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# FROM THE PERSONAL TO THE GLOBAL: LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

JOINT CONFERENCE OF  
THE SECOND WORLD WAR NETWORK (SCOTLAND)  
& THE SECOND WORLD WAR RESEARCH GROUP

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, 9-10 JUNE 2023



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#FromPersonalToGlobal

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## Friday 9th June 2023

9.00 - 9.45	Registration (McMillan Room)		
9.45 - 10.00	Opening Comments: Wendy Ugolini, Jonathan Fennell & Gary Sheffield (Meadows Lecture Theatre)		
10.00 - 11.30	Panel Session 1		
	<i>A - Armies in Exile</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre) CHAIR: Julie Gottlieb Guy Bud Nick Clifton Jenny Grant	<i>B - The Implications of Race</i> (CMB Seminar Room 1) CHAIR: Dan Todman Oliver Coates Alexandre Fortes Ed Gitre	<i>C - Prisoners of War</i> (CMB Seminar Room 2) CHAIR: Richard Hammond Mark Newman Michal Pałacz Wendy Webster
11.30 - 11.45	Refreshments (McMillan Room)		
11.45 - 13.15	Panel Session 2		
	<i>D - Conscientious Objectors</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre) CHAIR: Tobias Kelly Rosemary Rich Linsey Robb Claudia Treacher	<i>E - Colonial Dynamics</i> (CMB Seminar Room 1) CHAIR: Jeremy Crang Ewan Lawry Nina Wardleworth Rishika Yadav	<i>F - Institutional Representations</i> (CMB Seminar Room 2) CHAIR: Calum Robertson Kate Clements Matthew Kidd Andrew Whitmarsh
13.15 - 14.00	Lunch (McMillan Room)		
14.00 - 15.30	Keynote address & plenary discussion (live-stream on Zoom) Andrew Buchanan & Ruth Lawlor <i>Time to Murder and Create: Writing Histories of a Greater Second World War</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre)		
15.30 - 15.45	Refreshments (McMillan Room)		
15.45 - 17.45	Panel Session 3		
	<i>G - Emotions and the British Home Front</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre) CHAIR: Linsey Robb Julie Gottlieb Alex Hill Joshua Madrid	<i>H - Perspectives on Asia</i> (CMB Seminar Room 1) CHAIR: Alex Wilson Azrin Afrin Hanzhi Dai Zuzubee Huidrom	<i>I - Morale and Armed Forces</i> (CMB Seminar Room 2) CHAIR: Wendy Ugolini Matthew Barrett Geoffrey Hayes Gary Sheffield Hélène Solot
19.30	Conference dinner		

## Saturday 10th June 2023

8.30 - 9.00	Registration & Refreshments (McMillan Room)		
9.00 - 11.00	Panel Session 4		
	<i>J - Medical Care</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre) CHAIR: Tobias Kelly Roderick Bailey Frances Houghton Laure Humbert	<i>K - Home Fronts</i> (CMB Seminar Room 1) CHAIR: Jonathan Fennell Jadwiga Biskupska Kateryna Budz Thomas Bottelier Wendy Goldman	<i>L - Combat Effectiveness</i> (CMB Seminar Room 2) CHAIR: Gary Sheffield Megan Hamilton Richard Hammond Karine Varley Bastiaan Willems
11.00 - 12.00	Keynote address: Susan R. Grayzel <i>"G stands for Gas Mask": How Objects Can Illuminate Lived Experiences of the Second World War</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre)		
12.00 - 13.30	Lunch (McMillan Room)		
12.45 - 13.30	UG Panel: Holocaust Histories Farradeh Martin & Maddie Walch (G.16)		
13.30 - 15.00	Panel Session 5		
	<i>M - Agency</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre) CHAIR: Susan Grayzel Ling-chieh Chen Jonathan Fennell Alex Wilson	<i>N - Moving Through Space</i> (CMB Seminar Room 1) CHAIR: Frances Houghton Oliver Carter-Wakefield Liz Gardner	<i>O - Holocaust Perspectives</i> (CMB Seminar Room 2) CHAIR: Tereza Valny Paul Bartrop Karen Porter
15.00 - 15.15	Refreshments (McMillan Room)		
15.15 - 16.45	Panel Session 6		
	<i>P - Gendering War</i> (Meadows Lecture Theatre) CHAIR: Jeremy Crang Kiera Fitzgerald Michelle Moffat Joseph Quinn	<i>Q - Indigenous Forces</i> (CMB Seminar Room 1) CHAIR: Gary Sheffield Liam Kane Ed Pinfield Jacob Stoil	<i>R - Remembering the War Dead</i> (CMB Seminar Room 2) CHAIR: Wendy Webster Lisa Cooper Caitlin G. DeAngelis Wendy Ugolini

## ABOUT THE HOSTS



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

### SECOND WORLD WAR NETWORK (SCOTLAND)

@*SWWStudiesEdin*

The Second World War Network (Scotland) formally launched in April 2021. Dr Wendy Ugolini, School of History, Classics and Archaeology and Professor Tobias Kelly, School of Social & Political Science, were awarded a Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) Arts & Humanities Research Network Award to run a Second World War Network in Scotland. Previously, in 2019 they hosted the 'New Directions in Second World War Studies' interdisciplinary workshop which brought together researchers in the field to discuss their work and to flag up themes which would be of importance during the 80th anniversary commemorations of the conflict (2019-2025).

Following a suspension of activities due to Covid-19, the Network moved online and curated a series of events, including Expert Round Tables on 'New Texts/New Themes' and the British Empire and the Second World War; and a series of Second World War Conversations panels covering East Asia, the Mediterranean Theatre and North America. In addition, the Network presented *Puir Bliddy Swaddies*, an evening celebrating Scottish poets of the Second World War and an public lecture by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission addressing SWW commemoration. The Network also launched an online coffee morning for postgraduate researchers and a PGR showcase event. For more details on past events, visit [blogs.ed.ac.uk/swwnetworkscotland](https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/swwnetworkscotland).

Dr Ugolini and Professor Kelly work in partnership with Dr Calum Robertson, National Museums Scotland as well as other key partners including the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. To join the mailing list, please email Project Administrator Emma Forth on [eforth@exseed.ed.ac.uk](mailto:eforth@exseed.ed.ac.uk).

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### SECOND WORLD WAR RESEARCH GROUP

@*SWWresearch*



University of London

The Second World War Research Group is an international scholarly society focused on supporting the study of World War II. The Group aims to promote innovative research on the conflict and its global aspects and act as a forum for: bringing together new perspectives on the Second World War; publicising recent and current research into the conflict and its global impact; encouraging collaboration in research across the scholarly community and across academic disciplines; and providing an organisational hub for conferences, seminars and other events relating to the war.

The Second World War Research Group has over 500 members worldwide; its activities are run out of four regional hubs: 'Europe, Middle East and North Africa', 'North America', 'Asia-Pacific' and 'Southern Africa'. To date it has organised twelve international conferences and workshops on four continents; it convenes a regular online 'Global Seminar Series' and 'Virtual Reading Group'.

For further information on the Group, please visit [www.swwresearch.com](http://www.swwresearch.com). If you are interested in joining the Second World War Research Group, please email [jonathan.fennell@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:jonathan.fennell@kcl.ac.uk), [richard.hammond@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:richard.hammond@brunel.ac.uk) or [jadwiga.biskupska@gmail.com](mailto:jadwiga.biskupska@gmail.com).

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

### FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

*Time to Murder and Create: Writing Histories of a Greater Second World War*

#### **Andrew Buchanan**

Andrew Buchanan (Vermont) has written extensively on World War II, including *American Grand Strategy in the Mediterranean during World War II* (Cambridge, 2014) and *Globalizing the Second World War* (Past & Present, Feb. 2023). His articles have appeared in *Journal of Contemporary History*, *American Quarterly*, and *Diplomatic History*, and his latest book, *From World War to Postwar: Revolution, Cold War, Decolonization, and the Rise of American Hegemony* (Bloomsbury) will be published in December. He is currently editing (with Ruth Lawlor) a collection entitled *Essays on the Greater Second World War*.

#### **Ruth Lawlor**

Ruth Lawlor is a historian of American foreign relations with a focus on war, gender, and labour. She is Assistant Professor (U.S. in the World) at Cornell and received her PhD from Cambridge in 2019. Her first book, on the U.S. military and sexual violence in World War II, is forthcoming with Oxford University Press. She is currently writing about the militarisation of Alaska while also editing, with Andrew Buchanan (Vermont), a new collection on the global history of World War II.

### SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

*"G stands for Gas Mask": How Objects Can Illuminate Lived Experiences of the Second World War*

#### **Susan R. Grayzel**

Susan R. Grayzel is Professor of History at Utah State University, whose books include *At Home and Under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge, 2012) and *The Age of the Gas Mask: How British Civilians Faced the Terrors of Total War* (Cambridge, 2022).

## CHAIRS

### **Jeremy Crang**

Jeremy Crang is Professor of Modern British History at the University of Edinburgh. His most recent books are *Sisters in Arms: Women in the British Armed Forces during the Second World War* (CUP, 2020) and (co-edited with Paul Addison) *The Spirit of the Blitz: Home Intelligence and British Morale, September 1940-June 1941* (OUP, 2020).

### **Jonathan Fennell**

@jonathanfennell

Jonathan Fennell is Reader in Modern History at KCL, Co-Director of the Sir Michael Howard Centre for the History of War and President of the Second World War Research Group. He holds a Doctorate from Oxford and is the author and editor of three books on the Second World War.

### **Julie Gottlieb**

@JulieVGottlieb

Julie V. Gottlieb is Professor of Modern History at the University of Sheffield. She has written extensively on women, gender, politics and culture in the first 20th century Britain, including *Feminine Fascism* (2020, new edition 2021) and *'Guilty Women', Foreign Policy and Appeasement in Interwar Britain* (2015). Her current research is on the emotional, psychological and mental health impact of the international crisis and the coming of war. This project includes a collaboration on "The Nervous State" with playwright Nicola Baldwin, a dramatization of F.L. Lucas's *Journal Under the Terror, 1938* (1939).

### **Susan R. Grayzel**

Susan R. Grayzel is Professor of History at Utah State University, whose books include *At Home and Under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge, 2012) and *The Age of the Gas Mask: How British Civilians Faced the Terrors of Total War* (Cambridge, 2022).

### **Megan Hamilton**

@MeganAHamilton

Megan Hamilton is a first-year PhD student at King's College London and the Imperial War Museum. Her PhD is a transnational history of Second World War army training across the British Empire. She holds history degrees from two Canadian institutions, those being Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo.

### **Richard Hammond**

@rjhammond215

Richard is a Senior Lecturer at Brunel University, London and Vice President of the Second World War Research Group. His research interests include the Second World War, Mediterranean history and Fascist Italy. His first book, *Strangling the Axis: The Fight for Control of the Mediterranean during the Second World War* was published with Cambridge UP (2020).



## CHAIRS

### **Frances Houghton**

Dr Frances Houghton is a Lecturer in History at the Open University. Her research focuses on wartime British military culture and the experiences and memories of Second World War servicemen and veterans from across all three Services. Frances's first monograph, *The Veterans' Tale: British Military Memoirs of the Second World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) has won two awards, including the Society for Army Historical Research's Templer Prize for Best First Book, and was shortlisted for the Royal Historical Society's Whitfield Prize. Frances is currently writing her second monograph on medical care, masculinities and emotions in the Royal Navy during the Second World War.

### **Tobias Kelly**

Tobias Kelly is Professor of Political and Legal Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh. His research interests include war and peace, crime and policing, and human rights. He has carried out ethnographic and archival research in Britain, Israel/Palestine, and at the UN. His most recent book is *Battles of Conscience: British Pacifists and the Second World War* (Chatto)

### **Linsey Robb**

@linseyrobb

Linsey Robb is Associate Professor in Modern British History at Northumbria University. Her work focuses on cultural, social and gendered histories of the Second World War. Key publications include *Men At Work* (2015), *Men in Reserve* (2017), *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War* (2018) and *British Humour and the Second World War* (2023). She is currently working on a cultural and social history of conscientious objection in Britain during the Second World War, research which is funded by an AHRC Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship.

### **Calum Robertson**

@ScottishModern

Dr Calum Robertson is Curator of Modern and Military History at National Museums Scotland. Calum is a cultural heritage specialist with a broad range of interests and specialisms in the material culture of modern Scotland. Calum's research work is centred on the production, use and collecting of traditional Scottish weapons.

### **Gary Sheffield**

@ProfGSheffield

Gary Sheffield is Visiting Professor in the Defence Studies Department at King's College London. He is working on a book entitled *Civilian Armies: The Experience of British and Dominion Soldiers in the Two World Wars*, to be published by Yale.



## CHAIRS

### **Dan Todman**

Dan Todman is Professor of Modern History at Queen Mary University of London. He works on twentieth century British total war and its legacies. In 2016-2019 he published a two-volume history of Britain's Second World War - *Into Battle and A New World*. His next projects are on cities in the Second World War and the magazine part-work Purnell's history of the Second World War.

### **Wendy Ugolini**

@wugolini

Dr Wendy Ugolini is a historian of the Second World War specialising in ethnicities and identity formation. Educated at the universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, she is a Senior Lecturer in Modern British History at Edinburgh. Her first book, *Experiencing War as the 'Enemy Other'. Italian Scottish Experience in World War II*, was awarded the Royal Historical Society's Gladstone Book Prize. Her forthcoming book on the mobilisation of Welshness in wartime England will be published by Oxford University Press. Wendy is the co-founder of the Second World War Network (Scotland) funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and co-organiser of this conference.

### **Tereza Valny**

@tvalny1

Tereza Valny is a Teaching Fellow at the University of Edinburgh in modern history. She teaches courses with a focus on comparative genocide studies that use sources such as survivor testimony, landscapes affected by mass violence, and representations of trauma. Tereza's current research includes work on films that depict the aftermath of genocide, as well as a project which considers reconciliation in post-genocidal spaces through the lens of landscape.

### **Wendy Webster**

Wendy Webster works on the twentieth-century history of Britain and its empire. Her first book, *Imagining Home*, came out in a Routledge Classics edition last year. Her latest book, *Mixing It*, was one of History Today's books of the year. She is Emeritus Professor at Huddersfield University and an Honorary Fellow at the University of Edinburgh.

### **Alex Wilson**

Dr Alex Wilson is a Lecturer at the Defence Studies Department, King's College London. He is also a Regional Director of the Second World War Research Group and lead editor of *The Peoples' War? The Second World War in Sociopolitical Perspective* (MQUP, 2022).

## PANEL A: ARMIES IN EXILE

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: JULIE GOTTLIEB

**Guy Bud**

CEGESOMA / Independent Scholar

“Don’t You Hear the Call of the Downtrodden Motherland?” Emigrants and Expatriates in the Armies-in-Exile in the United Kingdom, 1940-1942”

Although frequently mentioned in passing, the “armies-in-exile” have attracted relatively little focused scholarly examination. This paper, adopting a comparative focus, attempts to draw out an under-appreciated global theme in their histories.

As Belgian, Dutch, Czechoslovak, Norwegian and Polish governments-in-exile began to reconsolidate their political positions through 1940 and 1941, they sought to enhance their meagre military resources through far-reaching plans to recruit among emigrant and expatriate communities across the world, notably in the Americas. In so doing, they drew on well-established traditions of military mobilisation along emigrant networks stretching back at least as far as the First World War. Although many were certainly keen to enlist, others were not. The paper examines the changing powers of national ties to mobilise new recruits in an era of increasing economic and political assimilation and other local pressures. Confronted with the perceived arrogance of exile governments who often seemed to take their support for granted, emigrants and expatriates adopted a range of strategies to avoid attempts to conscript or otherwise entice them into the exile armies often pitting competing national claims against one another.

Although never meeting overly inflated expectations, such efforts profoundly shaped the composition and politics of the exiled armies themselves. Several thousand soldiers from these backgrounds entered the armies-in-exile. They often formed a distinct and highly visible presence within companies and battalions and were separated from their compatriots by a shared sense of mistrust as well as differences of background, motivation, and sometimes even language. Hybrid identities such as these posed a particular challenge to contemporary rhetoric depicting “contributions” to Allied victory in solely national terms.

Aside from contributing to studies on wartime exile politics and emigration, this paper points more generally to the ability to emphasise or downplay particular aspects of personal identity to negotiate competing and even directly conflicting claims to political allegiance with wider relevance, for example, to the study of engagement with resistance and collaborationist forces in German-occupied Europe.

*Guy Bud is an independent scholar and associate researcher at the Centre d'Etude Guerre et Société (CEGESOMA) in Brussels, Belgium. His research focuses on the social and political history of Belgium in the mid-20th century. He is currently working on a monograph about the wartime period in the Belgian Congo.*

## PANEL A: ARMIES IN EXILE

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: JULIE GOTTLIEB

**Nick Clifton**

Kingston University London

“I saw General De Gaulle on the High Street!” The Free French Forces and the People of Surrey Heath  
During the Second World War

During the Second World War, the small Surrey town of Camberley became decidedly multicultural. At the Old Dean Camp, just outside of the town, the Free French Forces had created an infantry training camp following the Fall of France on 22 June 1940. The camp, which also held a military brig and accommodated Free French intelligence, would become French soil for the duration of the Second World War, hosting thousands of soldiers and boasting General De Gaulle and Winston Churchill as regular visitors. But what effect did these French soldiers have on their adopted community? To answer this question, this paper will amalgamate contemporary newspaper articles from the local press with eyewitness accounts, photography, and official documentation from the little-known archive of Surrey Heath Museum. This approach reveals a rich, colourful, and complex, but little-explored, social history of the Second World War that details stories of kindness, bravery, criminality, and love in a small suburban Surrey town.

*Nick Clifton is a PhD candidate at Kingston University London, funded by Techne DTP. His PhD project is *Terror, Collusion and the British Secret State in Northern Ireland, 1980 - 1994*.*

## PANEL A: ARMIES IN EXILE

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: JULIE GOTTLIEB

**Jenny Grant**

Queen Mary University London

@SilenceInPolish

Death in Exile: The Exiled Allies and the Imperial War Graves Commission, 1940-1954

The practical implications of the arrival of European servicemen in the UK after the Fall of France remains underexplored. In addition to the psychological trauma of military defeat and separation from families, the men who arrived in the UK faced numerous personal challenges during their years in exile. Of these, the most emotionally laden was perhaps the process of securing and marking a resting place for fellow countrymen who died on British soil, or in the skies above Britain; there was a profound significance to the act of surrendering a loved one's body to foreign soil.

However, this transnational aspect of the commemoration of the war dead has not been previously examined. National cultural practices had to be negotiated through the auspices of the Imperial War Graves Commission, which had expanded its remit to include the marking of Allied war graves on British soil. Intent on emphasising the extent to which the war effort was an Allied enterprise, the IWGC hosted a series of conferences to create coherence between the IWGC's values and aesthetics, and those of the Allies.

Despite this, however, cultural tensions arose over a number of issues, exacerbated by the context of exile. In the case of the Poles, for example, these arose from the delay in issuing wooden crosses to mark the graves, the misspelling of Polish names and, post-war, the conspicuous absence of permanent headstones for Polish servicemen when every other Allied serviceman had had his wooden or tin marker replaced with stone.

This paper, therefore, intends to explore the evolution of IWGC policies regarding the commemoration of the Allied war dead, and how such policies were received by national contingents who were, at once, the bereaved, guests, exiles, and allies.

*Jennifer is a Postgraduate Researcher at QMUL. Her work focuses on the adaptation of British institutions in response to the arrival of the Polish Armed Forces. She has a particular interest in the evolution of cultural memories of the War.*

## PANEL B: THE IMPLICATIONS OF RACE

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: DAN TODMAN

**Oliver Coates**

Cambridge University

West Africa's War Correspondents in World War Two Asia: the 1945 African Press Tour of India and Burma

The African war correspondents of World War Two constitute a major but little understood dimension of African and South Asian wartime history. In June 1945, four journalists representing Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana, and the Gambia travelled to India and Burma to report on African participation in the conflict. This paper examines the reportage of the war correspondents and contextualises it in relation to the growing importance of print culture and nobilities in the historiography of World War Two Africa.

*Dr Oliver Coates is Director of Studies in History and Politics at St Edmund's College, Cambridge, and Associate Researcher of the Institut des Mondes Africains at the CNRS, Paris. His recent research has appeared in the International Journal of African Historical Studies and the Journal of African Military History.*

## PANEL B: THE IMPLICATIONS OF RACE

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: DAN TODMAN

### **Alexandre Fortes**

Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro  
@alexfortes66

#### The Second World War and the emergence of the concept of Racial Democracy in Brazil

The identification of Brazil as a "Racial Democracy" was often evoked in the post-war period in critical contrast to the persistence of segregation in the United States South and to the Apartheid regime in South Africa. The genealogy of the concept traditionally goes back to the classic works of sociologist Gilberto Freyre released in the 1930s, such as *The Masters and the Slaves*. Criticizing the dominant eugenic thought in Brazil, which considered whitening indispensable for progress, Freyre treated the African cultural contribution and mestizaje as positive bases of national identity.

The Brazilian black movement, particularly since the 1970s, has denounced "Racial Democracy" as a myth that romanticizes the violence inherent to slavery and hides structural racism. In fact, racial inequality persists in the country 135 years after abolition, without ever having expressed itself in formal differentiation between black and white legal rights.

The role of World War II in the formulation of this controversial concept has only recently been explored in the bibliography. In fact, it is not used in Freyre's seminal works, but appears simultaneously in articles by Brazilian anthropologist Arthur Ramos and American literary critic Waldo Frank in 1943. Both shared the condition of militants of the anti-fascist left who enjoyed unprecedented opportunities to spread their ideas in the context of the joint participation of Brazil and the United States in the War.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze how the alliance between the two largest countries in the Americas against the Axis created opportunities for challenging widespread ideas of white supremacy as well as whitening policies. The Racial Democracy paradigm, carrying the ambiguity of expression of aspirations for equality and instrument for concealing inequality, will be addressed as part of the debate on the nature of nation-states and citizenship regimes in the post-war period.

*Alexandre Fortes (PhD, History, Unicamp) is a full professor at the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro and a former visiting professor at Duke University. Fortes is the author of several books and articles on Brazilian labor history. His current research focus on World War II impacts on Brazil.*

## PANEL B: THE IMPLICATIONS OF RACE

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: DAN TODMAN

**Ed Gitre**

Virginia Tech

@EJKGitre

### Breaking Rank: How the World War II Resistance of White US Soldiers to Racial Equity Fueled the Civil Rights Movement

In the lead up to the bloody summer of 1943, the US Army possessed unambiguous data from a survey of service members that frustration among Black GIs over their mistreatment and the persistence of segregation was pervasive, and that occasional conflict might devolve into open rebellion. Just before that summer, the army had given a similar survey questionnaire to a cross-section of all White soldiers, soliciting their opinions on race relations and racial segregation as well. The data affirmed what the army knew from previous surveys, namely, that the majority of White soldiers, including GIs from the North, wanted segregation to be maintained. Simply gathering this data had been a fraught endeavor. The researchers who ran the army's survey program excluded Black service members initially—the notion that the army should even be asking soldiers for their opinions was controversial enough—and they only started to after the army's research staff had been “sufficiently protected against possible repercussions.” Not only did army researchers know just how opposed the majority of White soldiers were to integration, but they had used their findings to show the “soundness” of the army's “one-rule” segregation policy. During the war, the army did attempt limited desegregation. Yet it was met with White resistance, which, in turn, further enflamed racial tensions. So much so that by late summer of 1944 some Black soldiers were starting to gird themselves for the opening of a new, quite literal front in the war against racial fascism, on American shores. Using survey data and thousands of open-ended survey responses from Black and White soldiers, which have been made accessible only recently, this paper considers how the wartime resistance of White soldier to integration led Black Americans in their quest for racial justice and equity to redouble their efforts, whatever the cost.

*Edward J.K. Gitre is an assistant professor of history at Virginia Tech and director of *The American Soldier in World War II*, a digital project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.*



## PANEL C: PRISONERS OF WAR

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: RICHARD HAMMOND

**Mark Newman**

University of Edinburgh

The British POW Experience in Hong Kong and Oeyama, Japan: The Memoirs of Frank Evans and Joseph Henry Newman

Although the surrender of the British Crown colony of Hong Kong in December 1941 is well documented, the captivity experience of British soldiers in Hong Kong and Japan remains to be fully explored and interpreted. Tony Banham's *We Shall Suffer There: Hong Kong's Defenders Imprisoned, 1942-45* (2009) is descriptive and narrative driven. He provides a compilation of valuable, but brief, first person accounts organized chronologically in an effort to include "every camp, every draft to Japan, and every hospital." Charles D. Roland's account of the POW experience in Hong Kong and Japan focuses primarily "on the 1,900 Canadians who arrived there [in Hong Kong] on 16 November 1941" and "is explicitly a medical story" told by a medical historian. Memoirs by Jean Gittins and G. A. Leiper discuss the civilian experience of captivity in Hong Kong.

The paper addresses ordinary British soldiers' captivity experience by comparing the memoirs of Frank Evans, *Roll Call at Oeyama, P.O.W. Remembers* (1985 [1981]) and the unpublished recollections of John Henry Newman, "A Guest of the New Order in East Asia 1941-1945." Although the Japanese held both men captive in Hong Kong and Oeyama, historians have only briefly cited Evans's account to illustrate the British experience and not utilised Newman's memoirs. Neither man was an officer, but despite some commonalities, their experiences under the Japanese differed in some respects, allowing for a more rounded exploration of British soldiers' captivity and the factors affecting it. The two men also responded differently to their experiences in the years following their release. Evans returned to Hong Kong and Oeyama in later life and promoted reconciliation, whereas Newman shared his thoughts only with former army comrades until persuaded by his eldest son to record his captivity memories.

*Mark Newman is reader in History at the University of Edinburgh. His most recent books are Black Nationalism in American History: From the Nineteenth Century to the Million Man March, and Desegregating Dixie: The Catholic Church in the South and Desegregation, 1945-1992.*

## PANEL C: PRISONERS OF WAR

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: RICHARD HAMMOND

**Michał Palacz**

Oxford Brooks University

Post-mortem experiences of the Second World War? Neuropathological research on Allied POWs in Nazi Germany

Eminent neuropathologists from the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Psychiatry in Munich and the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Brain Research in Berlin collected brains of Allied prisoners of war (POWs) who died in German captivity during the Second World War. These POWs included French and Soviet soldiers of non-European backgrounds. While the brains of the deceased men had been extracted for the purpose of a post-mortem examination and later retained in collection as research objects, their bodies were separately buried and in some cases repatriated after the war without the brains. Research on the body parts of POWs violated the spirit, if not the letter, of Article 76 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, which obligated belligerents to provide captive soldiers with honourable burial. This paper will analyse why German scientists were interested in the brains of Allied POWs within the broader context of Nazi biopolitics and unethical medical research in the Third Reich. I will also discuss the challenges of identifying the persons behind the histopathological slides and will explore the potential use of autopsy protocols to study conditions of life and death in German POW camps. Last but not least, by reconstructing the separate fates of extracted brains and buried bodies, this paper will bring attention to a previously unexplored aspect of 'post-mortem experiences' of the Second World War. Brain specimens of deceased Allied soldiers were inherited after the war by the Max Planck Society (MPS) and, while most of the tissue slides were collectively buried in 1990, some of them are still in collection of the Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry in Munich, pending recommendation from an on-going provenance research project, commissioned by the MPS and carried out at Oxford Brookes University by Professor Paul Weindling and me.

*Michał Adam Palacz obtained a PhD in History from the University of Edinburgh in 2016 and currently is a post-doctoral researcher at Oxford Brookes University. He is working with Professor Paul Weindling on a Max Planck Society funded project on the identification of victims of brain research in Nazi Germany.*

## PANEL C: PRISONERS OF WAR

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: RICHARD HAMMOND

**Wendy Webster**

University of Huddersfield

Writing and captivity in Southeast Asia

Sheila Allan kept a diary while she was interned by the Japanese from the age of 17 in Singapore. 'It was a dangerous undertaking, and the consequences of its discovery could have been horrendous' she wrote later in the introduction to the published version of her diary. Sheila feared punishment for writing, possibly death, and kept all her papers hidden from Japanese guards who made frequent camp inspections that filled her with dread.

This paper is about the role that writing played in the lives of internees and prisoners of the Japanese and in their post-war memories of captivity. It argues that writing practices and the survival or destruction of writing during and after the war have shaped the ways in which national and transnational histories of captivity in Southeast Asia are remembered or forgotten. Most of those who wrote in wartime did so in secret and kept their papers hidden fearing—like Sheila Allan—that discovery would mean punishment, possibly death. Many persisted with writing in very difficult conditions and under considerable constraints despite the risks involved. Why was writing so important to them?

Much of this writing survived, at times miraculously. Sheila Allan's diary survived, although with some pages missing and others damaged because they were eaten by silverfish. Some writing was published or deposited in archives, often after the death of writers whose papers had been left untouched for many years. Other writing is likely to survive in private archives in people's homes where those who preserve it are unlikely to think of themselves as archivists. There remain many gaps and silences. The paper argues that these gaps and silences demonstrate a range of different views not only about whose lives matter and whose deaths matter, but also about whose writing matters.

*Wendy Webster works on the twentieth-century history of Britain and its empire. Her first book, *Imagining Home*, came out in a Routledge Classics edition last year. Her latest book, *Mixing It*, was one of *History Today's* books of the year. She is Emeritus Professor at Huddersfield University and an Honorary Fellow at the University of Edinburgh.*

## PANEL D: CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: TOBIAS KELLY

**Rosemary Rich**

University of Brighton

@RosemaryAHRich

'I would see myself as split': the emotional turmoil of conscientious objectors during the Second World War

In May 1942, Eric Hope wrote to the Ministry of Labour that he had 'undergone a considerable change of mind during the last few months' and 'now wish to be transferred from the register of conscientious objectors to the military service register'. Eric, my grandfather, was one of around 60,000 individuals who claimed a conscientious objection to military service during the Second World War. A convinced pacifist in the lead up to the conflict, wartime letters show that he began to suffer doubts about his stance and eventually was driven to modify his position. While previous work on the topic has suggested that significant numbers of conscientious objectors experienced similar uncertainties and doubts, this has not been explored in great detail. Drawing upon my grandfather's experience and other personal testimony, this paper will propose that the unique circumstances of the Second World War proved a particular challenge to pacifists. It will suggest that events in the summer of 1940 prompted a significant break from interwar pacifism, which had constituted a peace movement of unprecedented scale. Some conscientious objectors describe experiencing an 'epiphanic moment' in their testimony, which caused them seriously to question their pacifist principles. For others, the all-encompassing nature of total war and new information about the Nazi atrocities made them feel increasingly that their position was untenable. Overall, this paper will argue that the experience of conscientious objection in the Second World War could be one of emotional turmoil.

*Rosemary Rich is an AHRC-funded doctoral researcher working on the cultural and emotional history of war. Her thesis, titled 'Where does pacifism fit into this kind of thing?': Conscientious Objectors and the Second World War in Britain', was inspired by her grandfather's experience. She has taught at King's College London and the University of Brighton.*

## PANEL D: CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: TOBIAS KELLY

**Linsey Robb**

Northumbria University

@linseyrobb

'I'll fight it by trying to mend the damage': conscientious objectors and medical service during the Second World War

60,000 British men professed a conscientious objection to conscription during the Second World War. Some sought to divest themselves entirely from the war machine with some even willing to risk prison for their absolutist stance. However, the vast majority were willing, sometimes even eager, to aid the war effort in an unarmed capacity. For many men medical service seemed an ideal role as it required them to take an active part in their country's war while remain both unarmed and humanitarian in their approach. For example, a total of 1,300 men served with the Quaker affiliated Friends Ambulance Unit during the Second World War with ambulance units sent to Africa, China, the middle East and across Europe. While sometimes providing civilian services (for example in Ethiopia) they often directly worked alongside military units providing aid to wounded servicemen. Thousands of COs took this a step further by working in the Royal Army Medical Corps itself. As such these men were sometimes viewed as 'cuckoos in the nest', distrusted often both by the military and the pacifist community. However, their stance as pacifists serving in warzones make them an excellent lens through which to understand the impacts of violence and the provision of medical care. Using oral histories and memoirs this paper will analyse their experiences of providing medical care while negotiating their own complex and, often, contradictory moral compasses. As such this paper, and the research it stems from, will provide a new perspective on wartime medical care as well as conscientious objection.

*Linsey Robb is Associate Professor in Modern British History at Northumbria University. Her work focuses on cultural, social and gendered histories of the Second World War. Key publications include Men At Work (2015), Men in Reserve (2017), Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War (2018) and British Humour and the Second World War (2023). She is currently working on a cultural and social history of conscientious objection in Britain during the Second World War, research which is funded by an AHRC Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship.*

## PANEL D: CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: TOBIAS KELLY

**Claudia Treacher**

University of Brighton

@ClaudiaTreacher

'To hell with tribunals': conscientious objection and queerness during the Second World War in Britain

This paper provides insights into the experience of conscientious objectors (COs) during the Second World War by focussing on CO artists in Britain who navigated homosexual desire or depictions of complicated gender expression alongside their conscientious objection. Much historical scholarship on masculinities during the Second World War in Britain has discussed various positions in relation to hegemonic or 'temperate' masculinity that soldiers, factory-workers, prisoners-of-war and civilians occupied (see, for example: Dawson, 1994; Rose, 2004; Robb and Pattinson, 2018). However, British CO artists with same-sex desire or who depicted non-normative gender expression experienced multiple societal pressures centred on the body while resisting conscription: they were distanced to varying extents both from militarised expressions of gender and heteronormative expectations. Conscientious objector artists who were also gay such as Arthur Wragg, Keith Vaughan, and John Minton represented in some of their work masculine-coded bodies as vulnerable sites of conflict where binaries of public and private are fraught. One such conflicted depiction was also drawn by art student Don Treacher who—after his application to be registered as a conscientious objector was rejected—wrote the accompanying slogan alongside a double-gendered body: 'To hell with tribunals'. By explicitly linking the tribunal processes with deviating gender expression Treacher's artwork offers a way to probe bodily entanglements of conscription, or what Peniston-Bird identified as the classification of militarised bodies (2003). By drawing on theory by Sara Ahmed on queer use and institutional mechanics, in which '[d]eviation is made hard' (Ahmed, 2019: 42), this paper traces connections between conscientious objector experiences and forms of historical queerness as adjacent struggles around bodily autonomy.

*Claudia Treacher is an AHRC-funded doctoral researcher at the University of Brighton working on material and visual culture. Her research areas include art and politics during the Second World War in Britain, conscientious objection, and family history.*

## PANEL E: COLONIAL DYNAMICS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: JEREMY CRANG

Ewan Lawry

Aberystwyth University

@EwanLawry

An 'obligation which we are not entitled to get rid of': the British imperialist response to Colonial Appeasement in the 1930s

The revocation of Germany's colonies in the Treaty of Versailles is often treated as one of the less significant aspects of the peace-making process in 1919. Where disarmament and reparations were fiercely resisted by the Nazis as they fought to revise the interwar world order in the 1930s, the former colonies were not a major priority. And yet, when seeking to appease Hitler and maintain European peace in the late 1930s, Neville Chamberlain saw a colonial restitution as a viable means of assuaging the voracious Nazi appetite for territory and prestige. Opposition to this idea came from two sources. The first was a group of M.P.s, including Tory imperialists like Leo Amery and Labour figures such as Philip Noel-Baker. They formed themselves into the Colonial League in order to wage a campaign to 'educate' the British public as to the apparent value of colonial control and to lobby ministers. The other group came from the colonies themselves, where organizations sprang up to represent British colonists, indigenous peoples, and even German colonists to resist the change of government. Though the attitudes of even the colonists, let alone the natives, is difficult to piece together, this paper proposes to draw out a hitherto neglected campaign which sought to oppose Nazi rule, the messaging of which placed native welfare and concerns about Nazi racial laws at the forefront. And so, it is possible to better understand attitudes towards colonialism in 1930s British political circles and shared anxieties about the prospect of turning Africans, without consultation, over to a state that was already persecuting its minorities in order to buy peace.

*Ewan Lawry is a PhD student at Aberystwyth University, working on 'The Anti-Appeasers: A study of the parliamentary opposition to the National Government's foreign and defence policies'. He is a Section Editor of the Bibliography of British and Irish History and has been a regular contributor to the Welsh Political Icons podcast series.*



## PANEL E: COLONIAL DYNAMICS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: JEREMY CRANG

**Nina Wardleworth**

University of Leeds

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Resistance fighters from the French Empire in Metropolitan France: the case study of the Mont-Valérien eleven

While it is now acknowledged that the Free French army was dominated by troops from France's North and West African colonies (Jennings, 2015), the role played by Resistance fighters from across the French Empire in Occupied France, outside the remit of the armed forces, has yet to receive the same scholarly attention.

This paper will focus on the eleven colonial resistance fighters who were shot by the German occupying authorities at the Mont-Valérien fort in Paris between 1941 and 1944. Mont-Valérien was the site of the greatest number of executions of resistance fighters during the Occupation. These men came from four different territories in the French Empire (Algeria, Guadeloupe, India, Morocco) and a variety of different socio-economic, professional and political backgrounds before the war. The paper will ask what a small case study of these men's stories can tell us about the presence and agency of transnational colonial subjects in Occupied France; their political activism, their military activities and their ability to evade capture. It will examine what their French police files and the German military judgements reveal about how the Occupiers and the French authorities adapted their narratives on terrorism and guerrilla warfare through the lens of racial attitudes towards Black and Arab resisters. The paper will end with a consideration of how we can retrace and construct such narratives of colonial resisters from often deliberately, incomplete wartime and postwar paper trails.

*Nina Wardleworth is Professor of Global French Studies at the University of Leeds. She is also the University's Decolonising Academic Lead. She is co-curator of the exhibition *Liberated by the Empire? Colonial Resisters and Soldiers during World War Two at the Mont-Valérien Memorial in Paris, opening in late June 2023.**

## PANEL E: COLONIAL DYNAMICS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: JEREMY CRANG

Rishika Yadav

LSE

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The Cape Lorries: South Africa's Coloured, Indian and Malay Soldiers in the East African Campaign, 1940-42

Forty thousand non-White soldiers from South Africa participated in the Second World War. They were part of the Non-European Army Services (NEAS) of the Union Defence Forces (UDF) and were, by regulation, unarmed. They served in the North African, East African, Madagascar, Middle East, and Italian campaigns, although their presence has seldom been acknowledged. Formed in 1940 in response to the mounting needs of war, the NEAS comprised of four racially sequestered units, the Cape Corps (for 'Coloured' or mixed-raced recruits), the Indian and Malay Corps (for South African Indian and Malay recruits), and the Native Military Corps and the Native Military Police (for Black African recruits).

East Africa was NEAS' first and, arguably, most prominent engagement in the war. Notably, NEAS accounted for the highest number of rank-and-file on this front among all South African units on this front. Although the 'high politics' of South Africa intended to demean the non-White man's right to armed service, within the barriers set by the Union, NEAS soldiers performed vital support tasks that were pivotal to Allied victory. They were part of the forces in the Battle for Keren, the capture of Asmara and the Battle for Amba Alagi. Despite being in the 'third-line', these auxiliary units frequently found themselves in active conflict zones, usually without supplies and reinforcement. The East African terrain itself was incredibly unforgiving, with tropical forest and limestone deserts, torrential rains and sandstorms. Not to mention the lions, the landmines and the Italian Banda (irregular guerrilla fighters). Yet, despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles, the NEAS was charged with maintaining the Allied artery that ran from Southern Africa to the East, via which 13,000 South African-manufactured military vehicles, military equipment and ammunition, medical supplies, and provisions were transported.

This paper looks at this front and the participation of the Cape Corps and the Indian and Malay Corps (IMC). It investigates the two years that these soldiers spent on the East African front, their experience of the war as unarmed ranks, under White commands, alongside non-White combatants. It deals with the day-to-day experiences of these soldiers, including their experiences of training, camp life, convoy work, frontline warfare, and illness and injury. The South African case, and the case of the Cape Corps and IMC specifically, is unique in that this was one of the very few instances in Empire where colonial soldiers were not directly or indirectly coerced into 'volunteering' for the army. A peak into their story not only provides for a new lens to interpret this often neglected campaign but also uncloaks the motivations of colonial soldiers for soldiering.

*Rishika Yadav completed her doctoral degree from the Department of International History at the London School of Economics (LSE) in September 2022. She is currently a Book Review Editor for the Journal of African Military History, Brill and is working on converting her thesis into a book for wider publication.*

# PANEL F: INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIONS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: CALUM ROBERTSON

## **Kate Clements**

Imperial War Museum

@KHClem

### Lived experiences from a total war: stories of women in IWM's Second World War Galleries

This paper will explore stories of women in the Second World War. It will present the varied lived experiences of ten women who feature in IWM London's new permanent Second World War Galleries, and demonstrate the links between the personal and the global.

The Second World War was a new type of war. It was a Total War, that was so vast in its scale and scope that whole societies were impacted by it, civilians were deliberately targeted and killed, and huge numbers of people were mobilised. Women were, of course, a major part of this. Huge numbers were killed through bombing and battle, while many performed combat and auxiliary military roles, which placed them in danger. Hunger, disease and displacement cost large numbers of women their lives. Both genocide and sexual violence were perpetrated on a wide scale, and both were factors in vast numbers of women's deaths.

This paper will explore ten very different women's stories, ranging from resistance fighters to spies; from members of auxiliary and frontline units to various civilians affected by enemy occupation, the conditions of war, and the Holocaust. They originate from a number of different countries, including Ukraine, the US, Britain, France, China, Italy, Barbados, Germany, and the Soviet Union.

The paper will conclude that understanding women's experiences of the Second World War is integral to understanding the Second World War. It will be shown that these individual stories did not happen in isolation: they were part of broader global themes and lived experiences. Women's stories – civilian and combatant – intersected with men's wartime roles and narratives. They are stories of bravery, resilience, compassion and hope, as well as suffering, violence, hardship and deprivation. The legacies of what women experienced in the Second World War can still be felt today.

*Kate Clements has worked at IWM since 2006. She has curated a number of exhibitions at IWM London, including the permanent Second World War Galleries. Kate is the author of Total War: A People's History of the Second World War and The Royal Family in Wartime. Kate is currently the Curator of the Churchill War Rooms.*

## PANEL F: INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIONS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: CALUM ROBERTSON

**Matthew Kidd**

University of Oxford

@matthewkidd85

### *Their Finest Hour and the construction of community-centred narrative spaces*

As the personal stories of the Second World War are fast fading from living memory, it is vital that these stories – and the wartime objects that often accompany them – are preserved for future generations. But in most cases, it is now necessary to speak to the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the men, women and children who experienced the war in order to identify, collect and preserve their previously unrecorded stories and objects. Their photographs, letters, diaries, medals and other ‘everyday’ artefacts symbolise the sacrifices that the wartime generation made, and, for historians, can help to recover the lived experiences of all those who experienced the conflict.

This paper will reflect on the key theoretical issues and methodological challenges relating to the object-centred digital history project *Their Finest Hour*. Since July 2022, this University of Oxford project has trained and supported over 100 volunteers across the UK to identify and digitally preserve the stories and objects of the war before they are lost to posterity. As well as helping to build an online archive of collected stories and digitised objects, the project team are actively engaged in considering the theoretical consequences of their work, which touches on the themes of memory, history, material culture, nostalgia, inclusivity and even contemporary political developments. In particular, the paper will discuss the project’s opening up of narrative spaces in which family members from different generations can discuss the experiences and material artefacts of the wartime generation, thereby recording the memories of the war generation while also giving a voice to diverse communities and later generations who grew up in environments dominated by narratives that preceded their birth. Finally, the paper will conclude by considering the benefits and challenges likely to be faced by those engaged in object-centred work in the coming years.

*Dr Matthew Kidd is Project Manager of Their Finest Hour and has been involved in similar oral history and object-centred initiatives at the University of Oxford since 2018. His research focuses on issues of identity and popular ideology in modern Britain, including during the Second World War.*

# PANEL F: INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIONS

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: CALUM ROBERTSON

**Andrew Whitmarsh**

The D-Day Story, Portsmouth

## Overlooked contributions to D-Day and the Liberation of France

So many words have been published about the 1944 Normandy Landings and the Liberation of France that one might think there is little more to say. The Allied forces involved in this campaign are primarily thought of as British, American and Canadian. Popular media such as films and computer games can even leave the impression that it was a purely American effort. At best it might be remembered that thirteen countries provided the majority of the Allied forces.

As with many historical events, the story of D-Day has been simplified in the telling, leaving out the contributions of so many individuals from a wide variety of national and ethnic groups. Many individuals from other countries served in the British armed forces in Normandy for example, including Caribbean, Malay Chinese and Burmese personnel flying in the RAF. The hundreds of ships of the British Merchant Navy taking part included Asian personnel, referred to at the time as Lascars.

US forces included not just African-American personnel, about whom there has been greater awareness in recent years, but also Comanche Indian 'code-talkers'. The Free French forces who landed in the south of that country in August 1944 included thousands of North African personnel. Another contribution to the campaign was made by the French Resistance, which collected intelligence and fought back against the occupiers. A significant proportion of Resistance members, many of them Jewish, had fled from other countries to escape Nazi persecution.

In some cases these contributions are well known within a particular community but to date they have never been integrated together to reveal the true, global contribution to Allied victory in Normandy in 1944 and the liberation of France. This paper represents the beginnings of a project by The D-Day Story, Portsmouth, to reveal this history to a wider public.

*Since 2001 Andrew has been curator of the D-Day Museum, since 2018 renamed The D-Day Story, Portsmouth ([theddaystory.com](http://theddaystory.com)). He was curatorial lead for that museum's refurbishment, which was shortlisted for European Museum of the Year 2019. He is also curator for the military history collection of the city's museums service.*

# PANEL G: EMOTIONS AND THE BRITISH HOME FRONT

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: LINSEY ROBB

**Julie Gottlieb**

University of Sheffield

@JulieVGottlieb

The 'Crisis Suicides' during Britain's War of Nerves, 1938-40

Between the so-called 'Hungry Thirties' and the 'People's War', Britain experienced a largely forgotten 'war of nerves'. The policy of appeasement and the dramatic unfolding of the Munich Crisis in September 1938, followed by the months of political and diplomatic aftershocks, have received ample coverage in the historiography, with political and diplomatic historians and IR specialists relying on elite sources and the interpretive tools of their own disciplines. More recently, cultural, emotional, and gender historians have begun to think more elastically about the period from the Munich Crisis to the end of the Phoney War. As I have suggested, taking social and cultural approaches allows us to acknowledge this as 'The People's Crisis'.

As war-veteran, Cambridge classicist, Bloomsburite, and crisis diarist F.L. (Peter) Lucas put it: "The Crisis seems to have filled the world with nervous break-downs. Or perhaps the Crisis itself was only one more nervous break-down of a world driven by the killing pace of modern life and competition into ever acuter neurasthenia." Private and personal experience mirrored the collective and public one. In mid-September 1938, Virginia Woolf mused: "Odd this new public anxiety: how it compares with private: how it blinds."

The wider context of this paper is concerned with the emotional and mental health impact of the coming of a total war from the air. The widespread feelings of high anxieties in this period can be substantiated through the study of the theorization, research and clinical treatment of nervous disorders by psychiatrists and psychoanalysts; the institutionalisation of the study of nerves by a nascent branch of Medical Psychology; and the mainstreaming of the language and concepts of psychoanalysis in cultural and political discourse. Even more tangible-- and tragic--evidence of the war of nerves is an apparent epidemic of 'crisis suicides'. This paper will interrogate how international relations was internalised; how it felt to live through the war of nerves; and how it felt to want to die because of the oppressive 'war fear'. Working with a dataset of 185 cases of 'crisis suicides', this paper will recognize the forgotten casualties of Britain's war of nerves.

*Julie V. Gottlieb is Professor of Modern History at the University of Sheffield. She has written extensively on women, gender, politics and culture in the first 20th century Britain, including *Feminine Fascism* (2020, new edition 2021) and *'Guilty Women', Foreign Policy and Appeasement in Interwar Britain* (2015). Her current research is on the emotional, psychological and mental health impact of the international crisis and the coming of war. This project includes a collaboration on "The Nervous State" with playwright Nicola Baldwin, a dramatization of F.L. Lucas's *Journal Under the Terror, 1938* (1939).*

# PANEL G: EMOTIONS AND THE BRITISH HOME FRONT

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: LINSEY ROBB

**Alex Hill**

University College London

## Hoping Against Hope': The Politics of Hope and Despair on the British Home Front

Affects, emotions, and feelings have always had an uncertain position in the historiography of Britain's Second World War. Certainly, historians have, since Henry Pelling, debated the extent to which the electorate developed 'left-wing feelings' over the course of the war. And others have analysed the British state's efforts to cultivate and manage emotion through propaganda. But, until recently, wartime emotions have been discussed in a largely unfocused manner; Home Front historiography has rarely taken inspiration from the history of emotions. Thankfully, this is starting to change as can be seen in Lucy Noakes's work on wartime grief. This paper focuses on the vernacular politics of hope, asking what role it played for British civilians in making sense of their wartime lives. Its articulation is traced through the Mass Observation archive which allows for sustained and intimate engagement with British civilians throughout the war. Drawing on work in the philosophy of emotions, this paper argues that a particular structure of hope—dubbed by Adrienne Martin, 'hoping against hope'—developed during the war and had crucial political ramifications. Importantly, this structure of 'hope' was noticeably different from that developed by British propagandists. Among 'ordinary' people, hope interacted creatively with despair, forming a political mood that was far from optimistic. Ultimately, this paper aims to make the case for putting the vernacular politics of emotion on the agenda for Second World War Studies.

*Alex Hill is a third-year PhD student at University College London. His research deals with people's perceptions of the future in Britain between 1940 and 1985. He is also interested in the history of emotions—particularly, hope, despair, cynicism, and fatalism.*



# PANEL G: EMOTIONS AND THE BRITISH HOME FRONT

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: LINSEY ROBB

**Joshua Madrid**

University College London

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Changing Communities: Roman Catholic Cooperation with Social Change in England, 1942-1944

This paper explores how Roman Catholics in England received and responded to the call for social change during the Second World War. The publication of the Beveridge Report in 1942, along with a series of other reports that called for societal change, laid the foundation for what would become the welfare state. For Catholics, the publication of these reports left more questions than answers. How would the desire for a more egalitarian society be constructed? How much control would the State have over what Catholics believed to be personal and family matters? Would these reports produce what Catholics perceived as the dangerous spread of Socialist political policies across Europe at the time? These along with a multitude of other questions perplexed Catholics in England and made them reconsider whether they could back the nation's post-war future. While recent histories of Britain in the Second World War regarded the Beveridge report as widely accepted by the British population, this paper attempts to provide an alternative narrative. Through diocesan, national, and Catholic newsprint archive resources, this paper constructs a more comprehensive understanding of Catholic cooperation with social change in England during the war. It argues that the debates over societal change in England brought a mixed bag of approval and scepticism amongst Catholics. Initially they were open to the idea of bridging class divides and generating greater equality between social groups. However, their support fell short of the demand for greater State control on what they considered to be personal and family matters. Consequently, these debates opened a second domestic battlefield for Catholics – namely against instituting socialism within their national borders – in conjunction with the battles being fought abroad. Overall, this case-study demonstrates the significant influence religious voices within England had during the Second World War on the eventual establishment of the welfare state.

*Joshua Madrid is a PhD candidate at University College London working on English Catholicism in the Second World War. Josh's research interests revolve broadly around war, religion, and nationalism. Particularly, Josh is drawn toward the social, cultural, and religious histories of warfare and how they are portrayed in collective memory.*

## PANEL H: PERSPECTIVES ON ASIA

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: ALEX WILSON

**Azrin Afrin**

University of Edinburgh

@AzrinAfrin

### Tale of Arakan Road: Faded history of Chittagonian Migrant

During the British colonial period there was a migrant worker flow towards Burma (Myanmar) from Chittagong (South-eastern part of Bengal) in agricultural, industrial and transport sectors. In 1942, after Japanese air strike in Rangoon, a massive movement of Indian, Bengali and Chittagonian evacuees tried to leave Burma and reached Calcutta and Chittagong. British steamer service was the major mode of transportation from Burma. There was a limited number of steamers against a huge number of evacuees. Though the distance from Chittagong to Akyab (Western Burma) was short, it was not so easy across without boats. There were several restrictions and limited transportations for the evacuees. Some of the lucky evacuees could managed a seat in the steamer, but most of them had to trail into a densely jungle path full of wild animals. Before the advent of the war, a severe riot broke down between Burmese and Indians including Bengalis, Chittagonians and others. When the Indian started to evacuate from Burma, some Burmese started to attack and looting them. They went through a series of hazardous situations throughout the journey. Bengalis from western part of Bengal had money to buy food and afford basic amenities, however, most of the Chittagonian migrants who used to do menial job had no money and had to starve.

There are some autobiographies written by the Bengalis in Calcutta. On the other hand, the literacy rate amongst the Chittagonian migrants were very poor. So, they left almost no trace of their journey in the history of the Second World War. I am going to use oral history, novels and vernacular newspaper to bring back the journey of Arakan Road by the Chittagonian migrants from Burma during the Second World War which are faded into oblivion.

*Azrin Afrin is a PhD candidate at the School of History, Classics and Archeology in the University of Edinburgh. Area of her PhD is Chittagong-Burma Labour Migration During Colonial Period. She is interested in research related to labour and migration and she is also curious about different dimension of the WWII in the Indian subcontinent.*

## PANEL H: PERSPECTIVES ON ASIA

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: ALEX WILSON

**Hanzhi Dai**

University of Edinburgh

@DaiHanzhi

Yan Xishan, Propaganda and Surviving in Shanxi's War of Resistance 1940-1944

Shanxi, a region lies in the mountainous hinterland of Northern China, was ruled autonomously by the native military dictator, General Yan Xishan for the entire lifespan of the Republic of China from 1912 to 1949. With its landlocked, geographically-peripheral status, Yan's Shanxi regime was approximate to Nationalist, Japanese, Manchurian, Mongolian, and Communist incursions. Since 1940, a sequence of defeats following the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, Yan's headquarter had relocated to the Ji County, renamed as Kenanpo (the Slope of Overcoming-difficulties) with only seven underdeveloped counties under its full possession. In his shrunken realm there, Yan had programmed a system of ideological indoctrination, aiming to rehabilitate his authority and strengthen his control through charisma and terror. This project investigates the mouthpiece publications of Yan Xishan's party state, including the periodicals Gemingdongli ("Revolutionary Drive") and Gemingxingdong ("Revolutionary Action") circulated inside Yan's dictatorial party organisation, the Minzugemingtongzhahui, or "the League of the National Revolutionary Comrades", as well as the domestic and international media coverage of Yan's realm. This research aims to counter the stereotypical mockery of Yan as an arbitrary "warlord" or "boorish emperor", but rather demonstrates how Yan's regime had orchestrated a cult of personality through its ranks, tactically rebuilt its prestige as another pivot of the Chinese War of Resistance, even an alternative model of modernisation outside the "corrupted" Chongqing under Chiang Kaishek and the Nationalists. Furthermore, this research provides a microscopic account of the rural daily life in wartime Shanxi, especially the survival of the soldiers through gradually rapacious means against the civilians, with the heavily-ideological and morally-ambivalent presentation of these details revealing much of the nature of Yan's regional party dictatorship.

*Hanzhi Dai is a first-year PhD student of History at the University of Edinburgh, with his research centres on the economic, social and cultural history of the "warlord" Yan Xishan's autonomous regional regime in Northern China during the long Second World War.*

## PANEL H: PERSPECTIVES ON ASIA

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: ALEX WILSON

**Zuzubee Huidrom**

Independent Scholar

@ZuzubeeH

Local experiences of the Global War: Narratives from Manipur during the Second World War

The imperial powers of Britain and Japan used Manipur, a princely state in British India, as a war theatre during the Second World War. Although memorialized as a 'greatest battle' or the Japanese army's biggest defeat, the experiences of the local Manipuris remain shunned from South Asian historiography. Scholarly works have not transcended beyond the military and strategic aspects of the war in Manipur. Considering how a large number of Allied and Japanese troops thronged in Manipur, the local population and the foreign forces forged a transnational connection through daily interactions and negotiations and gained new skills during the war. The British empire coerced the civilians to assume the roles of construction labourers, coolie, dancers, informants, and combatants to contribute to the war effort, thus transforming their identity. A further instance of how the Second World War altered the lives of ordinary Manipuri civilians' is that it exposed Manipur to extraordinary changes in all things associated with modernities, such as aeroplanes, airfields, huge constructions of roads, deadly weapons and western food.

Placing the war theatre in Imphal as a global event where people of Manipur were subjected to hardship and dislocation and used as mere objects of war, I attempt to examine the Manipuri peoples' experience of the Second World War. This paper will use a transnational approach to understand how Manipuri people adapted to the changing socio-political condition due to Global interactions, the Imperial campaign and propaganda practices to garner their support against Japan.

*Ms Zuzubee Huidrom is an independent researcher. She has completed her MPhil in Modern South Asian Studies from the University of Cambridge. Her research focuses on the history of women's movements in Manipur and wartime narratives of women during the Second World War in Manipur.*

# PANEL I: MORALE AND ARMED FORCES

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: WENDY UGOLINI

**Matthew Barrett**

Wilfrid Laurier University

@MattKBarrett1

## Documenting Canadian Service members and the Court Martial Record

During the Second World War, the Canadian Army held over 23,000 field general courts martial of personnel charged with all manner of misconduct overseas. This figure does not even include thousands more district courts martial and summary trials held in Canada and the United Kingdom. The vast majority of army and Royal Canadian Air Force court files have been preserved, archived, microfilmed, and now digitized, making them an accessible and invaluable source for researchers into the legal and social history of the Canadian military at home and overseas. These often-understudied records trace the judicial responses to misbehaviour and offer important insights into the disciplinary priorities of higher army and air force authorities. Beyond a legal history framework, the case files also uncover much more about the lived experiences and private lives of Canadian military servicemembers during the war.

This paper examines the social history of many of the men and women who made up the Canadian Army and RCAF through the rich court martial records. Building on the work of Mary Louise Roberts, J. Robert Lilly, and Paul Jackson, among other historians, this project investigates themes of gender and sexuality within the case files of servicemen and women subject to the military justice system. By interpreting the meaning of discipline and scandal quite broadly, in certain circumstances, Canadian Military Headquarters attempted to use the legal process to exert control over the social, moral, and sexual behaviour of its personnel. Prosecution of so-called gross indecency reveals how Canadians navigated fraught sexual taboos and identities. However, even seemingly ordinary cases, such as absence without leave or passing worthless cheques, can be examined through the lens of gender to better understand the private lives, domestic troubles, civilian relationships, and ensuing social transgressions of accused Canadian military personnel.

*Matthew Barrett has a history PhD from Queen's University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Canadian War Museum in 2021. He published two books in 2022: Scandalous Conduct: Canadian Officer Courts Martial, 1914–45 and Through Their Eyes: A Graphic History of Hill 70 and Canada's First World War.*

## PANEL I: MORALE AND ARMED FORCES

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: WENDY UGOLINI

**Geoff Hayes**

University of Waterloo

### The Challenges of Identity and Narrative in First Canadian Army

Historians have long explored how identities and narratives can reveal the culture and experience of military formations. This paper is part of a larger project on the morale of First Canadian Army during the Second World War. It draws upon the work of Ugolini, Crang, Sheffield, Allport, Fennell, C.P. Stacey and others to explore issues of identity and narrative in the wartime Canadian Army. Major Charles Stacey understood such challenges when he landed in the UK on Christmas Day, 1940. A Canadian Corps Headquarters stood up that day, which reminded Stacey of the legacy of the Arthur Currie's Canadian Corps. A powerful, mythical narrative, linking the battles of Second Ypres to the Final Hundred Days, would cast a long shadow over the next generation of Canadians, who would not see sustained operations for another two and a half years. In that time, morale reports would reveal Canadian troops coming to both loathe and admire their British hosts and be loathed and admired in turn.

Later as the army's official historian, Stacey understood the importance to creating an identity and narrative separate from that of the British. His notes on General Alexander's plans to break up 1 Canadian Corps after the battles for Rome laid bare the British impatience with higher Canadian formations. That frustration persisted after First Canadian Army Headquarters stood up in Normandy on 23 July 1944. Stacey's remarkable account of a heated exchange between Field-Marshal Montgomery and General Crerar in early September 1944 demonstrates the weight Canadians gave to national identity and narrative. Such persistence led to the unification of First Canadian Army (a remarkable feat of logistics as well as politics) in the final months of the war in Europe. In the end, however, the shadows cast by the CEF and British generalship have obscured our understanding of the culture, and experience of First Canadian Army.

*Geoffrey Hayes is a history professor at the University of Waterloo, Ontario Canada. His book, Crerar's Lieutenants: Inventing the Canadian Junior Army Officer, 1939-1945 won the C.P. Stacey prize in 2018. A director of the Canadian Battlefields Foundation, he has just left a group of Canadian university students exploring the Western Front, the Battles of the Scheldt, the Rhineland and the Liberation of the Netherlands.*

## PANEL I: MORALE AND ARMED FORCES

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: WENDY UGOLINI

**Gary Sheffield**

King's College London

@ProfGSheffield

### The Experience of Amphibious Warfare: British and Canadian Soldiers at Dieppe and D-Day

This paper examines the experiences of Canadian and British soldiers involved in two amphibious assaults, at Dieppe on 19 August 1942 (Operation Jubilee) and the D-Day landings on the coast of Normandy on 6 June 1944. Both actions were costly, but the former ended in disaster, and the latter in success. It will address the question of how much agency the soldiers possessed, and the extent to which their experiences were shaped by external factors, offering explicit comparisons of the two operations.

The paper examines such key issues as training; morale and combat motivation; the role of leaders, both formal and informal; chance; technology; the defenders; terrain, and environmental factors. Anthony King's 'Marshall Effect' thesis will be critically assessed with respect to the two case studies. The emphasis is firmly on the lived experience of the individual, particularly in the 'teeth arms', i.e., infantry, tank crew, artillery and combat engineers, and how these experiences contributed to military effectiveness and combat cohesion (or lack of same).

This paper is based on a range of primary sources, archival and published, including personal diaries, letters, memoirs, questionnaires, morale reports, war diaries and staff papers. Archival material is drawn from British, Canadian and US repositories.

*Gary Sheffield is Visiting Professor in the Defence Studies Department at King's College London. He is working on a book entitled 'Civilian Armies: The Experience of British and Dominion Soldiers in the Two World Wars', to be published by Yale.*

# PANEL I: MORALE AND ARMED FORCES

FRIDAY 9TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: WENDY UGOLINI

**Hélène Solot**

University of Paris Nanterre

@HeleneSolot

## “On the Fly-Paper End of this Long War”: American Soldiers in Alaska

In July 1943, American troops retook the Aleutian island of Kiska after a year of Japanese occupation. For the thousands of American soldiers who remained in the Alaskan Department, this marked a turning point as – for the most part – the theater became inactive and these men deterrents for any further – and increasingly unlikely as time passed – Japanese attack. The lack of an end date for this mission, the absence of a large-scale rotation system as well as the conditions in which soldiers lived contributed to the development of discipline problems and of numerous cases of mental breakdown. As part of the response to what military authorities viewed as a morale crisis, a team of the War Department’s Research Branch was sent to survey soldiers in Alaska in the spring of 1944.

Relying on the results of this survey, especially the answers written-in by the soldiers, and on photographs taken in the Alaskan Department, my paper will shed light on the experience of soldiers on what one of them described as “the fly-paper end” of the war, highlighting the feelings of boredom and oppressive isolation expressed by many men and the importance of the natural environment and of limited opportunities of interactions with civilians in shaping their experience. It will analyze how soldiers themselves pointed to the effects of their stay in Alaska on their physical and mental health and denounced the unfairness of having to spend long stretches of time in this region, often in the hope of seeing changes in policy implemented. My analysis will also envision how the men’s experiences varied, considering in particular the role of racial dynamics (through the study of the experience of Black soldiers) and of differences in location (the men themselves distinguishing between the Aleutians, seen as “the Isles of forgotten men”, and the Alaskan mainland).

*Hélène Solot received her doctorate in American History at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS, Paris, France). Her dissertation examines the contributions of social scientists to the management of American soldiers during the Second World War and the early Cold War. She teaches at University Paris Nanterre.*



## PANEL J: MEDICAL CARE

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: TOBIAS KELLY

**Roderick Bailey**

University of Oxford

'Save the dying and strengthen the weak': Blood transfusion in Far East prisoner of war camps, 1943-

45

During the Second World War, Allied medical officers in Japanese captivity routinely considered blood transfusions to be a suitable emergency treatment for fellow prisoners weakened from malnutrition, disease, injury, and post-operational shock. They were also confronted with a formidable range of challenges to surmount, from the problem of identifying compatible donors, to the myriad difficulties of taking and transfusing blood in squalid and disease-ridden settings where specialist equipment was non-existent. Solutions were found, however, and thousands of transfusions performed. Drawing on a range of primary sources, from contemporary records to research papers and post-war recollections, this paper discusses the improvised methods that were developed and applied, the extent to which obstacles were successfully overcome, and how the impact of effective transfusions in these conditions extended from the physical to the psychological.

*Dr Roderick Bailey is a historian at the University of Oxford where he specialises in the history of medicine, the history of war, and the spaces where those fields overlap. Supported by the Royal Army Medical Corps, he is currently undertaking a major research project on blood transfusion in the Second World War.*

## PANEL J: MEDICAL CARE

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: TOBIAS KELLY

**Frances Houghton**

Open University

“Neither Rascals nor Cowards”: Psychological Casualty Care in the Royal Naval Medical Service, 1939-1945

In 1943, Surgeon-Captain Desmond Curran, RNVR, the Royal Navy’s chief neuropsychiatric specialist, warned British naval medical officers that many wartime cases of psychological breakdown were ‘neither rascals nor cowards, but excellent men who are sick.’ This advice signaled something of a broad cultural change in the wartime Royal Naval Medical Service’s attitude towards mental and nervous disorder in sailors. Yet although important new systems, practices and cultures of psychiatric care were embedded into British naval healthcare at home and abroad throughout the war, naval doctors’ abilities to provide forward psychiatric care at sea remained extremely narrow throughout the Second World War. This paper explores how Britain’s naval medical staff at the ‘sharp end’ of the global war at sea understood and practiced distinctive ‘cultures of care’ of psychological casualties, working with a highly restricted battery of available professional expertise, treatments, facilities and evacuation options. This paper examines the strategies that British naval medical officers used to manage risks to the mental health of officers and ratings in their care. It also establishes the wartime limitations of forward psychiatric treatment at sea, arguing that remoteness, lack of professional training, and inadequate resources severely hampered maritime casualty care in ways that have not yet been fully recognized in medical histories of the Second World War. In so doing, this paper contributes valuable new perspectives on the unique challenges of providing wartime mental healthcare in the ‘austere environment’ of the global maritime world.

*Dr Frances Houghton is a Lecturer in History at the Open University. Her research focuses on wartime British military culture and the experiences and memories of Second World War servicemen and veterans from across all three Services. Frances’s first monograph, *The Veterans’ Tale: British Military Memoirs of the Second World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) has won two awards, including the Society for Army Historical Research’s Templer Prize for Best First Book, and was shortlisted for the Royal Historical Society’s Whitfield Prize. Frances is currently writing her second monograph on medical care, masculinities and emotions in the Royal Navy during the Second World War.*

## PANEL J: MEDICAL CARE

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: TOBIAS KELLY

**Laure Humbert**

University of Manchester

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Aiding the French Resistance: Medical Care and the Free French, 1940-1945

This paper explores how the Free French took care of their sick and wounded during their military campaigns in Eritrea (February – April 1941), Syria (June-July 1941), Lybia/Egypt (1942) and Italy (1944). While Free French medical personnel provided critical surgical and medical care in remote locations and challenging fronts, often with limited personnel and resources, little attention has been paid to medical care in the historiography of the French Resistance. And yet, a focus on Free French medical spaces sheds fascinating light onto Free French dependence on its Allies, capacity of adaptation and ethical dilemmas. First, this paper highlights the significance of previous medical experiences, notably the legacies of the Rif War and Spanish Civil War, in adapting to truly 'austere environments'. Second, it demonstrates that while the employment of a very diverse personnel, coming from very different national, professional and gender backgrounds, was undoubtedly challenging, it also led to important knowledge transfers and international exchanges. Third, this paper argues that in several 'austere environments' (such as Bir Hakeim in May-June 1942), medical staff faced particularly difficult 'ethical' dilemmas, when they lacked resources to deal with the influx of patients and witnessed the death or abandonment of their comrades.

*Laure Humbert is Senior Lecturer at the University of Manchester. She is the author of *Reinventing French Aid: The Politics of Humanitarian Relief in French-Occupied Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021). She is currently the Principal Investigator of an AHRC funded project ('Colonial and transnational intimacies: Humanitarianism in the French External Resistance, AH/T006382/1) and an Affiliated researcher of the UK government funded project *Researching the Impact of Attacks on Healthcare* (<https://riah.manchester.ac.uk>)*

## PANEL K: HOME FRONTS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: JONATHAN FENNELL

**Jadwiga Biskupska**

Sam Houston State University

@swwresearchna

Polish, German, and Ukrainian Roulette: National Identification and Insurgency in Wartime Poland

This paper emerges from a book project on the Nazi German settlement around Polish Zamość during the Second World War, a partially-realized plan that provoked the murder of the region's Jews, deportation of the Polish peasantry, resettlement of ethnic Ukrainians, and the depositing of various people designated as "German" before the Red Army's return in 1944. In particular, this paper considers the fluctuating self-identification and occupation identification of peasants and villagers. In the east of the interwar Polish Second Republic, many citizens had "amphibious"—in Chad Bryant's phrase—identities: Poles of German descent, Poles "of Mosaic faith," and those with varied loyalties to Polish- and Ukrainian-speaking communities and Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic churches. Under Nazi occupation, new categories were imposed "from above," including two "German(ic)" categories, Reichsdeutsch and Volksdeutsch, a racial understanding of Jewishness, and a "Ukrainian" category that was open-ended and could designate Slavs willing to cooperate with the occupation. These new categories could come with obligations, including compulsory Wehrmacht service. In contrast, the occupied weaponized "local" identities against occupation initiatives, sometimes by political or class affiliation (communist partisans, Pilsudskiites), sometimes by native tongue (Polish, Ukrainian, Yiddish). The "acid test" of these identifications was attachment to various partisan and resistance formations in the region's forests.

Using Max Bergholz's and Christian Gerlach's models of identity formation through violence, this paper will consider local Jewish survivor testimony from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), documents from the regional Polish state archives (AAN and IPN), and memoirs to analyze how civilians—Polish Jews, "ethnic" Poles, and "ethnic" Ukrainians—changed their identifications as they dodged and committed to resistance projects in the last two years of the war.

*Jadwiga Biskupska is associate professor of military history at Sam Houston State University and co-director of the SWWRGNA. Her first book, *Survivors: Warsaw under Nazi Occupation*, was published in 2022 with Cambridge University Press and won the Heldt Prize from the Association for Women in Slavic Studies (AWSS).*

## PANEL K: HOME FRONTS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: JONATHAN FENNELL

**Kateryna Budz**

University of Edinburgh

Lived Experience of Triple Occupation: The Ukrainian Greek Catholics in Eastern Galicia (1939-1945)

During the Second World War, Eastern Galicia, a part of the Second Polish Republic during the interwar period, underwent a triple (Soviet-German-Soviet) occupation. In the wake of the war, Hitler and Stalin turned this region into the 'bloodlands,' to use Timothy Snyder's poignant metaphor. As a result of the war, this Western Ukrainian region, once populated by Ukrainians, Poles and Jews, lost its multicultural character and became predominantly Ukrainian.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), the Church of most Ukrainians in the region, is a Byzantine-rite Church subordinated to the Vatican. The Greek Catholics, predominantly clergy, who were killed by the Soviets in 1941, were beatified by the Pope John Paul II in 2001. The designation of the UGCC as the 'Church of the Martyrs' stems, however, from the fact that it was abolished by the Soviet regime in 1946. The priests who refused to join the Russian Orthodox Church and acted clandestinely were subject to arrests and persecutions.

Memories of the Second World War figure prominently in the post-1991 testimonies of the former members of the clandestine Greek Catholic Church. Based predominantly on oral history sources, this paper examines Greek Catholic narratives of victimhood vis-à-vis the wartime authorities, both Soviet and German. The paper will also examine the place of 'Others,' namely Poles and Jews, in these memories, in particular in regard to the Holocaust.

By highlighting personal stories of Galician Ukrainians encountering Soviet and Nazi regimes, the paper will contribute to a global discussion on the fate of civilians during the wars.

*Dr Kateryna Budz is a Research Fellow at the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. She holds a PhD in History (2016) from the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (Kyiv, Ukraine). Dr Budz specialises in the history of the clandestine Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the Soviet Union.*

## PANEL K: HOME FRONTS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: JONATHAN FENNELL

**Thomas Bottelier**

Sciences Po Paris

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From the liberal peace to capitalist warfare: A genealogy of the 'arsenal of democracy'

This paper seeks to place the United States' Lend-Lease programme of aid to the Allies of the Second World War in its proper and global context. It does so in two steps. First, it traces the genealogy of the well-known idea that the US was the 'arsenal of democracy' to transnational debates about peace, economics, and democracy that long predated the war. Though most frequently attributed to Franklin D. Roosevelt's design to aid first Britain, then the Soviet Union resist the Axis in 1940-41, the phrase as a descriptor of the US's involvement in the war dates to Finland's Winter War of 1939-40. But it is in fact older. Joseph Goebbels, then Gauleiter for Berlin, used it in 1928 during the Nazi Party's first national election campaign. The notion that production and business could be harnessed to defend or spread democracy is older still, and was deployed during and in the wake of the First World War by business internationalists and proponents of a powerful and activist League of Nations. Second, the paper shows how the language of arsenals and democracy was taken up during the war, whether as a descriptive shorthand for the many material connections built between the US and (home) fronts across the world, or as critique, by actors ranging from opponents of the New Deal to opponents of segregation like the NAACP. The paper thus makes two contributions. First, it challenges the methodological nationalism that continues to mark studies of the US home front and Lend-Lease in particular. Second, it opens up new ways of considering the transformation of internationalism and (humanitarian) aid in the 1940s by placing the Lend-Lease programme, long considered solely of military, economic, and diplomatic import, centre stage.

*Thomas Bottelier is Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po. His EU-funded research project, 'Mobilizing the World: A New History of Inter-Allied Cooperation in the Second World War, 1939-1945', looks at the supranational organisation of production and logistics in the global Allied war effort.*

## PANEL K: HOME FRONTS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: JONATHAN FENNELL

**Wendy Z. Goldman**

Carnegie Mellon University

### The Soviet Labor System: Mass Mobilization and Movement

The Soviet government's decision to evacuate the industrial base of the territories threatened by Nazi occupation had huge consequences. In the first 6 months of the war, millions of people and a substantial portion of the industrial base was evacuated to the east beyond the reach of German bombers. Evacuation allowed the Soviet Union to continue to supply the Red Army with armaments, but it also created a new challenge for the government: to supply the new industrial base in the sparsely-populated eastern areas with a labor force. The wartime labor system that developed was unique among combatant nations and unprecedented in the Soviet Union's own history. In 1941, the government created the Committee to Enumerate and Distribute the Labor Force. Over the course of the war, it mobilized and sent millions of people to distant sites for permanent and temporary labor. Those who disobeyed a labor mobilization order faced criminal prosecution. Factories and work sites assumed responsibility for feeding, housing, providing care to millions of people who left their families. This paper deals with experience of Central Asians, mainly peasants and those unfit for military service, who were mobilized to the eastern towns. The terrible conditions they endured were similar to those of other mobilized workers, including a lack of food, heat, housing, proper clothing and footwear. But they also experienced discrimination, abuse, and appalling death-rates. The government attempted to ameliorate conditions by providing familiar national foods, interpreters, and doctors, but most of these efforts were ineffective. At the same time, party and state leaders of the Central Asian republics challenged the wartime labor system on the basis of national claims, the only national groups to do so. The paper focuses on Central Asian workers and their experiences in the larger context of anti-Semitism and other ethnic and national tensions exacerbated by the war.

*Wendy Z. Goldman is a historian of Russia, Department of History, Carnegie Mellon University. Her books on World War II include *Hunger and War: Food Provisioning in the Soviet Union During World War II* (Donald Filtzer, co-editor) and most recently, *Fortress Dark and Stern. The Soviet Home Front during World War II* (with Donald Filtzer.)*

## PANEL L: COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: GARY SHEFFIELD

**Megan Hamilton**

King's College London & Imperial War Museums

@MeganAHamilton

The Vernon Military Camp and the Imperial Army Training Archipelago, 1939-45

As Sir Hew Strachan states in his persuasive 2006 article, “Training, rather than battle, was the dominant experience of armies in the twentieth century.” It was not until the turn of the current century, however, that Second World War army training was given adequate attention in the literature. Since then, historians have done well to take advantage of the many perspectives the topic provides, from the individual soldier on the parade ground to the loftiest doctrine. Conversely, a gap remains: army training across the British Empire.

The Second World War was a global conflict and Britain’s imperial ties stimulated a collaborative effort and a flurry of international exchange. My paper will aim to provide a transnational perspective on how military training and Empire interact, through the specific case of the Vernon Military Camp. Being the most important army training facility in the interior of British Columbia, Camp Vernon trained thousands of Canadian citizens between 1939 and 1946. Not only was the Vernon Military Camp a basic training centre, but also a detention centre, a brigade headquarters, a military hospital, a specialized battle drill school, and finally, the Canadian School of Infantry. Due to its variety of roles, the camp hosted officers from all over the Empire and even the United States. Camp Vernon was influenced by training methods crafted in Ottawa, the UK, and elsewhere, while also pioneering some of their own. It was an important cog in the trans-imperial army training machine.

By using in-depth archival research from both Canadian and British archives, I will explore themes of inter-theatre learning, Empire relations, geography, and institutional learning. This investigation will contextualize the Canadian Army training system within that of the Empire. A transnational perspective of training will not only enrich our understanding of the military dimensions of the conflict but also stimulate a wider discussion of war and Empire.

*Megan Hamilton is a first-year PhD student at King’s College London and the Imperial War Museum. Her PhD is a transnational history of Second World War army training across the British Empire. She holds history degrees from two Canadian institutions, those being Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo.*



## PANEL L: COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: GARY SHEFFIELD

**Richard Hammond**

Brunel University, London

@rjhammond215

### Italo-German co-operation and rivalry in the Mediterranean

The Axis powers made for a disjointed alliance during the Second World War and have been dubbed 'a coalition without a strategy' that largely ran individual national wars. One theatre of the war where two of the major Axis powers did work together closely, however, was in the Mediterranean, from 1940-43. Historians have tended to present this relationship as one of constant friction that was driven by mutual distrust and an increasingly domineering approach by the Germans. This is in many ways accurate. From their arrival in the theatre in late 1940 they set up structures and command chains to undermine Italian control and pressured their allies to bend to their will on operations. There was also an undercurrent of serious distrust, which at times boiled to the surface, including (false) German accusations of traitors among the Italians ranks that were divulging secret information to the Allies.

However, focusing solely on this aspect of the relationship masks the much closer and more successful integration that took place at lower levels in the Mediterranean war. This saw Germans serve aboard Italian ships, and vice-versa. Important experience and knowledge were exchanged between the two via technical missions and training excursions. So were crucial technologies such as Italian torpedoes and German radar and sonar. Overall, this paper will demonstrate that in the Mediterranean theatre, the Italo-German relationship moved in two different directions. Strategically and operationally, it became both progressively more fractious and more German-dominated over time. By contrast, it became progressively closer and more effective below those levels. Fitting with the theme of this conference, this highlights the difference between personal (tactical and technical coordination), regional (coordination and the Mediterranean War) and global (the Axis coalition as a whole) aspects of the Second World War.

*Richard is a Senior Lecturer at Brunel University, London and Vice President of the Second World War Research Group. His research interests include the Second World War, Mediterranean history and Fascist Italy. His first book, *Strangling the Axis: The Fight for Control of the Mediterranean during the Second World War* was published with Cambridge UP (2020).*

## PANEL L: COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: GARY SHEFFIELD

**Karine Varley**

University of Strathclyde

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### Bombing Friends and Fellow Citizens: Lived Experience in the Aerial Bombing of Occupied France

Over 57,000 civilians died from Allied aerial bombing campaigns in France during the Second World War. The morality of the Allied aerial bombing of Europe has long been the subject of scholarly and public debate; however, the focus has overwhelmingly been on the bombing of Germany. This paper aims to explore the British and French justifications for bombing France as a 'friendly' occupied state whose population largely supported the Allies. While Baldoli and Knapp (2012) and Overy (2013) have examined the responses of the French civilian population, to date there has been little research into the lived experiences of the pilots and crews undertaking the bombing raids over France.

The paper will explore two central questions:

1. How did British and French officials and military officers justify the violence against civilians inflicted by the bombing campaigns?
2. In what ways did those responsible for the bombing itself, namely the British and French air crews, address issues related to civilian casualties in occupied France?

The first section of the paper will focus on how British policymakers conceived of Nazism as being so great an evil that it overrode concerns about violence against friendly non-combatants. It will investigate how the moralisation of violence drew on established tropes about military sacrifice, with civilian losses being presented not as 'collateral damage' but as 'sacrifices' for the liberation of France. The second section will explore operations during the 1944 Normandy landings, focusing on the experiences of British and French squadrons based at Bomber Command Station RAF Elvington. It will examine how French crews sought to deal with the moral dilemmas of bombing their own nation and citizens.

*Karine Varley's new project, funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh, explores the British and Free French use of violence in the Second World War. Her new book, *Vichy's Double Bind: French Collaboration between Hitler and Mussolini during the Second World War* (Cambridge University Press) is out in May 2023.*

## PANEL L: COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: GARY SHEFFIELD

**Bastiaan Willems**

Lancaster University

At the Abyss: Motivations and Experiences during the 1945 Siege of Königsberg

By the final year of the Second World War the German military had long exhausted its best soldiers. Yet the fighting during this period ranks among the grimmest of the war. More German troops died between the summer of 1944 and May 1945 than during all the previous years of the war combined. This paper examines what motivated those serving with the German armed forces to continue fighting. It consists of two parts. The first part explores what constituted a ‘combatant’, as the Nazi regime had gradually and deliberately blurred the line between soldier and civilian. Who was deemed ‘fighting-fit’, by whom, and on what grounds? The second part examines which mindsets underpinned behavioural patterns on or near the battlefield. Historians examining the fighting on German soil largely ignore the core tenets of National Socialism, instead opting to frame Germans’ defence of their country along ‘traditional’ lines of patriotism and duty. Whereas for the fighting abroad – especially in the Soviet Union – historians strive to offer a holistic view that amalgamates combat, brutalisation, and genocide, for Germany itself no such narrative exists. Using as a case study the besieged city of Königsberg, this paper argues that racism towards and suppression of ‘subject races’ continued to be an important element of the military decision-making process. It offers an incorporated history of German soldiers, civilians, and militia men, and examines their interactions with the city’s remaining Jews, social outsiders, and foreign labourers, showing the constant interaction of these actors. As such, it highlights the need to move away from the historiographic tendency to draw strict divisions between these groups, instead explaining the radicalisation in 1944-1945 as a direct result of their proximity to each other.

*Bastiaan Willems is Lecturer in the History of War in 20th Century Europe at Lancaster University. He recently published *Violence in Defeat: The Wehrmacht on German Soil, 1944-1945* (2021) and co-edited (with Michal Palacz) *A Transnational History of Forced Migrants in Europe: Unwilling Nomads in the Age of the Two World Wars* (2022)*

## PANEL M: AGENCY

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: SUSAN R. GRAYZEL

Ling-chieh Chen

SOAS University of London

### Postal Communication and Everyday Life in China during the Second World War

This paper aims to explore how Chinese people could rely on the postal service in wartime, and to what extent the entire postal system functioned both domestically and internationally for the people during the Second World War. The Second Sino-Japanese War between 1937 and 1945 was the most severe challenge to the Chinese Postal Service ever since its establishment in 1896. It started with the Lugou Bridge Incident on 7 July 1937 and ended with Japan's surrender in August 1945. It was not just a war in China but was subsequently involved in the Second World War which had wider impact on the international postal service. Although postal communication could be difficult and often interrupted at that time, Chinese wartime diaries, letters and memoirs suggest that the post service was still available and accessible. To what extent even a basic postal service could be maintained in wartime China? What kind of difficulties did arise? How important was postal communication for the people and society during the war? This paper will include different Chinese people's wartime experiences from different background to discuss the significance of information and communication in wartime, and evaluate the role of postal communication in people's daily lives during the war. I will argue that the separation caused by the war created greater need for postal communication. Because of the separation from relatives and friends, postal communication was more relied on by the people in wartime. Correspondence became an important part of wartime life in China and comforted people while going through a very difficult time. Meanwhile, the modern postal system played its role to provide a reliable service even beyond the boundaries of hostile regimes and countries. In fact, the postal service was not only just 'there', but generally operated surprisingly well even during the war.

*Ling-chieh Chen is a PhD candidate in history at SOAS University of London. His research interests are China and Taiwan's postal history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and gender history in colonial Taiwan. His PhD thesis focuses on China's wartime postal communication during the Republican era.*

## PANEL M: AGENCY

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: SUSAN R. GRAYZEL

**Jonathan Fennell**

King's College London

@jonathanfennell

Returning the People to the Heart of People's War: Mass Mobilisation and Popular Agency in the Second World War

As Michael Geyer and Adam Tooze have recently argued, 'in contrast to the military or the political and ideological histories of the Second World War, there is no narrative frame for the Second World War as a global economic, social and cultural event'. It is the tackling of this challenge that this paper seeks to address. Strategy can, and perhaps should, be understood as an interplay between those with power and those who are often seen to have little or no power. If we understand strategy in this manner, our comprehension of military and political dynamics is radically dependent on taking account of the often highly contextualised, contingent and interlinked decisions and behaviours not only of those at the top of any organisational or socio-political structure but also of those further down the 'chain of command'.

Over the last decade, nationally configured accounts of the war have increasingly addressed these challenges. Seminal works by Stargardt on Germany, Mitter on China, Todman, Allport, Edgerton and this author on Britain, Khan on India, Sparrow on the USA, Edele on the Soviet Union and Killingray on Africa, among others, have engaged with issues such as the dynamics of mobilisation and collective experience. This paper seeks to explore the sources and methodologies that make a transnational study of these dynamics possible. It makes use, among other sources, of thousands of military and domestic censorship summaries, morale reports and attitudinal studies, based on the assessment of around 50 million letters sent by German, British and Commonwealth (including Indian, East African and Southern African troops), American, Italian (fighting with and against the Axis), Polish, French (1939-40) and Free French, Yugoslav, Czech, Greek, Cypriot, Maltese, Belgian, Dutch, Spanish, Arabic and Jewish Palestinian forces to offer a new perspective on the people's history of the Second World War.

*Jonathan Fennell is Reader in Modern History at KCL, Co-Director of the Sir Michael Howard Centre for the History of War and President of the Second World War Research Group. He holds a Doctorate from Oxford and is the author and editor of three books on the Second World War.*

## PANEL M: AGENCY

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: SUSAN R. GRAYZEL

Alex Wilson

King's College London

From Farms and Factories to the Front Line: Exogenous Explanations for Indian military performance in North Africa, November 1941 to February 1942

This paper fuses transnational and decolonising methodologies to interrogate a significant drop in performance that occurred among Indian soldiers in North Africa from January 1942 – midway through British Commonwealth Eighth Army's CRUSADER offensive. Previous analyses of Eighth Army's reversal typically prioritise military factors, including superior Axis tactics, the diversion of strength to contend with Japan, and whether experience was spread too thin across the Empire's expanding armies. This paper builds on this scholarship by arguing, additionally, that hitherto unknown aspects of the mobilisation process unintentionally alienated South Asian support for the war in ways which came to affect front line troops. The Raj's wartime economic policies led to rampant inflation that skyrocketed during late 1941, exacerbated by India's lacklustre spring harvest. With the cost of living rising far faster than wages, urban workers in India's war industries staged a profusion of strikes. This threatened to paralyse production, a critical pillar of India's industrial war effort. To placate these workers, the Raj shifted the burden onto agrarian regions by capping, from December 1941, the price of rurally produced food. This action brought the Raj into direct conflict with military communities because the regions that supplied its soldiers grew most of its food. State-impose price caps jeopardised their capacity to thrive. Punjab, especially, encountered trouble because it grew 43 percent of India's wheat and supplied over half of all Indian soldiers to the African front line. This measure seemed to suggest that the state no longer valued rural sacrifices made in support of the war. It played a role in diminishing the ardour which soldiers displayed during that critical winter. Consequently, this paper fuses civilian and military experience on two continents into a fresh analysis with the power to explain fluctuations in the relationship between India's soldiers, society and colonial state.

*Dr Alex Wilson is a Lecturer at the Defence Studies Department, King's College London. He is also a Regional Director of the Second World War Research Group and lead editor of *The Peoples' War? The Second World War in Sociopolitical Perspective* (MQUP, 2022).*

## PANEL N: MOVING THROUGH SPACE

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: FRANCES HOUGHTON

**Oliver Carter-Wakefield**

IHR / Imperial War Museum

'Soldiers armed with camera' or 'civilians attached'? The Wartime Experience of Members of the British Army's Film and Photographic Unit

Formed in October 1941, the Army Film and Photographic Unit was created to rehabilitate the public image of Britain's Army after a series of defeats and setbacks which had caused public confidence to wane. To do this the unit would produce film and photographic material which showed the Army to be tough, efficient and, above all, modern.

Shot wherever British land forces were present this thematically diverse and geographically varied corpus continues to influence our understanding of the Second World War. But what of the men who produced these images? Drawn from a variety of professional background in which Fleet Street and the film industry predominated, how did they see themselves in relation to the wider corporate body of which they were part?

This paper will begin by examining how the cameramen of the AFPU were presented in the public sphere and demonstrate how they, as much as the images they produced, were used to signify that the Army's approach to war had changed. Yet whilst popularly visualised as 'commando cameramen' who charged into battle clinging to the side of tanks and for whom 'the shot' came first regardless of personal safety, the reality of their lived experience was often profoundly different.

Using a multi-disciplinary approach to reverse the camera's gaze this paper teases out the reality behind the myth and brings personal experience to the fore. By suggesting that the members of this small but significant unit may not always have subscribed wholeheartedly to the Army's conception of them as 'soldiers armed with cameras', this paper breaks new ground. In doing so it offers fresh insight into the tensions between military and civilian identity which – far from being specific to the AFPU – were a defining factor in the global experience of the Second World War.

*Oliver Carter-Wakefield is a PhD candidate working in conjunction with the Institute of Historical Research and the Imperial War Museums. His research examines the experience of members of the British Army's Film and Photographic Unit during the Second World War and the relationship between the Army, society, and the media.*

## PANEL N: MOVING THROUGH SPACE

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: FRANCES HOUGHTON

Liz Gardner

King's College London

### Popski's Private Army: A Case Study of Personal Memoirs and the Construction of Special Forces History during the Second World War

Lieutenant-Colonel Vladimir Peniakoff's, memoir, *Private Army*, became an international bestseller on its release in 1950. This paper uses this memoir as a case study of to evaluate the role of personal memoirs in the construction – and distortion – of special forces history. It tests the claim made by Peniakoff's biographer, John Willett, that his subject's "attitude to facts was disrespectful". To establish the validity behind these claims, this paper recovers the wartime history and experiences of his unit, No.1 Demolition Squadron, known as Popski's Private Army (PPA). This forms the basis of a new history against which to re-evaluate Peniakoff's relationship with the truth. PPA existed from October 1942 until September 1945 as one of the multitude of raiding units founded in the Western Desert. As Willett (1954) points out, PPA "operated behind enemy lines only for a month in Tunisia, [and] for three weeks in Italy". From September 1942, just before the inception of PPA, all raiding units in Eighth Army came under the command of Colonel (later General) John 'Shan' Hackett. His organisation known as G(R), directed the wide range of small units harrying Axis forces. Thus, there has been a tendency for PPA to be mentioned tangentially in discussions of more famous units under G(R) control, including the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG) and Special Air Service (SAS). Furthermore, the task of reconstructing narratives of small and obscure units undertaking special operations, such as PPA, is complicated by limited availability of primary sources. These methodological challenges mean that Peniakoff's memoirs feature heavily in shaping accounts of his force. By reassessing, through wider triangulation, the reliability of this source, new perspectives emerge on the reliability of memoir in the covert operations space.

*Elizabeth is a PhD Candidate at King's College, London (Defence Studies). Her topic is the Libyan Arab Force, during the North African Campaign 1940-1943. She received her Scottish MA from The University of Edinburgh in Archaeology in 2001 and has been a commercial archaeologist for most of the intervening years.*



## PANEL O: HOLOCAUST PERSPECTIVES

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: TEREZA VALNY

**Paul Bartrop**

Florida Gulf Coast University

### Civilians as Soldiers: Revisiting Jewish Armed Resistance during the Holocaust

For Jews during the Holocaust, fighting the Nazis was an existential issue, but with few arms, little to no military training, and even less in the way of formal defensive or offensive leadership, Jews who sought to fight back were forced to learn in situ and without any opportunity of a combat apprenticeship. Looking at examples from occupied Poland and France, this paper considers some of the challenges faced by Jews under Nazi persecution, the foremost of which was, indeed, whether to fight at all, or to acquiesce to whatever the Nazis had planned for them. Once this had been resolved, the next most vital question involved the reason for fighting. As will be shown, these varied from place and situation. From these two issues, others followed, including how many fighters existed and were prepared to engage in combat; what sort of arsenal was accessible; and the availability of food, medicine, and shelter. Above all, civilians had to reckon with the reality of death, both to inflict it on the enemy, and also when those around them fell—as well as their own morality.

It has often been assumed that Jews who fought the Nazis during the Holocaust were instant heroes fighting successfully against overwhelming odds in the ghettos, camps, and forests. This paper showcases several key problems with this notion, highlighting the challenges faced by men and women as they transitioned from civilians to become fighters.

*Paul Bartrop is Professor Emeritus of History at Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, Florida, and Principal Fellow in History at the University of Melbourne. He is the author, co-author, and editor of 30 books, the most recent of which are *Sources for Studying the Holocaust: A Guide*, and *The Routledge History of the Second World War*.*

## PANEL O: HOLOCAUST PERSPECTIVES

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: TEREZA VALNY

**Karen Porter**

Sheffield Hallam University

@kp\_phd

'I cannot write anymore because tears are welling up in my eyes': Emotions in Daily Life in the Warsaw and Lodz Ghettos

This paper examines the role of emotions in ghettos during the Second World War, assessing how the ghettoized Jewish communities responded to and functioned (or attempted to function) under the emergency situation of Nazi occupation. Analysing emotions experienced and expressed by Jewish inmates incarcerated in the two largest ghettos of Nazi-occupied Poland offers a significant and unprecedented insight into the (dis)functioning of daily life under Nazi rule.

Though ghettos were Nazi-created spaces designed to contain, oppress, exploit, and eventually murder the Jewish inhabitants, they were not concentration camps: inmates retained their names (rather than receiving prisoner numbers used to address them), wore their own clothes, lived with their families or other chosen individuals and had a modicum of freedom to make decisions regarding their daily life. The residents of the ghetto were forced to live in a terrifying environment which, despite its indisputable horror, had a functioning daily rhythm for most of its existence – interrupted by Nazi visits into the ghetto or the deportation of thousands of residents to unconfirmed destinations in “the East”. The ghetto society, therefore, straddles the murderous Nazi camp system and a community able to express their own agency in daily life. The occupation and ghettoization elicited serious physical traumas on the population ranging from physical violence to starvation, but it also provoked a series of mental traumas: anxiety, fear, depression, desperation and even hope in a complicated amalgam of experiences. These impacted the ghetto inhabitants’ perspective on their past, present, and future. Emotions tied to the perpetrators (which traversed the spectrum from individual Nazi functionaries to Hitler himself) helped the inmates navigate their situation to the best of their ability, assess risk, and forecast their chances of survival.

This paper will utilise contemporaneous ghetto sources, namely that of diaries and other writings, to illustrate the role of emotions in daily life under Nazi occupation.

*Karen Porter recently completed her doctoral thesis ‘Perceptions of Daily Life in Diaries from the Warsaw and Lodz Ghettos’ at Sheffield Hallam University. She is currently turning the thesis into a book and working as researcher at the National Holocaust Centre and Museum in Laxton, Nottinghamshire.*

## PANEL P: GENDERING WAR

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: JEREMY CRANG

**Kiera Fitzgerald**

University of Roehampton / The National Archives

'She would best be employed as a subordinate': A Case Study of Pearl Cornioley and The Diverse Women of Special Operations Executive, F Section

Born in Paris on 24 June 1914 at the eve of the First World War, Cécile Pearl Cornioley (née Witherington) entered a life of poverty, vagrancy and hardship. 30 years later, she would be appointed organiser of a Maquis region heavily engaged with the enemy ahead of D-Day operations. Commanding approximately 3000 men at the height of conflict, Cornioley was the only female Special Operations Executive agent to run a clandestine network during the Second World War.

Through the case study of Pearl Cornioley, this paper explores the complex ways in which the efficacy and agency of Britain's female SOE F Section operatives are constructed in history, public archives, and post-war literature including fiction, memoirs, and biographies. This cross-sectional approach to female recruits allows for a new understanding of the ways in which femininity was perceived as an asset for undercover work during the Second World War and will offer a re-assessment of gender within the field of Intelligence studies. The war time exploits of Cornioley are some of the most extensive files held within The National Archives' SOE collection, with her career giving inspiration to several works of spy fiction, memoirs, and biographies in the post-war period. This paper will examine the dialogue between post-war literature and the cultural history of female spycraft found within TNA's collections to explore what constitutes a British female operative in the public consciousness and whether the literary works pertaining to Cornioley allow for more cultural agency than that of the archives, therefore permitting the exploration of imaginative and creative constructions of women as spies in the Second World War. A newly approached, re-examination of such literary works is vitally important to redress the imbalance in public perception around the role of the SOE female agent, both in fiction and reality.

*Kiera Fitzgerald is a PhD student at the University of Roehampton. Her thesis, "Literary Heritage and the Public Archives: The Diverse Women of Britain's Special Operations Executive, F Section", is a TECHNE/AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral Award with The National Archives. Kiera is also the Education Officer at The Wiener Holocaust Library.*

## PANEL P: GENDERING WAR

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: JEREMY CRANG

**Michelle Moffat**

University of Otago

@MMoffski

'We still have some kind of nationality': Scottish Experiences of the Second World War

Historian Paul Addison referred to the Second World War as “the culminating moment” in the history of Britain. The war, he suggested, was “the high-water mark of Britishness”, when a sense of common purpose and heightened British consciousness bound together the nations of Britain. Recent studies, however, have challenged this picture of unity and shared identity, arguing that this historical emphasis on ‘Britishness’ has obscured experiences of war in Britain’s constituent nations.

With this research in mind, this paper argues for the decentring of Britain and the recovery of national experiences of the Second World War. It focuses on Scotland, and examines the ways national identity, local history, and cultural tensions influenced experiences and shaped Scottish responses to war. A case study of the 1942-3 furore over ‘mobile women’ is used to illustrate the complexity of wartime identity formation, while also linking to underlying themes of political tension, and anxieties over nationhood and post-war regeneration.

*Dr Michelle Moffat is a historian of war and society, affiliated with the History Programme at the University of Otago (Dunedin, New Zealand). Her upcoming monograph, *Scottish Society in the Second World War: Tradition, Tension, Transformation*, will be published by Edinburgh University Press in late 2023.*

## PANEL P: GENDERING WAR

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - MEADOWS LECTURE THEATRE

CHAIR: JEREMY CRANG

Joseph Quinn

University of Oxford

@ww2research

“Even if Eire is staying neutral, I am not”: the experiences and perspectives of Irish women in the British forces during the Second World War

During the Second World War, an estimated 100,000 volunteers from Ireland would join the British forces, with approximately 60-70,000 of these enlisting from the neutral southern Irish state, the only neutral dominion of the British Commonwealth. Among these recruits were at least 12,000 women who volunteered to serve in the women’s auxiliary branches and nursing services that had been maintained by the British forces since the First World War.

The presence of these Irish women within the British forces, alongside their Irish male counterparts, underlined a curious fact about Irish society and culture throughout a period of strained political relations between Ireland and the United Kingdom. Although the majority of British institutions in the newly independent Irish state had dissolved, the tradition and practice of Irish service in British uniform had not. This is particularly interesting when looking at the role of Irish women in the auxiliary branches of the British armed services, and military nursing services. Their position was defined, not necessarily by the desire to break free from a patriarchal and economically stagnant Irish society, but by an impulse to follow an age-old family tradition of service in the British forces. They wished to do what was acceptable in their particular social circle; to join in common cause with their friends and family members, both male and female, and render their services in aid of what they saw as a righteous cause.

This paper explores the motivations and experiences of a small sample of Irish women volunteers who joined various branches of the British forces during the Second World War. Drawing on the pioneering research of Lucy Noakes and Fionnuala Walsh, it will highlight the precedent of service laid down by their pioneering female antecedents in the First World War, and shall examine their individual experiences of enlistment and service in the British forces on case-by-case basis, paying attention to social backgrounds, alongside ethno-religious and political identities, in order to highlight points of contrast and comparison.

*Dr Quinn has a PhD in Modern Irish & British history from Trinity College Dublin. He previously lectured at University College Dublin during 2017-19, before working at the National Archives, Kew, and the Imperial War Museum. He is currently working on the development of new podcast series for the IWM, and is a Project Coordinator with “Their Finest Hour”, a digital humanities project which aims to crowdsource the public heritage and memory of the British and Commonwealth experience in the Second World War. Joseph has published with a number of leading scholarly publications, including War in History and Liverpool University Press, and is producing a monograph for publication with Cambridge University Press.*

## PANEL Q: INDIGENOUS FORCES

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: GARY SHEFFIELD

**Liam Kane**

Deakin University

### Fighting for Australian Imperialism? Papuan and New Guinean Infantry Battalions at War

During the Pacific War the Australian Army raised five 'native' infantry battalions in the territory of Papua and the mandate of New Guinea, which were eventually grouped into the Pacific Islands Regiment. Never had men from these territories been eligible for military service. Were Papuan and New Guinean infantry battalions organisations in which colonial hierarchies were renegotiated and even diminished, as some colonial administrators feared? Or were existing social relations reworked to address Japan's offensive in the Asia-Pacific region? To answer these questions, I examine a range of under-explored administrative matters that provide insight into the social dynamics of the 'native' infantry battalions. Exploring the relationship between high-level decision making and ordinary experiences in war, this paper first demonstrates the importance of service entitlements, such as pay and leave, and resonances between Australian Army and pre-war colonial employment practices to Papuans and New Guineans experience of military service. As the battalion constituted the soldier's immediate community, I seek to illuminate the formal structures and social configurations of these units. Building on the work of Hank Nelson, I demonstrate that ill-discipline in units in the Pacific Islands Regiment was probably the product of simmering anti-colonial sentiments, patterns of inter-village violence that threaded through Papuan and new Guinean societies, and the sort of opportunism often practiced by soldiers deployed far from home. Given the linguistic and cultural diversity of Papuan and New Guinean communities and the gulf that existed between mostly white officers and NCOs and the other ranks, this paper interrogates the cohesiveness of the 'native' infantry battalions as fighting units.

*Dr Liam Kane is Lecturer in Military History in Deakin University's Centre for Future Defence and National Security. He is currently writing a book about Australian-US cooperation in aerial warfare in the Pacific war, but his research interests' range across military affairs in the Australia and the British empire more generally in the first half of the twentieth century.*

## PANEL Q: INDIGENOUS FORCES

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: GARY SHEFFIELD

### **Ed Pinfield**

King's College London

@Ed\_Pinfield

### Islanders of Destiny: The Intrinsic Importance of Pacific Islanders to the Secret War on Bougainville, 1941-2

Although it is widely acknowledged that the contributions of Indigenous people were important to the Allied war effort in the Pacific, no existing literature can claim to have outlined how the actions of Indigenous people impacted the battles and campaigns that shaped the Pacific theatre. Thus, demonstrating how Pacific Islanders influenced the Pacific War's course and outcome is the research dilemma this work seeks to address.

To answer this research question, this paper examines the Pacific War's turning point, the Guadalcanal campaign, through the lens of the lived experiences of Islanders on Bougainville who aided the Coastwatching espionage network, using the memoirs and wartime reports from the Australian Coastwatchers and oral testimonies from Indigenous people. This paper argues that the Coastwatching network could not have operated without the gallant assistance of Islanders, such as the Fijian Methodist missionary-turned-spy, Usaia Sotutu. Therefore, any success the intelligence network brought the Allies was fundamentally a product of Indigenous participation, and could not have occurred without their efforts.

By establishing the intrinsic importance of Islanders to the Coastwatchers, instances of the espionage network's successful activities are then analysed within a military-strategic context. This paper argues that the intelligence gathered by the Coastwatching network, and the Indigenous participation behind it, was key to the Allied war effort during the Guadalcanal campaign because it proved invaluable to the Americans in what was the decisive element of the campaign; the battle for aerial superiority. This paper then expands on this by arguing that the intelligence gathered by the Bougainville Coastwatchers, permitted by Indigenous actions, also had extremely damaging implications for Japan's concurrent war effort in Papua, and in the long-term at every and any battle fought after Guadalcanal as Tokyo's disastrous defeat in the Solomons forced them to alter their military stratagems, much to their detriment.

*Ed Pinfield is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Defence Studies at King's College London. His research concerns the enduring legacies of the Second World War across the Pacific Islands; those which continue to affect the lives and livelihoods of Pacific Islanders, and the region's marine and terrestrial environments.*

## PANEL Q: INDIGENOUS FORCES

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 1

CHAIR: GARY SHEFFIELD

**Jacob Stoil**

US Army School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS)

@jacobstoil

### Personalizing the Global and Globalizing the Personal: A Comparison of The Motivations of Indigenous Forces in Palestine Mandate and the Horn of Africa

By the very nature of their existence irregular indigenous forces existed in the liminal space at the intersection of the local and the global within the Second World War. For the most part their fight and existence were inherently local or regional but made significant contributions to the global war. From the Philippines through Burma and the Middle East to Africa, these indigenous forces were the vehicle through which hundreds of thousands experienced military service during the Second World War, yet, they have received little historical attention. The motivations behind their participation in the war are, if mentioned at all, often stuck in tropes of loyalty or nationalism. This paper serves as a corrective to such tendencies by restoring the voices of the individuals in East Africa and the Middle East who made up these forces.

The paper compares the motivations of the individuals who in the indigenous forces in Palestine Mandate and Ethiopia to discuss the logic that drove them into the war. In Palestine Mandate, many of those who volunteered served in a capacity with a limited and local effect but were personally motivated by global considerations. Those who fought in Ethiopia tended to be more focused on local and personal considerations but in aggregate had a profound effect on the global war effort. By combining traditional sources and oral history interviews conducted with veterans of the forces this paper demonstrates for the first time the ways in which the indigenous forces and the powers with which they cooperated were able to channel global concerns into local service and personal and local concerns into global effect. As a result, the combined motivations and experiences of the indigenous forces situated them at the intersection of the personal, the local, and the global.

*Dr. Jacob Stoil holds a doctorate in History from the University of Oxford and MA in History of Warfare from the Department of War Studies at King's College London. He is an Associate Professor of Military History at the US Army School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), Adjunct Scholar of the West Point Modern War Institute (MWI), Senior Fellow of 40th ID Urban Warfare Center, and Assistant Director of the Second World War Research Group (North America). Dr. Stoil's has published multiple articles on irregular indigenous force cooperation during the Second World War for which he has won several awards.*



## PANEL R: REMEMBERING THE WAR DEAD

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: WENDY WEBSTER

**Lisa Cooper**

Deakin University

@HistoryWordgirl

### Caring for the dead of Australia's war against Japan

The reality that confronted Australian troops in their efforts to bury the dead in the war against Japan stands in contrast to the beautiful peaceful war cemeteries dotted around the Pacific today. Between these two stark realities exists a void in our understanding of just how the dead of this war came to be relocated from the mud, blood and muck of jungle battlefronts to the carefully manicured and maintained war cemeteries of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Here lies an overlooked yet vitally important role in the war, carried out by an unknown band of men between death and burial on the battlefield and the Commission's work in creating and maintaining these cemeteries – the men of Australia's war graves units. This paper will highlight the effort of Australia's war graves units to locate and identify the dead of the war against Japan during active operations in New Guinea. It will expose the unique and challenging circumstances faced by these units in the Pacific in their effort to carry out what was a gruesome yet necessary task. Reliant on the accuracy of field burials – the first stage in dealing with the dead – the efforts of Australia's war graves units marked the first official memorialisation of the dead. Theirs was a role vital to the Army in the timely and effective completion of its role in the war, vital to relatives as they grieved a lost loved one, and vital to the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission in upholding its defining policy of honour in perpetuity. If we know little of these units, however, the results of their work are entirely recognisable in the thousands of headstones and bronze plaques that act as grave markers, and the memorials to the missing standing in war cemeteries around the Pacific.

*Lisa Cooper is a writer and historian, and a Research Fellow at Deakin University. In 2023 Lisa completed her PhD at Deakin University which examines the role of Australia's war graves units and the policies and politics of dealing with the dead from the Pacific theatre of the Second World War.*

## PANEL R: REMEMBERING THE WAR DEAD

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: WENDY WEBSTER

**Caitlin G. DeAngelis**

Independent Scholar

@cgdhopkins

[The Imperial War Graves Community in Occupied France: Nationalité, Commémoration, Résistance](#)

In May 1940, the Imperial War Graves Commission had 526 employees stationed in France and Belgium. When the Germans invaded, half of them escaped to the United Kingdom and half were left behind.

In this paper, I will present the experiences of a small, but significant, civilian population whose experience of the Second World War was shaped by the complexities of their liminal national identities. Gardeners from the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand faced years of internment in Nazi camps while their neutral Irish colleagues remained free.

Meanwhile, the gardeners' French wives and dual-national children existed in an uneasy limbo. Legally British but French by birth, they played a key role in escape and evasion networks in northern France. The Anglo-French community around Arras, who dubbed themselves Coeur de Lion, were some of the earliest résistants in France, beginning operations in the summer of 1940.

In this paper, I will argue that the War Graves families experienced both benefits and vulnerabilities as members of a community that was fundamentally rooted in commemorating a trans-national alliance. The gardeners were (mostly) British men on a “task that was peculiarly British,” which required them to live abroad. Their wives were, in many cases, French and Belgian women who became legal étrangères in their own countries when they married British men. Their children—often trilingual in English, French, and Flemish or Ch’ti—made ideal recruits for the Resistance and the Special Operations Executive (SOE).

*Caitlin G. DeAngelis is an independent historian specializing in cemeteries, memorials, and material culture. She holds a Master's in History and a Ph.D. in American Studies from Harvard. Her first book, *The Caretakers*, is about the gardeners who worked for the Imperial War Graves Commission. It will be published in January 2024.*

## PANEL R: REMEMBERING THE WAR DEAD

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - CMB SEMINAR ROOM 2

CHAIR: WENDY WEBSTER

**Wendy Ugolini**

University of Edinburgh

@wugolini

"I never got over David's death". Robert Graves, Affinity Welshness and the Royal Welch Fusiliers

London-born poet and writer Robert Graves (1895-1985) famously declared that he was 'Welsh by adoption'. His deep emotional connection with the Royal Welch Fusiliers, with whom he served during the First World War, reinforced this identification with Wales, which had been forged in childhood during family holidays in Harlech. When the Second World War broke out, Graves's sense of 'affinity' Welshness had devastating implications for his eldest son, David whom he badgered to enlist with the Royal Welch Fusiliers, and who subsequently died in Myanmar in 1943. Based on letters of the Graves family held at St John's College Oxford, this paper shows how, in order to find consolation in David's death, Graves attempted to posthumously place his son within a wider communion with their shared Welsh regimental identity. Through various commemorative practices - epitaphs, poetry, literary tributes, and even regimental dinners - Graves continually sought to reconnect his military service with that of David and attach meaning to both. In particular, his increasing obsession with the idea of male child sacrifice informed his immediate postwar 'Welsh' work *The White Goddess* (1948). Overall, this paper demonstrates how an identification with a Welsh regiment, and a conscious affinity with Wales, can tell us something important about the functioning of human relationships and the construction of dual identities in wartime.

*Dr Wendy Ugolini is a historian of the Second World War specialising in ethnicities and identity formation. Educated at the universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, she is a Senior Lecturer in Modern British History at Edinburgh. Her first book, 'Experiencing War as the 'Enemy Other'. Italian Scottish Experience in World War II', was awarded the Royal Historical Society's Gladstone Book Prize. Her forthcoming book on the mobilisation of Welshness in wartime England will be published by Oxford University Press. Wendy is the co-founder of the Second World War Network (Scotland) funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and co-organiser of this conference.*

# UG PANEL: HOLOCAUST HISTORIES

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - G.16

CHAIR: MEGAN HAMILTON

**Farradeh Martin**

University of Kent

@farradeh5

“What can I try on this one?”: Nurses’ Suppression of Childhood Agency in a Nazi-Austrian Children’s Hospital, 1940-1945

‘I had to do everything the others wanted me to. Of course, one resisted, and of course, one wouldn’t always do things the way others wanted, and of course, bad stuff happened.’ This quote from a Spiegelgrund survivor aptly summarises the nature of the facility. Spiegelgrund was a children’s ‘hospital’ that opened in July 1940 on the grounds of Am Steinhof in Vienna. Nazi doctors split this into two main sections: one where they tested experimental medicine on disabled children, and another designed to suppress resistance from dissident children. This micro-historical paper situates Spiegelgrund in the broader context of the regime, particularly reflecting on how the individual relationships between staff and child – the good and the bad – altered childhood agency.

Methodologically, the paper will use twelve oral interviews in which adults reflect on their memories of the facility. These testimonies deepen our understanding of the hospital, and the idiosyncratic ways staff used their instruments of power. In order to appreciate the nuances of childhood agency, the paper will consider Mona Gleason’s conceptual argument that children sometimes express their agency by mobilising adults to do things for them. By extrapolating her thesis, this paper will explore how the abusive power imbalances in Spiegelgrund altered the ways children used relationships to reify their agency. It will then reflect on how staff responded to this, and the structures they formed to prevent it. The question of whether children had agency is not explored here. Despite their best efforts, nurses could never entirely strip a child of their agency. Instead, nurses deliberately manipulated the environment to make conformity a more convenient way of deploying it than resistance. Overall, this paper will investigate these power imbalances, using agency to understand the everyday lives of the children institutionalised in Spiegelgrund.

*Farradeh Martin is a third-year History undergraduate at the University of Kent. She did her microhistory dissertation on Spiegelgrund, a Nazi-Austrian Children’s hospital. Farradeh hopes to continue her research with an MA on Nazi propaganda, racial pseudoscience and eugenics and would be happy to chat with others about this at the conference.*

# UG PANEL: HOLOCAUST HISTORIES

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE - G.16

CHAIR: MEGAN HAMILTON

**Maddie Walch**

University of Southampton

@MaddieWalch

## The Auschwitz Sonderkommando and Masculinities

The Auschwitz Sonderkommando was a special unit of male prisoners, the majority of whom were Jewish. As a victim group, Sonderkommando has been largely overlooked in Holocaust historiography, often referenced only briefly. They were recruited to move corpses from the gas chambers to the crematoria. Selected for their physical strength, many were only in their early twenties when they were recruited. This paper explores factors influencing masculinities in the Auschwitz Sonderkommando and the changes that occurred when normative masculine behaviours could not be upheld. Focusing on Sonderkommando testimonies, this paper looks at the ways in which the upbringing and lived experiences of these men before being transported to Auschwitz played a role in performances of masculinity within the Sonderkommando.

*Maddie Walch is a third year undergraduate History student at the University of Southampton specialising in Holocaust and Jewish Studies. Her primary research interests are gender and the Holocaust and Jewish experiences of the Holocaust. She has recently completed her dissertation on 'The Auschwitz Sonderkommando and Masculinities'. Maddie hopes to continue her research while studying on the MA Holocaust: History, Experience, Heritage with the Parkes Institute for Jewish/non-Jewish relations at the University of Southampton from September.*

## Activities for Sunday 11th June 2023



### TOUR OF COMELY BANK CEMETERY WITH THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

Edinburgh (Comely Bank) Cemetery contains 227 burials of the First World War, most of them forming a war graves plot in Section D. The Second World War plot is immediately in front and contains more than half of the 76 Second World War burials. The cemetery also contains a Finnish war grave and two non-war service burials. Join the tour with CWGC Public Engagement Coordinator Patricia Keppie to hear the stories of these individuals.

The tour will start at the gates on Crewe Road South at 11am on Sunday 11th June. The cemetery has paths, but most are gravel or grassed, so please wear appropriate footwear.

Buses 37 and 29 run from North Bridge to the stop next to the cemetery, as do the 19 and 113 from the stop at the top of Waverley Steps. There is very limited parking.

Sign up during registration and join us for the tour!

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## SECOND WORLD WAR EDINBURGH APP WALKING TOUR

PRODUCED BY THE SECOND WORLD NETWORK (SCOTLAND)  
WITH FUNDING FROM THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH

Although Edinburgh was fortunate not to experience large-scale air raids during the Second World War, it still has a fascinating and diverse wartime history. It was an important site for a range of military forces including British troops and foreign contingents and had close proximity to significant airfields and naval bases. At the height of the invasion threat in 1940, 33,000 British troops were located in the Edinburgh area of Scottish Command.

This tour also highlights more neglected histories, such as the anti-Italian riots of 1940 and those who rejected conscription, including conscientious objectors and some Scottish nationalists.

Visit the 12 stops in the tour and learn more about Edinburgh's Second World War history.



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