wynn's things reflects Booth's assertion that these material objects, permeated by memory, can be discarded, taking memory with them. By extending this argument, we can see that only a part of the memory of Wynn is destroyed, the memory of the child, not the man/soldier. Into the fires of the destructor go the symbols of Wynn's youth: "the books and pictures and the games and the toys and [. . .] the rest" (109). Kipling so minutely details the list that one imagines them John's own possessions. The only personal items Miss Fowler and Mary keep from the destructor are Wynn's RFC cap and belt, and a "huge revolver with flat nosed bullets [. . .] which were forbidden by the rules of war to be used against

civilized enemies"[7] (115). Just as the destruction of personal effects can erase memory, retaining certain items can augment memory. The burning of Wynn's civilian effects suggests that Mary converts the memory of her civilian Wynn into the memory of the soldier in order to aid her foray into "experience of battle."

Mary replaces Wynn as a "soldier" on the home front, an ideal that Kipling saw as a necessity for all who are patriotic. Indeed, Wynn trains Mary as he goes through his own flight training, teaching her about "Taubes, Farmans, and Zeppelins" (114). He also teaches her how to shoot the revolver loaded with the flat-nosed bullets. And so as a soldier, Mary must perform "her work—work which no man [. . .] would ever have done" (116). The war thus enters the domestic front as Mary engages in conflict. Taking on Wynn's language, she refers to the Germans as "bloody pagans" (115) and sets out to wreak vengeance not only for Wynn's death, but also the death of little Edna, a child killed in the village. In "Towards a Feminist Peace Politics," Sara Ruddick notes that "despite the opposition between war making and caregiving, most caregivers have complied with, and often devoted their energies to, war" (114). Mary becomes a "powerful caregiver" in that she takes advantage of the vulnerable state of the German soldier, who, on the most superficial level, represents Wynn and her tie to motherhood. Her reaction to the soldier's death reflects Ruddick's assertion that "powerful caregivers may be more than usually tempted by sadism [and] self-indulgent aggression [. . .]" (119) rather than the "sexual glee" that some women experienced through the "invigorating sense of revolution [and] release which the war allowed" (Gilbert and Gubar 264). After denying the soldier any sort of assistance as a "sportsman" would at a time of crisis, and wielding Wynn's pistol, she experiences an intensity of emotions as she listens to the German soldier die (116). Mary becomes a "militant mother" (Marcus 139) who has triumphed over the enemy and who has proved herself "more deadly than the male" (*Kipling's Verse* 365). To show how completely Mary has rejected her former domestic ritual and status for the ecstasy of war, Kipling has her return home, "where she scandalized the whole routine by taking a luxurious hot bath before tea, and came down looking, [. . .] quite handsome!" (117). By breaking her former ritual in even this small way, Mary has completed her conversion and has become the romanticized image of the soldier of the Great War. However, this image is a false one because the experience she has is based upon private manipulation fueled by national misdirection. This

skewed attitude allows her to cast the blame for Wynn's death, during a training flight, on the Germans. This anger also allows her to imagine that a bomb has been dropped by a German plane, and it allows her to listen in sadistic ecstasy as a man dies. Mary's sense of completion at the death of the soldier then is based upon private propaganda, not the truth.

Yet even though this story might be a testament to hatred as some critics have noted, we are able to see ambivalence in Kipling's propaganda, slight though it may be, which looks toward his retraction in "The Gardener." Surely Kipling suggests ambivalence when he describes the airmen who bring Wynn's body home as "children" (107). He was perhaps thinking of his own son at war. Kipling also provides a sense of the youth wasted by the war in that Wynn was to have become a solicitor in London before the war ends his chances. However, Kipling carefully offsets this "slip" in a discussion between Miss Fowler and Mary: " 'I'm sorry it happened before he had done anything.' [. . .] 'Yes,' [Mary said]. 'It's a great pity he didn't die in action after he had killed somebody' " (107). Kipling changes the waste of a productive life into the waste of a destructive force. However, this destructive force that was to have been Wynn "was a gentleman who for no consideration on earth would have torn little Edna into those vividly coloured strips and strings" (115). Again we see violence and war through the filter of the home front, horrors couched in domestic language. One can also sense a certain irony in these words, for even though the chivalrous version of the soldier was etched into the British imagination, surely Kipling knew that war was not a gentlemanly exercise. However, mass indoctrination overrides any sort of personal ambivalence in this story, and we are to see Mary Postgate as "a policewoman of patriarchy, the woman who enforces in other women the continued complicity of motherhood and war" (Marcus 139).

From Mary's nationalist extreme, Kipling moves much later to a more complex and psychologically realistic characterization of the domestic experience in Helen Turrell in "The Gardener." Because Kipling remained on the home front and experienced the loss of a son, he produced an intricate understanding of the process of "being manufactured into a bereaved next of kin" (183). This story completes Kipling's progression within the stages of exposure to war. He has lost the innocence and the zeal evident in the early stories. The death of his son removed Kipling from his safe, ordered existence, placed him within the experience of war, and forced him to review his own motivation behind his propa-

ganda. Like other memoirists of the Great War, Kipling was not able to articulate his grief and despair until long after the war's end. "The Gardener" can be read as Kipling's personal experience of war on the home front. He projects himself into the mother, Helen Turrell. On a superficial level, Helen is like Kipling in that she too serves on various war committees and holds "strong views about the proposed village war memorial" (171). Kipling's intricate characterization at the beginning shows the complex private manipulation of truth within his character Helen Turrell, whose emotions are an extension of his own.

Helen Turrell is "thirty-five and independent," and a respected citizen of a small community with whom she is "as open as the day" (178). Helen is the mother of an illegitimate son, however, an anathema in polite Edwardian society, so she must create a private propaganda which is so flawless that no one will see the truth behind her "nephew's mouth which was somewhat better cut than the family type" (180). In this way, she rejects her motherhood (as Kipling rejected his emotional fatherhood through his propaganda), a loss that she will reconcile only when faced with the physical loss of her son. The narrator provides a litany of Helen's virtues, all of which fall in the general category of domestic responsibility. Kipling's language and the exactness and precision of Helen's story reveal the manufactured quality of the information. And the repetition of the phrase "the village knew" suggests the village does know all about Helen, but had "evolved a ritual" (183) out of respect for her family name (and wealth), in order to accept the knowledge of Helen's little secret. The village's ritual resembles England's ritual, in the erasure of the war on the home front through the distortion of the effects of war. Helen covers all details within her aura of misinformation. She allows no embarrassing questions to crop up because she has already taken care to cover her weak spots. For instance, Helen only allows Michael, her son, to call her "Mummy" at bedtime, and this is to be their secret, "but Helen, as usual, explained the fact to her friends" saying to Michael afterwards, "it's always better to tell the truth" (180). Ironically, Michael evokes England's complacency as he says tearfully to his mother, " 'but when the troof's ugly I don't think it's nice' " (180). He feels betrayed (as most of England's fighting men did) when faced with the ugly truth behind the manufactured lie. This is the crux of the story, the difference in Helen's *mind* between the truth versus manufactured reality, and it seems that through this story, especially when read against the other two stories, Kipling questions the validity of the "old lies" constructed during the

war and reveals his own disillusionment.

Kipling stresses the "process of manufacture" in this story, alluding to the home front rituals of private and public propaganda and the "blessed passivity" (184) it affords to those on the home front whom the war has touched. Helen must take her place (as Kipling had to) "in the dreary procession that was impelled to go through a series of unprofitable emotions" (183). Like his character Helen, Kipling wrote numerous letters in order to find out what had happened to his son.[8] However, like Mary, who remained "quite steady" in the midst of her chaotic emotions, Helen's private ritual allows her to "[stand] still" while the "world was going forward; [. . .] it did not concern her" (184). She exists in her prefabricated life and "slip[s] Michael's name into talk and incline[s] her head to the *proper* angle at the *proper* murmur of sympathy" (184, emphasis mine). These are intricate movements in a complex dance for the dead which progresses in increasingly difficult stages as Helen is "manufactured into the bereaved next of kin" (183).

One can sense Kipling's personal experience with tragedy as the narrator recounts how Helen, "moving at an immense distance [. . .] overcome[s] her physical loathing of the living and returned young" and sits on "various relief committees" (184). Despite his loss and the shift in his feelings about the war, Kipling was always involved in the war effort although he remained "silent" in his literary work. Like Helen, he could not allow his public persona to be overshadowed by his private truth. Appointed a Commissioner of the Imperial War Graves Commission, he was responsible for the creation of the tomb of the Unknown Soldier and for choosing the inscription set up in every war cemetery: "Their Name Liveth For Evermore." Helen, however, experiences what Kipling was not able to: "the agony of being waked up to some sort of second life," as she goes to find Michael's grave—"the altar upon earth where [she] might lay [her] love" (184). Kipling had no such altar, and yet Kipling's experience allowed his Aunt Georgie to write of him: "Quite well, he seemed, and younger and stronger than before, as if he had died and been buried and risen again, and had the keys of hell and death" (qtd. in Birkenhead 269). Kipling made his journey through the stages of war resulting in a shift in vision, and his new understanding of war is reflected in the images of the cemetery where Michael Turrell is buried.

At Haagenzeele and its cemetery, Helen comes to see the "truth" of war, stripped of its propaganda. A "merciless sea of black crosses [. . .]

[in] a waist-high wilderness of weeds stricken dead" (188) presents the stark desolation of war. The fact that the cemetery is under construction when Helen arrives heightens the idea that the aftermath of war is a period of reconstruction (both physical and emotional). But the cemetery, a study in black and white, also indicates the glorification of war in the gleaming white headstones that top the hill at Haagenzeele. Before viewing the cemetery however, Helen encounters two women also touched by war who are physical manifestations of Helen's despair stripped of private ritual. One woman has lost a son, and the other a lover. We can look to the brief but intense portraits of these women and see the psychological terror and despair working in Helen, as well as in the author. The dream-like quality of her experience and the "nightmare" of the "razed city full of whirling lime dust and blown papers" (185) marks Helen's conversion and sets the stage for Helen's encounters with her doppelgangers and the ensuing agony of the reality of her experience stripped of its muffling ritual.

The first, "a large Lancashire woman," is unable to find her illegitimate son's grave because "she did not know which of his two Christian names he might have used with his alias" which was Smith (185). Michael's name is also an alias because of his illegitimacy. The woman is driven mad by this uncertainty, and she sobs on Helen's breast, disconcerting her so much that she "hurr[ies] out before the woman could lament again" (185). The second, Mrs. Scarsworth, "a stolid, plainfaced Englishwoman" has constructed a lie to cover her own secret like Helen; however, sensing possible empathy from Helen, the woman bares her soul saying,

> "I've got to tell someone [. . .]. Tired of lying—always lying—year in and year out. When I don't tell lies I've got to act 'em and I've got to think 'em, always [. . .]. I can't go to him again and nobody in the world knowing. I want to be honest with someone before I go." (187)

Helen asks her how many years she has been lying as if to gauge her own "years and years" of subterfuge (187). She recognizes a link between them, but when Mrs. Scarsworth vents her grief, Helen reacts as she has willed herself to in the past: " 'Oh, my dear! My dear!' "(188). It is the proper response with the correct distance and disassociation that Helen requires in all interaction. The Lancashire woman and Mrs. Scarsworth voice the

pain of the psychological wounds of those left behind, those same wounds within Helen which she controls and mutes through ritual because only private ritual allows her to survive the agony of her especially private loss. She is repulsed by these women because she is not ready to acknowledge what they already have—the truth. Here Helen represents another haunting image of Kipling's own ritual for the dead.

The extent of Helen's own need for private ritual is heightened at the end of the story, in a scene that has often been branded sentimental and ineffective. In the cemetery, Helen is faced with the overwhelming sea of crosses "rushing at her [. . .] wondering by what guidance" she would ever find her son's grave (188). The guidance comes from a gardener representative of the risen Christ and Christian ritual. He offers her "infinite compassion" and the freedom within the truth when he tells her, " 'Come with me, [. . .] and I will show you where your son lies' " (189). It is the first time in the story that her relationship with Michael is voiced, by anyone, but Helen's reaction is not given to us, revealing Kipling's respect and need for intense privacy. However, the ending of the story suggests that even though she might have tacitly acknowledged the public truth of her private loss, she does so in a foreign land where her only naysayer is dead and buried. She rejects the "truth" of the Christian ritual for the blessed passivity of her own private ritual. As she leaves the cemetery and "turn[s] for one last look," she sees "in the distance [. . .] the man bending over his young plants; and she went away, supposing him to be the gardener"[9] (189). It is much easier for her to remain in her own construction and continue to be "independent" than to live, fully awakened and vulnerable to intense pain in her "second life."

If we view this last passage in relation to Kipling's own experience, it seems to suggest a failure of public ritual (national propaganda and religion) which he discovered in part through his son's death. The story also reflects the narrowing of Kipling's gaze with respect to female characterization. Helen is much less of a type than Frau Ebermann and Mary Postgate, and her experience is much more psychologically complex and related in greater detail, suggesting that Kipling wrote with an understanding of those emotional agents which worked against the British home front during and after the war.

The stories reflect the innocence of the early war years, and they also reflect Kipling's own painful journey towards the truth and the need for personal peace in the aftermath of war. The unique qualities of the Great

War precluded his imperialist mode. Stories of conflict like his Anglo-Indian tales seem farcical when compared to the starkness of "The Gardener" which realizes the themes of modernist fiction. Often overlooked because of his extremist political writings, or trivialized because of his children's stories, Kipling survives as a chronicler of the Great War of the same scope as other memoirists who attempted to record the emotional and physical toll taken on England's men and women.

Notes

1. My working definition of propaganda is taken from Gary Messinger who defines propaganda as "the presentation of information in an emotionally appealing manner for a purpose that is not candidly announced and in support of a view which we would probably debate" (9). This definition implies secrecy and the careful use of language to manipulate information directed to the specific audience of the home front. Also implied is the manufactured quality of the information.

2. Wilfred Owen's poem "Dulce et Decorum Est" (1917) provides the catch phrase for all glorification of war: "My friend, you would not tell with such high zest/To children ardent for some desperate glory,/The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est/ Pro patria mori" (Hibberd and Onions 201). The speaker addresses those of Kipling's generation and the noncombatant who knew of war only through printed material.

3. On September 18, 1914, *The New York Times* printed an authors' manifesto, entitled "Famous British Authors Defend England's War." Those present at Wellington House signed it as well as others, including May Sinclair and Jane Harrison. It is one of the first examples of propaganda directed to neutral nations in order to gain support for England's effort in the war.

4. Private or domestic ritual is closely aligned with national propaganda. Private propaganda is a ritual borne out of emotional manipulation of information at the public level. Instead of relying solely on the mass publications for the sense that "all is quiet on the Western front," Kipling's characters as well as Mansfield's and Woolf's look to their physical, domestic space for a sense of safety within war. Hence, national propaganda is converted into private propaganda reflected in domestic ritual that euphemizes reality.

5. Yvonne Klein reports that on May 13, 1915 a German in a Zeppelin dropped a bomb that landed on Stoke Newington and killed Elsie Leggatt, aged three. She was one of the first of the air raid casualties of the war (1). Kipling used this incident as he used the Bryce Reports to add verisimilitude to his writing and an extra punch to the anti-German message in his early stories.

6. The scripture alluded to can be found in Matthew 12: 43-45.

> When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there: and the last state shall be worse than the first. Even so shall it be unto this wicked generation.

This scripture enforces the idea of private domestic ritual that muffles perceptions of reality.

7. Flat-nosed bullets are meant to explode on impact rather than leaving entry and exit wounds. The wounds caused by these bullets are difficult to treat because of the internal damage caused by the explosion of the shell.

8. The circumstances of John's death were kept from his parents. H. Rider Haggard, a close friend, had ascertained that John, when last seen, was suffering terribly from a mouth wound. To spare the Kiplings this last image of their son, Haggard declined to tell them the circumstances of his death. This incident reflects national propaganda working on a private level. In a similar fashion, the home front population was not apprised of the realities surrounding the soldiers' deaths, nor were they allowed to bury their dead at home.

9. The scripture alluded to can be found in John 20: 15. "Jesus saith unto her [Mary Magdalene] Woman, why weepest though? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him and I will take him away." The allusion to Mary Magdalene links the story to the brief poem "The Burden" that forms a conclusion of sorts to the story. Two stanzas from it preface the story:

> One grave to me was given,
> To watch till Judgement Day;
> And God looked down from heaven
> And rolled the stone away.
>
> One day in all the years,
> One hour in that one day,
> His angel saw my tears
> *And rolled the stone away!*
> ("The Gardener" 179)

Works Cited

Birkenhead, Lord Frederick. *Rudyard Kipling*. New York:
Random House, 1978.
Blondel, Nathalie. *Mary Butts: Scenes From the Life.*
New York: McPherson, 1997.
Booth, Allyson. *Postcards From the Trenches: Negotiating the Space Between Modernism & the First World War*. New York: Oxford UP, 1996.
Buitenhuis, Peter. *The Great War of Words: British, American and Canadian Propaganda and Fiction, 1914-1933*. Vancouver: U of British Columbia P, 1987.
Gilbert, Elliot T., ed. "*O Beloved Kids*": *Rudyard Kipling's Letters to His Children.* London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1983.
Gilbert, Sandra, and Susan Gubar. *Sexchanges.* Vol. II of *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1989.

Hibberd, Dominic, and John Onions, eds. *Poetry of the Great War*. New York: St. Martin's, 1986.
Kipling, Rudyard. *Collected Verse*. London: Doubleday, 1907.
—. "The Gardener." *Debits and Credits*. London: Macmillan, 1927. 179-189.
—. "Mary Postgate." *A Diversity of Creatures*. New York: Scribner's, 1917. 103-117.
—. "Swept and Garnished." *A Diversity of Creatures*. New York: Scribner's, 1917. 226-234.
Klein, Yvonne M., ed. *Beyond the Home Front: Autobiographical Writing of the Two World Wars*. Washington Square, NY: New York UP, 1997.
Marcus, Jane. "Asylums of Antaeus: Women, War, and Madness—Is There a Feminist Fetishism?" *The New Historicism*. Ed. H. Aram Veeser. New York: Routledge, 1989. 132-151.
Messinger, Gary. *British Propaganda and the State in the First World War*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1992.
Parker, Peter. *The Old Lie: The Great War and Public School Ethos*. London: Constable, 1987.
Raitt, Suzanne, and Trudi Tate, eds. *Women's Fiction and the Great War*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1997.
Ruddick, Sarah. "Towards a Feminist Peace Politics." *Gendering War Talk*. Eds. Miriam Cooke and Angela Woolacott. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993. 109-127.
Sanders, Michael, and Philip M. Taylor. *British Propaganda During the First World War: 1914-1918*. London: Macmillan, 1982.
Wilson, Angus. *The Strange Ride of Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Works*. New York: Viking, 1978.

Tracy E. Bilsing is an Assistant Professor of English at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. She continues to study short fiction written during the years of the Great War which emphasize the home front experience. A great admirer of Kipling, she is also investigating the fiction of other noncombatants, including Katherine Mansfield, Mary Butts, and Elizabeth Bowen.

Katherine Kinney

Cold Wars: Black Soldiers in Liberal Hollywood

In 1982 Louis Gossett, Jr was awarded the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his portrayal of Gunnery Sergeant Foley in *An Officer and a Gentleman*, becoming the first African American actor to win an Oscar since Sidney Poitier. In 1989, Denzel Washington became the second to win, again in a supporting role, for *Glory*. It is perhaps more than coincidental that both award winning roles were soldiers. At once assimilationist and militant, the black soldier apparently escapes the Hollywood history Donald Bogle has named, "Coons, Toms, Bucks, and Mammies" or the more recent litany of cops and criminals. From the liberal consensus of WWII, to the ideological ruptures of Vietnam, and the reconstruction of the image of the military in the Reagan-Bush era, the black soldier has assumed an increasingly prominent role, ironically maintaining Hollywood's liberal credentials and its preeminence in producing a national mythos. This largely static evolution can be traced from landmark films of WWII and post-War liberal Hollywood: *Bataan* (1943) and *Home of the Brave* (1949), through the career of actor James Edwards in the 1950's, and to the more politically contested Vietnam War films of the 1980's.

Since WWII, the black soldier has held a crucial, but little noted, position in the battles over Hollywood representations of African American men.[1] The soldier's role is conspicuous in the way it places African American men explicitly within a nationalist and a nationalizing context: U.S. history and Hollywood's narrative of assimilation, the combat film. This placement was, of course, rigorously eschewed by the traditions and institutions of segregation. In 1943 the U.S. Office of War Information conducted a survey of films which featured black

characters (23% of the total output in late '42 and early '43) and concluded, "in general, Negroes are presented as basically different from other people, as taking no relevant part in the life of the nation, as offering nothing, contributing nothing, expecting nothing" (Koppes 179). This difference was of concern to a government which was not only drafting African Americans to serve in rigorously segregated units, but, perhaps more urgently, was mobilizing African American workers in war industries where they were greeted uneasily by white workers. In this context, as Thomas Cripps notes, "the war movies seemed heavensent" (75). In *Bataan*, *Sahara*, *Crash Dive* (all 1943), and *Lifeboat* (1944) black men were self-consciously featured as supporting players in a national and global drama.

The discovery of the black soldier's key part on the national stage during WWII involved a paradox of recognition and repression, remembering and forgetting which would outlive the Jim Crow military. What begins in WWII as a kind of tokenism, the inclusion of a black soldier in the symbolic platoon, becomes, in the 1980's, the grounds on which the war film is recuperated. The war film exemplifies the characteristics Dana Polan sees defining Hollywood films of the 1940's, "a narrativity caught between power and paranoia" (Polan 15). If the power of narrative lies in its ability "to write an image of life as coherent, teleological, univocal," then paranoia is its troubled twin, "the fear of narrative, and the particular social representations it tries to uphold, against all that threatens the unity of its framework" (Polan 12). I want to elaborate Polan's argument by placing race at his juncture of power and paranoia, as that which defines in quite overt ways the boundaries within which Hollywood narrative achieves coherence and univocality and yet is also the site of repression which breeds paranoia.

The ideological coherence of the WWII combat film reflects an unusually literal example of what Louis Althuessar called an Ideological State Apparatus in the marriage of the government (civilian and military) and the entertainment industry. The Office of War Information turned to Hollywood not simply to propagate policies and war goals, but to re-imagine everyday American life in relation to the war effort. Racial stratification was one crucial aspect of American life which demanded such revision, resisting both absolute segregation which delimited labor mobility and the war-time demands of groups such as the NAACP who were demanding a double V for Victory, against fascism abroad and racism at home. The genre of the WWII combat

film codified an image and a plot of American identity in which racial difference could be presented without distress. As Polan's narrative analysis suggests, this coherence could only be wrought through dramatic repressions—most basically the repression of a segregated military and white racism. These repressions direct combat narratives at every turn, forming a paranoid other which would itself become a narrative staple of Vietnam War films, media spectacularization of sixties black militancy, and, most especially, blaxploitation films—the resistant black man with a gun.[2]

The 1943 release *Bataan* established the most critical generic feature of the Hollywood combat film: the symbolic platoon. Set against the less than heroic U.S. withdrawal from the Philippines, the movie introduces, literally through a role call, the assemblage of soldiers, sailors, and marines who are left behind to blow up a bridge and keep it from being rebuilt. Although the men are marked by differences of military service and rank, region and age, the most apparent and characteristic difference is ethnicity and race: Jew, Irish, Pole, Chicano, Filipino, and African American are brought together. This emblematic melting pot marks the film's importance as one of the first produced in cooperation with the Office of War Information. The ideological work set up for the plot is apparent. A series of differences is established in order to be resolved in the gesture of common purpose, marking and motivating the mobilization necessary to a total war effort.

The differences dramatized in the plot, however, are strictly personal and individual. It is by eschewing the dramatization of tensions with overt social, political and ideological implications that *Bataan* is most typical, even prototypical, of the combat film. Ironically, this means that the level of difference most apparent in the establishing scene, the ethnic and racial, remains spoken only through characterization and is not enacted. Plot lines belong exclusively to white characters with no particularized ethnic identities: the pilot, Sergeant Dane, the cynical Todd, the naive sailor Purkett, and the conscientious objector medic. These are the men who have to make choices and whose characters change in the audience's estimation over the course of the film.

This internal drama of identity and unity is played out against a significantly racialized landscape. The Japanese-dominated Philippines constitutes a kind of American racial dreamscape—the grotesque return of the imperial repressed. As Richard Slotkin, notes, "the Japanese advance graphically confirmed the direst fantasies of a 'Rising Tide of

Color' " (318-19). The Philippines marked a U.S. military defeat paralleled only by Little Big Horn. *Bataan* enacts this mythology, cloaking its studio sets in an eerie fog which heightens the claustrophobic and surreal qualities of the American last stand. No mention is made in *Bataan* of the history of U.S. forces in the Philippines.[3] That history is encoded instead by Yankee Salazar, the Filipino scout who, at a crucial moment, strips off his uniform and in loincloth and body paint sets out to find General MacArthur and a "Fourth of July" spectacle of American power. Salazar is more overtly patriotic than the American Todd who doubts MacArthur's ability. But his demonstration of patriotic faith also recapitulates the popular American rational for domination in the Philippines, that the Filipinos were incapable of self-rule and in need of American protection.

Salazar is the Yankee but he is also the Indian, both as a visual icon and in his role as scout. The invocation of this past works to elide the more immediately troublesome past of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines and, by placing the Filipino at the liminal point in American identities, draws the black soldier Epps (Kenneth Spenser) firmly within the circle of American identity. Epps becomes the spokesman for faith in the military and by extension the American system, chastising Salazar's need to seek greater American aid rather than to act as an American, that is on his own authority and power. Spenser literally embodies such power. He is by far the tallest man in the group, and his physical presence is crudely reinforced by posing him shirtless through most of the film.

In a crucial scene, Purkett, the teenage sailor/musician is standing guard at night. In the eerie mist he fires at what he thinks is a "Jap," only to have it revealed as the dead body of Salazar hanging from a tree, an image which suggests the silent and torturous horrors committed by the unseen Japanese enemy. Although, as John Dower and Richard Slotkin have both demonstrated, anti-Japanese propaganda drew heavily on anti-black racist iconography, here Salazar and the Japanese are figured similarly as part of the landscape which is literally foreign to the G.I.'s, including Epps.[4] Epps' difference is diminished in direct relation to the short, stocky Salazar; no one would mistake the towering Kenneth Spenser for the enemy as constructed in the film.

Within this international reinscription of the racial boundaries of American identity, racial difference within the U.S. loses its most volatile points of demarcation. This is most apparent in the careful bal-

ancing of Epps' doubled role as demolitions expert, the one who actually blows up the bridge, and as preacher, the one to eulogize the dead and invoke a higher purpose. By turning Epps' character to God and the spiritual, his role is moved outside the realm of social, political, and historical contingency in which racism operates. This characterization of Epps requires that Jim Crow segregation in the military be forgotten both by the narrative and by the audience. Although an explanation in which Epps had become separated from his unit would be perfectly feasible within the narrative context, the film operates in complete denial by making Epps and Matowski buddies who have served together since before Pearl Harbor.

In a sense the film does its work too well. The image of black and white soldiers fighting side by side is so naturalized that it renders a segregated military illogical. This defiance marks the film's liberal core. Producer Dore Schary claims credit for the inclusion of Epps, acknowledging it "really was inaccurate" but seeing it as a breakthrough opportunity in race relations (Suid 45). The problem is that desegregation remains thinkable in the film only as an inaccurate fiction.[5] This irony in underwritten by Michael Rogin's observation that "the grip of the good war [on American culture] has importantly to do with how it seemed at once to justify demonology and to free American politics from the stigma of race" (110). In defeating Japan, and especially Nazi Germany, expansionist powers with explicitly racist ideologies, the United States was able for the first time to effectively suppress its own ideology and history of racism, even as it demonized the enemy through highly familiar codes.

The liberal gesture of the black soldier's inclusion in the symbolic platoon of *Bataan* found new and higher stakes in the move for adult audiences in the post-war era. As Thomas Cripps has convincingly demonstrated, the ideology of common purpose and brotherhood which enabled a positive imaging of racial difference in WWII films developed in the postwar era into the most self-consciously liberal of Hollywood genres, the message or social problem picture (215-249). Released in 1949, *Home of the Brave* clearly reflects these generic and ideological imperatives. Self-consciously promoting *Home* as the first postwar picture to deal with the "race problem," producer Stanley Kramer went so far as to hide the subject of the film during production in order to beat the passing film *Pinky*, being made at the same time, into release. *Home of the Brave* tells the story of a small army surveying unit which is

sent to map enemy encampments on a Pacific island near the end of WWII. The white unit is assigned a black surveyor, Corporal Moss (James Edwards), as the only available qualified soldier. In the unit Moss is reunited with his high school buddy, Finch (Lloyd Bridges), encounters overt racism from a private and, initially, resistance from the young Major in charge. The film is framed by Moss's psychiatric treatment for paralysis and amnesia following Finch's death.

Home of the Brave is both a film about repression and itself an example of repression. *Home* narrates this encounter across the color line from the hyper-individualized and internalized perspective of a doctor/patient relationship. In the film's dramatic denouement, the psychiatrist badgers Moss into admitting that he felt good when Finch was shot. But the crucial question becomes one of motivation. Moss believes he was feeling retribution; that he was glad Finch died because he was "going to call me a yellow bellied nigger." "No" the doctor exclaims, striking the bed with his fist, "that's the problem, that sensitivity of yours." Circling him the doctor commands Moss's attention: "I want you to listen to me, harder than you've ever listened to anyone in your life." The lesson is that Moss is "no different," that "all soldiers" feel good when a buddy is shot instead of them. The point here is fairly obvious. First of all, Moss, not white racism, is the problem, the bearer of the disease and the mark of difference—"that sensitivity of yours." Commanding the camera with his movement, which literally looks down on the immobilized black soldier, the doctor seeks to cure the paralyzed Moss by appropriating his point of view, retelling his story back to him and deracializing it.

This disavowal of racism ironically counters Kramer's positioning of the film as the first postwar film to deal with the race problem. But the flashback structure in many ways focuses the film's telling desire to both name white racism and to repress it. First, and most obviously, it puts racism in the past. The two white characters most guilty of racism are in fact the film's first narrators who tell their story to the doctor in order to aid in Moss's recovery. Their narration of their own racism becomes evidence of their conversion. There are, however, significant lapses in narrative logic within this framing. The Major denies knowing anything about the private's attack on Finch on the island, and at the end of the film the private enacts the very kinds of racist assumptions that are criticized in the flashback he ostensibly narrates. Both men are forced to deny knowing things about racism that they have to know in order to tell the story.

These ruptures are contained by two organizing narrative structures. First is the very convention of the Hollywood flashback. "Think back," the doctor tells Moss and we are visually sent back in time to the island. Although framed by character narrations which would suggest subjective points of view, the camera makes the past a place that can be visited, empirically stable and knowable. The single point of contested interpretation becomes not what happened but a word unspoken by a dead man, either "nigger" or "nit-wit." Within the film's narrative, the psychiatrist is the only audience for these various narrations and, as an army doctor, he uses his dual authority to both institutionalize and individualize a proper narrative. The use of newsreel footage within these individually framed flashbacks aids both the naturalizing gesture of classic Hollywood style and the doctor's appropriation of Moss' memory to reconstruct a universal masculine narrative which is presented as the cure for Moss's debilitating difference.[6] The film prefigures Daniel Patrick Moynihan's 1963 advocacy of the "utterly masculine world" of the military as a cure for the "disorganized and matrifocal family life in which so many Negro youth come of age" (Baskir 125). As in the symbolic platoon of WWII combat films, the whole purpose of difference is to subsume it. In *Home of the Brave*, racism is literally an isolated problem, the internalized disease of the only black person in the film, and he is cured at film's end.

Home of the Brave is not wholly as pathetic as its denouement. James Edwards' performance was widely praised in the black and white press as breaking stereotype. Edwards' career is a powerful gauge of the new and severely limited opportunities afforded African Americans in Hollywood following WWII. Having served as a first lieutenant in WWII, Edwards went on to play G.I.'s in *The Steel Helmet* (1951), *Bright Victory* (1951), *Battle Hymn* (1957), *Men in War* (1957), *Pork Chop Hill* (1959), and *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962). Again and again, Edwards played a soldier or veteran, a role which insisted on his heroic manhood even as it refused to allow it any active narrative emplotment. In essence, Edwards was given a gun and not allowed to use it. Only Samuel Fuller's iconoclastic Korean War film, *The Steel Helmet*, allows Edwards' character to be defined by a bitterly ironic acknowledgment of his doubly embattled space, simultaneously fighting American racism and the communist enemy with wit and grace. In *Bright Victory* Edwards plays a blind veteran who befriends another blind and bigoted white G.I. As in *Home of the Brave*, the use of the hospital suggests the

diagnosis of racism as an illness, but, as in the later Sidney Poitier film, *A Patch of Blue* (1965), blindness becomes the metaphor for the noble possibilities of a colorblind society.

As Michele Wallace argues, "In the aftermath of the Jewish Holocaust, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, the Japanese internment, and in the early stages of the McCarthy era and the Cold War, the particular political environment of the late forties made the range of safe discussions of [race and racism] a narrow one" (268). This narrowness continued well into the fifties, but it was complicated by the need to acknowledge the desegregation of the armed forces. When President Truman signed the 1948 Executive Order instituting "equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin," he acted out of a complex set of domestic and national security considerations, pressed both by the work of African American civil rights leaders like A. Philip Randolph and the growing acknowledgement that segregation was a liability in the international propaganda battles of the Cold War. In Truman's colorful terms, "The top dog in a world which is 90% colored ought to clean his own house" (Sherry 146). Hollywood's WWII practice of not mentioning the typically cameo presence of the black soldier neatly reflected the need to show a new, desegregated America without confronting the history of segregation and discrimination.

The Korean War forced the new policy of desegregation into practice.[7] *Pork Chop Hill*, one of the most epic and earnest Hollywood representations of the Korean War, demonstrates the barely contained tension between the WWII practice of the symbolic, but un-narrated inclusion of the black soldier, and the increasing degree to which the story of the black soldier was the story of the war. *Pork Chop Hill* never names race or racism directly, but in the doubling of James Edwards and Woody Strode it implicitly addresses the controversy over desegregation in the military. Edwards, the corporal, is the consummate good soldier, who commands the recalcitrant men to get on with the job, calling white men "boy" without eliciting resentment. The film tells the story of a bloody battle, perhaps the last before the immanent announcement of an armistice. Exacerbating the futility of fighting a war being decided in negotiation are the appeals of an eloquent Chinese Communist propagandist broadcasting over the battlefield. Many, even most of the men complain, try to get rotated out of the unit before the battle, and even move toward open subordination if not mutiny by telling their

commander, played by Gregory Peck, that they should turn back because the hill is not worth dying for. But when the propagandist announces, "Men of King Company, you know this isn't your fight," his voice plays over the image of Woody Strode, who, in apparent response, throws himself on the ground and claims a sprained ankle.

Peck literally pulls Strode back into the battle, but when Strode takes refuge behind a stump after seeing a G.I. killed, Peck threatens him with ten years in Leavenworth. The charge of cowardice remains unspoken and is, in any case, an oversimplification of Strode's sullen relationship to battle. James Edwards is ordered to "keep an eye on" Strode, a charge both official and personally felt. "I've got a special interest in everything you do," he tells Strode. The two black soldiers fill a medium shot, staring each other down. At the center of the shot Edwards' hand grips Strode's wrist just below a clenched fist. The shot is striking in the way it anticipates the overlapping iconography of the Vietnam War and Black Power. Here, however, the gaze of one black soldier into the eyes of another is not that of brothers, but of antagonists, of the good soldier and the coward. Woody Strode is what James Edwards has to overcome to enter fully into the military corps, his quite literally paranoid other. Through Strode the film surreptitiously invokes the racist attacks on African American courage and loyalty which had so long been used to uphold segregation in the military. As in *Home of the Brave*, however, the antagonism exists not within white, national imagination, but within and between black men.

Oddly though, Edwards drops out of the film. We see him neither killed nor wounded, but he is not among the two dozen survivors. Woody Strode, on the other hand, is crucial in the enactment of the last stand. He energetically throws himself into the work of defending the bunker. Like Kenneth Spenser in *Bataan*, Strode is a dominating physical presence whose commitment establishes American security in a hostile world. In return for Strode's labor, Peck offers him a cliché of inclusion which reverberates perversely against the Civil Rights battles contemporary to the film's release—"Welcome to the club." The film plots Strode's cowardly doubt, his lack of faith in home and war, country and platoon, if ostensibly only to overturn them, in a way that it cannot seem to plot Edwards' professionalism which simply exists beyond question. In a terrible but telling turn of irony, Edwards' last movie role was as the General's valet in *Patton* (1970).

If *Pork Chop Hill* is exemplary of Hollywood's interest in serious,

realistic films in the 1950's, *The Manchurian Candidate* is its paranoid twin; a dark, perverse, subjective film about unconscious actions and desires. As in the other films, Edwards' race is never mentioned. The film offers by far the most pointed image of Edwards as no different from the other men in his unit. *The Manchurian Candidate* opens in a Korean brothel, where soldiers, including Edwards, are shown drinking and lounging with half-dressed women. Edwards is the only black soldier in the unit, but the camera in no way distinguishes his presence or his relationship to the other soldiers or the women. The entrance of the martinet, whistle-blowing Laurence Harvey further binds Edwards' image to that of the other men. The spectacle of miscegenation, the most inflammatory image of desegregation, is pointedly invoked, but as with *Bataan* the internationalizing of race and ideology in the film works to draw the black solider within the circle of American manhood. The Korean prostitutes exist literally outside the black and white iconography of American segregation and the Orientalized communists are the film's ultimate un-American other.

Edwards is so like the film's hero, Frank Sinatra, that they share the same dreams. These dreams of a meeting of a ladies garden club in a hotel are themselves "plants," the falsified memories of communist brainwashing. But they carry a fascinatingly American aspect: Sinatra's ladies are white, Edwards' are black. The women share identical clothing, manners, and presentations. Both white and black garden clubs are convincing "slices" of American life. But unlike the lone black soldier of the symbolic platoon, these parallel domestic dreams testify to the very segregation which Edwards' relation to Sinatra and the other men denies. In terms of the film's convoluted plot, Edwards is the link between Sinatra and Harvey, the planted assassin, after the war. Like Sinatra, he is driven to seek out Harvey, writing a letter which is the first evidence that Sinatra's obsessions are not individual. It is Edwards' testimony to the government which makes Sinatra's nightmares credible when both men identify the same Soviet agents.

Edwards thus becomes the link between the heroic and perverse images of a wounded Cold War masculinity. This is why the brothel scene, and the later one in which Edwards awakens from a nightmare and is shown in bed with his wife are so significant. In the struggle against Communist subversion, more than the strong body of the black soldier is needed. Black men must come home from war without the peculiar, racially defined stigma of paralysis, doubt, and lack which *Home*

of the Brave had to create in order to control. Edwards is as virile and as tortured as Sinatra—at least in the diminished but parallel capacity of a supporting player to the star. The subversive threat of communism, as many commentators on the film have noted, is figured as primarily sexual. Harvey's perversion as a communist-controlled assassin is figured through the codes of fifties homosexuality. He fails utterly as an American man, dominated by a corrupt over-bearing mother. Edwards offers the crucial support to Sinatra's struggle to combat the subversive evil within, implicitly affirming new resources for heroic, American masculinity. Once again the corporal, Edwards stands for "the men" of the patrol in a way that the officer Sinatra cannot. In both the brothel scene and in a photo displayed in Edwards' apartment he is pictured at the exact center of the unit, surrounded and embraced by the other men. The racial implications of this manly struggle once again go unsaid, but in a film about dreams, repression, brain-washing and false consciousness, the unsaid is granted far greater power than in films committed to principles of realism. Read side by side, *Pork Chop Hill* and *The Manchurian Candidate* suggest the depth of the need for the good black soldier's supporting role in the national drama of wars hot and cold, material and psychological.

The concerns of the early years of desegregation in the armed forces which shaped the possibilities and limitations of James Edwards' career were utterly transformed by the Vietnam War. In a few short years, from 1965 to 1968, the good news story of a successfully desegregated army in the field were overshadowed by charges of disproportionate casualties and the competing ideology of black nationalism. The Vietnam films of the 1980's rely heavily on the invocation of black nationalism. But once again its representation is iconic not dynamic, suggestive of the cultural landscape of the war rather than the fraught critical connections between African Americans' struggle for Civil Rights and the Vietnam War. Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1986) is the most telling in this regard. For the first time a significant number of black soldiers are featured within the platoon. Gestures of collectivity, however, are insistently interracial. Black soldiers, and perhaps even more importantly, the unnamed cultural sign of blackness, is crucial to the film's claim to realism. But the particular claims and critiques of black nationalism are carefully and coercively controlled. Only one character, the suggestively named "Junior" (Reggie Johnson), explicitly voices the black nationalist position. As many commentators have pointed out, the courage of the

militant stance is undercut by Junior's gross cowardice in the face of battle. Even more telling is Junior's isolation from the other black soldiers. His "free your mind your ass will follow" speech about drugs as the white man's plot is delivered to a white soldier while surrounded by other white soldiers as country music plays in the background. Clyde Taylor has described the black characters in *Platoon* as "shadows" who double and reflect the white characters at center stage (8). Because these black shadows never confront each other, reference can be made to black radicalism without having to engage the implications of its critique.

The good black soldier, again suggestively, even cynically, named, is King (Keith David). King's primary role is as mentor to the film's white protagonist, Chris (Charlie Sheen). As Clyde Taylor has wittily pointed out, the relationship trades on the old cultural model of Huck and Jim—"Come back to the foxhole, Chuck, Honey" (8). Taylor notes that King doubles Sergeant Elias (Willem Dafoe): "Where Elias's affirmation is an activist, apocalyptic salvationism, King's is a brotherly accomodationism" (8). This reading places King firmly within the liberal tradition. Although Oliver Stone was vociferously condemned as a "Hollywood liberal" by the conservative press of the Reagan/Bush years, his bellicose film style owes less to the imaging of a society rising above color, than the politics of the hipster articulated by Norman Mailer. King's difference from Elias is the difference between life and death in the peculiarly racialized sense Richard Dyer describes in his influential essay, "White": "the idea that non-whites are more natural than whites also comes to suggest that they have more 'life,' a logically meaningless but commonsensically powerful notion" (55). After recovering from a minor wound, Chris returns to the unit where King greets him with the wrist grip handshake of the dap, the black to black salute of the Vietnam War (Flowers 110). He is reborn in his initiation by King into the underground world of the "heads," where black and white soldiers dance in each other arms to the Motown sound of "Tracks of My Tears." Segregation dies not in the liberal dream of James Edwards' professionalism telling its own story of accomplishment, but when the white middle class son is welcomed into "the cool world."

The Vietnam War combat film which most powerfully places black soldiers at its dramatic core is the one usually considered the most politically conservative, *Hamburger Hill* (1987). Much more so than *Platoon*, *Hamburger Hill* is an ensemble piece which is constructed crucially around an image and practice of black solidarity out of which

interracial bonds can be earned. At the core of this black solidarity is the medic Doc, played with breathtaking intensity and intelligence by Courtney Vance. Doc, McDaniels, and Motown are introduced together, singing the Motown sound to each other. As in *Platoon*, music plays a crucial role in defining the cultural codes of the war, but here the racial politics of identification are foregrounded. Country Western is not simply the anthem of evil, violent rednecks, nor Motown the sound of a generation of peace loving freaks beyond color. Motown is black music and the Southern accented Platoon Sergeant complains they never play Tammy Wynette on Armed Forces Radio.

This admission of cultural difference translates in an unprecedented way into the articulation of political consequence. Doc, McDaniels, and Motown's song is interrupted when they meet their squad leader (Dylan McDermott) just returned from medical leave. The white man is obviously a friend, but their friendship does not disallow an acknowledgment of racist practices in military. From a joking plea for more brothers to aid them in the music wars, McDaniels makes a more serious request to be transferred to the rear. With less than three weeks on his tour, he's "too short" to go back into the deadly A Shau Valley. "They don't take niggers back at headquarters," Doc tells McDaniels as the sergeant says nothing, "all the white motherfuckers are back there." Doc's delivery is, as always, painfully ironic. It is an old and fundamentally true joke, even if "*all* the white motherfuckers" are obviously not back at HQ. This truth is upheld in the following scene in which Doc's instruction of the New Guys in proper oral hygiene, literally brushing their teeth, is paralleled in the sergeant's instruction in surviving battle. Doc's speech is informed by both technical military instruction and experience. Doc is clearly as knowing as the sergeant, and as played by Vance, demonstrates a far greater brilliance and charisma. He is the truest leader in the unit, but the marked limitations of his role, the circumscribed circle of his command here resonates much farther than the plot limitations imposed again and again on James Edwards. Doc's irony speaks reflexively back to the social and political circumstances which shape his position in the military hierarchy.

Uniquely among Vietnam War films, *Hamburger Hill* actively plots the narratives of both black solidarity and interracial foxhole brotherhood. Whereas in *Platoon* the dap serves as a sleight-of-hand in which black nationalism is both invoked and dispelled, in *Hamburger Hill* the double possibilities of the dap are far more fully imagined. The

crucial scene of the dap comes between Motown and Doc following McDaniels' all too predictable death in battle. "It don't mean nothing," Motown reminds Doc with an irony devoid of humor. Again and again they perform the fist-clenched, elaborate handshake of the dap, until the one black new guy joins in, rebuilding the solidarity threatened by war's violence. Throughout the film Doc returns to his articulate critique of the black man's position in the war, drunk and sober, with varying degrees of humor and bitterness. At a key moment, a white soldier, Beleski, challenges Doc's presumption that racism landed him in Vietnam. "What did they do," Beleski asks, "pull the fucking gold spoon out of my mouth to send me over here?" Doc walks up to him and a fight seems imminent. Instead Doc offers him the clenched fist of the dap; "brother blood," he greets with a laugh. Unlike the interracial bonds of *Platoon*, Doc is not so much offering to overcome racial difference, but to admit class as legitimate site of contest in the war. Yet, concerns about class inequity involving the draft and service in the war more generally can seemingly only be named through race; Doc can and does protest, Beleski can do so only in response to Doc. The black soldier comes to stand for the broad injustice of the Vietnam era draft, invoking but also to a degree disguising what James Fallows called in 1975 the nagging question, "What did you do in the class war, Daddy"?[8]

When Doc dies he seems to give up his insistence on the difference racism makes. "We're all dirty niggers on this hill," he declares before dying in the arms of Motown and the white sergeant, a statement visually enforced as the soldiers become indistinguishable in the muddy slop of the battlefield. Doc's dying gesture of interracial solidarity is sustained by the same assumptions which define the film's political conservatism. Throughout the film, the U.S. is presented as overtaken by antiwar protesters who spit on returning G.I.'s. There is no home. These antiwar protestors, however, are exclusively identified as long-haired college kids and liberal politicians. The turn against the war by Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael and other black leaders is elided entirely. Protesting the war is a privileged position, enjoyed by neither black nor white grunts. Doc's passionate condemnation of the racism inherent in authoritative structures of political power, is ultimately deflected, if not to the fringes of society, at least to an oppositional, not central, position.

The film which most powerfully "integrates" the black soldier into the form and message of the military film is without question *An Officer and*

a Gentleman. Crucially, Sergeant Foley's "blackness" is never named in the film and the story is often told, and held as powerfully significant, that the role of Foley was not written for a black man. Lou Gossett's performance is frequently cited as one which "rises above" or "escapes" racial categories and designations. Gossett was quoted following the Academy Awards ceremony as telling other black actors "Don't just look for black roles. Just look for good roles" (Wiley 626). This language suggests that the measure of Gossett's success, perhaps even its award-winning quality, is as a black actor playing, if not a white role, a not-necessarily-black one. In short Gossett, but not Foley, is read as black.

But the conclusion drawn from this story is usually held to be that the film is not "about" race, and, thus, that race does not figure significantly in the film's meaning. Quite to the contrary, the film's success, both ideologically and at box office, depends very heavily on the unnamed sign of Foley's, and not just Gossett's, blackness. The film ranked second only to *ET* in earnings for 1982, but the cultural work performed by the film was even more powerful: nothing less than the rehabilitation of the military's image as a cultural institution following the degraded representations of the Vietnam War. *An Officer and a Gentleman* returns to the motifs of World War II films, where the military builds gentlemen endowed with self-respect, self-reliance, esprit de corps, and pride, regardless of race, class, or (in the 1980's) even ender.

In order to accomplish this project, the film must banish the specter of Vietnam and Foley is the agent of this exorcism. As the recruits line up for the ritual inspection by their Sergeant, Foley commands their attention through insult, and while the process will lead to the familiar doubting of the men's heterosexuality and thus masculinity, he begins by doubting their Americanness. "You've been badmouthing your government," he accuses, and ridicules them for "being afraid to drop napalm on women and children." Early in training the unit runs to a marching song about a woman burned by napalm. The woman recruit half protests, "that's disgusting," but she laughs and keeps on running. The film seems to assume that the audience will likewise first respond with disgust, and depends upon the unspoken appeal of Foley's race (and of the woman's own place in the frame) to carry viewers beyond it. The black man becomes the model for the recreation of white men whose masculinity has been compromised by "long hair and bad-mouthing their government," in short by the 1960's. Vietnam is named and the Civil

Rights and Black Power movements are not. But race is what is most dynamically played out in the relationship between Foley and the recruits, effectively sidestepping any questions regarding the war in Vietnam or the place of the military in American society. The military is good because Foley is its spokesman, implicitly testifying to principles of integration and equal opportunity, and to a non-convulsive image of historical change, what George Will has called the "military meritocracy." That there is one black recruit simply allows the fiction of color-blindness its flawless appeal, much as the woman recruit helps create an apparently contemporary setting for the film's old-fashioned plot about working-class girls husband-hunting among the officer candidates. In representing the military a noble social institution, the film aesthetically reinvents World War II films. Richard Gere resembles no one so much as John Garfield, the sullen kid from the wrong side of the tracks who rises to the challenge, as in *Air Force* (1943).[9] Most reviewers had the same basic response to the film—they don't make movies like this anymore. While some critics celebrated this nostalgic return and others condemned it, none recognized the black soldier's crucial role in the film's newly old-fashioned story, even as they celebrated Gossett's performance.

Louis Gossett Jr.'s Gunnery Sergeant marks a significant promotion over James Edwards' corporal. The sergeant's role, in turn, has been superceded by a generation of black actors featured in starring roles as officers, encouraged no doubt by the enormous popularity of Colin Powell. Denzel Washington's performances in *Courage Under Fire* (1996) and *Crimson Tide* (1995) are exemplary of an astonishingly wide range of films. Yet, across the demands of mobilization and demobilization, from WWII through the end of the Cold War, from segregation through desegregation, the black soldier's supporting role has fulfilled an oddly consistent need in imagining the nation. The history of this representation, its brave promises and disappointing limitations, continues to silently suggest the complexity of African Americans' role in affirming and questioning national narratives without ever allowing the black soldier to voice his (let alone her)[10] own story.

Notes

1. Thomas Cripps' *Making Movies Black: The Hollywood Message Movie from World War II to Civil Rights* is a significant exception. Thomas Doherty's *Projections of War: Hollywood, American Culture and World War II* and Clayton R. Koppes and Gregory D. Black, *Hollywood Goes to War: How Politics and Propaganda Shaped World War II Movies* also include considerable attention to the political controversies surrounding the representations of African Americans in the context of the war effort. There is no comparable sustained attention, however, to the role of the black soldier in contemporary film. For example, Ed Guerrero's rich study, *Framing Blackness: The African-American Image in Film*, offers an insightful study of the place of race in the militarized vision of masculinity in post-*Star Wars* American film, but makes no mention of the figure of the black soldier.

2. In his publicity tour for *Bloods: An Oral History by Black Veterans of the Vietnam War*, Wallace Terry discussed his efforts to sell his manuscript on black soldiers in Vietnam. Terry was sure that the manuscript would be snapped up, posed as it was at the juncture of "the two biggest stories" of his generation, Vietnam and Civil Rights. After dozens of rejections he came to the conclusion that he had a story no one in America wanted to hear: he was "talking about black men with guns." The oral histories were suggested by an editor at Ballantine Books as an alternative to Terry's manuscript about the radicalization of black soldiers in country after 1969.

3. A later film, *Back to Bataan* (1945), would try to narrate the Philippine resistance to U.S. imperialism in order to enlist it in the battle against Japan. This move collapses in comic absurdity when Anthony Quinn, as the grandson of an Auginaldo-like Philippine leader turns to the American military commander, John Wayne, and says, "I know you're a better Filipino than I am."

4. See John Dower 147-180; also Slotkin, 319-320.

5. Desi Arnaz's character, Ramirez, operates in a related way. Ramirez is in love with California and the big band sound. Although carefully avoiding any reference to the *pachuco* culture of Chicano youth in wartime California, as the "jitterbug kid," Ramirez seems consciously designed to reverse the hysterical media inscriptions of the "Zoot Suit Riots" which would erupt in Los Angeles between sailors and Chicano youth within a week of the film's opening. Ramirez denies this strife, testifying instead to the inclusive appeal of American culture. "That's good old America," he crows in response to the radio. The mechanic who has "built his own jalopy back home," Ramirez reverses the studied impracticality of the low rider in Chicano culture and emerges as an American tinker, one who works for the common purpose in spite of sickness and fatigue until overcome by malaria. Unlike the Los Angeles youths persecuted by sailors, police, the newspapers, and courts alike, when Ramirez "jitterbugs himself to death," it is within the circle of an American culture which is presented as understanding and valuing the

Spanish language and Catholicism. The film seems to be making a plea for acceptance of Chicano culture, only to demonstrated that such a gesture is unnecessary.

6. Michele Wallace makes a similar point: "The institutionalization in the forties of a psychoanalytic/psychiatric discourse in the US was central to the formation of conventional notions of masculinity, sexual difference, family, and personality in dominant discourse" (268).

7. See Nalty 255-269.

8. For a careful reading of the significance of race and class in the Vietnam-era draft and military service, see Christian Appy.

9. As a Jew and in his open commitment to leftist political causes, including the unionization of the film industry, Garfield carried in many ways a heavier burden in relation to the assimilation narrative that Gere does. But as with the role of the black soldier, the relationship between Garfield and Gere can be read in nearly opposite ways: either Gere "whitewashes" Garfield and his place in Hollywood history or Garfield's history can be brought to bear on nostalgic readings of films such as *An Officer and a Gentlemen*, complicating interpretations of what is being remembered and forgotten, particularly in relation to class and ethnicity. It would be further worth comparing *An Officer and a Gentlemen* to Garfield's *Body and Soul* (1947). Gossett is less of a "sidekick" than Canada Lee plays in *Body and Soul*, but the basic structure of the black man physically and morally "training" the white man (including a scene in a boxing ring) is continued in *Officer*. For more on Garfield see Robert Sklar, *City Boys*.

10. John Sayles' *Lone Star* (1996), an independent film significantly at the margins of Hollywood distribution, is the only film I know to feature supporting yet significant roles in which black women are soldiers.

Works Cited

Althussar, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Trans. Ben Brewster. London: Monthly Review Press, 1971.

Appy, Christian. *Working Class War: American Combat Soldiers and the Vietnam War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

Baskir, Lawrence M. and William A. Strauss. *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, The War and the Vietnam Generation*. New York: Vintage, 1978.

Bogle, Donald. "James Edwards." *Blacks in American Films and Television: An Encyclopedia* New York: Garland, 1988. 387.

—, *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films, expanded edition*. New York: Continuum Publishing, 1989.

Cripps, Thomas. *Making Movies Black: The Hollywood Message Movie from World War II to Civil Rights*. New York: Oxford, 1993.
Doherty, Thomas. *Projections of War: Hollywood, American Culture and World War II*. New York: Columbia, 1993.
Dower, John. *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Pantheon, 1986.
Dyer, Richard. "White." *Screen* 29 (Fall 1988) 44-64.
Fallows, James. "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?" *The Washington Monthly* 7 (October 1975) 5-19.
Flowers, Arthur. *DeMojo Blues*. New York: Dutton, 1985.
Guerrero, Ed. *Framing Blackness: The African-American Image in Film*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.
Koppes, Clayton R. and Gregory D. Black. *Hollywood Goes to War: How Politics and Propaganda Shaped World War II Movies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
Nalty, Bernard C., *Strength for the Fight: A History of Black Americans in the Military*. New York: Free Press, 1986).
Polan, Dana. *Power and Paranoia: History, Narrative and the American Cinema, 1940-1950*. New York: Columbia, 1986.
Rogin, Michael. "'Make My Day!': Spectacle as Amnesia in Imperial Politics." *Representations* 29 (Winter 1990) 99-123.
Sherry, Michael S. *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930's*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.
Sklar, Robert. *City Boys: Cagney, Bogart, Garfield*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1992.
Slotkin, Richard. *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in the Twentieth Century*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.
Suid, Lawrence. *Guts and Glory: Great American War Movies*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978.
Taylor, Clyde. "The Colonialist Subtext in *Platoon*" *Cineaste* 15 (1987) 8.
Terry, Wallace. *Bloods: An Oral History by Black Veterans of the Vietnam War*. New York: Ballentine Books, 1984.
Wallace, Michele. "Race, Gender, and Psychoanalysis in Forties Film: *Lost Boundaries*, *Home of the Brave*, and *The Quiet One*." *Black American Cinema*. Manthia Diawara, ed. New York: Routledge, 1993. 257-271.
Wiley, Mason and Damien Bona, *Inside Oscar: The Unofficial History of the Academy Awards* New York: Ballentine Books, 1987.
Will, George. "The Military Meritocracy." *Newsweek*. February 11, 1991. 70.

Films Cited

Air Force. Dir. Howard Hawks. Perf. John Ridgely, Gig Young, Arthur Kennedy, John Garfield, Harry Carey. Warner Brothers. 1943.
Back to Bataan. Dir. Edward Dymtryk. Perf. John Wayne, Anthony Quinn. RKO.1945.

Bataan. Dir. Tay Garnett. Perf. Robert Taylor, Desi Arnaz, George Murphy, Thomas Mitchell, Lloyd Nolan, Kenneth Spenser, Robert Walker. MGM.1943.

Battle Hymn. Dir. Douglas Sirk. Perf. Rock Hudson, Anna Kashfi, Dan Duryea, James Edwards. Universal. 1957.

Body and Soul. Dir. Robert Rossen. Perf. John Garfield, Canada Lee. United Artists. 1947.

Bright Victory. Dir. Mark Robson. Perf. Arthur Kennedy, James Edwards. Universal. 1951.

Courage Under Fire. Dir. Edward Zwick. Perf. Denzel Washington, Meg Ryan. Twentieth-Century Fox. 1996.

Crimson Tide. Dir. Tony Scott. Perf. Denzel Washington, Gene Hackman. Disney. 1995.

Crash Dive. Dir. Archie Mayo. Perf. Tyrone Power, Anne Baxter, Dana Andrews, Ben Carter, James Gleason. Fox. 1943.

Glory. Dir. Edward Zwick. Perf. Mathew Broderick, Andre Braugher, Cary Elwes, Morgan Freeman, Denzel Washington. Tri Star Pictures. 1989.

Hamburger Hill. Dir. John Irvin. Perf. Dylan McDemott, Courtney Vance, Don James, Don Cheadle. Paramount. 1987.

Home of the Brave. Dir. Mark Robson. Perf. James Edwards, Douglas Dick, Lloyd Bridges, Jeff Corey. United Artists. 1949.

Lifeboat. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Perf. Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, Hume Cronyn, Canada Lee. Twentieth-Century Fox. 1944.

Lone Star. Dir. John Sayles. Perf. Chris Cooper, Elizabeth Pena, Kris Kristofferson, Matthew McConneghey, Joe Morton, Ron Canada. Paramount.1996.

The Manchurian Candidate. Dir. John Frankenheimer. Perf. Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh, Angela Lansbury, James Edwards. United Artists. 1962.

Men in War. Dir. Anthony Mann. Perf. Robert Ryan, Aldo Ray, Robert Keith, James Edwards. United Artists. 1957.

An Officer and a Gentleman. Dir. Taylor Hackford. Perf. Richard Gere, Debra Winger, Louis Gossett, Jr. Paramount. 1982.

A Patch of Blue. Dir. Guy Green. Perf. Sidney Poitier, Shelly Winters, Elizabeth Hartman, Ivan Dixon. MGM. 1965.

Patton. Dir. Franklin Schaffner. Perf. George C. Scott, Karl Malden, James Edwards. Twentieth-Century Fox. 1970.

Pinky. Dir. Elia Kazan. Perf. Jeanne Crain, Ethel Waters, Ethel Barrymore. Twentieth-Century Fox. 1949.

Platoon. Dir. Oliver Stone. Perf. Charlie Sheen, Willem Dafoe, Tom Berenger, Forest Whitaker, Reggie Johnson, Keith David. Orion. 1986.

Pork Chop Hill. Dir. Lewis Milestone. Perf. Gregory Peck, Harry Guardino, George Peppard, James Edwards, Woody Strode. United Artists. 1959.

Sahara. Dir. Zoltan Korda. Perf. Humphrey Bogart, Bruce Bennett, Lloyd Bridges, Dan Duryea, Rex Ingram. Columbia. 1943.

The Steel Helmet. Dir. Samuel Fuller. Perf. Gene Evans, James Edwards. Deputy/Lippert. 1951.

Katherine Kinney teaches American literature and film in the English Department at the University of California, Riverside. She is the author of *Friendly Fire: American Images of the Vietnam War* (Oxford UP 2000). Her current project is a book entitled *Liberal Hollywood: Politics And Style 1945-1975.*

Commentary by
D. A. Boxwell

Kulturkampf, Now and Then

The dust jacket to *The Human Stain* announces the basic premise of Philip Roth's salvo fired "in a time of cul tural warfare, with 'the persecuting spirit' on the rise, a president is hounded over a sexual affair, a professor loses his job over a single word, and the nation succumbs to an 'ecstasy of sanctimony.' " While Roth does not actually use the phrase "cultural warfare" at any point in the novel, he doesn't need to. As I write, in the summer of 2000, we are so immersed in the war, reminded of it daily in the run-up to the presidential election, that there's no need to call overt attention to it. Not only do we hear the black flak erupting to traumatize us, but we are engulfed by the constant white noise of competing forces in this current war; indeed, we can't imagine the 1990s without it. What's more, we can't imagine the cultural warfare of the decade without its political counterpart (shutting down the Federal government, impeaching the President).

Roth's book is a great novel for our times; it's an angered response to the moral crusade of forces arrayed on the political and religious right engaged in a counterrevolutionary coup against the 1960s, symbolized by Bill Clinton and his multifarious betrayals. Most importantly, Roth's novel engages with the domestic wars convulsing America since the end of the Cold War. *The Human Stain*'s contorted narrative interfuses the historical and cultural conflicts swirling around America's end of the millennium which, for the sake of convenience, the book's publishers can readily shorthand as "the culture wars." Coleman Silk, Roth's beleaguered protagonist, is caught up in—and fatally victimized by—a time of cultural warfare, the terrain of which is a shelled battleground created by Vietnam's unhealed scars; the unfulfilled promises of 60s progressive

ideologies; the debasement of those same ideologies to the "political correctness" controversies on American campuses; a continuing legacy of racism and anti-Semitism; second wave feminism and its discontents; and the enduring pain of America's suppressed class conflict. All come together in Roth's despairing vision of a country whose aggressive tendencies are turned inward, destroying good men like Silk, in a frenzy of destructive "rituals of purification" (2).

Roth's novel is the perfect *Zeitgeist* book for an America unable to let go of its puritanical heritage after 400 long years, consumed by its own self-annihilating impulses, which are acted upon in particular historical moments when perceived threats from within (and within the American national character) are more dangerous than threats from without. We are in another one of those moments, just as we were in the 1930s. As Nathan Zuckerman, the novel's narrator tells us, post-cold war America is in the throes of "an enormous piety binge, a purity binge, when terrorism—which had replaced communism as the prevailing threat to the country's security—was succeeded by" a national obsession with the Commander-in-Chief's sexual peccadillos (2). Moreover, Roth insists on historicizing the current culture war, seeing it as just the latest manifestation of "what Hawthorne. [. . .] identified in the incipient country of long ago as 'the persecuting spirit' " achieving its first full flowering at Salem. Thus the essential conflict—in both the American individual and at large in the American body politic, between a censorious, theocratic impulse and a secular, democratic streak of independence from any external policing action—erupts at moments in American life with almost predictable frequency. And what's interesting is the degree to which this essential conflict has been intensified rhetorically, since the end of the Cold War, by metaphorizing it as warfare. If, as Clausewitz so famously declared, war is the continuation of politics by other means, the ferocity of political contention and debate in turn of the millennium America is such that the body politic is not merely in conflict with itself, as in previous historical periods, but is at war. As Roth's novel so tellingly makes clear, Jeffersonian political ideals have been KIA. Politics in America isn't a matter of attaining consensus through informed and rational debate and reflection, but is now all-out warfare, the uglier the better. And not just one war, either. It's a proliferation of wars: the war on drugs; the gender wars; the race wars; the culture wars. I'll trace the evolution of the rhetoric of cultural conflict in terms of "the culture war" to a plurality of "the culture wars" and explore that evolution as it has

occurred in the absence of "real" war after the fall of the Berlin Wall. I'll end by raising the specter of the culture wars marking the decade before America's entry into the Second World War, suggesting that maybe the more things change on the front lines of the culture wars, the more they remain the same.

Actually, the phrase "culture war" is nothing new, nor is the concept of a culture at war with itself. In the modern era, we can go all the way back to Germany in the period after the Franco-Prussian War, when (as the OED informs us) the word *kulturkampf* (literally, culture struggle) entered the lexicon to describe the convulsive conflict between the Bismarck's government and the Papacy for control of schools and Church appointments (1872-87). The bitterly contested effort to secularize the nascent German empire wasn't unique in the 19th century, but it was this particular one that articulated it as something more than just a debate or even a conflict. The opposing forces of church and state, if not considered *krieg* (war), was a "struggle," according to the phrase's maker Rudolf Virchow, the scientist and Prussian liberal statesman, who declared in 1873 that the battle with Roman Catholicism assumed "the character of a great struggle in the interest of humanity." Note that Virchow universalized the conflict in terms larger than the German people, inflating the rhetoric circulating around the controversy, to argue that it had import for all of mankind. As in all struggles, there are wins and losses; in this first *kuturkampf*, most of the anti-Catholic legislation had been repealed, moderated by Bismarck, or fell by the wayside from a lack of enforcement and public resistance to it. Fast forward to discourse around the American election of 2000, when the phrase "kulturkampf" is invoked by the neoconservative public intellectual Gertrude Himmelfarb in the recent pages of *Commentary*:

> This, in short, has been a more instructive primary season than most, for it has obliged us once again to take the measure of our country. What we witness is not a political war in the usual sense—a war waged first among the several factions within each party and then between the two parties. Nor is it, more ominously, a Kulturkampf, a religious war that threatens to alter the longstanding relations of church and state. It is something more than the first and less than the second—a new episode in the culture wars that, contrary to the predictions of some, continue to engage us as they have for almost a half-century. (Himmelfarb 23)

Here she imports, from a momentous conflict in German history, the compound word to suggest that contemporary secular America, however challenged by the "dissident culture" of social and religious conservatism, will be spared all-out war only if politicians and religious leaders "recogniz[e] and respon[d] to the serious issues at stake in these culture wars." Approving, from the political right, of those "dissidents," whose "traditional customs and beliefs" must be respected by politicians, Himmelfarb enjoins the candidates from "exacerbat[ing] conflict into open warfare." Her deployment of such rhetoric is just one example of the sheer ubiquity of metaphorizing cultural conflict in terms of war in contemporary America.

Yet the word *kampf* only suggests cultural conflicts in terms of struggle, of contestation in the form of politics by means other than all-out violent war. If any single individual is responsible for ratcheting up the rhetoric to invoke *kulturkrieg* it would be Patrick Buchanan. Almost exactly contemporary with the fall of the Berlin Wall, Buchanan's magnetic demagoguery articulated for the right a more aggressive and combative rhetoric that transferred the suppressed violence inherent in the Cold War (only unrepressed and enacted by proxy in Vietnam, El Salvador, and so forth) to the domestic realm of cultural production. A key moment in this rhetorical transformation was the headline for an editorial by Buchanan in the *Washington Times* on May 22, 1989: "Losing the War for America's Culture?" The question he posed was answered in the affirmative by a slashing condemnation of the National Endowment for the Arts for funding such provocatively offensive cultural production as Andres Serrano's and such institutions as the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Arts (of Winston-Salem, North Carolina) for exhibiting Serrano's work. While Buchanan was pleased to pronounce America the victor of the Cold War, he thundered that "America's art and culture are, more and more, openly anti-Christian, anti-American, nihilistic" (32). Moreover, the cultural transgressors were sneaky and subversive, having taken advantage of America's victorious battles in the Cold War to worm their way into the body politic, weakening its integrity. "While the right has been busy winning primaries and elections, cutting taxes and funding anti-communist guerrillas abroad, the left has been quietly seizing all the commanding heights of American art and culture" (32). Buchanan could not resist elaborating the figure of the American cultural scene as a battlefront, castigating the enemy for successfully "taking that hill." Buchanan drew the battle lines

in stark and simple terms: right versus left, flattening the complex landscape with what he knew would be the popular, but polarizing, appeal of his Manichaean world view.

Buchanan ended his *Washington Times* editorial with an overt linking of the end of one war, directed outwards, with another war, directed inwardly. "Political leaders in Washington believe that the battle against communism is being fought in the jungles of Asia and Central America, while failing to realize the war is also raging on the battlefield of the arts within our own borders" (33). His call, in 1989, for "conservatives and the religious community that comprise the vast middle-American population" to take arms and "do what the liberals did long ago—capture the culture," reached even more soldiers at the 1992 Republican National Convention. At Houston, Buchanan seized the delegates' rapt attention as he called for the right to reject the call to turn swords into ploughshares and instead take up the fight against a domestic enemy contaminating and corrupting the nation's Judeo-Christian values. It was such a defining moment in contemporary politics that Buchanan savored the moment again at the Texas GOP convention in San Antonio in 1996. "What did we say? I said there was a cultural war going on in this country for the soul of America, and that war is about who we are, what we believe, and what we stand for as people" ("Speech"). Of course, Buchanan didn't singlehandedly invent the battalions of this war. He was merely crystallizing for the right a strong impulse to take up arms evolving since the early 1980s, when such elite palace guards as the Reverend Donald Wildmon's National Federation for Decency and the Reverend Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority joined forces with almost 400 other fundamentalist Christian organizations (the Eagle Forum, Concerned Women for America, et al.) to form the Coalition for Better Television in February 1981 (Bolton 334). The CBT began organized boycotts of objectionable TV programs, as well as targeting corporate advertisers of such programming. In that same year President Ronald Reagan's Task Force on the Arts and Humanities, packed with religious conservatives, reported a "Mandate for Leadership" and advocated slashing the budgets of both the National Endowment for the Humanities and that pernicious JFK invention, the National Endowment for the Arts. But there's no question that by the time of the 1992 GOP convention, a decade of combat could be conceptualized conveniently by Buchanan as a "war," and, at that, an unspoken war against the 1960s and a war of revenge for Watergate.

If Buchanan popularized the metaphor of war to get our minds around the debate between the forces of right and left, few refused it. Forces on the left readily embraced it as well. For example, *The Revolutionary Worker*, the newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist Party, opined in an editorial in its August 14, 1989 issue ("Down with the Senate Art Police!") that the Senate's "fascistic" move to abolish the NEA, inspired by Buchanan's Nazi-like condemnation of so-called "degenerate art" (*entartete kunst*), was a manifestation of social control to "tur[n] back the clock and revers[e] social progress made since the 1960s. "Cultural war," in the words of the Revolutionary Worker, "is very sharp right now because it concentrates big questions that are up in society as a whole." Here the RCP marshals forth the figures of speech of the military campaign (and in all caps for that propagandistic flair): "And NOW IS NOT THE TIME FOR REBEL ARTISTS TO BE ON THE DEFENSIVE. NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE THE POLITICAL OFFENSIVE," as yet again the right and left, het up by the extremist rhetoric of their most extreme spokesmen, prepare to engage in hand-to-hand combat. It is worth noting how quickly, at the end of the 1980s, the metaphorization of perennial cultural conflict as all-out war, became entrenched in the American imagination—so much so, that by the end of the following decade, Roth's novel *The Human Stain* doesn't have to express it directly (only for the dust jacket writer to more overtly remind us of it). It becomes an ever-present backdrop, engulfing us so that we can't remember a time when controversy wasn't a matter of destructive war, scarring the national psyche so that "healing" (to invoke another popular metaphor at large in a therapy-obsessed culture of continual self-reinvention) can't ever seem to "begin."

In the summer of 2000, when Dick Cheney (a former Secretary of Defense) was announced as the GOP Vice Presidential nominee, much discourse swirled around Lynne Cheney's public identity as a "cultural warrior" in the 1990s as head of the NEH during the Reagan and Bush administrations (1986-1993). It was Reagan speechwriter-turned star TV pundit Peggy Noonan who used exactly that phrase on MSNBC to praise Lynne Cheney's value to the Bush-Cheney ticket in the election. Matt Bai of *Newsweek* asserted that "it is Lynne Cheney who has been the true right-wing warrior in the family," fighting the good fight at both the NEA and then, predictably enough, as a TV pundit on *Crossfire* during the Clinton-Gore years (Bai). Indeed, we probably shouldn't underestimate the degree to which the rise and proliferation of network

and cable TV political analysts in the 1990s have helped the public discourse around cultural conflicts (from public funding for the Arts to controversial art exhibits) become increasingly "hot." While such programs are hardly big ratings winners, their very titles—*Firing Line* and *Crossfire*—announce themselves as productions where "sparks fly" and competitive media force up the vituperation factor as opposing pundits vie for attention. It has been easy for such staged antagonism to revel in all the metaphors of violent combat, as portentous, doom-laden music chords accompany the talking heads in the shows' intros. It is therefore completely fitting that Lynne Cheney continue the battle, with the bully pulpit of the White House unavailable to the GOP during the wilderness years of Clinton-Gore, in the electronic town square, forming and fomenting outraged public opinion against the kind of cultural production that does nothing to uplift and enlighten, but rather threatens to unravel the moral fiber of the American body politic's uniform.

One of the problems that moralizing cultural warriors like Lynne Cheney and Tipper Gore and Patrick Buchanan and Michael Medved and Donald Wildmon and William Bennett and Joseph Lieberman (and the names of dozens of prominent figures in the post-Cold War era could be reeled off here) have is that in a much-vaunted capitalist free enterprise market economy dominated by giant American media corporations, the targets of attack actually sell. Consumers exercise freedom of choice at the box office for gore-filled action flicks, send Nielsens sky-high for nightly sniggering sexual innuendo, and sustain a multibillion-dollar porn industry because, presumably, they know what they like. The 1990s witnessed an enormously contentious period of public debate, organizational boycotting, and critical vilification over not just offensive Art with a capital A, the unspeakably vile objects in museums (works by Serrano, Mapplethorpe, Ofili, et al.), but also over a countless number of popcult artifacts, even as seemingly anodyne as Disney's feature-length cartoons (which were presumed to conceal satanic and sexual imagery read subliminally by zombified tots). It was also the Internet Decade, exacerbating alarmist fears of cultural pollution by a seemingly fungal new medium capable of evading any political boundaries or parental oversight and control. V-chips, "Nannyblockers" on the internet, parental advisories on rap CDs: all are inventions of a decade which marshaled technology away from outer space and foreign enemies and towards the new war for the hearts and minds of America's children and to protect the easily outraged

sensibilities of their increasingly helpless parents, who risked losing the fight right on the doorstep of America's hearth and home. Of course, that metaphoric doorstep has disappeared, since the now-porous threshold of the middle-class American suburban home has multiplied to every electrical, cable, and telephone outlet in it.

The religious right continued to metaphorize all these bewildering social and cultural developments in the easily familiar terms of war. As Robert Knight did very recently in a statement issued by his influential Family Research Council: "The ex-gay movement is a way out of this plague [of homosexuality] that has hit our families. It's time to let faith take over. This is the Normandy landing in the larger cultural wars" (Knight). This could make a lot of sense to Knight's audience in the wake of the baby boomers' guilt-ridden rediscovery in the late 1990s of the World War II generation's heroism (capped by the overwhelming success of Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* and Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation*). Overt reference to the actuality of the Second World War ups the rhetorical ante from earlier in the decade when Beverly LaHaye, in a 1992 Concerned Women for America fundraising appeal, simply referred to the war in generic terms: "We are at war in America today. [. . .] We don't want our children taught that the sin of homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle 'choice.' " Knight masterfully invokes a crucial offensive in the war against a bad enemy (so bad as to be medicalized as "plague," which in turn plants a field of associations pertaining to AIDS) to suggest the paramount importance of expunging homosexuality from the home front. For Knight and his fellow congregants, the enemy in the current war is one that launches its attack from within, yet the rhetoric also powerfully externalizes that enemy, insisting on its essential foreignness or Otherness.

Perhaps the most scabrous critique of this fundamentally xenophobic streak in the American national character, now directed towards enemies of a vaunted (if mythical) "traditional Judeo-Christian morality," came in the guise of a crude cartoon movie, the kind of nasty popcult artifact that would earn one of Bennett and Lieberman's "Silver Sewer" Awards. Actually, Matt Stone's and Trey Parker's *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut* has been unjustly overlooked by the Award, which ironically, as ever, calls increased attention to the effluent of popular culture (winners like Marilyn Manson, Howard Stern, *Ally McBeal*, and Jerry Springer) and its producers (Fox, CBS, Seagram Inc.), thus ensuring continuing masscult fascination with what is condemned by moral arbiters. Bennett

has, in his own compelling rhetoric, turned the American hearth and home into a besieged space that has become an imperfectly run police state at war with its own citizens. "You can't keep" sexual and violent imagery "away from the kids. It's a siege. If you turn it off at your house, they'll see it at somebody else's house," Bennett averred (qtd. in "Fox TV"), inadvertently pointing up the terrifying dispersal of popcult artifacts over increasingly multiple media outlets when the era of Three Network dominance of the airwaves is well and truly over. The media are uncontrollable, and so are the kids. The movie version of the Comedy Central show audaciously suggests that the only meaningful war, in the post-Cold War era, is not even the kind of humanitarian police-keeping actions over Northern Iraq or Kosovo that have marked Bill Clinton's controversial watch as Commander-in-Chief, but is, rather, the all-out full-scale traditional land invasion of a scapegoat nation irrationally singled out by outraged mothers for corrupting their children.

In *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut* America declares war on its neighbor to the north when the Canadian import *Asses of Fire*, itself a crude feature-length spinoff of a massively popular and scatological TV cartoon, incites the kids of South Park (led by Kyle, Cartman, Stanley, and Kenny) to emulate their foul-mouthed, farting cartoon heroes, Terrance and Phillip. Local protests against the film soon become a national movement by the concerned mothers of America, determined to "form a full assault/It's Canada's fault." Actually, it's at least the theater manager's fault, too, since the South Park kids snuck into the R-rated movie which is, as Kyle's Mom insists, "nothing but foul language and toilet humor." But Stone and Parker cannily show that Americans will always externalize the blame whenever and wherever possible. Stan's mother sings, "Don't blame me for my son Stan;" rather, as the Oscar-nominated song has it, "Blame Canada," because "It seems everything's gone wrong/since Canada came along." The most demonized external enemy of the early 1990s, Saddam Hussein, gets relegated in *South Park* to the depths of hell as Satan's insatiable lover (he's been killed by a pack of wild boars); once he's disposed of, Canada takes pride of place as the number one threat to an embattled nation directing its militaristic impulses towards the producers of movies that, to paraphrase Cartman, warp the fragile little minds of American youth. As the Mothers Against Canada watch the horrific carnage from afar, Kyle's Mom remarks, blind to the irony of America's culture wars: "This what we wanted. We wanted

our children brought up in a smut-free environment."

Stone and Parker's movie, for all its provocative crudity, struck a chord with many moviegoers in the summer of 1999 seeking a satiric expression of protest against the barking watchdogs of public morality; certainly, the movie was both popular at the nation's multiplexes (where 16 year-old ticket-takers allowed 13 year-old cinemagoers to sneak from theater to theater) and became a critics' darling. Rita Kempley in the *Washington Post* praised it for its "surprising smarts" and for being a "sharp, wildly funny social satire." Richard Corliss in *Time* told his readers that he laughed himself sick. Even Roger Ebert, who's as mainstream a critical voice as one can imagine, admitting laughing, however guiltily. His sententious review in the *Chicago Sun-Times* fussed about how important a statement it was: "it serves as a signpost for our troubled times. Just for the information it contains about the way we live now, thoughtful and concerned people should see it," if only to inoculate themselves against its "depraved" content. And as the Clinton-era combat film *par excellence*, it was the perfect expression of the entertainment's industry refusal to toe the Bennett-Lieberman line. Indeed, Bill Clinton's overly enthusiastic, and requited, embrace of Hollywood was yet another reason for the right's disdain for him, and the two were associated inextricably in the minds of many who credited both with sapping American moral and military strength. In the absence of any other enemy in the post-Cold War era, the whole idea of war as a heroic enterprise gets parodied by Parker and Stone. For instance, Kyle's Mom, in a Mothers Against Canada uniform, stands alone in long shot in front of a huge American flag, an irreverent riff on George C. Scott's *Patton*. She pumps up the troops: "Horrific, deplorable violence is OK, as long as people don't say any naughty words; that's what this war is all about." Her war spins apocalyptically out of control when she inadvertently unleashes Satan's visitation on the earth with a resurrected Saddam Hussein at his side to begin two million years of darkness.

Stone and Parker's kinetic satire of the Culture Wars, refreshing as it is to many, though, prompts a thought or two about how easy it might be to mock parents' concern for their children, maybe too easy. They are easy targets, and they justifiably resent it, accurately confirming their own impression that the forces of media capitalism hold them in pitiable contempt. Certainly, popular entertainment like *South Park* doesn't alleviate those concerns, especially since Parker and Stone have their

cake and eat it, too, by making a movie filled with "naughty words" which satirizes those who are upset by those "naughty words." But this perhaps only exemplifies how vast the divisions are in American culture at the turn of the third millennium, when there seems to be little cultural consensus over what expression best expresses the nation's ideals. Indeed, there seems to be even less desire for such consensus. For sure, the extent to which opposing forces in the culture wars depend on hyperbolic rhetoric, each side either demonizing or ridiculing the other, suggests that the metaphorization, in militaristic terms, of a lack of consensus over artistic expression may well be completely futile. But one might despair less when one understands that America's *kulturkampf* is nothing new. The fundamental impulse to get exercised about provocative forms of cultural expression doesn't have much inherently to do with Bill Clinton or Comedy Central or trash talk shows or white rapper Eminem. Rather, it has much to do with the degree to which America is satisfied with its own salvation, and then becomes preoccupied with salvific missions overseas. Distracted by real war, all becomes more quiet on the domestic cultural front. National consensus over cultural production was an easier matter during the first half of the 1940s, for instance, when even New Deal leftists like Aaron Copland or Marc Blitzstein composed music unequivocally dedicated to the Allied war effort and an uncomplicated vision of America as a good, pastoral place where ordinary heroes were born and raised. But the socially and economically turbulent early 1930s, by contrast, when American military commitments overseas were correspondingly minimal, marked another cycle in American history, much like the 1990s, when a vocal and volatile battle was fought over the content of the most pervasive form of popular entertainment: the movies.

Film historians like Lea Jacobs, Thomas Doherty, Gregory Black, and Mark Vieira have recently done much important work reminding us that another culture war occurred almost immediately after the Stock Market crash in 1929, a war between the Catholic Church (and its allies) and Hollywood that culminated in a crisis in the summer of 1934, when the U.S. Senate was poised to pass legislation regulating the content of Hollywood's studio productions. Interestingly enough, this war got especially hot, when America finally confessed to itself that the *first* national war on drugs (Prohibition) was a dismal failure, a cure much worse than the disease it was designed to eradicate. In the nick of time, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association finally

acknowledged that the industry would have to call a halt to a profitable trend toward more graphic representations of sex, drugs, and violence in its ribald comedies (like the Marx Brothers' *Monkey Business* and Mae West's *I'm No Angel*), gangster flicks (such as *Scarface* and *The Beast of the City*) and women's melodramas (*Red-Headed Woman* and *Call Her Savage*, to name only two examples of a particularly notorious genre). Threats of boycotts and legislation from high, which would have amounted to a governmental system of censorship, were averted when the MPPDA agreed finally to revise, strengthen, and enforce a 1930 Production Code that had been virtually ignored. Thus the industry was permitted to get serious about censoring itself. The moral arbiters of the Depression era railed against the cultural pollutants manufactured by the Dream Factory in terms absolutely familiar to us 70 years later.

In 1933, the immensely influential Catholic National Legion of Decency enjoined the flock to chant an oath to avoid objectionable movies as "occasions for sin" with words like these: "I condemn absolutely those salacious motion pictures which, with other degrading agencies, are corrupting public morals and promoting a sex mania in our land" (qtd in Doherty 320-1). On June 8, 1934, Denis Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia went so far as to consider *all* movies the occasion for sin: "A vicious and insidious attack is being made on the very foundation of our Christian civilization" (qtd in Doherty 321). Protestant and Jewish protest groups, as well as over 40 secular organizations, also joined the Legion throughout the 1933-4 run-up to the threat of government legislation, upping the rhetorical ante (Vieira 152). Politicians had a field day bloviating at length. Here, for example, is Francis D. Culkin, Republican Congressman of New York: "Steadily the stream of pollution which has flowed forth from Hollywood has become wilder and more turbulent" (qtd. in Doherty 324). Sociologists like Henry James Forman and Herbert Blumer also entered the fray, beating the drums for iron-hand oversight of movie content. Forman's best-selling tract *Our Movie-Made Children* argued that children were empty vessels, incapable of resisting direct character (mal)formation and corruption by Hollywood's producers and writers, who were "subversive to the best interests of society [. . .] nothing less than an *agent provocateur*, a treacherous and costly enemy let loose at the public expense" (qtd. in Doherty 321). The net result was the industry's capitulation to the forces of conservative morality, very effective self-policing of the industry under the aegis of Fightin' Irishman Joseph Ignatius Breen, and the survival of

the Code until 1967, when the first rating system came into effect. A measure of how quickly the film industry both adjusted and adhered to its own new moral standards was the replacement of the top-grossing female star of 1933 (Mae West) by 1935's top female money-earner, Shirley Temple. Culture was, at the end of this particular culture war, made safe for children and their parents.

The culture wars that periodically erupt in American history, and take a formidably divisive form, are not trivial outbursts. They're important manifestations of America's contradictory impulses to conform to conventional moral precepts rooted in Leviticus or St. Augustine or Calvin and to rebel against those very same moral dictates. The overheated dramatic rhetoric inhering in metaphorizing cultural debate as "war," as "attack," as "struggle" reminds us that, for all participants—artists, corporations, consumers, politicians, kids and their parents—it's almost as if life itself were at stake. And, in a way, it is. Creative expression is essential to the life of a culture and to the life of the individual, embodying the desire for the truth of the human condition as each of us sees it. That we see it differently inevitably leads to outbreaks of *kuturkampf*. However traumatic and even destructive culture wars are in a time of withdrawal from military conflicts outside our national borders, they at least suggest a lively culture of consent and dissent that energizes both cultural producers and those who refuse their visions. Say what you will, however moribund America's military-industrial complexes may be in the post-Cold War world we won for ourselves, the public response to the production from America's studios is far from quiet.

Works Cited

Bai, Matt. "'I Have Strong Opinions:' Cheney's Wife, Lynne, is the Family's True Right-Wing Warrior." http://www.msnbc.com/news/439415.asp

Bolton, Richard. *Culture Wars: Documents from Recent Controversies in the Arts.* New York: New Press, 1992.

Buchanan, Patrick. "Losing the War for America's Culture?" *Washington Times*, May 22, 1989. In Bolton 31-3.

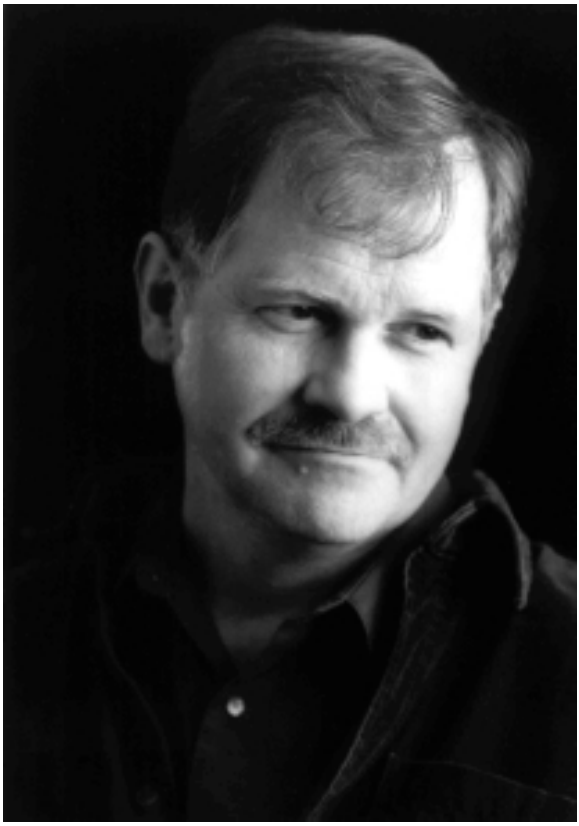
Buchanan, Patrick. "Speech at Texas GOP Convention, 1996." http://205.252.89.138/new/speeches/tx_gop_convention.htm

Corliss, Richard. "Sick and Inspired." http://www.time.com/time/magazine/articles/0,3266,27428,00

Doherty, Thomas. *Pre-Code Hollywood: Sex, Immorality, and Insurrection in American Cinema. 1930-1934*. New York: Columbia UP, 1999.

"Down with the Senate Art Police!" In Bolton 92-4.
Ebert, Roger. "South Park: Bigger, Longer and Uncut." http://www.suntimes.com/ebert/ebert_reviews/1999/06/063001.html
"Fox TV Wins 'Silver Sewer' Award." http://www.apbnews.com/mediawatch/1999/09/15/sewer0915_01.html
Himmelfarb, Gertrude. "The Election and the Culture Wars." *Commentary* 109.5, May 2000: 23.
Kempley, Rita. "The Wickedly Funny *South Park*." http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/movies/reviews/southparkkempley.htm
Knight, Robert. Family Research Council: "Issues in Depth." http://www.frc.org
Roth, Philip. *The Human Stain*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.
Vieira, Mark A. *Sin in Soft-Focus: Pre-Code Hollywood*. New York: Abrams, 1999.

D.A. Boxwell is teaching the Culture Wars in the Department of English and Fine Arts at the United States Air Force Academy



Photograph Credit: Curt Richter

A professor of English at Cornell University, **Robert Morgan** is the author of six books of fiction, most recently *The Balm of Gilead Tree: New and Selected Stories*, and *Gap Creek*, a novel.

Robert Morgan

Hemingway and the True Poetry of War

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
  That mark our place; and in the sky
  The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
  Loved and were loved, and now we lie
        In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
  The torch; be yours to hold it high.
  If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
        In Flanders fields.
    —John McCrae, "In Flanders Fields"

Keynote Address, delivered at The United States Air Force Academy, October 9, 1999, for the "Hemingway and War" Conference

On July 3, 1961 my dad and I drove back from the pole bean field in the pickup truck for lunch. It was an extremely hot day and I remember being bathed in sweat as we stopped at the mailbox. The newspaper came with the regular mail in those days and when I opened

up the Hendersonville *Times-News* the headline blazed across the top: "Ernest Hemingway Dead at 61!"

I don't remember anything else about that day, except what I read in the news story. The feature article described the world's most famous writer as having been depressed and sick. It said he had been killed by a shotgun blast to the head, and it quoted his wife Mary as saying, "This in some incredible way was an accident." There was a picture of the author standing beside a huge marlin.

I was sixteen years old at the time and bound for college that fall. That was to be my last summer working in the beanfields with my dad, plowing with a horse, saving my quarters and sweaty dollar bills to buy books and pay tuition. I was going to escape the small farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina to study science at a university. In those "Beat the Russians" years it seemed necessary for all young people to study nuclear engineering or aerospace engineering.

Like any ambitious sixteen-year-old, I was interested in studying many things. I wanted to be a composer and I wanted to be a pianist. I wanted to study philosophy and higher mathematics. And I had wanted to attend West Point and become a pilot, but was told I was too nearsighted even to qualify for an appointment. I wanted to fly B-52s.

But the subjects I was most possessed by were reading and writing. Since the Henderson County bookmobile had begun coming to Green River Baptist Church the first Monday afternoon of every month when I was in the sixth grade, I had been devouring the arctic adventure stories of James Oliver Curwood and Jack London. I had read Dickens, and at the age of fifteen *War and Peace,* which I had seen advertised in the Sears & Roebuck catalog as "the greatest novel ever written."

But the greatest discovery of the year before I went away to college had been Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*. Wolfe was often mentioned in the newspaper in those days. He was a local legend, having grown up in Asheville just thirty miles away, and having written his famous book about Asheville. He was the most famous writer from North Carolina.

When I got *Look Homeward, Angel* from the bookmobile and began reading it in 1960, I felt it was the book I had been looking for. It was a book about me, and about how ambitious and thrilled and scared and "lost" I felt. Eugene Gant's parents seemed like my own parents. And his anxieties and frustrations and sense of destiny were my own. As so many other American boys had before and have since, I discovered a

version of myself in *Look Homeward, Angel*, and I became intoxicated with the elevated, rhetorical prose. I felt I had discovered a new poetry in the choral sections of the book.

> Which of us has known his brother? Which of us has looked into his father's heart? Which of us has not remained forever prison-pent? Which of us is not forever a stranger and alone?
> ...Remembering speechlessly we seek the great forgotten language, the lost lane-end into heaven, a stone, a leaf, an unfound door.

This seemed to me better than Homer and Shakespeare combined. I didn't really know Homer or very much Shakespeare, but I was sure this was what was meant by epic writing and by tragic poetry. I read passages from the book so many times I had them by heart.

> Each of us is all the sums he has not counted: subtract us into nakedness and night again, and you shall see begin in Crete four thousand years ago the love that ended yesterday in Texas.

Imagine my excitement when I discovered that Thomas Wolfe had been born on October 3, 1900, the same day on which I was born forty-four years later. Our kinship seemed even stronger than I had guessed before. No wonder the language and longings of the book felt so much my own. It seemed to me Thomas Wolfe had captured for all time the essence and the rage, the fears and the poetry of what it meant to be young and alive. After describing the long, slow, painful death of Eugene's brother Ben from consumption, Wolfe says on page 590,

> We can believe in the nothingness of life, we can believe in the nothingness of death and of life after death—but who can believe in the nothingness of Ben? Like Apollo, who did his penance to the high god in the sad house of King Admetus, he came, a god with broken feet, into the gray hovel of this world. And he lived here a stranger, trying to recapture the music of the lost world, trying to recall the great forgotten language.…

At the end of the novel, as Eugene Gant is about to set out for the world beyond Asheville, or Altamont, as he walks in the square at

sunrise after hallucinating that the stone angels in his father's monument shop have come alive and Ben has returned as a ghost to talk with him, he exhorts himself to set out on his journey, paraphrasing Stephen Daedelus,

> I shall find no door in any city. But in the city of myself, upon the continent of my soul, I shall find the forgotten language, the lost world, a door where I may enter, and music strange as any ever sounded; I shall haunt you, ghost, along the labyrinthine ways.…

This was the rhetoric with which I had been inebriated for many months, when I discovered the work of Ernest Hemingway in 1961. Oddly enough, I had just begun to read Hemingway a few weeks before his death. I had discovered several of the Michigan stories and had begun *A Farewell to Arms*. And I had begun to discover a new kind of poetry. Hemingway's prose was as powerful as Wolfe's, but in a very different way. Hemingway's diction was plain and spare, his sentences stripped down, his observations understated. I discovered that Hemingway could achieve his most powerful effects with quiet language and—something new to me—irony. After the tidal waves of Wolfe's language, it was a revelation and an education to read sentences such as these.

> We were in the garden at Mons. Young Buckley came in with his patrol from across the river. The first German I saw climbed up over the garden wall. We waited till he got one leg over and then potted him. He had so much equipment on and looked awfully surprised and fell down into the garden. Then three more came over further down the wall. We shot them. They all came just like that.

And in the story "Indian Camp" Nicks asks his father, "Is dying hard, Daddy?" "No, I think it's pretty easy, Nick. It all depends."

I began to fall in love with a different kind of writing and a different kind of sensibility. Where Wolfe had celebrated emotion through overstatement and explicitness, Hemingway drove home the emotions by suggestion, by implicitness. For a young reader perhaps the most impressive thing about Hemingway's style is the way it evokes emotional

and spiritual depth under a surface of fact and control, even nonchalance. Hemingway's style and tone evoke a special sense of character, of integrity. To a young reader the style implies a rigor similar to science, to good newspaper and sports reporting, to the playing of dangerous sports, even when the voice is clearly English, not American.

> It was a frightfully hot day. We'd jammed an absolutely perfect barricade across the bridge. It was simply priceless. A big old wrought-iron grating from the front of a house. Too heavy to lift and you could shoot through it and they would have to climb over it. It was absolutely topping. They tried to get over it, and we potted them from forty yards. They rushed it, and officers came out alone and worked on it. It was an absolutely perfect obstacle. Their officers were very fine. We were frightfully put out when we heard the flank had gone, and we had to pull back.

Reading Hemingway's stories I discovered how voice can evoke character, and how a few carefully chosen sentences can imply a whole world of attitude and experience.

Growing up in rural North Carolina, I attended schools so old-fashioned they required a lot of memorization and recitation. Beginning in about the fifth grade, we had to memorize poems as well as patriotic texts such as The Preamble to the Constitution and The Gettysburg Address, and say them before the class. I remember reciting "The Raven," "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," "Song of the Chattahoochee," as well as "Thanatopsis" and "To a Waterfowl." One of the poems we had to memorize in the fifth or sixth grade was Alan Seeger's "Rendezvous With Death."

> I have a rendezvous with Death
> At some disputed barricade,
> When Spring comes back with rustling shade
> And apple-blossoms fill the air—
> I have a rendezvous with Death
> When Spring brings back blue days and fair.
>
> It may be he shall take my hand
> And lead me into his dark land
> And close my eyes and quench my breath—
> It may be I shall pass him still.

I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear...
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledge word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Along with learning Seeger's poem and "In Flanders Fields" and a few other poems from World War One, we were taught a little about the history of the war, the fighting in the trenches, the evil Kaiser. My teacher passed along to us as history propaganda stories about Germans marching through Belgium in 1914 and cutting off the right arms of all male children. She told us King Arthur was seen riding a white horse above the no man's land, leading the Allies to quell the Hun. She had been a little girl during World War One, but she described the Americans breaking the Hindenburg Line as though she had been there. In her version the war was a story of good smashing evil, of heroism and sacrifice. She also had us memorize Rupert Brooke's "The Soldier." Rupert Brooke was her favorite poet. She showed us a picture of him with his curly locks on both sides of his forehead, looking dreamy and romantic.

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed:
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

> And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
> A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
> Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
> Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
> And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
> In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

The week after Hemingway's death *Life* magazine published a famous portrait of the grizzled author on its cover. Inside was a feature on the career of Hemingway, with many photos and a tribute by Archibald MacLeish. I pored over MacLeish's article until I knew much of it by heart. He talked about Hemingway's fame as an athlete, soldier and boxer, big game hunter and fisherman, enthusiast of bull fighting, fighter with the Resistance. He described the influence of newspaper editors, and Sherwood Anderson and Gertrude Stein. This was the first time I heard the name Ezra Pound, who MacLeish quoted as saying about the young Hemingway in Paris, "The son of a bitch's *instincts* are right." He described Hemingway living in a garret in Paris in the early 1920s, writing sentence after sentence and revising them endlessly. He described Hemingway's style as carving walnut, tough and lean. He

> Whittled a style for his time from a walnut stick
> In a carpenter's loft in a street of that April city.

I read more Hemingway stories, and I read *A Farewell to Arms* and I reread MacLeish's article, and I began to think about writing in a new way.

> In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees too were dusty and the leaves fell early that year and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling and the soldiers marching and afterward the road bare and white except for the leaves.

Here was a voice that was firm and fresh and authoritative. But it was also poetic, almost hypnotic, in its repetitions and simplicity. The passion was caught in the restraint of the voice. And the tragedy of the story was caught in the tone of the voice from the first sentence. At the age of sixteen I was struck by the photographic quality of the writing, even the cinematic quality of it. Hemingway gave his narration the authority and seeming directness of a document. He was giving the facts of the story. I would later study modern poetry and see how he had put into fiction writing the tenets of Imagism in poetry as defined by Ezra Pound around 1912.

> 1. Direct treatment of the "thing" whether subjective or objective.
>
> 2. To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
>
> 3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.

Other tenets of Imagism as defined by Pound were:

> An "Image" is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time.... It is better to produce one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works.... Use no superfluous word, no adjective which does not reveal something...the natural object is *always* the adequate symbol.... Go in fear of abstractions.

There was already a model for the kind of precision and economy and rigor of poetic style in classical American literature, in the prose and much of the poetry of Thoreau. Thoreau had already shown how to communicate his passion, his commitment to accuracy, his white-hot allegiance to the truth of facts and expression in the simplest, most direct language. But of course I did not know that at the time.

And I certainly did not know that Thoreau had been influenced by the new art and technology of photography which had just become popular in America in the 1840s as he began work in his journals on the project

that would become *Walden*. I believe the impact of photography on writing has been greater than we generally recognize. I know photography had a profound effect on Walt Whitman's poems about the Civil War, and I know that Whitman's *Drum Taps* and Matthew Brady's photographs had a significant impact on the way later writers such as Stephen Crane would recreate battle scenes of the Civil War.

As a reporter Hemingway had taught himself to make words the pictures and work as pictures. The challenge photography had brought to writing, as early as Thoreau, was the authority of its seeming objectivity and neutrality. Photography caught and fixed the details, the truth, the naked eye might have missed or the brain forgotten. There was something clinical and factual and unarguable about a photograph. It was beyond mere opinion, subjectivity, interpretation. It was the truth. "The camera does not lie," became an adage.

"Prayer is the contemplation of the facts from the highest point of view," Emerson had said. "To the wise, therefore, a fact is true poetry, and the most beautiful of fables." "A fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows," said Thoreau.

The camera saw with a lens a hundred times the size of the human lens. And the photographic plate was a hundred times the size of the human retina. I believe that the poise and detailed rigor of Hemingway's description and narration were deeply influenced and inspired by the ethics and esthetics of photography. Hemingway's style occurs like a great vowel shift in modern writing, and the art of narration has never been the same since.

Besides the tone of voice and the plain, naked details, one of the things that struck me from the very first about Hemingway's writing was his willingness, even his commitment, to look directly at pain, at the source of pain. When Frederic Henry is wounded in *A Farewell to Arms* we are there, at the center of the experience.

> Through the other noise I heard a cough, then came the chuh-chuh-chuh-chuh—then there was a flash, as when a blast-furnace door is swung open, and a roar that started white and went red and on and on in a rushing wind. I tried to breathe but my breath would not come and I felt myself rush bodily out of myself and out and out and out and all the time bodily in the wind. I went out swiftly, all of myself, and I knew I was dead and that it had all been a mistake to think you just died. Then I

> floated, and instead of going on I felt myself slide back. I breathed and I was back.

My feeling at the age of sixteen was that Hemingway had found a way to make writing in the old sense obsolete. He had made the writing almost invisible and the experience everything. The first time you read a passage you are hardly aware of the cadence or the texture of the sentences. I would discover later that this is the way much of the best art works. Art that is most successful conceals its art. It was a considerable art that could make me feel there was no art, only the facts and intense experience. But I understood the newness and power of what Hemingway was doing, as many millions of readers had before me.

When I talked about Hemingway to my friends in 1961 the word I used most often was "honesty." I was in love with the confessional frankness of the narrator in *A Farewell to Arms*. The brutal candor had its own kind of eloquence.

> I had been driving and I sat in the car and the driver took the papers in. It was a hot day and the sky was very bright and blue and the road was white and dusty. I sat in the high seat of the Fiat and thought about nothing. A regiment went by in the road and I watched them pass. The men were hot and sweating.

Never had I seen anyone write so well of wounds, of hospitals, of the love of God and the fear of God. Frederic Henry was willing to talk about the things no one else was willing to talk about, that I was unable to talk about. And the poetry, the poetry of description, the poetry of voice, the poetry of implicitness, were incomparable. Nowhere is this better shown than in Henry's paraphrase of the priest's description of his home region of Abruzzi.

> There were bears on the Gran Sasso D'Italia but it was a long way. Aquila was a fine town. It was cool in the summer at night and the spring in Abruzzi was the most beautiful in Italy. But what was lovely was the fall to go hunting through the chestnut woods. The birds were all good because they fed on grapes and you never took a lunch because the peasants were always honored if you would eat with them at their houses.

Critics from the very first have singled out the narrative of the retreat from Caporetto in *A Farewell to Arms*. Many consider it the finest writing about warfare that Hemingway ever did. The fresh, surprising detail, the pacing, the matter-of-fact telling of extraordinary events, create a sustained experience of threat and disorientation, uncertainty, and desperate longing that has been a model for later writers. This art is demonstrated nowhere better than in the scene where Henry shoots the sergeant.

> "I order you to halt," I called. They went a little faster. I opened up my holster, took the pistol, aimed at the one who had talked the most, and fired. I missed and they both started to run. I shot three times and dropped one. The other went through the hedge and was out of sight. I fired at him through the hedge as he ran across the field. The pistol clicked empty and I put in another clip. I saw it was too far to shoot at the second sergeant. He was far across the field, running, his head held low. I commenced to reload the empty clip.

Even more memorable is Henry's description of his escape after he has been arrested as a deserter and is about to be shot himself. The desperation and drama of the scene are heightened by the tense understatement of the narration. This is one of the most important lessons later writers have learned from Hemingway: when events are dramatic enough, when the issue at hand is a matter of danger, even life and death, the simplest and plainest language will suffice. For the greatest effect, the language must seem to disappear and events unfold on their own. Of course it is a sleight, because the language is making the events unfold.

> I looked at the *carabinieri*. They were looking at the newcomers. The others were looking at the colonel. I ducked down, pushed between two men, and ran for the river, my head down. I tripped at the edge and went in with a splash. The water was very cold and I stayed under as long as I could. I could feel the current swirl me and I stayed under until I thought I could never come up.

It is astonishing to think that Hemingway did some of his finest, most original writing when he was only twenty-four and twenty-five. He was

the age of our graduate students when he carved out this style in Paris. He had never been to college. He had never been to a graduate writing workshop. When the century was young he went off to the war and was wounded, and he worked for the Toronto *Star*. And he met Sherwood Anderson in Chicago. I believe the example of Sherwood Anderson is as important as many biographers have suggested, and perhaps even more so. For what was special about Anderson was that he was a kind of regionalist, a member of the Chicago Renaissance with Sandburg and Masters and Lindsay. But he was also very much of a modernist, a friend and supporter of Gertrude Stein. There is a jazz-like quality of improvisation in Anderson's short stories. His voices have both the realistic idiom and an air of expressionistic distortion. Anderson's best writing has a unique blend of regional inflection and flavor combined with an almost abstract musicality. However real his characters may seem, his language is clearly artifice.

One of the things the young Hemingway must have learned from Anderson so early is that stories are not actual events transferred to the page, but the seemingly real created through the artifice of language. Having understood that from the beginning, Hemingway was already ahead of most young writers, then and now.

I have found it interesting that Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* is described as an architecture student. Not a whole lot is made of this on the surface in the novel. But I think it is a significant connection.

A few years ago I thought of developing a course at Cornell that explored the inter-relationship of poetry and architecture from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century. It was easy to see how the Palladian fashion of Elizabethan building could be paralleled to the classical style of Fulke Greville and Ben Jonson and the school of Jonson. Jonson even collaborated with the designer and architect Inigo Jones. And I saw how the Baroque poetry of the Seventeenth Century could be compared to the architecture of Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor. Vanbrugh himself was a famous poet and playwright before he became an architect. And of course Pope was a friend of Burlington and wrote a famous poem to Burlington about neo-classical poetics and esthetics. Similar comparisons could be made between Romantic poets and both Greek Revival and neo-Gothic architecture.

But where my planning ran aground was in the Twentieth Century. If the most notable architect of the century was Frank Lloyd Wright with his "prairie style," where was the parallel in poetry. The obvious place to

look was the Prairie School of poetry, but neither Sandburg, nor Masters nor Lindsay seemed comparable to the originality and quality of Wright's buildings. It seems odd now that I did not think to connect Wright with that other famous former resident of Oak Park Illinois, Ernest Hemingway. For now I can see that the plainness and boldness, the radical simplicity, the seeming naturalness of Wright's early work in the Oak Park houses, did indeed have their counterparts in Hemingway's prose. The poet who paralleled Wright's designs was not Sandburg but Hemingway. And whether it was conscious or not, I have no doubt that the famous presence of Wright's architecture in Oak Park where Hemingway grew to manhood influenced his thinking about style and design, about art and about life. Hemingway set out to find the hard clean line in language that would match the hard clean line in Wright's buildings, and the bold clean lines of the new century. The difference was that Hemingway, coming two decades later, and having been to war, would apply those principles of design to the experience of war. And war would define much of the century just unfolding. As Pound liked to say, "The son of a bitch's *instincts* are right."

"Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over," Hemingway says in *Death in the Afternoon*.

To write the true poetry of war one must put down the facts of the war. But putting down the facts can take on an irony all its own. Just stating the facts of horror can numb the reader on the one hand, or take on a satiric edge on the other. It is this paradox of writing about war that Hemingway is addressing in his bitter parodic story "A Natural History of the Dead," originally a section of *Death in the Afternoon*.

> Until the dead are buried they change somewhat in appearance each day. The color change in Caucasian races is from white to yellow, to yellow-green, to black. If left long enough in the heat the flesh comes to resemble coal-tar, especially where it has been broken or torn, and it has quite a visible tarlike iridescence. The dead grow larger each day until sometimes they become quite too big for their uniforms, filling these until they seem blown tight enough to burst. The individual members may increase in girth to an unbelievable extent and faces fill as taut and globular as balloons.... The smell of a battlefield in hot weather one cannot recall. You can remember that there was such a smell, but nothing ever happens to you to bring it back....

> The first thing that you found about the dead was that, hit badly enough, they died like animals. Some quickly from a little wound you would not think would kill a rabbit.… Others would die like cats; a skull broken in and iron in the brain they lie alive two days like cats that crawl into the coal bin with a bullet in the brain and will not die until you cut their heads off.

What comes through in this satire, where the speaker has a supposedly clinical detachment, an educated, even British voice, reporting as a scientist on the appearance of corpses on a battlefield, is that even the facts won't give you the truth. The detailed description of the dead is one kind of ghastly truth, but far from the main truth of war, the experience of war. The irony is brutal, the story unsettling, the truth skewed, partial, the effect numbing.

A brutal, unsettling account of a soldier who has been gassed is given in Wilfred Owen's poem "Dulce Et Decorum Est":

> Dim, through the misty pines and thick green light,
> As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.
> In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
> He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.
>
> If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
> Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
> And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
> His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
> If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
> Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
> Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
> Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
> My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
> To children ardent for some desperate glory,
> The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
> Pro patria mori.

Sweet and decorous it is to die for one's country. Owen is probably the finest of all English war poets, and this poem is a landmark in the truthful poetry of war. It is dramatic and authentic. But its designs on the

reader are clear almost from the beginning. It is bitter and moralistic, and it tips its hand almost from the first line. It is a true poem of war, but portrays only a partial picture of war. Owen's poetry has a narrow, bitter intensity. It does not even attempt wholeness, the larger picture.

One of the most intense experiences of the soldier is the longing for home, for the home place. He may be dissatisfied when he actually returns there, as in the Hemingway story "Soldier's Home." He may find home completely different from what he remembered and imagined in the army. But home is what he thinks about while he is lying awake in a faraway tent or hospital or abandoned building. In "Now I Lay Me" the soldier never sleeps. He lies listening to the chewing of silkworms, as if he is forced to listen to the spinning of the Fates. The gnawing of the silkworms is the noise of entropy, of the universe being chewed up and broken down to waste.

It is often noted that most of Hemingway's fiction about war is not about actual fighting, not about combat itself. It is about romance set against the background of war. It is about the aftermath of war, and going home after war. War is the human condition. War is history. War is fate against which an individual defines himself. Much of Hemingway's best writing is about convalescence, about waiting, and about insomnia. Hemingway is the poet of insomnia. "The Gambler, the Nun and the Radio" is a great ode to insomnia, as is the story "A Clean, Well Lighted Place," as are many passages in *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*. From "Now I Lay Me":

> ...all night you could hear them eating and a dropping sound in the leaves. I myself did not want to sleep because I had been living a long time with the knowledge that if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body. I had been that way for a long time, ever since I had been blown up at night and felt it go out of me and go off and then come back. I tried never to think about it, but it had started to go since, just at the moment of going off to sleep, and I could only stop it by a very great effort.

While he lies awake in the dark Nick thinks of fishing whole trout streams a pool and a shallow and a log at a time. He thinks of finding the bait he would use, grubs and insects, grasshoppers. When he cannot fish mentally he says his prayers. He tries to pray for everyone he ever knew,

and he tries to recall everything that ever happened to him. He recalls his house and backyard, and the time his mother burned his father's arrowhead collection. When he can neither remember or pray he lies awake in the dark listening to the silkworms. One night he has a long conversation in the dark with a fellow soldier who urges him to marry.

The testimony of those who have been to war is that the experience has far more to do with waiting, with worry and boredom, than with actual combat. "Now I Lay Me" may be Hemingway's finest war story. It is certainly one of his best. The brilliance of the story is in the way it shows, by reflection, by indirection, how the experience of danger, how the proximity of death, strip away illusions. The soldier in the story occupies his mind through the dark hours by remembering and reliving his favorite memories of trout fishing in all the streams he has known. He distracts himself by praying for all and by trying to relive his youth in detail. And he distracts himself by talking with his fellow soldier John. But all the time in the background the silkworms are chewing away and dropping excrement on the leaves below. They are the cosmic noise he is trying so hard not to hear. They are the second law of thermodynamics, the impersonality of nature, the inexorable breakdown of all toward shit and nothingness.

I believe a fine paper could be written on the use of grasshoppers in this and some other Hemingway stories, notably "Big Two-Hearted River" and "A Way You'll Never Be." There is a great deal of loving detail in all the stories about catching grasshoppers and using them for bait in trout fishing. In "Now I Lay Me," Nick Adams says,

> Sometimes the stream ran through an open meadow, and in the dry grass I would catch grasshoppers and use them for bait and sometimes I would catch grasshoppers and toss them into the stream and watch them float along swimming on the stream and circling on the surface as the current took them and then disappear as a trout rose.

That is one of the memories that sustain him through the long, sleepless nights. And in "A Way You'll Never Be" a wounded and shell-shocked Nick Adams, speaking compulsively and hysterically, says, "If you are interested in scars I can show you some interesting ones but I would rather talk about grasshoppers. What we call grasshoppers that is; and what are, really, locusts. These insects at one time played a very

important part in my life.…"

Nick goes on to describe in great detail to the alarmed adjutant the look of grasshoppers and how they are used for trout bait.

> "...the medium-brown is a plump, compact, succulent hopper that I can recommend as far as one may well recommend something you gentlemen will probably never encounter. But I must insist that you will never gather a sufficient supply of these insects for a day's fishing by pursuing them with your hands or trying to hit them with a bat."

Nick continues with his breathless lecture on the proper way to catch grasshoppers, as though he were instructing troops. Driven over the edge emotionally, he keeps returning to the scenes and lore of his childhood. It is a scary performance, and one of the most dramatic, and one of the most memorable scenes in all Hemingway's stories about war.

Even greater attention is given to the catching and use of grasshoppers as trout bait in "Big Two-Hearted River" where we see Nick after he has returned from the war, physically recovered but still healing emotionally. In some of the finest descriptive writing Hemingway ever did he tells how the grasshoppers in the burned over tract of forest are now black.

> ...he noticed a grasshopper walk along the ground and up onto his woolen sock. The grasshopper was black. As he had walked along the road, climbing, he had started many grasshoppers from the dust. They were all black.… They were just ordinary hoppers, but all a sooty black in color.

As the burned over wilderness suggests the world severely damaged by the war, the black grasshoppers suggest the damaged men who have survived the war. In what was once the paradise of the river woods, only the sooty grasshoppers have survived. "Big Two-Hearted River" shows Nick's true homecoming.

> Inside the tent the light came through the brown canvas. It smelled pleasantly of canvas. Already there was something mysterious and homelike. Nick was happy as he crawled inside the tent. He had not been unhappy all day. This was different though.

After sleeping well that night in the tent, Nick goes looking for trout bait the next morning.

> He found plenty of good grasshoppers. They were at the base of the grass stems. Sometimes they clung to a grass stem. They were cold and wet with the dew, and could not jump until the sun warmed them. Nick picked them up, taking only the medium-sized brown ones, and put them into the bottle. He turned over a log and just under the shelter of the edge were several hundred hoppers. It was a grasshopper lodging house.

All day Nick fishes and catches trout. It is a satisfying day. The man who once could not sleep while he listened to the silkworms gnawing, who could not control his hysterical talking, is at ease along the river. He decides not to go into the swamp but to stay in the open country, fishing with grasshoppers. In the symbolism of the story, this suggests that he does not want yet to analyze the emotional trauma, does not want to go deeper into his mental problems. He prefers to heal himself by doing again the things he once did for pleasure. "Big Two-Hearted River" may be Hemingway's most perfect story. The descriptive writing is as good as any in Thoreau. It is a model of the poetics of sticking to the facts while suggesting a world of emotional and intellectual complexity, and implying the drama of history, of war, beyond the horizon.

But why all the fuss about grasshoppers in this and the other stories? Why would an author famous for shooting rhinoes and catching giant marlins pay so much attention to grasshoppers? Certainly the descriptions show his gift for vivid, intimate observation of the natural world. And to the disturbed soldier at war grasshoppers symbolize the world of childhood and nature he has left behind. I want to address this question by thinking about the popular connotations and associations grasshoppers have. Perhaps the most famous poem about grasshoppers is La Fontaine's "The Grasshopper and the Ant," translated here by Marianne Moore.

> Until fall, a grasshopper
> Chose to chirr;
> With starvation as foe
> When northeasters would blow,
> And not even a gnat's residue

Or caterpillar's to chew,
She chirred a recurrent chant
Of want beside an ant,
Begging it to rescue her
With some seeds it could spare
Till the following year's fell.
"By August you shall have them all,
Interest and principal."
Share seeds? Now what is worse
For any ant to do?
Ours asked, "When fair, what brought you through?"
"I sang for those who might pass by chance—
Night and day. Please do not be repelled."
"Sang? A delight when someone has excelled.
A singer! Excellent! Now dance."

In this ancient fable the grasshopper is seen to be the hedonist, the irresponsible no-account who sings and fiddles while the ant prepares against the winter and the hard times to come. The grasshopper is the classic ne'er do well, the bohemian, the poet, if you will. And think of the ant in *Proverbs*: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise."

But also, remember the famous scene with ants in *A Farewell to Arms*. We see what happens to the ants in the fire.

> Once in camp I put a log on top of the fire and it was full of ants. As it commenced to burn, the ants swarmed out and went first toward the centre where the fire was; then turned back and ran toward the end. When there were enough on the end they fell off into the fire.... I remember thinking at the time that it was the end of the world and a splendid chance to be a messiah and lift the log off the fire and throw it out where the ants could get off onto the ground. But I did not do anything but throw a tin cup of water on the log, so that I would have the cup empty to put whiskey in before I added water to it. I think the cup of water on the burning log only steamed the ants.

The ants are consumed without knowing they might just as easily

have been saved by the indifferent Henry. But if they had been grasshoppers they would have flown out of the flames and lived to sing another day.

It seems to me that the grasshoppers symbolize to Hemingway not just childhood and pastoral innocence, but also anti-puritan rebellion and relish of the present moment. The grasshoppers sing and die. They do not try to store up treasures for old age. Their treasure is every moment of every day lived before the cold and darkness come, before they are caught and eaten by a trout. They have the courage, and the wisdom, to live in the present. In a society where art itself is frowned upon, where wine has been declared illegal, the grasshoppers may suggest art and joy and the courage to pursue pleasure, or at least the nonchalance to ignore the mean and the timid, the moralistic smallness of middle-class society. The grasshoppers have a special meaning for the soldier who can't sleep, and the soldier who speaks compulsively, manically, and the soldier who returns to the wilderness scarred and still healing.

> He washed the trout in the stream. When he held them back up in the water they looked like live fish. Their color was not gone yet. He washed his hands and dried them on the log. Then he laid the trout on the sack spread out on the log, rolled them up in it, tied the bundle and put it in the landing net. His knife was still standing, blade stuck in the log. He cleaned it on the wood and put it in his pocket.
>
> Nick stood up on the log, holding his rod, the landing net banging heavy, then stepped into the water and splashed ashore. He climbed the bank and cut up into the woods, toward the high ground. He was going back to camp. He looked back. The river just showed through the trees. There were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp.

The grasshoppers suggest freedom, escape from the confines of a pinched, restricted life. The grasshoppers suggest survival of the impractical, the poetic freedom to sing and fly. That is the greatest lesson the soldier may have learned. That, I believe, is Hemingway's truest poem of war.

Paul Elisha

Four Poems

Before The Echoes Die

I must speak of this, while
the bittersweet image of those islands
recalls the same infernal green;
tell it before a lifetime's jumbled
residue careens remembrance
down some trivial cul-de-sac,
deletes the haunt from Jo Stafford's
"I'll Be Seeing You" and
Dorsey's tromboned eloquence
quavers and fades to daunting silence;

the way it was when Gabriel Heater
grieved for Europe on the radio news,
told us how the "Japs" raped Asia's amplitude,
one sacked city at a time. Oblivious,
we listened to Sinatra sing
"I'll never smile again," neither old
nor wise enough to fathom
what that meant; invading each
insidious isle, certain a placid likeness
lay just beyond its bloody beach;
fancied Edens awash in Eves,
their virtues scantily graced,
Loreleis to sweeten our survival.

As victors, blest to savor
home's familiar face, we
discovered spaces where trifles dressed
the ticky tacky walls like icons;
cursed a darkness falsely lit
in halls where wisdom earlier
was nursed. Now beset by opiates
and hate, our fates are fed by hard rock
and a thousand points of light.

Though the thought of all this pales
outright, in terms of what we saw:
ethic etched in body parts
marking war's horizon, outrage
tacked on a casualty dispatch
in the newspaper office window,
reduced to yellowed sheets on countertops,
what's past is but a page
in which tomorrow's fish is wrapped.

Boots

Remember, in the old Movietone newsreel,
the mirror imaged rows in black,
how they truncheoned power onto pavement;
how, with each succeeding step,
the inevitable echoed across Nurnberg's
bleak concrete, that all those boots
belonged there? The boot Remarque described
in "All Quiet On The Western Front,"
held a Boche private's leg.
Its heel, stained with sweet dung scent,
hinged curiously near his face
while cringing fingers, below,
slowly traced a bloody stump.

By the time he'd written "Arch Of Triumph,"
Remarque had learned better. The Gestapo

chauffeur, unfazed, thrust himself
between a dazed Chech girl's thighs
as his captain ordered, tunic
neatly draped on a nearby chair
but he never took off his boots.
Notice how polished ones
efface their wearers, homogenize.
From the knees down, Hideki Tojo
and MacArthur could have been twins.
How do we apprise the difference?

Outside that tent on an Attu beach,
a red cross hyped the sale
of amputations, cheap, no waiting.
Baiting us not to linger, there,
a medic eyed the growing pile
of single combat boots. "That,"
he smiled, "is how we handle frost-bite!"
Those boots, we learned, lacked prejudice;
the plowboys resting unconcerned
beside a former factory foreman's;
once pallid Pittsburgh jailer's
atop a Carolina cotton baler's.

I stomped that lava beach,
churned my foot to bloody puree
until warm wetness steeped
what would still be mine. Now,
hugging concrete in a strip mall lot,
years of missteps undefined,
this stunned Vet hears a cherub say:
"Old sport, I think your leg is broken.
Sorry but this is going to hurt;
we'll have to remove your boot."

Essences

In that tent on the mangrove fringe
Thinking I had cheated death
But not quite believing it
Looking at splints and bandages
Arms in permanent supplication
As the kamikaze's engine
Droned its die-hard obbligato
"Hit the ditch!" A nurse intoned
Then dove and landed on top of me

"Don't know how you feel," she bitched
"But I'll be damned if I will die
Still hungering for love"
As our bodies intertwined
There in a muddy crucible
I recall her kiss had the taste
Of something I couldn't identify.

Taking The Green Goddess

Garnishing the dark horizon, veiled
Scylla hugs her verdant shoal,
tempts us toward an ages old
seduction; its grim embrace augurs
indulgence baptized in blood, bone
and strife. The summons haunts each
tracer arc, bids us revisit
life primeval on this pubic shore.

Flickered image on the lagoon
hums "The Moon of Manakoora;" Lamour
oscillates to sighing guitars, as Hope
observes her sloped strand through ogly
eyes and Crosby croons lewd
lullabyes, to every mother's son
who's ever teased himself with thoughts of

midnight bliss, laments the loss of manhood's
tenderest hours. As geysered mortars
flower, a rocket signals—"Come!" Destroyers
"Whoop!" and we're off on the road to Charybdis.

Paul Elisha's poetry appeared in **WLA**' s Spring/Summer issue for 1997. A political commentator and host of music and poetry programs for WAMC-FM, Northeast Public Radio in Albany, New York, he is currently working on a series of poems based on experiences of 27th Infantry combat veterans, in the Saipan invasion (June, 1944), under a community arts grant form the New York State Council on the Arts.

Doug Heckman

Quarry

Years ago, this rock quarry was a factory, producing rock and gravel to all towns around. I'm walking on a new road at Gibbs Army Airfield near Tirana, Albania and I wonder if the towns which surround us take pride that this quarry is producing gravel again.

The rust-black metal structures of the quarry loom like a foreclosed amusement park. This is Albania, and like the quarry, every aspect of the country's infrastructure has disintegrated. I detect decay in the buildings, old factories, and in the faces of people.

Gibbs Army Airfield is here to support the war efforts in Yugoslavia. They named the airfield for a helicopter pilot who died, along with his co-pilot, during a training mission. So far, they are the only casualties of the operation.

An old Chinese-built dump truck puffs past me, lifting dust and dirt and I'm forced to look away. Strategically positioned U.S. Army tanks hunker behind new earthberms.

We're roughly a month into the bombing campaign to regain control of Kosovo—we're beyond the strategic bombing of darting fighters and cruise missiles. B-52s have been added to the arsenal. We heard that two days ago, a series of cluster bombs caught two groups of Yugoslav soldiers in the open.

Serbian military casualties are to be expected. But there have been others killed. Weeks ago, we bombed a bridge near Sarajevo and killed people making their way home from market. Then there was the incident where our bombs struck a convoy of ethnic Albanians—the Albanians we are committed to protect. The papers read: "Unavoidable causalities of an air campaign."

My job is to monitor the quarry operation, to ensure this part of our mission, this production of rock and sand for the warfighter's base camp, is "up to snuff," is "making the grade," is an operation the general will be proud of calling his own.

Inside the gate of the quarry, children run beside a moving troop truck, jumping to the floorboards, begging for chocolate and MREs (Meal Ready to Eat). Across the way, two children chase a dog away from a pile of empty green MRE packages. The dog carries one of the torn, green, plastic containers, runs behind a pile of crushed pea gravel and under a strand of concertina wire. The dog clears the tight roll of barbs and the children stop at the fence and watch the dog run across the field. When the dog sees the children trapped behind the fence, it sits and begins working on the filthy package.

Then there is a child atop a large pile of sand. He triumphantly sprays his friends with a water bottle. He swings the bottle round and round—the water like a moving whip—as if the water were supplied by a garden hose.

The children screech. When the bottle empties, one of the boys races over to soldiers resting beside a large truck and begs for another water bottle. The child motions with his hands, pleading. The soldiers stop work and ask him how old he is, ask him his name. Another soldier gets a friend to take a picture of him and the kid. The Albanian child hams it up and forgets about the water bottle. His friends join him. Every one wants a photo taken with the smiling Albanian children.

The quarry used to sit outside Gibbs Army Airfield's perimeter, which proved inconvenient. So the Army real estate office bought the quarry, then bought the road leading to the quarry.

One older woman, whose home included a hand-painted door, rose bushes and a patio covered with grape vines wasn't impressed with money. Eventually, the combination of money and pressure convinced her otherwise. Her front yard now houses port-a-lets and green tents. Her flowers and vines are neglected.

The quarry first produced gravel for the primitive roads in camp, though it has now degenerated into a sandbag production. The soldiers and local Albanians have piled up thousands of bags for the camp. They have thousands to go. The higher-ups initially ordered 20,000 bags, then 40,000, military intelligence highlighting threats of in-direct fire, snipers, terrorist bombs. I think of African safari movies, where hunting parties collect piles and piles of wood to keep fires burning day and night.

There have been rumors of Serb Special Forces and expected mortar attacks from the hills. We've seen the pictures in *Stars and Stripes*, of what the Serbs have done to Kosovars.

The quarry is bordered by road, river, and pastureland; the quarry yard is roughly the size of a large supermarket parking lot. Bottles, plastic bags, used utensils, strands of wire, potato chip bags, and other trash lay everywhere. Stationed near the front gate, the port-a-lets stink. Paper towels, newspapers, used handi-wipes, and toilet paper are trapped in the barbed wire.

At the moment some twenty sandbag teams are at work. Unlike the neatly aligned tents or the ordered parking of military vehicles, the sandbag teams are spread around the yard: there are eight Army enlisted groups and twice as many Albanian teams.



Photograph Courtesy of the Author

The Albanians wear dress shoes (loafers for the men, heels for the women) or plastic sandals. Some of the younger workers don't wear shoes at all. Sweat pants and dress slacks are popular, as are dress shirts, T-shirts, and tank tops.

Albanians seem to prefer shirts featuring a sultry Marilyn Monroe or a Rocky Balboa in victorious pose. Many of them wear clothes

advertising Harley Davidson or Marlboro. I told a woman wearing a Yosemite National Park T-shirt that I lived in California, near the park. She looked at me with a blank stare; she said she bought the shirt because of the cotton. She made me feel a sleeve.

The GIs wear their camouflage pants, combat boots, and Army-green T-shirts. Their pants are faded on the thighs from struggling with fifty-pound sandbags. There are GI women in some of the crews. These women look much like the men, with short hair and arms built to handle the long shifts.

I walk between the piles and working people carrying a digital camera in one hand, a notebook in the other. I'm here to observe the sandbag operation process.

The GIs give me the worst looks. They love to hate me: a cleanly attired Air Force officer snapping photos. I grunt hellos, try to keep ridiculous questions to a minimum.

But I break down and ask one group how many bags they think they've filled. Finally someone says, "Four trucks full." Then another, "Too many." To make the point more clear, another GI adds, "Too fucking many," which I take as a cue to leave. A soldier asks if I'm a reporter for *Stars and Stripes*. Before I can tell him no, he tells me there are machines which do this work. Sand-bagging machines. He wants to know why the Army doesn't use them. He says that'd make a good story. He says I should write that one.

The GIs employ an assembly line. Four shovel, four hold the bags upright, two tie, two stack. When a squared pile of bags is complete, a truck is requested and the crew passes the bags, person to person, to the bed of the truck.

The Albanians mount a frenzied attack on the sand pile. They uses masses, all ten or twelve of them, as many as possible around the large mound, and work furiously, some with shovels, others kneeling and scooping with their bare hands. One of the teenagers has taped his hands like a boxer. These people without shovels, with or without taped hands, are closer to their work, are more efficient on their knees and hands scooping sand. The Albanians with shovels have as much sand at their feet as they do in a bag.

The filled bags lay haphazard around the Albanian crew. Then, in one seemingly coordinated movement, half of the crew goes to the shade while the other half ties the bags shut. When the truck comes, each person takes one or two bags and heaves them up onto the truck,

stacking the pile of bags in the fashion of a slash pile of scrap wood.

In one way, the two crews, the Albanians and the Americans, are the same: they both suffer from the hard work. Shirts and pants, of whatever sort, are sweat-stained, and when they rest, both crews squeeze into tiny slivers of shade. Half-demolished concrete walls offer relief while a few GIs lay close to parked trucks. But many just put shirts over their heads, pour water down their backs.

Albanians sleep in wheelbarrows, an American lays outstretched, his head on a brick-hard sandbag. And there is an Albanian asleep on a sand pile, curled like a homeless person on a park bench.

One of the GI teams passes around a water bottle. It's shared by each soldier and then the last soldier gives the little remaining water to one of the begging children. The child runs away, splashing at his friends.

A child approaches a GI team on break. The team is drinking water. The boy is small with a large head. The boy approaches the group and asks for water, even using the English word. The Americans yell at the child in Albanian. The child runs back to his group of friends. I go to the group and ask a soldier what they said to the child. The soldier says, "Don't know exactly. Something like, 'Get the hell away.' Whatever it means, it works."

The friends are angry with the small boy, upset he returned with nothing. The boy twists at his Spiderman shirt. I look at the boy with his friends and I understand that it's not the children who have changed: it's the adults.

The children's never-ending energy has ignited something awful in the worn adults. The Americans now yell at the children in foul Albanian slang. When that doesn't work, they throw empty water bottles. The children shield themselves, then steal away with the bottles. And when the children approach their Albanian fathers or brothers, the men lunge at the children, grab them by their hair or arms and scold them, slapping their faces with their hands. The children approach the adults less and less, choosing instead to sit by themselves or walk around in small gangs.

Three weeks ago, I visited a refugee camp. There were families just arriving at the camp and the children tagging along behind their families, or their newly adopted families, acted similarly.

I climb up onto an old concrete wall. Below me, people move slowly. The adults, the children, even the dogs. The workers have another four hours until quitting time.

The children stay clear of the workers. I watch one of the small gangs. A barefooted child sneaks up to a stash of MREs. He hides behind a truck's wheel, then jumps around and snags two packages. He runs and a GI runs after him. The child throws the MREs to his friends and the friends scatter. The soldier doesn't know whom to chase so he curses in English and stops. He goes back to the other soldiers and I can see his expressions and gestures complaining of the thieving local kids, of how you can't trust them, of how primitive these people are. The Albanian workers hear the American's excited language and understand the problem. They stand still and look blankly at the soldiers.

The children who stole the MREs are running through the quarry yard. They weave through the maze-like, trailer-high piles of sand.

They eventually group back on the backside of a large gravel mound. A few of them are ripping at the MREs. Brown cardboard and green plastic containers are thrown on the ground. The boy who stole the MREs runs up and starts wrestling with two other boys for parts of the MRE. The children fight and run and stop and fight more. It reminds me of a nature film. Hyenas. The segment where the lion is supposed to be the star, but then the pack of crazed hyenas flash into the frame, nipping at chunks and stealing the spotlight. I watch the children and I can hear the hyenas yipping and chewing at the spare zebra leg, blood on their snouts.



Photograph Courtesy of the Author

Doug Heckman spent four months in Albania during the Balkan conflict. His work has been published in *Weber Studies*, *Other Voices*, and *Reed Magazine*. A 1994 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, he recently received his M.A. in English from San Jose State University. Now separated from the Air Force, he currently lives in Nashville, Tennessee, where he's working on his first novel.

William Newmiller

The War I Didn't Worry About

Two wars raged in 1966. At age 18, I worried more about the one that could pull me and other 18 to 26 year-olds into a conflict I didn't understand in a faraway jungle. The other war was nearby, 15 miles up the road in Benton Harbor, Michigan. Benton Harbor was the biggest town in largely rural Berrien County in southwestern Michigan. Along with neighboring St. Joseph, Benton Harbor lies east of Chicago, on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. Once home to the nation's largest open-air produce market, an industrial, cultural, and retail center for the surrounding population, Benton Harbor began bleeding figuratively and literally during the wave of racial unrest that swept the nation in the sixties. Wounds there have yet to heal, and they remain painful. The war I wasn't so worried about continues, even as we begin to bring some closure to the other war in Vietnam.

Alex Kotlowitz's 1998 book about Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, *The Other Side of the River*, recalled for me long dormant memories that fuse the then and now, the we and they, and that tell the division and violence of our time. The book chronicles the enduring racial division that defines the relationship between black Benton Harbor and white St. Joseph, located just across the St. Joseph River. It's a racial division marked by opposing perceptions that were sharpened by the discovery on May 22, 1991 of the corpse of Eric McGinnis, a black youth found floating in the river separating the two towns. The intervening years haven't revealed the cause of death, but everybody in Benton Harbor and St. Joseph seems to *know* the cause. Those on the north bank of the river in Benton Harbor remain convinced that Eric was killed, probably by a white in St. Joseph. On the south bank of the river, in St. Joseph,

residents see Eric's death as accidental.

If you've visited Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, the difference in perceptions by the townspeople won't be surprising. Although collectively called the "Twin Cities," few cities contrast so sharply. Picturesque St. Joseph, with its cobblestone streets, antique stores, art galleries and boutiques, and commanding view of Lake Michigan, describes itself on its official web site as being "nestled on the southern tip . . . of the Riviera of the Midwest." Benton Harbor has no web page. In 1989, *Money* magazine ranked Benton Harbor as the worst place to live in America. I drove through Benton Harbor in 1998, on a nostalgic journey to visit the haunts of my youth. Little was left of the city I remembered from before the war. The movie theaters, the stores, the restaurants, the offices—all are abandoned now, their broken windows covered with rotting plywood, their foundations crumbling.

Connecting these contrasting cities is the Bicentennial Bridge. As you cross it from Benton Harbor to St. Joseph, Benton Harbor's low-lying land, some of which was dredged from the canal built to serve an early port, is at your back. In front, your eyes follow the upward slope of the land to the bluff sitting above the southern bank of the river. On it, rising like a fortress, sits the county courthouse and jail. St. Joseph actually began as a fort. The French explorer, Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, followed Father Jacques Marquette to the mouth of the river Marquette called the Miami, after the nearby Miami Indians. Here La Salle built Fort Miami. Later, Jesuits built a mission upstream, naming it St. Joseph in honor of Canada's patron saint. Eventually, the river, too, took on the name of St. Joseph, as did the town downstream that grew about the site of Fort Miami. Roman Martyrology describes St. Joseph as the "protector of Our Lady's good name" and as the "confidant of Heaven's secret." Benton Harbor's namesake is a bit more down to earth. Thomas Hart Benton, staunch supporter of Andrew Jackson and a Senator from Missouri between 1821 and 1851, championed Michigan's statehood. He lost his senate seat in the election of 1850, when his newfound opposition to slavery placed him at odds with his constituents. He would stay in Washington, D.C. writing on a variety of issues. His last book, *Examination of the Dred Scott Case*, was sharply critical of the Supreme Court's decision declaring that congress could not ban slavery in the territories. The coincidence of name—one city, on the hill, named for the sainted foster father of Jesus—the other, built on land dredged from the river bottom, and named for a

Jacksonian politician—seems to have destined these towns to clash as competing symbols.

One of my best friends in college, an idealistic and less than streetwise law enforcement intern in the sixties, witnessed the hardening of symbol into reality when discontent boiled over into the streets of Benton Harbor. His naïve faith in uniformed authority shattered; he told me about police officers—in squad cars cruising through Benton Harbor, rifles pointed out the car windows—muttering, "go ahead, nigger. Do something." One officer, despite the long overtime hours, would hurry back out after his shift to patrol the streets in his own car, savoring the excitement.

It was and remains war, and it takes the language of war to describe it. Kotlowitz writes of race in Benton Harbor and St. Joseph: "Sabers rattle. Accusations are hurled back and forth across the river like cannon fire. And the cease-fires, when they occur, are just that, cease-fires, temporary and fragile." In Benton Harbor, Eric's black friends reacted to his death with anger. "For these boys," reports Kotlowitz, "the neighbors across the way were the enemy." "A few," according to Kotlowitz, "brandished wooden canes [. . .] waving them around like the long swords of ancient warriors." Kotlowitz characterizes the conditions existing when Eric's body was discovered: "the lines had been drawn, the sandbags piled high."

This war went long unnoticed. In the late 1940s, the serene countryside and unspoiled lakefront beauty of rural southwestern Michigan was for many Chicagoans like my parents an irresistibly attractive respite from the crowded, noisy, and increasingly dangerous big city. Then, it was a four-hour drive from Chicago to southwestern Michigan. Now, it's less than two hours. Then, you could gaze across Lake Michigan from the Michigan beach and see nothing but the vast, seemingly endless expanse of azure, an immense inland sea. But such untouched seclusion in the Midwest has long been illusory. By the late fifties, on days when the wind blew from the southwest, the stench of Gary Indiana's steel mills would sour the morning. And now, on a clear day, the Sears Tower and the John Hancock building rise above the azure horizon, a reminder that the great lake is but a lake.

Maybe the changes to the area were too gradual and too subtle for a teenaged boy to notice. I overlooked the irony that my parents, like many others, had escaped the city, but not its problems. Half a world away more intense conflict had my focus. Others were returning from

Vietnam with collections of human ears. Soon, I feared, it would be my turn. In 1969, college—and the II-S student deferment—was behind me. I'd already passed the draft physical. In rapid succession, I'd "won" the draft lottery (the only time I'd made the top ten in anything) and learned of the massacre in My Lai. Two months after the Kent State shootings, I'd report for training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, planning to serve my time in the Air Force: an unavoidable intrusion in my life, born of military necessity and a national policy of capricious conscription.

Texas would be as close as I'd get to Vietnam. At Sheppard AFB, Texas, I'd teach South Vietnamese students to become military pilots. I remember Hoa, a likeable person, but an unlikely pilot. Pulled from medical school to become a pilot, he never seemed comfortable in an airplane. Usually lost, and often engrossed in academic details, he blithely crossed runways without clearance, cut other planes out of the traffic pattern, and once banged the nose gear so hard on the runway that he broke the strut. Family history, however, may have fated Hoa for combat. When he was a child, the Viet Minh killed his father, a North Vietnamese, in Hanoi; Hoa's mother escaped with her children to Saigon. Years later, I'd read W.D. Ehrhart's short story, "I Drink My Coffee Black," and remember Hoa: how he would bring me coffee when we had to report to the flight line at 0500, and how curious he was about my disdain for cream and sugar. In Vietnam, he told me, one would drink unsweetened black coffee only as a reflection of bitterness that had entered one's life. I'd attend graduation for a class of pilots on the day Hue fell to the North Vietnamese. Most of my students would never go home. Hoa would say he didn't want to return to Vietnam because everyone he knew was dead.

About this time, I realized, like Hoa, I no longer wanted to return to my rural home. A larger world beckoned, and Benton Harbor's downward spiral continued, fueled by the exclusivity of the surrounding area, which increasingly sharpened racial divisions, even as distinctions between friend and foe in Vietnam further blurred. St. Joseph had long maintained its racial exclusivity. In 1965 the local paper reported, "not one black family had been sold a St. Joseph home since World War II." And even when the color line was broken in 1965, the same paper editorialized, "a few of those agile colored youngsters might do a lot for the [St. Joseph High School] Bears' basketball fortunes."

Some would cite St. Joseph's exclusivity for the demolition in 1972 of

Silver Beach, the area's largest amusement park. Silver Beach, located in St. Joseph at the mouth of the St. Joseph River, drew the young and active from both sides of the river. Next to the midway was a sandy beach where children would romp in the cold Lake Michigan surf. Pretense faded away at both the beach and the midway. The roller coaster was a social leveler. Terror—even when artificial—breaks down boundaries. As beach-goers peeled off their jeans and tee shirts, they removed a layer of armor and bared their human vulnerability. The demise of Silver Beach further limited the opportunity for social contact between blacks and whites.

What contact remains has been marked by suspicion and, too often, by violence. The case of Eric McGinnis is but one instance that gives rise to suspicions and perceptions that break along racial boundaries. In 1998, the *South Bend Tribune* published an account of Eric McGinnis's classmates in the Benton Harbor class of 1993. Within five years of high school graduation, reported staff writer Julie A. Swidwa, five of the 142 students surveyed had died violently: three from gunshot wounds, one from stab wounds, and another from a beating. Not a single 1993 Benton Harbor High School graduate lives in St. Joseph. Sadly, the separation symbolized by the St. Joseph River runs through much of America's social landscape. Like the responses to the O.J. Simpson verdict and to the beating of Rodney King, the responses to Eric McGinnis's death from each side of the river point to worldviews appallingly out of synch.

The daily contact I had with my Vietnamese student pilots disappeared years ago. There were a few letters. Hoa did go home, and managed somehow to survive a few combat missions before the South was completely overrun. In the early eighties, Hoa wrote from the Galang Refugee Camp. I helped him obtain sponsorship, and he immigrated to America, at last escaping that war. Despite his previous experience in America, he struggled for years to find his place, first in odd jobs and then in a failed attempt to become a commercial pilot. Finally, he drew upon his medical training to become a physical therapist. He lives in Philadelphia, where he provides physical rehabilitation to victims of inner city violence, mostly black men in their late teens and early twenties. He has applied for U.S. citizenship.

William Newmiller grew up in rural southwestern Michigan, a few miles south of St. Joseph. He retired from the Air Force in 1993 after serving 23 years as a pilot of trainer and transport aircraft and now teaches composition and literature at the United States Air Force Academy where he is **WLA**'s Editor for Electronic Publishing.

Subarno Chattarji

Representations of Vietnam in some poems of John Balaban, Kevin Bowen, and Bruce Weigl

More than twenty years after the fall of Saigon, the Vietnam War continues to bedevil the American imagination and its foreign policy. The former is evident in the large body of films, television programmes, novels, and poems. The latter manifested itself in Ronald Reagan's declaration that Vietnam was a war fought for a 'just cause', and George Bush consigning the 'Vietnam Syndrome' to history after the Gulf War. Distinct revisions in dominant political and cultural spheres are embodied not only in Reagan and Bush, but also in iconic figures such as Sylvester Stallone's Rambo. Various modes of national and collective recuperation predicate the need to counteract the 'Vietnam Syndrome', the moral outrage and defeatism that permeated sections of American society in the Sixties and Seventies. The aftermath, as Jean Elshtain writes, is often construed as one of 'universal victimization':

> Vietnam is even now in the process of being reconstructed as a story of universal victimization—of the Vietnamese by us; of our soldiers by the war—and by us when we didn't welcome them home; of our nation by the war at home and *the* war; of wives and girlfriends by disturbed veterans; of nurses by the war and later nonrecognition of *their* victimization.[1]

Such a construction conflates different experiences and thereby obliterates the distinctive and moral aspects inherent in each. Poetic representations by veterans present visions of personal trauma and political critique. While their work questions prevalent recuperations of the war,

a part of this body of poetry is complicit in the construction of the veteran as 'victim'. Recent poetry by American veterans, however, reveals a distinct reaching out to the 'other', a desire for sympathetic connections with the Vietnamese, and offers imaginative and moral critiques of those structures of justification. This essay deals with a few poems that embody new perspectives and empathies.

The transition to a point of view that encompasses Vietnamese experiences arose partly out of a desire to expiate guilt and partly out of a genuine solidarity. Several war veteran poets, W.D. Ehrhart, Bruce Weigl, John Balaban, Kevin Bowen, among others, have been back to Viet Nam, and memorialized those experiences. In a way, these veterans seem to be guided by Balaban's exhortation at the end of his memoirs: 'Go visit Vietnam, I'd tell the troubled vets. Go visit, if you can, and do something good there, and your pain won't seem so private, your need for resentment so great.'[2] In the realization that their pain is not private in the claustrophobic sense they thought it was, that their enemy, the 'gooks', suffered from and still live through the trauma of war, American veteran poets begin to bridge a chasm of ignorance and pain. Some of the best poets sketch not merely a political solidarity (as was done so often and simplistically by the antiwar movement), but a human one, the ability, as Grace Paley puts it, 'to imagine the real—the lives of other people.'[3] This imaginative ability is often combined with a sense of guilt. On his way to Viet Nam, Larry Rottmann, veteran-poet, muses on the motivations for his journey back:

> I wanted to meet these folks. To hold them. Touch them. Smell their life and sweat. I want to know they are alive, especially the children. I need to be reassured that we didn't kill or poison them all.[4]

In a country cut off from U.S. aid and trade links till very recently and ruled by an orthodox Marxist government, the disappointments are aplenty and reassurances more complex than the ones desired by Rottmann. Solidarity is often thwarted by realities and legacy of a brutal war, as in Ehrhart's poem, 'For Mrs. Na', where he begins with the hope that although he is sorry for the war, he can consign it to a dead past. Confronted with Mrs. Na, he realizes that it is a living presence, and that an apology is a pathetic substitute for loss:

But here I am at last—
and here you are.
And you lost five sons in the war.
And you haven't any left.

And I'm staring at my hands
and eating tears,
trying to think of something else to say
besides "I'm sorry."[5]

Poetic attempts to transcend a purely egocentric and ethnocentric view of the war represent an imaginative leap that would have been inconceivable during the conflict. Stephen Sossaman concluded his review of *Winning Hearts and Minds* and Michael Casey's *Obscenities*, with the following observation:

> American veterans can probably never adequately assess the Vietnamese people's experience of that war; had we been sensitive enough to their culture much of the war would never have happened. It is enough that veterans begin to test and assay their own experience.[6]

Sossaman's analysis, published in 1973, could not have foreseen that the 'test[ing] and assay[ing]' of veteran poetics and experience would expand to acknowledge, if not include, Vietnamese perspectives.

The poetry of Balaban, Bowen, and Weigl resists the convenient erasure of inconvenient histories vis-à-vis the Vietnam War and recovers them for sober recollection. An aspect of this erasure is evident in the obliteration of the Vietnamese and their sufferings in political and popular culture representations. The Vietnamese, particularly the Viet Cong, were/are caricatured as fanatical 'gooks'. In the dominant discourse Vietnam is projected as an event that happened solely to America (the term 'Vietnam Syndrome' is symptomatic of this phenomenon). The poems I analyse in this paper moralize the language of war and politics. They refuse to merge into the silence and revisionism that has overtaken influential sections of American historiography and popular culture. They express solidarity with the Vietnamese, a process and attitude

almost totally absent in other representations.[7] The reaching out is tentative and incomplete. However, it represents the acknowledgement of the 'other' in humane terms and without the simplistic idealizations found in some of the antiwar protests and stateside poetry. Denise Levertov's 'What Were They Like?' is one example of protest poetry that transforms the Viet Cong into holy warriors and projects Ho Chi Minh as a benign father figure. Her poem fails to take into account the atrocities committed by the Viet Cong (no matter how justified their fight for freedom) and the political contradictions inherent in Ho's policies. The poems of Bowen and Weigl in particular are troubled by this desire to idealize the 'other' and exculpate guilt, but they are also more skeptical, nuanced, and open to the contradictions and disappointments of the encounter with the 'other'. Their poems offer a valuable ethical and moral alternative in terms of memory, conscience, and representation of the aftermath of a terrible war.

The move towards a more resilient remembrance, the burden of responsibility in postwar America is best embodied in the poetry of John Balaban. He occupies a unique position in that he did not go to Viet Nam as a soldier, but spent two years, 1967-69, as a conscientious objector, working as an instructor at the University of Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, and then as a field representative for the Committee of Responsibility to Save War-Injured Children. He was in Viet Nam during the Tet Offensive and witnessed the devastating effect of war on civilians, particularly children. In his memoir, *Remembering Heaven's Face: A Moral Witness in Vietnam*, he consciously distances himself from fellow Americans:

> I was after all a conscientious objector to military service. Somehow I wanted Vietnamese to know this, as if they would appreciate the moral difference between my presence and that of 500,000 other young Americans who were pouring into the country: I had come not to bear arms but to bear witness.[8]

There is an element of naïveté in his status as a CO, but his work with the Committee of Responsibility (an agency that did excellent work with injured Vietnamese children), his genuine empathy with the Vietnamese, their culture and language (he is one of the few veteran poets who speaks fluent Vietnamese, and has translated their oral folk poetry, the *ca dao*), allow him to write poems of sympathy and quality about a sad,

brutal period of history. Although Balaban was not personally responsible for acts of war, he does feel a 'burden of personal guilt'.[9] In his memoir he recalls watching a wounded toddler shriek with pain, 'until I was ashamed to be alive, to be human, let alone to be an American, to be one of those who had brought the planes to this sad little country ten thousand miles away'.[10]

Balaban's 'The Book and the Lacquered Box' delves with imagination and empathy into the atmosphere of 'other' lives during the war. It begins with the speaker-observer and his companion being enticed by rare books:

> The ink-specked sheets feel like cigar leaf;
> its crackling spine flutters up with a mildewed must.
> Unlike the lacquered box which dry-warp detonated
> —shattering pearled poet, moon, and willow pond—
> the book survived to beg us both go back
> to the Bibliothèque in the Musée at the Jardin in Saigon,
> where I would lean from ledges of high windows
> to see the zoo's pond, isled with Chinese pavilion,
> arched bridge where kids fed popcorn to gulping carp,
> and shaded benches, where whores fanned their make-up,
> at ease because a man who feeds the peacocks
> can't be that much of a beast.[11]

The book and 'lacquered box' as artifacts conjure a world of delicacy and refinement, yet they are threatened with violence and disruption. 'Crackling', 'detonated', and 'shattered' disrupt notions of civilization and peace normally associated with works of art. These words relate not only to the war at hand but, in the references to the 'Bibliothèque' and 'Chinese pavilion', to earlier histories of occupation. Architecture and buildings provide a context of imperial domination from within which the poetic gaze turns outward to survey normal life in the guise of kids feeding popcorn and whores fanning themselves. The collocation of innocence and necessity, finesse and violence is extended in the last part of the poem:

> A boatride,
> a soda, a stroll through the flower beds.
> On weekends the crowd could forget the war.

> At night police tortured men in the bear pits,
> one night a man held out the bag of his own guts,
> which streamed and weighed in his open hands,
> and offered them to a bear. Nearby, that night,
> the moon was caught in willows by the pond,
> shone scattered in droplets on the flat lotus pads,
> each bead bright like the dew in Marvell's rose.

The war is a perennial absent presence, and torture is coterminous with the 'crowds' who 'forget the war'. Torture, as Elaine Scarry observes, is 'Brutal, savage, and barbaric, [. . .] and explicitly announces its own nature as an undoing of civilization, acts out the uncreating of the created contents of consciousness.'[12] The poem, while presenting the horror imposed by the client government in South Viet Nam, is a conscious act of making. It names and inscribes terrors and deprivations within a context of placidity and beauty. The epigraph to the poem, from Andrew Marvell's 'On a Drop of Dew', emphasizes this context:

> So the Soul, that Drop, that Ray
> Of the clear Fountain of Eternal Day,
> Could it within the humane flow'r be seen.[13]

The poem entwines the lives of people with the pastoral, which throws into sharp relief the contrast between the decay and torment of Saigon and a desire for normality and peace. Balaban does not idealize the people or the landscape. The poignancy of the poem lies in the portrayal of beautiful possibilities and desires cohabiting with real and palpable traumas. The poetic gaze and voice are both engaged and balanced; there are no 'tiny anonymous people' here, neither are they valorized as heroic. Balaban's unique perspective allows for insight and empathy in a poem that inscribes comprehension of and solidarity with the 'other'.

Kevin Bowen's collection of poems, *Playing Basketball with the Viet Cong*, 'reinscribes the humanity of a former enemy'.[14] The title poem displays a genuine sympathy with the Gauloise-smoking, ex-Viet Cong, who comes to the poet's house in Boston, and shoots baskets. 'Graves at Quang Tri' dwells on the price of war from a Vietnamese point of view. The problem of soil erosion and the continuing menace of unexploded mines, are two facets of postwar Viet Nam that Bowen mentions. 'A Conical Hat' offers a rare insight into what it was like fighting for the

Viet Cong:

> Across the table all night
> I watch the stories
> come alive in his eyes;
> I can almost see the bulb burning;
> a man pedals a bicycle underground,
> in the shadows of the bunker
> he makes power for lights and suction
> in the operating room.
> Lungs burn, he inhales
> fine red bits of earth.
> They are digging to expand the tunnels,
> make more room for the wounded.

The underground network of bunkers and tunnels that sustained the guerrillas were testimony to the tenacity of a people who would not give in. As recollected by the former guerrilla, the past is a set of stories for the listener-poet, but it is significant that the poet-speaker, the 'I', 'watch[es] the stories/come alive in his eyes'. There is a direct, empathic connection:

> One day he walks
> straight off the earth,
> right into the brown, wrinkled
> hide of an elephant,
> carves meat for a starving platoon,
> takes machete and scalpel,
> makes cut after cut
> until he's covered
> in blood and muscle,
> fighting for air.

The digging of tunnels, the making of 'cut after cut', are analogous to the poetic endeavour of recovering a war that co-existed with the soldier-poet's past, but did not really exist in his consciousness. From a war point of view the tunnels were a dangerous military impediment, but the poet now perceives human lives sustained by and in the tunnels:

Ten years, his wife
slept in the mountain caves,
after bombs, repaired roads,
made posters, paintings
to record each detail.

"Ham Rong Bridge, 1970," he shows me.
A woodcut on rice paper.
Two women in conical hats
load rocks along a road.

These stanzas offer a memory of war from the Viet Cong perspective, and the 'woodcut on rice paper' is a representation of history as artistic detail. At one level, however, the poetic representation veers towards a heroic mode available in some stateside poetry. While imperialist America bombs Viet Nam, its heroic revolutionaries dig in, repair roads, and even have time to make woodcuts. It is the sort of image North Vietnamese propaganda posters presented without any sense of irony. The language of political rhetoric might have different referents, but on both sides it tended to simplify and exaggerate issues. Bowen's poem is redeemed from this tendency to valorize the enemy by the last stanza, where even the stereotypical conical hat has symbolic connotations not usually noticed by outsiders:

His eyes burn as he looks
through the woodcut.
I thank him, I will need this hat,
the cool circle of its shade.

For the former Viet Cong soldier the woodcut is not merely an artifice: it is a symbol of sacrifice, war, loss, and, perhaps, hate. The waste and sorrow of war cannot be transcended easily, and while he meets his former enemy in amity, and offers the hat as a gift, the gesture is troubled by the past. The poet is aware of this: 'the cool circle of its shade' is what he needs to shield himself from what his countrymen did to the Vietnamese. The hat is a symbol of peace as well as a protection from searing memory. In accepting the hat the poet reaches out to the 'other' and enters another circle of memory with all its troubling associations. The

poem inscribes an act of solidarity and responsibility, and in so doing represents 'a just and genuine reconciliation'.[15]

Going back to Viet Nam helped many veterans to ameliorate the sense of exile they felt in the U.S. It was an extension of the homecoming theme discernible in earlier veteran poetry, a projection of Viet Nam as a redemptive landscape. The latter is a theme exaggeratedly presented in some stateside poems in their delineation of the loss of innocence trope. Veteran poets are much more cautious, and if they do valorize Vietnam, it is a qualified endorsement. Their focus is on the possibilities of reconciliation. As Kevin Bowen put it, going back to Vietnam 'stirs the mind, rekindles the imagination, and reopens the heart to hope. It cannot change the past, but it can reconnect the past with the present'.[16] Some of Bruce Weigl's poems attempt to establish connections and rekindle hopes that the war had snuffed out.

In 'Dialectical Materialism', Weigl describes a Viet Nam at peace, the kind of world Rottmann desired when he looked forward to his visit; people live everyday lives and have not all been bombed or poisoned out of existence:

> Through dark tenements and fallen temples
> we wander into Old Hanoi,
> oil lamps glowing in small
> storefronts and restaurants
> where those, so long ago my enemy,
> sit on low chairs and praise the simple evening.
> [. . .]
> The people talk and smoke,
> men hold each other's hands again in that old way
> and children,
> their black and white laughter all around us,
> kick the weighted feather
> with such grace into the air
> because the bombs have stopped.[17]

It is a sympathetic portrait of a city that was heavily bombed, particularly during Nixon's Christmas bombing in 1972. The scene is a type of pastoral: peaceful, harmonious, simple. It not only contrasts with the frantic horrors of war, but with stereotyped notions of the enemy. The shift from cultural typecasting and ignorance to awareness is evident in

the line, 'men hold each other's hands again in that old way'. In Viet Nam the sight of men holding hands was common and not necessarily an indication of sexual preference. For American soldiers, raised in a dominant culture and trained in a military that emphasized manly virtues, the Vietnamese were effeminate and, most likely, homosexual. Charles R. Anderson observed this cultural prejudice and shock amongst Americans in Viet Nam:

> there was still another characteristic about the Vietnamese which completely repulsed the grunts. Asian peoples are much less inhibited than westerners about displaying their affection for friends of the same sex. Among Asians, holding hands or walking arm in arm in public does not arouse suspicions of homosexuality. The grunts, however, were shocked at such behavior. They needed to believe their allies and those whose freedom they were supposedly defending were better than "a bunch of queers."[18]

Weigl may not have shared this attitude but he is aware of a climate of ignorant condemnation and reverses it here. The reversal of cultural stereotype and obvious sympathy does not, however, conceal an element of voyeurism. The observer is an outsider, pleased and relieved that the former enemy is getting along so well. If Viet Nam and the return to it are constructed as redemptive landscapes, it is necessary that the enemy should be at peace, that the hardships of war be concealed, since that will return the observer-poet back to responsibility. To Weigl's credit, the poem does not shy away from the troubling legacies and questions of the war. At the Long Bien Bridge they meet a man taking water to his corn, and he is a more, though not sufficiently, individuated figure:

> When we ask our questions
> he points to a stone and stick
> house beyond the dikes
> one thousand meters from the bridge
> our great planes
> could not finally knock down.
> He doesn't say
> how he must have huddled

those nights with his family,
how he must have spread himself
over them
until the village bell
called them back to their beds.
There are questions which
people who have everything
ask people who have nothing
and they do not understand.

'He doesn't say' is a key line in that the poet is aware of life events, traumas, memories that he can only dimly imagine. He is the perennial outsider, and the reticence of the Vietnamese farmer outlines a world of terrible suffering and dignified perseverance. As a veteran-poet Weigl is aware of a subtext of anguish; he is also conscious of difference, of an inability to bridge cultural chasms, and the last four lines encompass this lack of comprehension. These lines are self-reflexive: they mediate precisely the questions of voyeurism and placid, uninvolved observation that were raised in stanza one. Finally, the poet is aware of the contrary visions he and his enemy bring to the war. Perhaps these attitudes arise out of cultural difference: 'people who have everything/ask people who have nothing'. While Vietnam is projected in the U.S. as something that happened to America, there is a whole world that suffered the war as well, and Weigl attempts to inscribe that reality. The desire to 'imagine the real' is entangled with the poet's personal agenda: the need to be reassured, to expiate guilt. This does not undermine the credibility of the desire, but it does indicate the tangled web of memory, trauma, and exile that the poet translates onto the 'other' in his representation of that 'other' world. Some of these themes recur in 'Her Life Runs Like a Red Silk Flag'.

The poem offers a more intimate, person-to-person interaction and understanding than in 'Dialectical Materialism'. The point of view is neither distanced nor voyeuristic:

Because this evening Miss Hoang Yen
sat down with me in the small
tiled room of her family house
I am unable to sleep.
We shared a glass of cold and sweet water.

On a blue plate her mother brought us
cake and smiled her betel black teeth at me
but I did not feel strange in the house
my country had tried to bomb into dust.[19]

The genuine sense of empathy co-exists with unease, an overstatement of feeling at home. Miss Yen's recollection in the next few lines about her childhood in Hanoi during Nixon's Christmas bombing has the force of personal testimony that disrupts the glib acceptance of responsibility on the poet's part. Her account of war reopens the wounds of trauma and conscience:

She let me hold her hand,
her shy unmoving fingers, and told me
how afraid she was those days and how this fear
had dug inside her like a worm and lives
inside her still, won't die or go away.

Her fear is analogous to veteran trauma whereby the war becomes a continuous living presence. For the veteran-poet who returns to Viet Nam this account offers a unique perspective on his own troubles. In recent years, particularly since the official rehabilitation of the veteran, he has been reconstructed as a 'victim', first of the war and then of neglect on returning home. Soldiers were traumatized by the war, and bewildered, angry, and alienated on their return, but to construe the soldier as 'victim' elides certain other problems. As Kali Tal points out: ' "Soldier as victim" representations depend upon the invisibility of the soldiers' own victims, namely Vietnamese soldiers and civilians.'[20] Weigl highlights the hitherto invisible, gives voice to the victim and, paradoxically, only the victim can offer real forgiveness:

And because she's stronger, she comforted me,
said I'm not to blame,
the million sorrows alive in her gaze.
With the dead we share no common rooms.
With the frightened we can't think straight;
no words can bring the burning city back.

The poet acknowledges a weakness arising from guilt, and takes on

his country's burden. The absolution offered is not sentimentalized, and the 'million sorrows', the dead and the frightened permeate the present consciousness. A healing and reconciliation that buried or rewrote the past (as some of the official reconciliation does) would be inadequate in its failure to establish sympathetic connections. The poetic reconciliation is open to the contradictions and pain of the past and its memory in the present:

> All night I ached for her and for myself
> and nothing I could think or pray
> would make it stop. Some birds sang morning
> home across the lake. In small reed boats
> the lotus gatherers sailed out
> among their resuming white blossoms.

In the midst of trauma, Weigl presents the lotus gatherers as a revitalizing vision. The 'resuming white blossoms' are emblematic of a pastoral often evoked as a counterpoint to the blighting experiences of war. One wonders, however, whether the residue of horrible memories can be counterbalanced by the pastoral. There is another problematic thread running through the poem: the constant emphasis on the 'I'. Although the poem articulates the pain of another, vulnerable being, that utterance is placed within the context of the speaker-poet's desire and imperative need for forgiveness. Miss Yen, in her ability to forgive, seems to understand this need; she combines remembrance with forgiveness. In an interview, Weigl expressed awareness of a culture of egotism, which also explains the self-centred nature of some veteran poetry:

> they [the Vietnamese] don't take the war as personally as we took it. It's easier for them to forgive. Because ours is an egocentric culture whereas theirs is a much more selfless culture. If you're Vietnamese, you're always attached to some larger thing: a family, hamlet, village, et cetera. It's not just 'I'.[21]

Weigl generalizes and thereby simplifies the differences, but the lack of Vietnamese egotism in the poem is striking. It may not be easier for Miss Yen to forgive, but she can because she transcends (if only for a moment) her world and reaches out to another one. In fact she displays

greater strength of character and capacity for solidarity than the poet-speaker does. The latter is egotistical, weak, and passive, but the poet inscribes the possibilities of hope and renewal. That he does so within uncompromising contexts of indelible pain and trauma makes the poetic effort all the more resonant and valuable.

This brief discussion of veteran poetic representations of Vietnamese war experiences indicates problems and possibilities inherent in the project. Most of the representations are still located in American traumas and guilt (Balaban is, perhaps, an exception). They are occasionally voyeuristic and often naïve in their projection of postwar comradeship. However, veteran poets represent an aesthetics of engagement, a strenuous refusal to turn away from the horror and trauma of war memory. This aesthetic is evident in poems expressing solidarity: there is no easy sentimentality that can transcend the barriers of culture scarred by war. Kevin Bowen's 'A Conical Hat', Bruce Weigl's 'Dialectical Materialism', and Ehrhart's 'For Mrs. Na', are examples of the poet's ability to offer new insights in the aftermath of this sad war. Ehrhart perhaps best sums up this new poetic in his conclusion to 'The Poet as Athlete':

> Consider poetry, how good poems
> offer us the world with eyes renewed.
> Now see the swimmer I am watching:
> all discipline, all muscle, lean and hard.

The swimmer's 'discipline' 'lean and hard' is analogous to an aesthetic that pares down language to delineate horrific events or endless trauma. There is a self-obsessive element in the focus on individual traumas, but this is counterbalanced by a commitment to witness so that the future may be less bleak than the past. It is not a comforting or beautiful picture, neither is there any sense of convenient closure. The poets offer moving testaments to the desire and possibility of a Rortyan solidarity. Richard Rorty's idea of solidarity as a willed act provides a valuable context for my discussion of these poems:

> It [solidarity] is to be achieved not by inquiry but by imagination, the imaginative ability to see strange people as fellow sufferers. Solidarity is not discovered by reflection but created. It is created by increasing our sensitivity to the particular details of the pain and humiliation of other, unfamiliar sorts of people.

> Such increased sensitivity makes it more difficult to marginalise people different from ourselves by thinking, "They do not feel as we would," or "There must always be suffering, so why not let them suffer?" [22]

The 'solidarity' poems may be perceived as self-serving; there is an undeniable element of the need to express the 'other' in the hope that such an inscription will lead to reconciliation and closure (a project tied to the largely conservative 'healing and reconciliation' agenda available in dominant American culture). What makes these poems distinctive and important within such a culture is their ultimate refusal to participate in histories of mythification and amnesia. In vocalizing the pain of the 'other', veteran poets create a nominal space for solidarity and shatter the illusion that the Vietnam War happened exclusively to Americans. The poems introduce a human and moral dimension largely absent in political discourse. Poetic representations of Vietnam remain marginal when compared to other cultural productions such as film (one has only to look at the world-wide popularity of *Rambo*), but in their very 'marginality' they offer integral and critical modes of memorializing the war. 'History,' Anne Michaels writes in *Fugitive Pieces*, 'is amoral: events occurred. But memory is moral; what we consciously remember is what our conscience remembers.'[23] While I would dispute the first assertion, since it is humans as moral or immoral agents who fashion history, Michaels highlights the vital notion of moral memory that I ascribe to and value in the poems I have discussed. American veteran representations of Vietnam are located within personal traumas, guilt, and desires, but they also address the memory and conscience of a nation that continually seems to dismember those harsh and traumatic memories. Perhaps the poetry represents a beginning towards a collective and moral remembrance of a brutal and sad war.

Notes

1. Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1987), 218.

2. John Balaban, *Remembering Heaven's Face*, (New York, London: Poseidon Press, 1991), 333.

3. Grace Paley, 'Writers and War,' *The Writer in Our World*. Highlights of *TriQuarterly*

Magazine's 1984 Symposium, Northwestern University: Audiocassette, Side D.

4. Larry Rottmann, 'A Hundred Happy Sparrows: An American Veteran Returns to Vietnam,' *Vietnam Generation*, Volume 1, Number 1, Winter 1989: 113-140.

5. W.D. Ehrhart, 'For Mrs. Na,' *Just For Laughs* (Silver Spring MD: Vietnam Generation Inc., & Burning Cities Press, 1990), 23-24.

6. Stephen Sossaman, 'American Poetry From the Indochina Experience,' *Long Island Review*, No. 2, Winter 1973-74: 30-33.

7. There are exceptions such as Lady Borton's *After Sorrow* and Frances Fitzgerald's *Fire in the Lake*, but these are rare examples in a dominant culture of amnesia.

8. John Balaban, *Remembering Heaven's Face*, 17. In his refusal to bear arms Balaban moves beyond the archetypal witnessing of war offered by Wilfred Owen and Sassoon.

9. Jeffrey Walsh, ' "After Our War": John Balaban's Poetic Images of Vietnam,' in Jeffrey Walsh and James Aulich, eds, *Vietnam Images: War and Representation* (Basingstoke and London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1989), 145.

10. John Balaban, *Remembering Heaven's Face*, 104.

11. John Balaban, 'The Book and the Lacquered Box,' *Locusts at the Edge of Summer: New and Selected Poems* (Washington: Copper Canyon Press, 1997), 5.

12. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 38.

13. The next line, 'Remembering still its former height', inscribes the memory of a better world, just as Balaban outlines the possibilities of beauty and civilization. In Marvell's poem contraries are held in balance. See Andrew Marvell, 'On a Drop of Dew,' *Complete Poetry*, ed., George deF. Lord (London and Melbourne: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1984), 6-7.

14. Carolyn Forché, 'Introduction' to Kevin Bowen, *Playing Basketball With the Viet Cong* (Willimantic CT.: Curbstone Press, 1994), 7.

15. Carolyn Forché, 'Introduction,' *Playing Basketball*, 9.

16. Cited in Jayne S. Werner and Luu Doan Huynh, eds, *The Vietnam War: Vietnamese and American Perspectives* (New York and London: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 267.

17. Bruce Weigl, 'Dialectical Materialism,' *Song of Napalm* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1988), 66.

18. Cited in Jacqueline Lawson, 'She's a Pretty Woman for a Gook: The Misogyny of the Vietnam War,' in Philip K. Jason, ed., *Fourteen Landing Zones: Approaches to Vietnam War Literature* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991), 23.

19. Bruce Weigl, 'Her Life Runs Like a Red Silk Flag,' *What Saves Us* (Evanston, IL: TriQuarterly Books, 1992), 13.

20. Kali Tal, *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 138.

21. Cited in Eric James Schroeder, *Vietnam, We've All Been There: Interviews With American Writers* (Westport CN., and London: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 194.

22. Richard Rorty, *Contingency, irony, and solidarity* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), XVI.

23. Anne Michaels, *Fugitive Pieces* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1996), 138.

Subarno Chattarji holds a D.Phil from Oxford University and teaches at St. Stephen's College, Delhi. Professor Chattarji's book on American poetic representations of the Vietnam War is forthcoming from Oxford University Press, UK.

Reviews

Doing Time: 25 Years of Prison Writing: A Pen American Center Prize Anthology. Edited by Bell Gale Chevigny. Forward by Sister Helen Prejean. New York: Arcade Publishing, 1999, xxxii + 288 pp., including notes about contributors $27.95, cloth; $15.95, paper.

Reviewed by Rachel Woodward, United States Air Force Academy

With 2 million American citizens in prisons across the country and what many are calling the prison-industrial complex beginning to rival the military-industrial complex of the cold war, it is not surprising that we are becoming more and more interested in who is in prison, why they are there, and whether prison is the solution to crime in America. Recent films like *The Green Mile* and *Dead Man Walking* reflect a growing skepticism towards a system that has doubled (from 1 million to 2 million) in the last ten years alone. *Doing Time: 25_Years of Prison Writing*, an anthology made up of the short stories, essays, and poems of 51 prisoners, echoes this sentiment. Reading the works of these prisoners makes one fact clear: America is still fighting a war—this one against itself. The isolation, brutal treatment, disorientation, and subjugation of those behind *Doing Time*'s narratives are clearly reminiscent of the words of those who have previously fought for survival in an unfamiliar and hostile world, if in albeit different circumstances.

The anthology is a product of PEN (Poets, Playwrights, Essayist, Editors, and Novelists), which was founded in 1921 for the purpose of "consolidating world peace through a association of writers" (xix). PEN's American Center is concerned with defending the rights of writers in foreign countries who have been jailed for their beliefs. This concern naturally extended to the United States when it became evident that prisoners in our own jail systems were being censored and even punished for writing (xix). Since 1973 PEN has encouraged prisoners to submit their writings for publication. Currently they receive about 1700 submissions a year. There are no criteria for selection set forth in the introduction, although editor Bell Gale Chevigny explains that she prized rich material, fresh language, and the absence of hackneyed formulas (xxviii). The anthology is divided into 11 sections that represent the

most-often recurring themes (initiation, time, work, family, race, death etc.). Each section is prefaced by an editorial explanation that appears to have more to do with the anthology's agenda than the works that follow it. At the end of the book each author has provided an autobiographical statement that includes date of birth, sometimes what each contributor is incarcerated for, and why writing is important to him or her. The demographics of the writers are diverse: some taught themselves to read in prison, others have multiple advanced degrees; some are serving 2-3 years for possession, others have life sentences or are on death row for murder. Oddly, most are born in the 40s and 50s with only 2 submissions from the post-70's generation and 7 from the 60's. Race and gender seem proportionately represented.

Despite the editor's persistent and intrusive rhetoric at the beginning of each section, there is much to be learned from the writers themselves about life in prison. The autobiographical notes often point out that the individuals write not to further a political agenda but "as a defense against the crushing isolation" (331), to create "a spiritual connection to God" (337), or because "writing is all I have" (341). Because composing for many of the inmates is a form of staying in touch with themselves and the outside world and not a vocation, much honest and self-revealing writing results. Additionally, because the subject matter is very foreign to most readers, the pieces are often both informative and unsettling.

One of the most interesting and reflective parts of *Doing Time* is the section on reading and writing. In the short story "Coming into Language," Jimmy Santiago Baca explains in vivid detail his transition from illiteracy to awareness. The story makes us aware of the tragedy of illiteracy and the cyclical nature of the disease. Particularly sad is the section where Baca is determined to teach himself grammar but can't get a textbook. When he asks his sister to buy one for him, she refuses, stating that bookstores frighten her. Baca tells us learning to read and write gave him something to lose for the first time in his life. He tells the reader: "There was no longer the distinction between the other and I. Language made bridges of fire between me and everything I saw" (104). Paul St John's essay "Behind the Mirror's Face" represents the darker side of language and may be the most cynical and disturbing piece in the collection. Whereas Baca believes language brings salvation, St John is certain it is only another means of manipulation. For St. John prison writing can never be anything more than a tool used by the establishment to gull the prisoners further into submission. He directly attacks

the idea that writing breaks down the walls of isolation, commenting that there is no freedom of expression in prison because it is all subject to "salaried censorship squads" (119) who use the words of prisoners to placate an overly-liberal public, a public, incidentally, who is not concerned with his rights and well being "except to feel real good that things aren't as bad out in the world" (121). He notes that those who are so worried about his comfort might begin by "sending me some real food and vitamins" as well as "some real medical care, you know the kind that steps right to the business and [. . .] doesn't wait for rigor mortis in order to proceed" (121). St John's anger, cynicism, and resentment are palpable in this piece that so effectively uses language to deflate any good intentions the editors might have had.

Curiously, the anger that distinguishes St John's writing is absent from that of most of the other writers. For them the horror of prison life is recounted in a mild, journalistic-like abstraction. Whether it is men making their way through prison becoming other men's "bitches," inmates being forced to care for the AIDS patients whom the guards don't want to touch, men being gang-raped and beaten, the suicide watch that ends in scavenger-like raids on the victim, all are portrayed with the same detachment as comments on the sun rising in the yard or the birds nesting in the guard towers. In "Pearl Got Stabbed" Charles P. Norman recounts an inmate's death in three short sentences:

> He stabbed Pearl first, several times, as Jerome and the other prisoners stood and watched. Pearl fell by the shower, and Kilgore poured the paint thinner over his face and body, intending to burn him up. He tried to light a book of matches, but his hands were so bloody that the matches got wet and he couldn't light them. (194)

Doing Time is full of scenes like this. Brutality and degradation are at best casual happenings. The bare, unsentimental nature of such pieces is what makes this book as disturbing as it is.

While much of the book's power is derived from the rawness of the writing, there is also a stylized and sophisticated side to many of the contributions. Several authors have MFAs or Masters Degrees in English. Writing tutorials such as the Bedford Hills Writing Workshop produce very polished work, and some of the writers represented here are professional authors. Richard Stratton, for instance, is a regular con-

tributor to *Rolling Stone*, *Spin*, and *Newsweek* and recently won the Sundance Grand Jury award for his film *Slam*. While these pieces do not make up the bulk of the anthology, the reader looking for polished style and technique will not be disappointed.

In *Doing Time*, we see the representative word of what constitutes 25% of the world's prison population. The editors have sought to connect those prisoners around the world who have been jailed for their writing to our domestic felons who find themselves unable to write freely. That premise that America's prisons are the new Soviet Gulag is strained. Indeed, the perpetual intrusion and commentary of the editor make the pieces and their selection appear agenda-oriented and compromise the integrity of work that could stand on its own. That said, however, the book remains a worthwhile read. The writing, while not always technically sophisticated, is honest and aware. It introduces its readers to the brutal realities of prison and forces us to question the efficacy of the system. In short, *Doing Time* is worth our time.

The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post-Cold War. Robert D. Kaplan. New York: Random House, 2000, xix+ 201 pp., index. $21.95.

Reviewed by Michael A. Round, United States Air Force Academy

The title of Robert D. Kaplan's latest book lets you know that what follows will not be a rosy prediction for the future. Skimming the "Contents" page reinforces that notion: "Was Democracy Just a Moment?" "Idealism Won't Stop Mass Murder," "The Dangers of Peace." Kaplan writes a disturbing collection of essays, especially disturbing because they are not the rantings of some wild-eyed survivalist. Instead, they are well written (clean, descriptive prose, well-informed by the ideas of others), thoughtful, and from a man who's had a first-hand look at what he writes about. The collection covers the 5-year period from 1994 to 1999, but the essays remain current, relevant, and credible. He links the physical world to human representations, perhaps misrepresentations, of it, then links these to a changing definition of war and warfare. While I question some of his recommendations, his acumen as observer/reporter is keen; the bulk of the collection deals with those observations.

Using Samuel P. Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations" as his starting point, Kaplan points out the increasingly cultural foundation to violence throughout the world,

> a run-down, crowded planet of skin-head Cossacks and *juju* warriors, influenced by the worst refuse of Western pop culture and ancient tribal hatreds, and battling over scraps of overused earth in guerilla conflicts that ripple across continents and intersect in no discernible pattern—meaning there's no easy-to-define threat. (29-30)

He goes on to quote a "long-range thinker for the U.S. Navy," Michael Vlahos, who says, "We are not in charge of the environment and the world is not following us. It is going in many directions. Do not assume that democratic capitalism is the last word in human social evolution" (30). Think of this in this election year while we spend our time worrying about a projected surplus, interest rates that may average 8.5%, and whether or not the "market economy" is a curative for anything that ails us.

Kaplan sets the following scene in Turkey:

> Built on steep, muddy hills, the shantytowns of Ankara, the Turkish capital, exude visual drama. Altindag, or "Golden Mountain," is a pyramid of dreams, fashioned from cinder blocks and corrugated iron, rising as though each shack were built on top of another, all reaching awkwardly and painfully toward heaven—the heaven of wealthier Turks who live elsewhere in the city. Nowhere else on the planet have I found such a poignant architectural symbol of man's striving, with gaps in house walls plugged with rusted cans, and leeks and onions growing on verandas assembled from planks of rotting wood. (30-31)

While this is a bleak picture, Kaplan surprises the reader as he notes the strong points of the slum and comes to the following conclusion:

> My point in bringing up a rather wholesome, crime-free slum is this: its existence demonstrates how formidable is the fabric of which Turkish Muslim culture is made. A culture this strong has the potential to dominate the Middle East once again. Slums are litmus tests for innate cultural strengths and weaknesses. Those people whose cultures can harbor extensive slum life without decomposing will be, relatively speaking, the future's winners. (32)

Kaplan sees the world trudging inexorably to a conflict initiated first by colonialism, then by the bifurcated post-World War II hegemonies of the United States and the Soviet Union, spheres of influence that essentially used the remnants of colonialism to their own advantage.

One of the remnants of colonialism remains in the maps we use. Citing Benedict Anderson of Cornell University, Kaplan critiques the rhetoric of maps:

> Maps, Anderson explains, "shaped the grammar" that would make possible such questionable concepts as Iraq, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. The state, recall, is a purely Western notion, one that until the twentieth century applied to countries covering only 3 percent of the earth's land area. Nor is the evidence compelling that the state, as a governing ideal, can be successfully transported to areas outside the industrialized world.

> Even the United States of America, in the words of one of our best living poets, Gary Snyder, consists of "arbitrary and inaccurate impositions on what is really here." (39)

In the face of such large-scale problems, the best Kaplan can do is to voice the hope that pessimism will engender prudence:

> Indeed, those who quote Alexis de Toqueville in support of democracy's inevitability should pay heed to his observation that Americans, because of their (comparative) equality, exaggerate " the scope of human perfectibility." Despotism, Toqueville went on, "is more particularly to be feared in democratic ages," because it thrives on the obsession with self and one's own security which equality fosters [. . .] many future regimes, ours especially, could resemble the oligarchies of ancient Athens and Sparta more than they do the current government in Washington. History teaches that it is exactly at such prosperous times as these that we need to maintain a sense of the tragic, however unnecessary it may seem. (60)

Kaplan cites Toqueville further as he makes the argument that we misunderstand our own history, that democracy "evolved in the West not through the kind of moral fiat we are trying to impose throughout the rest of the world but as an organic outgrowth of development" (66). Kaplan disdains moral arguments alone to support democratic development; "historical and social analysis" (67) must precede democratic inclinations.

The most direct military impact the changing world will have is on the intelligence industry, a "military growth industry":

> The public will demand protection—for as few tax dollars as possible—from a whole new kind of enemy that is using technology to miniaturize and conceal explosives and communications devices. The future will thus be brutal to industrial-age armies with big tanks and jets, and kind to corporate-style forces in urban settings, which rely on both electronic and human intelligence. (106-07)

Moreover,

> Terrorism, drug smuggling, money laundering, industrial espionage, and so on will all evolve into new forms of "conventional" warfare that provide authoritarian leaders with the means to wage war without ever acknowledging it. (109)

Kaplan's future is a believable combination of *Rollerball*'s transnational corporate world and *Blade Runner*'s ecologically ruined one. He moves from what the new wars will look like to "The Dangers of Peace," warning specifically about the danger of a strong United Nations:

> The U.N. bureaucracy, along with others who seek a peaceful world, worships consensus. But consensus can be the handmaiden of evil, since the ability to confront evil means the willingness to act boldly and ruthlessly and without consensus, attributes that executive, national leadership has in far more abundance than any international organization. [. . .] Though the U.N. is certainly not about to dominate the world, it carries within it the seeds of a banal, bureaucratically distant organization, inflexible because of the vast territory it would have to manage, and lacking accountability because of its received claim to progressive rationality. Such an organization would not rule through violence but by ably delegitimizing—perhaps, with the help of an all-powerful global media—anything and anybody that crossed its path, by defining such opposition as "immoral," "unprogressive," "provincial," or "isolationist." (178-80)

Where does the United States fit into all this? Citing Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis*, Kaplan sees international goals "best realized through national self-interest" (181), urging a U.S.-dominated U.N., conceding

> That, of course, may not lead to peace, since others might resent it and fight as a result; but such an action would fill the world's organization's insipid ideological vacuum with at least someone's values—indeed, ours. Peace should never be an expediency. Whether it was the Korean War, the 1991 Gulf War, or the weapons-inspection regime against Saddam Hussein, the U.N. has always been most credible when it was an accomplice of U.S. foreign-policy goals. (181)

He goes on to warn that our world closely resembles the world just before W.W. I. But then again, let's look at his examples above: we're still in Korea, still in the Middle East, still in Bosnia and Kosovo. Is the solution here that we should simply become an occupation force throughout the world? If so, we create more American targets, spread more ill will for terrorists to exploit with "post-industrial miniaturization" (183) all for rather unspecified "foreign-policy goals." In the end Robert Kaplan argues that peace is well and good in theory, but problematic in practice; "struggle, of one sort or another, hopefully non-violent" is a better solution for mankind's sociological/cultural problems, since

> Struggle demands the real facts, as well as real standards of behavior. [. . .] [W]ar ultimately demands credibility, whereas long periods of peace do not; with no threat at hand, lies and exaggerations carry smaller penalties. (184)

On the surface the above sounds too easily hip. Philip Knightley's essay, "The First Casualty," in which Knightley highlights the loss of truth during war, provides a counterpoint to Kaplan's contention that war is where we'll find "the real facts." Other notions jumble a bit for me here, too. Peace should never be an expediency? If struggle is our natural state, then why wouldn't we sometimes see peace purely in terms of expediency? What is the "hopefully non-violent" struggle to consist of? Economic competition? Capitalism is eventually going to run its course, as Kaplan suggests early in the book, but when he urges us to extend our values through the U.N. he's urging economics more than anything, since over the last 20 years, democracy and capitalism have become virtually inseparable to us. But if democracy is an outgrowth of "social and historical arguments," so is capitalism and so is socialism. Further, the whole credibility of the war vs. peace assertion rings a little hollow. In the information age, disinformation is the real growth industry; we've found that "is" ain't what it used to be, that "smart" weapons have a lower I.Q. and more limited applicability than advertised (see Paul F. Walker's and Eric Stambler's essay "[. . .] And the Dirty Little Weapons"*)*, and that advertising is the persuasive vehicle of choice, not argument (see Kathleen Hall Jamieson's *Eloquence in the Electronic Age*, a domestic commentary that none-the-less carries relevance for foreign affairs considerations, too). The real anarchy isn't coming, it's here, and it has to do not so much with the environment, weapons and crazy people—we've always

had our share of those and Kaplan presumes that the responses to weapons and crazy people will remain basically the same—as it does with words and images as the stealth weapons of choice, and the crazy ways that people have bought into words as transients, rather than stable residents of our world. Words/images are the battleground of cultural and sub-cultural wars. When they become transients, so do values and ideas.

Ultimately, my criticism of Kaplan pertains to his predictions, not his reporting. His observations of our world, the things he draws our attention to, are vital considerations for national security:

> To understand the events of the next fifty years, then, one must understand environmental scarcity, cultural and racial clash, geographic destiny, and the transformation of war. The order in which I have named these is not accidental. (18-19)

Kaplan claims the last two, "new approaches to mapmaking and to warfare—are the most important. They are also the least understood" (19). His book tries to fill those gaps in our understanding, and, for the most part, does an excellent job.

The Book of War: Twenty-five Centuries of Great War Writing. Edited by John Keegan. New York: Viking, 1999, xix+ 492 pp, list of sources, index. $34.95.

Reviewed by Elizabeth A. Muenger, United States Air Force Academy

John Keegan has assembled and edited an impressive collection of writings on war, a feat not necessarily as easy as it once might have been, given the proliferation of such anthologies in the last decade. As usual, Keegan has gathered his selections from a vantage point just oblique enough to add a new perspective to what we would normally expect from "great war writing." As he has done for the last thirty years, Keegan forces us to consider war and things military from expanded parameters. We hear from the vanquished French at Agincourt, from an old woman remembering being held prisoner by Indians during the course of the American Revolution, from an "Arab-Syrian gentleman" who opposed the Frankish crusaders in 1131. The breadth of the selection alone makes this book a valuable addition to any library and a necessity for any military historian.

The beauty of this collection, however, lies in the Keegan touches of a graceful introduction and an arrangement that isolates selections into clashes between cultures, hostilities involving regular armies in established European states, and finally, war in the twentieth century. Keegan has two major themes that bind the whole collection—that from Thucydides to Terkel, the crucial importance of the warrior spirit remains, and that "the history of all forms of warfare is [. . .] essentially inhumane." Indeed, given the non-combatant witnesses Keegan has summoned, his attention to the "warrior spirit" element seems muted, at best.

Accompanying most of the entries are Keegan's individual introductions to the selection, placing it in both chronological and contextual perspective. This strategy allows Keegan his wise words of commentary reminding the reader of the subtleties, ironies, and contradictions that are inescapable in conflict. The old woman, for instance, who applied for a pension on the grounds of her imprisonment by Indians under the pay of the British during the Revolution, had an impressive survival rate as a captive; she had also been held for three years by Indians when she was a child, during the French and Indian War. Captain Roeder, an officer in the Hessian Lifeguards who accompanied Napoleon on the Russian cam-

paign of 1812, missed most of the major battles on the road to Moscow, and indeed, missed Moscow itself, having been detailed with his regiment to protect communication lines and ferry supplies forward. His narrative of the retreat from Moscow, however, has all the power and horror of a battle itself, as the army attempts to retrace its steps and escape the Russian winter, "somewhat fantastically attired in priestly vestments and even women's gowns as a protection against the cold." Some choices need no introduction, but instead draw their power from their very unlikeliness of choice. Do we meet again Stephen Crane's blue serpent army, coiling and uncoiling down the road to Chancellorsville? No. Instead we read Crane's poem "War is Kind," with its bitter cynicism and deadly restraint. In the selections from the Zulu war battles of Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift, two Zulu warriors and two British officers provide the eyewitness accounts. We meet Rommel as a lieutenant in World War I, describing his company's attack on a French position in 1917; of Feldmarschall Erwin Rommel there are already traces.

There are only the smallest of critical bones to pick about this fine collection of war writings. A complete source list traces the origins of each of the selections, but in a few cases, Keegan could have added information and interest within his introductory remarks. A word or two about the battle of Blenheim, and Robert Southey's role in English letters, would have been welcome, especially for those Americans who are not military or literary historians. The same might be said for Elizabeth Custer's hagiographic role in proselytizing her husband's memory. Who is Helen Roeder? A great-granddaughter to the Napoleonic captain? What was her editing method? None of these small omissions are in any way crucial, but Keegan is so successful in engaging us with his selection that we might as well also request the full history lesson. This book is not for the military history buff, but for the thoughtful historian in any field.

Scenes From the End: The Last Days of World War II in Europe. Frank E. Manuel. South Royalton, Vermont: Steerforth Press, 2000, ix + 135 pp. $20.

Reviewed by Edward F. Krise, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

Scenes from the End is a personal narrative from the perspective of a U.S. Army intelligence officer and prisoner-of-war interrogator, covering the period of time from the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 to the occupation of Leipzig in May 1945. It is based upon notes written immediately after the author returned home on VJ-night, along with letters written to his wife. Fifty years later, Dr. Manuel found his material and assembled this memoir on the collapse of the Third Reich.

Although military historians may be looking for a thorough chronological narrative, Dr. Manuel lets his readers know from the start that *Scenes from the End* is not intended to provide mere facts: "Conversations reported here have passed through the smoke screen of memory, recollections of the spirit, rather than the precise detail, of events" (viii). As the author of fifteen academic books, including *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, which he wrote with his wife Fritzie P. Manuel and which won the 1993 National Book Award, Dr. Manuel shows a sophisticated understanding of how this new book departs from a purely academic purpose: "Military historians have assembled a picture of the grand design, creating the myth of an official history; but fragments may be closer to the chaos of experiences in war before it has been subjected to cleansing" (viii). Accordingly, Dr. Manuel notes that "the style and technique of these sketches derive from the movies, with their abrupt shifts of scenes and persons, to which the reader has to adapt" (viii). I did not find this to be a problem. The narrative flows vividly and evenly with a prose characteristic of an accomplished writer.

Dr. Manuel begins by briefly tracing his origins in a prosperous Jewish family in the Boston communities of Dorchester and Roxbury. As a student at Harvard, he received fellowships that enabled him to study in Europe, where he was exposed to an "enraged, screaming Hitler" (3). *The Nation* employed him as a correspondent in Spain, from which he departed just prior to the Spanish Civil War. Upon his return home, Manuel was appointed a regional director for the Federal Writers Project and later to the Office of Price Administration as well as the Office of War Information. The Army "snatched" him away and following several malassignments he was commissioned in Military Intelligence. Fluent in

French and German, Manuel was classified as a German prisoner-of-war interrogator, shipped to London in November 1944, and then to Paris.

Manuel's "baptism of fire" (the title of the first chapter) began when he was assigned to the 21st Corps of Seventh Army. He offers a general description of the unit's tactical situation and experience, first in reserve and then defending the left flank against German efforts to extend the perimeter of the Alsac pocket near Colmar. By late February, they reached Weilhime and Bad Tolz. On 30 April, Hitler committed suicide, which was followed by the surrender of the German High Command on 7 May. The 21st Corps and Manuel were then ordered to Leipzig.

Dr. Manuel describes the disorder and chaos at the end, noting the behavior of the French as the "conquered reconquering" (17). He depicts the Fatherland as one vast battlefield with the dead unburied in the forests, boxcars stalled in yards, and weapons scattered everywhere. He tells about the aimless movement of German troops as "everything had lost its meaning except getting out alive and returning to Hilde and the kids" (25). The last defenders of the Reich, Dr. Manuel notes ironically, were "weeping children and sniveling old men" (26).

The several layers of the German government including civil, party, military and SS units attempted to maintain some form of defensive posture, but "finally the hour had come for the besieged town. Snipers on the outskirts fired their last rounds. Flagwavers destroyed their swastikas and substituted the white of purity and surrender" (45). Dr. Manuel goes on to describe the reaction to defeat, including a wide variety of psychological defenses by the number of German citizens ranging from the common folk—"little Michels"—who remained loyal to their Fuhrer, but kept their feelings secret; to the few who resorted to guerilla warfare; to the homeless imported workers; and even to the German High Command.

Dr. Manuel addresses the issue of the Holocaust, too, in a fascinating chapter entitled "Remnants of Israel." He recalls a mass funeral service for Jews, who were continuing to die in the last days of the war, at which a rabbi says, "Let not the Germans who are standing here feel that we are full of hate. Because we are not. We leave judgment to God. The crimes are too grave for man to understand, to believe that they come from man" (76). Manuel's own identity as a Jew adds complexity to the narrative, especially when he describes his exchanges with some Polish Jews:

> They quickly recognized the American Jewish officers and in the traditional, ingratiating manner asked, "*Ihr seit a Yid? Ich bin oich a Yid*" (Are you a Jew? I too am a Jew). And then they poured forth their tales of woe, how nobody cares for the Jews who were starving in Warsaw. They wanted to report war crimes and to narrate their experiences. For a moment they made me feel part of the victorious army of farm boys and I told them that nobody was interested in their suffering. And they said I did not have a Jewish heart. I was only trying to deny myself in them, and them in myself. (87)

The final two chapters bring several more interesting episodes, as when Manuel reflects on his attempts to collect the books published in Leipzig, in order to send them to the Library of Congress and the British Museum. It turns out that the German soldiers got tired of reading Nazi Party literature: "What, no Nietzche in your knapsack? No Nietsche. A few Goethes here and there and even a bit of Hegel; but no *Mein Kampf*. The Party literature [. . .] gathered dust, while German soldiers clamored for translations of *Gone With the Wind* to comfort them through long nights in cellars and foxholes and pillboxes" (134). The role of Nazi propaganda in the war is well known and may tempt us to dismiss the German soldiers as automatons, but Manuel's insights into the soldiers' reading preferences evokes sympathy; these soldiers were human beings, too.

This narrative was of special interest to me, since I witnessed "the end" from a different perspective—as a 20-year-old prisoner of war. The retreating German Army on the Eastern Front elected to take their prisoners with them, and I participated in a 59-day trek from what is now Czema, Poland, to Celle (near Hanover), Germany. I observed many of the same discontinuities in German behaviors as noted by Dr. Manuel; for example, during one escape attempt, a fellow Ranger sergeant and I were recaptured and placed in a local city jail. We were booked, mugged, and fingerprinted, even though the sounds of the Russian guns were audible in the distance, by a sheriff who looked like the epitome of a Prussian officer. All of the sudden, he broke into uncontrolled sobbing. He discovered that my buddy had the same birthday as Adolph Hitler!

Scenes from the End succeeds as a memoir because it captures truths and complexities about the war that a mere history book could not, and yet it also rings true with my own experience. In his intentionally fragmented memoir, Dr. Manuel creates enough space for us to see ourselves there—to remember our own war, or to imagine ourselves in his.

Literature at War, 1914-1940: Representing the "Time of Greatness" in Germany. Wolfgang G. Natter. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, 280 pp. $35.00.

Reviewed by Rouven J. Steeves, United States Air Force Academy

At a time when ever-increasing professional specialization breeds highly detailed studies of the arcane, it is both refreshing and illuminating to read a work which transcends disciplines and frames specific literary considerations in the larger context of cultural and historical progression. Wolfgang Natter's examination of German literature during 1914-1940 is one such multi-layered study. It at once exposes the reasons for the rise of a bellicose, culturally chauvinistic stream of literature before, during, and after the First World War (the "Time of Greatness") while engendering an awareness of the danger inherent in the creation and manipulation of cultural capital by political forces. With respect to the latter, Natter especially bemoans simplistic analysis by scholars who study a work of literature but not the work of its formation.

Literature at War is in many ways a study of the war wrought on literature. Examining the "extraordinary proliferation of volumes and genres" of war literature, Natter—employing a harmonious mix of literary criticism, historical analysis, and case studies—argues that notions of unadulterated authorial inspiration must be tempered in light of overt and covert cultural and socio-political constraints imposed upon the author (4). Thus, as to the question whether the composition of literature is ever a purely aesthetic undertaking, Natter emphatically answers that the "effacement" of the considerations of social production and circulation is "the illusion on which rests the claim for literature as a purely poetic, autonomous realm of creation, an aesthetic construct that I reject" (10). Instead, Natter espouses that his study "emphatically links both meanings of *Geschichte* (history and story) in connecting past events with the storytelling of these events" (2). He argues not for historical or literary relativism but rather for the thorough examination of literature informed by an astute awareness of underlying socio-political and cultural forces.

Hence, in Chapter 1: "What is War Literature and Why Does it Merit Study?" Natter "describes" many of the "issues that a reader must weigh in determining the meaning of the war in the literature" and "why it is necessary to pursue the general question of how—through the interac-

tion of military, academic, and publishing agencies—a particular knowledge about the First World War was created and disseminated" (11). Unearthing and scrutinizing the vast depository of "nationalistically oriented literature (in some cases accorded canonical status after 1933) that was once widely read but is now largely forgotten by scholars" (2), Natter exposes the extensive censorship scheme with which the German army and state "took active steps in disseminating a type of writing imbued with what, both then and after defeat, would be labeled *Frontgeist* [the spirit of the trenches]" (36). Analyzing both active forms of censorship, undertaken by such agencies as the *Kriegspressestelle* (War Press Agency) and individuals such as the *Offizierkriegsberichterstatter* (officer war reporters), and reactive forms, in the guise of editorial censors, Natter argues that the "'original translations'" were "framed within the state-administered mechanisms that engendered the illusion of a seamless national identity and will, covering up incoherence or contradiction" (6).

The German idea of *Geist* in its various embodiments—the nationalistically infused *Juli-Geist* of 1914, the *Frontgeist* characterizing the brotherhood of soldiers, or the *Volksgeist* of the National Socialists—evokes a spiritual, veritable pseudo-Christian idea of redemptive history—of a people set apart for greatness. It is a theme which ebbs and flows throughout the literary currents of late nineteenth, early twentieth century Germany and which finds poignant articulation in Walter Bloem, both as author and head of the *Kriegspressestelle*.

The synergy of state and author working in tandem to dictate a national narrative of greatness are here clearly evidenced. In his historically fictive trilogy of the Franco-Prussian War, published prior to the Great War, Bloem repeatedly evokes the theme of the birth of nationhood, which is "both the content and the integrating principle of the novel" (48). Bloem's nationalistic stance steeped in Germanic heroism propels him to the head position of the *Kriegspressestelle* during World War I, where he is able to constructively shape *die Zukunft* (the future) to conform to the envisioned narrative.

A similar synergy of purpose is noted in Natter's consideration of Philipp Witkop's anthology, *Kriegsbriefe gefallener Studenten* (War letters of fallen students). Characteristic of this and other genres of war prose is the spectacle of their birth. Beginning with state institutions and the military hierarchy admonishing writers to exercise "self censorship," warnings of reprisals follow for letters that are not expressive of

"silent heroism" and the heroic ideal. The birthing process ends with multiple levels of censorship from army units to the editor ensuring a product that conforms to the developing national narrative (88).

Natter further develops the extent that such synergy was imposed by considering the dissemination of reading material both at home and on the front undertaken by the "army, the *Volksbildung* (popular education) movement, and publishers" (9). Specifically with regard to publishers, Natter analyzes the importance of individual firms "producing inexpensive literature at home and for the troops" which promoted national ideals. The case study focused on the Cotta publishing house is especially poignant, for it is reflective of an industry largely intent on framing a "war consonant with the 'spirit of 1914'"—even after defeat (9).

In the final case study of Bruno Vogel's anti-war polemic, *Es lebe der Krieg! Ein Brief* (Long live war! A letter), Natter examines the unequal struggle over the national narrative in light of the unexpected defeat. The court trial and punishment of Vogel and his publisher "amply indicate that the state censorship of works dealing with the First World War was indeed continuing after [. . .] Germany's surrender in November 1918" (193). In fact, the "Christianized" notions of the national narrative found even greater impetus as the National Socialists manipulated the idea of a nation born for a great destiny but betrayed (*die Dolchstoßlegende*) and forced to suffer an unjust "crucifixion" at Versailles. Under National Socialist leadership the time had come for the resurrection of the spirit of the nation born in the trenches and the movement "toward the full presence promised in 1914—a powerful and unified nation purged of particularities or contradictions" (208). As Natter concludes, "National Socialism completed the tautology prefigured by the propaganda work of a wartime culture industry" and embroiled Germany in another world war (208).

Literature at War is a fine interdisciplinary study, which deconstructs without succumbing to deconstructionism—that *Geschichte* is not a simple thing. If the work can be faulted, it is only in that while Natter rightly demands greater scholarly scrutiny of literature from the "Time of Greatness," and while he poignantly alludes to the greater danger of simplistic historical and literary examinations, he leaves the implicit question—how can greater objectivity be achieved—largely unanswered. Still, he clearly poses the problem, leaving another to proffer a clear—or at least clearer—solution. In the end, Natter's work poses the challenge to think critically without succumbing to skepticism—to focus on detail while

recognizing that the part must be understood in light of the whole. Neither literature, nor culture, nor history exists in a vacuum. The study, then, is a work in progress, not only in the historiography and study of literature in the period 1914-1940, but moreover as an examination of the "dense cultural capital at stake in the articulation of the political between 1914-1940, and furthermore, the extent to which normative culture, however unactualized for anti-hegemonic purposes, has been a strategic site for the orchestration of the political" (206).

A work's greatness is not dominantly determined by its timeliness but timelessness. As a study warning of simplism in scholarship, and even more so warning of the danger of permitting literature and culture to be manipulated by any force, Natter's *Literature at War* accomplishes both by emphasizing lessons man forgets time and time again.

Hart's War. John Katzenbach. New York: Ballantine, 1999, 490 pp. $24.95.

Reviewed by George Luker, United States Air Force Academy

Many times we learn best about the truth of history through fiction. While fictionalized prisoner-of-war experiences such as those found in David Westheimer's *Von Ryan's Express* and Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* distort some facts, and perhaps even revel in the free play of historical data, they wind up revealing truths about those captivity experiences in ways that laying out linear details rarely can. John Katzenbach's latest novel, *Hart's War*, is one such fictional tale. It is clearly a fiction: the setting for the narrative, Stalag Luft Thirteen, is a fabrication, a "composite of several camps," Katzenbach admits; the plot and characters are likewise inventions (489). And yet readers will be treated to solid research taken from sources such as Lewis Carlson's *We Were Each Other's Prisoners* and Westheimer's *Sitting It Out*.

Katzenbach's best source for his novel—and in a very genuine and significant way the person to whom the book is dedicated—is his own father, a B-25 navigator who was shot down over the waters of the North African theater on a skip-bombing mission and then captured by the Germans. From February 1943 to the end of the war, Katzenbach's father spent his life as a PW. For a short time he was held in Italy, and then later he was shipped to Stalag Luft Three in Sagan, Germany, close to the Polish border. All things considered, the elder Katzenbach's experiences are remarkable and worthy of their own story. When the war started, the senior Katzenbach had been studying pre-law at Princeton. After he was shot down and settled in as a prisoner at the German PW camp, he was able to obtain enough books from the YMCA and study them long enough so that when the war was finally over he was able to pass two year's worth of exams in six weeks. In fact, he graduated from Princeton on time with his class. The lesson that Katzenbach and his family took away from the "mythic" values that father imparted is that "an opportunity could be created out of any situation, no matter how harsh" (490).

Having mentioned all that, it should come as no surprise, then, that Katzenbach's main character is a B-25 navigator interned at a German PW camp. He is a "kriegie," a shortened German term that allied prisoners used to refer to themselves, who studies his small number of law

books during the countless hours of prison life. In the face of very austere conditions and the strict confines of the fictional Stalag Luft Thirteen, many opportunities nevertheless present themselves in this novel, a novel that could be considered a detective story and a provisional courtroom "whodunit." After a brutal murder is committed in the American sector of the camp, the main character, legal "expert" Lieutenant Tommy Hart, is chosen by the camp's Senior American Officer to defend the only Tuskegee Airman in camp, accused of murdering another kriegie, a white racist American flyer. With help from two RAF prisoners who live apart from American prisoners, a former Canadian police detective and a famed British barrister, Tommy Hart's assignment is to prove the lone black flyer's innocence. Hart's task becomes daunting since the murder looks like a frame-up and racial prejudice runs wide and deep at the camp. All the evidence places guilt squarely on the black man, so in order to prove his innocence, Hart needs to find the actual murderer or murderers. His only chance to solve the crime within this controlled prison community is to unravel all of the motives, means, and opportunities for the murder to take place. As it turns out in this case, motives and means are less important than opportunities.

Unmistakably, the concept of opportunities is important to Katzenbach's whole story. Just as his prisoners generate opportunities at Stalag Luft Thirteen, Katzenbach himself crafts many opportunities to show readers what life was like in World War II German PW camps. He demonstrates, for example, that in those camps American and RAF flyers were treated relatively well compared to their Russian counterparts who were literally worked to death. That even though the western allies received marginally better treatment, all prisoners suffered from constant starvation, freezing temperatures, paralyzing fear, and relentless tedium. That racism can find a way of overriding misery. That misery measures the depths of one's self. That the word "enemy" can be a slippery term. *Hart's War* reminds us in the end that we rarely know when we'll have to fight our greatest battles, but by glancing backward through historical fiction we may better anticipate the important conflicts in front of us.

Please send book review inquiries to Lt Col Mark S. Braley at mark.braley@usafa.af.mil.

War, Literature & the Arts

An International Journal of the Humanities

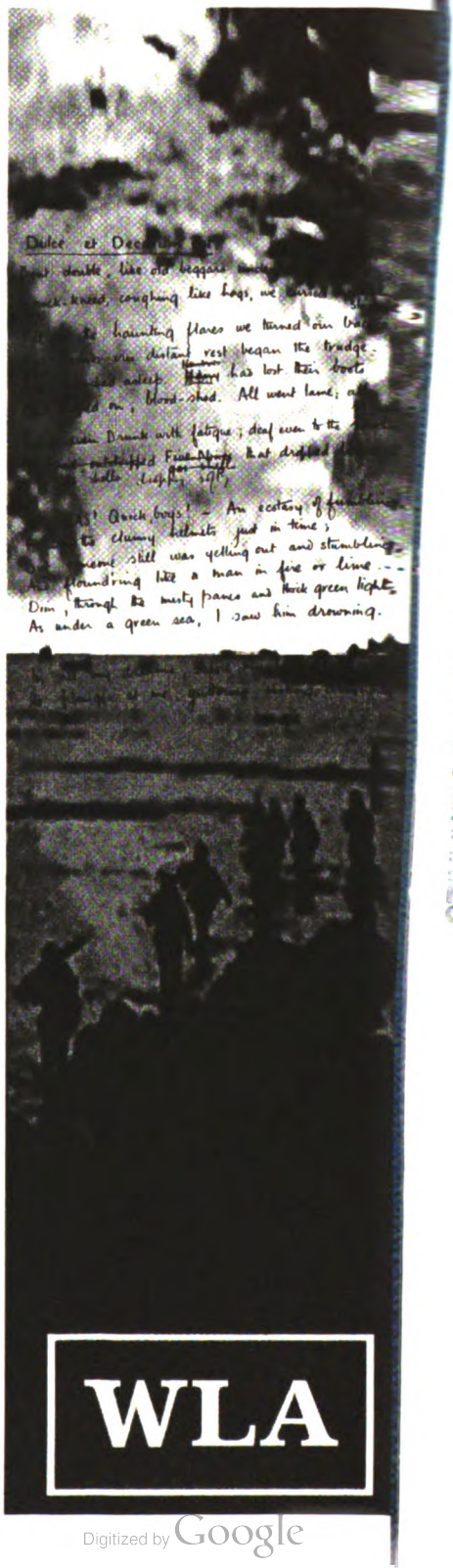
Recent contributors:

Paul West	John Clark Pratt
Richard Wilbur	Wendy Bishop
Andre Dubus	David Willson
W.D. Ehrhart	John Gery
Rolando Hinojosa	Carolyn Forché
Reg Saner	G.S. Shara Chandra
John Wolfe	Maggie Jaffe
Robert Pinsky	George Monteiro
Robert Morgan	Jim Colvert

Praise for the journal:

Published since 1989 by the English Department at the U.S. Air Force Academy, WLA has long been an unusual and enticing journal. Orienting itself in relation to a topic many find abhorrent and coming from a military organization, it may, in some people's eyes, be foredoomed. But even the least prescient reader must realize the creative result of individual war-time experience. The literary artifact is not responsible for the situation; instead, the evil at least has this singular positive result. WLA provides a forum for the discussion of this material. Its 300 pages are so full of amazing material that one wonders how the editors manage matters. Essays, poems, fiction, reviews, interviews, and artwork round out extraordinary issues. This is a superior publication.

– Robert Hauptman, Editor,
Journal of Information Ethics



Further information:

http://www.usafa.af.mil/dfeng/wla.htm
Donald Anderson, Editor
e: donald.anderson@usafa.af.mil
p: 719.333.3930 f: 719.333.3932

Subscriptions for biannual journal available:
one year $10 | two years $18 | three years $24

Digitized by Google



War, Literature & the Arts:
An International Journal
of the Humanities

Managing Editor	Colonel Thomas G. Bowie, Jr.
Editor	Donald Anderson
Poetry Editor	Will Hochman
Fiction Editor	Robert Burns
Book Review Editor & Assistant	Lieutenant Colonel Mark S. Braley Captain Stephen J. Rippon
Design Director	Captain Gary Mills
Editor of Electonic Publishing	William E. Newmiller http://www.usafa.af.mil/dfeng/wla
Contributing Editors	Fred Kiley Perry Luckett Captain Thomas G. McGuire
Associate Editors	Richard W. Lemp William E. Sheidley Lieutenant Colonel James. H. Meredith Tracy Santa Lieutenant Colonel D.A. Boxwell David Haven Blake Lieutenant Colonel Thomas W. Krise Major Brian J. Hanley

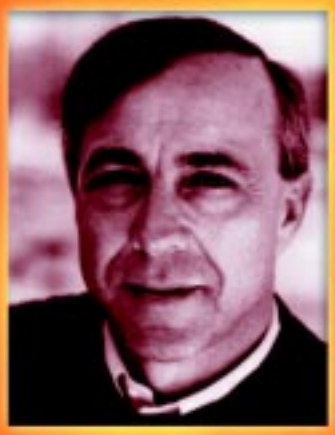
Digitized by Google

I covered the final weeks of the Vietnam War as a correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*, and, as most of you know, I fought in it with the U.S. Marine Corps in 1965 and 1966. Tonight, I'm going to talk about my memoir of Vietnam, *A Rumor of War,* and about Vietnam's legacy—the lasting effects it's had on our society and culture. But I want you to understand that I'm no dispassionate historian. For me, the war has been and always will be a deeply personal, emotional experience. In fact, it was the most important thing that ever happened to me. Like thousands of veterans, I underwent a kind of death and re-birth in the rice-paddies and jungles. Sixteen of my comrades were not so lucky—their names are now etched on that stark, black-granite wall in Washington. Whenever I recall those names and the faces that went with them, I'm reminded of the words a French officer spoke years after the armistice ending World War One: "The war, old boy, is our youth, secret and interred."

– Philip Caputo, p. 19







War, Literature & the Arts:
An International Journal
of the Humanities

Volume 12, Number 1
Spring/Summer 2000

Photograph of Mr. Caputo © Stephen Ellis
Cover design by Jeff Collins

WLA
War, Literature & the Arts
Spring/Summer 2000