



Falcon Footnote

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Academic Year 2020-2021

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Holocaust Programming & Outreach

By Dr. Meredith Scott and Lt Col Michael Epper

Alain Resnais' masterful Holocaust documentary, *Night and Fog*, closes with a haunting reflection:

“With our sincere gaze, we survey the countryside as if the old monster lay crushed forever beneath the rubble. . . We pretend it all happened only once at a given time and place. We turn a blind eye to what surrounds us and turn a deaf ear to humanity’s never-ending cry.”



This refrain, paired with the knowledge that we teach history for the profession of arms, is a heady reminder that what cadets learn in the classroom is critical to their futures. These realities drive the study of the Holocaust at USAFA, as cadets wrestle with difficult questions, give voice to Jewish experiences, and analyze the actions of those involved. They equally come to understand the crucial role that militaries play in preventing and ending mass violence. These are vital lessons for future officers. With this in mind, DFH is creating new opportunities for cadets to examine the Holocaust and its enduring consequences.

This year, DFH partnered with the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, DC and the Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies at UT Dallas. In March, twenty-two History, FAS, Poli Sci, Humanities, and MSS cadets took part in a two-day workshop on the Holocaust, genocide, and the prevention of mass atrocities. Working with USHMM, DFH held sessions on German military changes prior to 1941 and leadership ethics. Cadets also interacted with a survivor, examined the warning signs of genocide, and took part in an interagency panel with the Dept. of Defense, USAID, and the Dept. of State. In addition, several cadets traveled to the Ackerman Center during the first summer period, working with its world-class resources and depth of expertise on the Holocaust. C1C Ellie Beaulieu, C1C Colton Layman, and C1C Andrew Sellon pursued advanced research as part of a History 499 under the direction of Lt Col Michael Epper. C1C Corey Eisert Wlodarczyk took part in the inaugural Ackerman CSRP, which paired his capstone research on the restitution of Aryanized and looted property with administrative support for the center. Opportunities such as these give cadets the ability to expand their learning outside of the classroom and incorporate it into their development as future officers and leaders. We are committed to offering innovative programming and look forward to what next year will bring!

**The Falcon Footnote
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Commander's Corner: Col Meg Martin



Dear DFHers near and far, thanks for hanging in there for our Academic year 20-21 roll up! In many ways, our department and USAFA continued to feel the effects of COVID-19. The department abided by USAFA policies and procedures governing mask wear, physical distancing, telework, leave and official travel, and the myriad other areas affected by COVID. The Fall 2020 semester was especially altered, with most classes taught remotely, and frequent quarantine and isolation measures implemented. The global health pandemic began to subside in noticeable ways during the Spring 2021 semester, and with the introduction of a vaccination and widespread inoculation among the faculty and det population beginning in March, in-person interaction, both in and out of the classroom, increased markedly. Despite very real challenges, the success of our cadets and faculty remained undiminished, so that even during another upended year, DFH faculty and cadets continued to excel. As always, thanks to our faculty alumni, former cadets, and donors who have made opportunities possible for our department.

We completed the military-to-civilian faculty transition plan in the fall. Our final hire, which took our total number of civilians to 12, was for an expert in European history. Dr. Meredith Scott joined our team on a permanent basis, she had previously served in a temporary billet, and we are delighted to announce her addition. Also on the personnel

front, we celebrated military promotions to major (Joel Mathews), lieutenant colonel (Teddy Givler, USSF, pinned on, Nick Smith is now a select) and to colonel (Matt Dietz pinned on as he left for a deployment). We also celebrated new academic ranks with promotions to senior instructor (LT Tony Rush, USN, and Lt Col Mike Epper) and associate professor (Dr. Doug Leonard). Maintaining a tradition of active scholarship, our faculty members published, presented, and served on panels over 45 times. DFH members also supported wider USAFA requirements serving on Admissions Boards, Outcome Teams, as Officer Representatives, club OICs, and as a tenure committee member, among the most notable.

Our cadets remained engaged as well. In summer 20, Dr. Bob Wettemann helmed an oral history project capturing department-level responses to COVID, with cadets conducting nearly all the interviews. Eleven of our majors also participated in the annual Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum in late April. The Academy's research office posted a list of abstracts of planned CSURF presentations that can be found here:

https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/CSURF-2021-USAFA-Book_of_Abstracts.pdf.

As of this writing, summer research was underway for summer 21, with several cadets able to travel to locations in Florida (CENTCOM), Dallas (The Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies), and Alabama (Maxwell AFB). For the first time ever, DFH selected an outstanding cadet senior thesis, which went to C1C Jackson Ayers. Jackson also earned a graduate school spot as the Wolfe Scholar, given to an outstanding cadet in the Humanities Division. He also was awarded the Outstanding Cadet in the Humanities Award. C1C Ayers is one of 4 cadets DFH will send with history or FAS-History majors to graduate school this fall—great news for the DFH faculty pipeline and for our graduates! Our two department sponsored Graduate Studies Program scholarship recipients are Mark Schell (San Diego) and Kate Power (Ohio). Jackson Ayers (Wolfe Scholarship) is headed to Hawaii, and Spencer Rohlwing (FAS-History, Lawson Scholarship) is off to Florida. We are so pleased for these cadets' success!

Although COVID was disruptive again this year, we are pleased that the department is moving forward in several important areas. The Harmon Memorial Lecture, which was cancelled in Fall 20, will take place this year in October. We are thrilled to announce that DFH alumna Jeanne Heidler and David Heidler will be our speakers. Dr. Justin Simundson was our lone current DFHer at SMH this spring; we expect robust attendance in Fort Worth in April. After a gap last year in our Distinguished Visiting Professor program, we are excited to welcome Dr. Kathryn Barbier who joins us this academic year from Mississippi State University. Finally, in late July, I met with a core of engaged faculty alumni to kick off the formation of a more formally organized faculty alumni association. The group's first goal is to update addresses to bring our community together, with an eye towards a possible 2023 department reunion. Larry Weaver is leading the way with key support from Don Bishop, John Terino, Tom Menza, Dick Rauschkolb, and Ted Hitchcock. Former Permanent Professors Brig Gen (ret) Carl Reddel and Brig Gen (ret) Mark Wells are involved as well. Many others have agreed to help grow the mission and scope of the group and we look forward to their progress. If you hear from Don or others, please know it is a real group—no phishing here! If you'd like to be plugged in, please join the DFH Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/USAFACademyHistoryDept>) or email the department (USAFA.DFH@usafa.edu).

DFH's focus remains on developing our cadets both as budding historians and as leaders of character in service to our nation, the Air Force, and Space Force. Thanks to all of you for your continued support of DFH, its faculty members, and our cadets. As always, "Once a DFHer, always a DFHer!"

Faculty Profile

By Dr. Cameron McCoy

Dr. Cameron McCoy is a native of Washington, D.C. and teaches courses in 20th and 21st century U.S. history. Dr. McCoy has taught at the United States Military Academy at West Point, Brigham Young University, and currently in residence at the United States Air Force Academy. His upcoming manuscript, tentatively titled, *Contested Valor: African American Marines in the Age of Power, Protest, and Tokenism* (University Press of Kansas, projected publication 2022), chronicles the lives and experiences of many of the first African American Marines during their military service in the American South and abroad from 1945 to 1975. His work is distinctive because it examines the limitations of military integration and the critical failure of leadership on the part of many Washington and Marine officials during the Cold War era, which led to distinct forms and practices of systemic racism. He also focuses on rare aspects of military life during this period: the psychological effects of institutionalized racism and the emergent Black Power and Civil Rights movements, which served as a significant catalyst for several 21st century cultural diversity programs in the Marine Corps. He earned his doctorate in U.S. history at the University of Texas at Austin after receiving a master's in military history at Texas A&M University, and his bachelor's in International & Area Studies at BYU.



In addition to being an assistant professor and teaching courses on U.S. Race Relations, the Great Wars, Modern Warfare Studies, and Foreign Policy, Dr. McCoy also serves in the Marine Corps Reserve as an infantry officer. He currently holds and has held several positions of command while serving multiple combat tours and deployed to various countries in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM, ENDURING FREEDOM, ULCHI FREEDOM GUARDIAN, KEY RESOLVE, and the combined field training exercise Foal Eagle (Seoul, Korea).

In his duties as a Marine Reservist, as he balances life as an assistant professor at USAFA, Dr. McCoy has served as Commanding Officer, Headquarters and Service Company and Company C, 4th Recon Battalion, San Antonio, Texas; field historian for the Marine Corps History Division and the National Museum of the Marine Corps, during which time, he deployed in support of SP-MAGTF-CRA. Dr. McCoy later served as a strategic planner for the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command (JECC), USTRANSCOM, Norfolk, Virginia where he participated in multiple exercises, mission tailored packages, and real-world missions in support of USINDOPACOM, EUCOM, and USSOUTHCOM.

2021 DFH Weapons Shoot at Fort Carson

By Dr. Bob Wettemann



Spring 2021 also witnessed the return of a long-time cadet favorite, the History Club's Historic Weapons Shoot. Facilitated by former DFHer Lt Col Nathan Watanabe (U.S. Army, retired), nearly thirty cadets participated in the shoot, held at a range on Fort Carson. After witnessing DFH's own Dr. Bob Wettemann get three rounds off from his 1763 Charleville .69 caliber smoothbore musket in a minute, fifteen seconds, cadets witnessed the evolution of



the rate of fire of a succession of American longarms used throughout history, from the American Civil War, to the Spanish American War, to the world wars, and on to the present day. After this demonstration, they took weapons in their own hands, and under close supervision, had the



opportunity to get up close and personal with these weapons, loading and firing them to see this evolution first hand. The Weapons Shoot is always a cadet crowd pleaser, and with the COVID pandemic soon to be in our rearview mirror, there are already plans for next year.

Photos:

Cadet under the guidance of Lt Col (ret.) Nathan Watanabe fires m1919 Browning .30 caliber light machinegun;

Dr. Bob Wettemann instructs a cadet in the finer points of loading the m1763 Charleville .69 caliber flintlock musket;

C2C Logan Beck, C1C Wyatt Lake, Lt Col Nathan Watanabe (U.S. Army, ret), and Dr. Bob Wettemann at the Historic Weapons Shoot.

Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Outstanding Thesis Award: Lt Col Jessica Brown

On February 26, 2021, incoming history instructor Lieutenant Colonel Jessica Brown, was awarded the prestigious Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) “Outstanding Thesis Award” for 2020. The CSGS is comprised of over 200 graduate schools from 15 different states. Only two graduate students are recipients of the award and Lt Col Brown was one of them.

The CSGS award committee asked Lt Col Brown to provide a two to three minute speech at the award ceremony providing insight into the research process for her thesis titled “A Symbol of American Female Equality: The United States Air Force Pilot.” Lt Col Brown told the committee the journey of her thesis question started with her MC-130H Initial Qualification Course in 2008. She stated, “I sat down in my academic classroom at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico to begin my journey with initial qualification in the MC-130H Talon II as an Electronic Warfare Officer (EWO). I was the youngest aviator in the class of 12 students...and the only female. Two older civilian male simulator instructors found me and presented an excel document identifying the Talon II community members, both past and present. The instructors were excited to relay that I was “number seven” and “number ten.” I asked what those numbers meant. The instructors continued, “you are the seventh female to train in the MC-130H as an EWO, and the tenth female to ever fly the MC-130H since being operational in 1992.” I didn’t know what to think...here it was, January 18, 2008, and I’m being told I am “seven and ten;” how could that be? Surely this information, this timeframe must be a mistake.”

During her 18 months in graduate school at Auburn University, Lt Col Brown visited various archives in-person and online while developing her thesis. The three archives that she spent weeks researching were the Air Force Historical Research Agency in Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama, the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California. Additionally, Lt Col Brown interviewed multiple key political and military figures from the 1970s and 1980s; one pivotal group was the first class of female pilots in the USAF, Class 77-08.

During her research Lt Col Brown identified an academic shortfall; there were missing stories, incomplete and outdated information regarding the role of the female aviator in the USAF. Lt Col Brown’s thesis work examined the history of gender integration in the Air Force within the broader US political and social context. She demonstrated through the archive’s primary sources in conjunction with the firsthand interviews, that the USAF female pilot became a symbol of equality in America enabling further social and political changes within other institutions.

The CSGS committee stated “the thesis exemplified the research skill, independent thought, and clarity of expression that one would expect of the winner of this award.” Lt Col Brown not only won the CSGS “Outstanding Thesis Award” but she also garnered Auburn University’s “Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award” for 2020. Lt Col Brown’s work is truly groundbreaking and has been used to craft the National Museum of the United States Air Force’s first-ever exhibit on women in flight, “USAF 77-08,” which opened to the public March 5, 2021.



Photo

Lt Col Jessica Brown with children: Eli (baby) and Nathan; Halloween 2018 at Auburn University

History of BBQ

By Dr. Bob Wettemann

In Spring 2021, DFH offered “American Regional Identities” for the first time. The course, a product of the recent curriculum revision, promised to examine how a rich tapestry of diverse regional identities contributes to the national character. Exploring history, ideology, economy, demography and environment as factors that shaped both regional and national identities the course, as designed, was a blank canvas for a wide variety of historical study.

There was a time when history classes chronicled almost exclusively the tales of elite white men, a narrative tilted heavily toward political, military, and economic heroism. The profession eventually matured to broaden its gaze to yield a past that is more inclusive of people from different backgrounds of race, class, and gender. Along with this maturation in scope came a parallel flowering in research and interpretive methodology. Historians of the environment, technology, culture, social movements, and so forth revealed how thematic interpretation enable us to draw wider conclusions about the forces that forged the world we inhabit.

Food and its interaction with society, or “foodways,” emerged as a serious thematic field of study only in the last forty years, and in this early phase found primary focus in the tradition of cultural history. In the last fifteen years, however, we have witnessed an outpouring of scholarship that considers the history of food more inclusively. Today, a foodways approach can be used to explore themes as diverse as technology and environment, social, political, legal, cultural, and economic history.

Although Barbecue is not necessarily an American invention, Americans certainly argue about it, and the claim can be advanced that it is the quintessentially American food. But beyond that, there is considerable disagreement as to who makes it best. North Carolina? Texas? Memphis? Kansas City? What is it? Whole Hog? Pork Shoulder? Ribs? Beef? Chicken? Cooked outdoors over a live fire? Indoors with gas? Direct or Indirect Heat? Grilled? Sauce or Not? Tomato-based sauce? Mustard? Vinegar? The debate goes on and on. But there are historical precedents for these differences based upon a host of historical phenomena that can allow us to explore not only various aspects of technology, but environment, social, political, legal, cultural, and economic history...all through the study of the gastronomic wonder that is American Barbecue!



History of BBQ Cont.

These questions formed the foundation for the inaugural offering of History 341: American Regional Identities: The History of Barbecue. Over the course of the semester, thirty two cadets in three sections of the course explored the historical roots of American barbecue, what it was, how it emerged, and how it became an American food. They read about the historical development of barbecue from its Afro-Caribbean origins, its role in local and regional politics in the nineteenth century, its dynamic and formative personalities, and how barbecue evolved into the food industry that it is today. In addition to dynamic classroom conversations, students researched well known American pitbosses of the historical past, as well as contemporary figures in American barbecue, with some going so far as to correspond and speak with John Vergos of the famous Rendezvous Barbecue in Memphis, Wayne Mueller of Mueller's BBQ in Lockhart Texas, Chris Lilly of Big Bob Gibson's Barbecue in Decatur, Alabama, and Deuce Raymond of Sweet Baby Ray's Barbecue Sauce.



In addition to traditional classroom instruction, cadets also participated in a pair of lab exercises: a “sauce lab,” where they were tasked with finding a barbecue sauce that could be documented to pre-1945 sources, and a “rub lab,” where they were encouraged to procure a contemporary barbecue rub. In both cases, they were to attribute the sauce or rub to a regional style, and determine why that was the case, before adding sauce and rub to pulled pork that had been prepared by their professor. And although COVID protocols prevented any field trips or dining in experiences, on two occasions a pop-up restaurant opened and they were permitted to have “drive through” service at the aptly named “That Barbecue Place,” which operated out of their professor’s garage, providing them a chance to sample mesquite-smoked Texas beef brisket and slow-roasted barbecue ribs.

The class ended right before graduation, and for at least two of the students in the course, barbecue was a part of their sixty-days of post-graduation adventures, as their paths crossed at Arthur Bryant’s BBQ in Kansas City, Missouri. Needless to say, the course was a tasty success, and there are sincere hopes that History 341 will be offered again soon!

Photos:

Sauce Lab 1 — Students in History 341: History of Barbecue prepare for the sauce lab. (opposite)

Sauce Lab 2 — The products of the Sauce Lab (top right)

Sauce Lab 3 — 2Lts Will Ulrich and Beth Gordon meeting at Arthur Bryant’s Barbecue in Kansas City, Missouri. (bottom left)

FACULTY FAREWELL: Colonel Matt 'Meta' Dietz



My arrival at USAFA in July of 2020 was the result of a series of happy accidents going all the way back to my failure of a physics final exam at Texas A&M in 1996. That was the day I changed my major to history, which led to me eventually getting a master's degree in history and the opportunity to apply for a position at USAFA. Since it is the Air Force, of course, nothing is that straightforward. So, just before Christmas 2017 Col Martin called and offered the opportunity to get a PhD for three years before joining the DFH faculty – and of course the life changing decision needed to be made in the next three days.

When I arrived for work my first day, it marked only the second time I stepped foot on the Academy in my life. In the span of the nearly twenty-five years between failing a physics final and joining the department, I found a passion for flying jets, learning history, and teaching/mentoring young officers. USAFA let me do almost all of those things, and the thing I enjoyed the most was interacting with the cadets. Even the ones who did not like history wanted and needed mentorship and coaching as

they transitioned from high school kid to Air Force officer. While Covid blocked most of the face-to-face interaction, for the most part they were eager to learn – which made my job infinitely easier and more enjoyable.

Covid made a lot of things about my year at USAFA odd, and frankly slightly frustrating. I did not get to fully embrace all of the USAFA experiences – such as sporting events and cadet milestones. Most frustrating was the limited interaction with my colleagues in the department and across the Academy. Fortunately, we managed to squeeze a few LeMay Hours in and from time to time eat lunch together. Also, since my office faced one of the doors, I could see and chat with people as they came and left. While these interactions were in masks and more than six feet apart, everyone in the department made me feel welcome and strove to both learn about me and my family and share their experiences. Despite the limits and restrictions, I truly can say I made many new friends.

In another turn of events typical of how Air Force works, my promotion to colonel meant I had to leave the department after only ten months. My new job as the AFCENT A3 is rewarding and challenging in different ways from my time at USAFA, but it is also a bit exhausting to be honest. After nearly two decades of operational flying, I quickly grew accustomed to the slower pace of academic life – needless to say things are anything but slow here. The challenge of closing up combat operations in Afghanistan dominates my days along with the ever changing geo-political reality of the Middle East. I truly hope I will return to USAFA after my tour here to renew the friendships and continue leading, teaching, and mentoring young officers.

Regardless of whether that hope becomes reality, I am grateful to Col Martin for the opportunity to serve in the department and happy I had the chance to meet all of you and call you friends.

PS – I am considering starting a LeMay Hour here since that is a tradition worth sharing!

FACULTY FAREWELL: Lt Col Michael Epper

Two years ago when I was interviewed to join the department, little did I know the tone of that meeting would set the tone for my time in the department. I remember thinking how did these people know so much about what I thought was a rather innocuous subject. However, what impressed me the most was after more than 25 years in the Air Force I had finally found people who thought like me and understood life in a similar fashion. I instantly felt at home and enjoyed the lunch table discussions on the topic de jour or EI sessions with cadets to see the lightbulb moments. The comradery of the department was impressive and I quickly adjusted to my new life of reading books and doing research solely for the purpose of learning. That first semester, while daunting, was an amazing time.



With the start of my second term I was ready to dive into the material again and further expand my portfolio, however that wasn't meant to be. The departure of the Cadet Wing in March of 2020 forced the department to once again adjust to a new teaching norm: remote operations. Over the course of the next 18 months we re-wickered our teaching styles and assignments to ensure the cadets still gained an appreciation for the hardest "fuzzy" class they would ever take.

Now as I approach the end of my time in the department and my Air Force career, I am very grateful for my DFH tour. The cadets have taught me new meanings for the phrase "Sir, may I ask a question?" and "Sir, I don't understand?" Ultimately, I will miss my friends in the department and I look forward to continuing to serve with them in my new career in the Athletic Department. In the end, it is all about our mission to create "Leaders of Character."

Farewells:

Part of being at USAFA is experiencing a level of faculty turnover every year. Please join us in saying farewell to some of the DFH team as they move on to future endeavors.

Lt Col (ret) John Clune: Retired—Humanities Dept Head, Merchant Marine Academy

Col Matthew Dietz: PCS'd AFCENT/A3 Forward al Udeid AB

Lt Col Michael Epper: Retired—USAFA Athletic Dept

Major Tim Romans: Returned to Air Force Reserve, Atlanta

LT Tony Rush: PCS'd US Navy 5th Fleet, Bahrain

New Civilian Faculty:

Over the past year, DFH hired and onboarded 1 civilian professor, bringing the department to its full compliment of 12 full-time civilians. Welcome aboard to:

Dr. Meredith Scott (Assistant Professor)

Hails:

DFH is proud to welcome six new incoming faculty members this summer. Welcome to the team!

Dr. Mary K Barbier (Distinguished Visiting Professor): Arriving from Mississippi State University, Starkville MS

Lt Col Spencer Beaumont: Arriving from Texas A&M University, College Station TX

Lt Col Theodore Givler: Arriving from University of Colorado-CO, Colorado Springs, CO

Lt Col Robert Umholtz: Arriving from Offutt AFB

Major Patrick Hussey: Arriving from Aviano AB

Major David Martin: Arriving from Wright Patterson AFB

Academic Year 2020-2021 Teaching Awards

Outstanding Academy Educator: Dr. Doug Kennedy

John F. Shiner Award (Military History Teaching Excellence): Lt Col Michael Epper

David H. Zook Award (International History Teaching Excellence): Major Timothy Romans

Jeanne Heidler Award (American History Teaching Excellence): Dr. Robert Wettemann

Stephen L. Orrison Award (Cadet Mentorship Excellence): Dr. Meredith Scott

Academic Year 2020-2021 Cadet Awards

Outstanding Cadet in Humanities Award: Jackson Ayers
Andrews Award for the Top Overall History Major: Mark Schell
Bong Award for the Top Cadet in Military History: Connor Lofthus
7th Bomb Group Award for the Top Cadet in General History: Camryn Mathis
American History Award: William Ulrich
International History Award: Veronica Cunningham
Rupp Award for Interdisciplinary Studies Related to History: Raymond Metzger
Thiele Award for the Department's Graduate Studies Program Recipients: Kathryn Power and Mark Schell
Air Force Historical Foundation Award (Best Airpower Paper): Wyatt Lake
Outstanding Senior Thesis Award: Jackson Ayers
Outstanding Cadet in Humanities Major: Julia Rochester
Wolf Scholarship: Jackson Ayers
Lawson Scholarship: Spencer Rohlwing



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