

Abstracts

- 1515 **Mary Louise Pratt, Harm's Way: Language and the Contemporary Arts of War**
How does language operate as an instrument of warfare? Leaving behind the idea of violence as beyond words, this essay seeks out terms for a reflection on linguistic violence and the weaponization of language in warfare. Using theories of war and examples from current United States engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, the essay examines language as an essential element of violent action and as military weaponry under such rubrics as psychological operations, interrogation, morale building, force multiplication, and cultural awareness. The essay reflects on the semantic work of making warfare and violence meaningful to those who sacrifice for them and on the language predicaments that states of war create and cannot solve. (MLP)
- 1532 **Fredric Jameson, War and Representation**
The problems of the representation of warfare are approached from two directions: on the one hand, the formal oppositions between the act and the scene; on the other, that between the individual or existential and the totality or collective. The texts examined include Grimmelshausen, Döblin's *Wallenstein*, Tolstoy, and Alexander Kluge. (F)
- 1548 **Mary A. Favret, Still Winter Falls**
This essay follows closely a long tradition of poets writing about war as winter, emphasizing its most dangerous characteristics: an impersonal force that can bring indiscriminate annihilation, freezing numbness or insensibility, and blank illegibility. These poems tell of modern total war *avant la lettre* and its capacity to destroy what we can feel or know of its work. Focusing primarily on eighteenth-century British poets (Pope, Thomson, Cowper, and Wordsworth) but turning as well to Homer and our contemporary poets, the essay considers the particular threats of war to poetic creation and the difficult, often desperate means by which poets resist those threats. Perhaps most ominous in these figurations are representations of war as still, inactive, and somehow outside the logic of historical eventfulness. Thus the poets meditate as well on the very possibility of historical narrative amid the violence of war. (MAF)
- 1562 **Aaron McLean Winter, The Laughing Doves of 1812 and the Satiric Endowment of Antiwar Rhetoric in the United States**
Antiwar activists in the United States have often made recourse to satire in order to rebut claims that their dissent is sententious and effeminate. Federalist opponents of the War of 1812 used the genre to posit, moreover, that they alone could manage the military and economic crisis that resulted from a disastrous second war against Great Britain. But satire, in an era of incipient nationalism, was problematically associated with British snobbery. I argue that wartime periodicals show Federalist satire pulling in diverging directions. Projects like

Alexander Hanson's *Federal Republican* are regressive, reviving the Augustan archetype of the satirist as intellectual martyr, even as they unwittingly lay the groundwork for a liberal model of civil disobedience. Projects like George and Henry Helmbold's *Tickler* are progressive, phrasing Federalist principles in the post-Federalist vocabulary of liberal competition through their experiments with populist dialect, which also anticipate the postwar transformation of British American "satire" into all-American "humor." (AMcLW)

1582 **Benjamin Friedlander, Emily Dickinson and the Battle of Ball's Bluff**

Emily Dickinson's response to the Civil War—once discounted as nonexistent or negligible, now embraced as part of the canon of Civil War writing—gives evidence of a conscious testing of alternatives. Among these alternatives, the most surprising, perhaps, is her potentially public positioning of herself as a war poet in works that celebrate military heroism. One such celebration, "When I was small, a Woman died—," written in the aftermath of Ball's Bluff—a disastrous Union loss—revises the scenarios presented in two other Ball's Bluff poems and transforms the horrific death of a local soldier into a glorious ascent into the heavens, an uncharacteristically joyous response to an event that others (including Herman Melville) experienced as entirely mournful. Since the two other poems appeared in her local newspapers and since the soldier was Amherst's first casualty, Dickinson's poem is likely a carefully crafted bid for publication. Read in this way, moreover, "When I was small" reminds us that war presents a poet with unique rhetorical problems but also with opportunities, and that these opportunities can be tempting even for a writer as resistant to the literary marketplace as Dickinson. (BF)

1600 **Marina MacKay, "Is Your Journey Really Necessary?": Going Nowhere in Late Modernist London**

This essay discusses civilian relations to space in the Second World War, focusing on late modernist fiction about wartime London. In novels by Elizabeth Bowen, Henry Green, Patrick Hamilton, and James Hanley, the modernist city has ceased to be the site of expansive, cosmopolitan opportunity it was for writers of the 1920s: permitting civilian death on a massive scale, the city is newly imagined as an anteroom to a brutal common death. Enforced immobility and coerced collectivity find expression in a recursive, subjectivist form that mimics the claustrophobic entrapments these novels describe. A pervasive sense that the mere existence of other people jeopardized one's own points to the limits of familiar stories about civilian solidarity in wartime. (MM)

1614 **Charlotte Eubanks, The Mirror of Memory: Constructions of Hell in the Marukis' Nuclear Murals**

How does art cultivate moral reflexivity? Maruki Iri and Maruki Toshi, eyewitness-

nesses to the atomic aftermath at Hiroshima, were the first artists to publicly display works showing the effects of nuclear irradiation on the human body. While their work has long been considered antiwar, few attempts have been made to theorize how their compositions structure an ethical response to aggression. Three interconnected zones of representation are explored: the artists' murals, Toshi's testimonials regarding the creation of the murals, and the museum in which the murals are displayed. Bringing Japanese Buddhist traditions for the depiction of suffering (*etoki* 絵解き 'picture explanation,' hell screen art) into conversation with contemporary theories of performance (Turner's concept of the "subjunctive mood," Taylor's notion of "the repertoire"), memory (Kansteiner's "collected memory," Auron's "pain of knowledge"), and museum studies (Crane's "distortion"), I articulate a contemporary Japanese model of nuclear criticism. (CE)

1632 **Sarah Cole, Enchantment, Disenchantment, War, Literature**

This essay employs the notions of enchantment and disenchantment to develop a theory of literature and violence across the twentieth century. War and violence were imagined either as generative, providing the symbolic core for cultural self-definition, or as entirely unredeemable, as pointless attacks on human flesh. A wide-ranging language is provided for elucidating the relation of literature to war and violence, and T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) is considered as an example of the key motifs traversing and defining this history. The poem demonstrates that literary modernism, for all its tendency to encode, rescript, and miscegenate, was fully and intricately engaged with the polarization between transformative and useless violence. (SC)

1648 **Jan Mieszkowski, Watching War**

Today we refer to the dissolution of the classical battlefield, since combat is now waged virtually, in information networks as well as on physical terrain. The thesis of this essay is that this transformation of warfare was set in motion in Europe at the turn of the nineteenth century. In the popular mythology of the Napoleonic era, world history is figured as a giant spectacle of clashing of armies whose mysteries can be discerned only by the emperor's all-seeing eye. In contrast, authors such as Rousseau, Stendhal, and Tolstoy propose that military events are best understood not through direct experience of the front lines but by reading about battles or imagining what they must be like. In the modern theater of war, the audience is enjoined to consult a medium that is no longer essentially visual. (JM)

1662 **Stacey Peebles, Lines of Sight: Watching War in *Jarhead* and *My War: Killing Time in Iraq***

Jarhead, Anthony Swofford's 2003 memoir of the Persian Gulf War, and *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*, Colby Buzzell's 2005 memoir of the Iraq War, emphasize the authors' voyeuristic delight in watching war movies before and

during their military service. What follows their enthusiastic consumption of “military pornography,” however, is a crisis of nonidentification and a lingering uncertainty about the significance of war in their own lives. Swofford and Buzzell find that the gaze they initially wielded is turned on them, and in response Swofford roils with sexually coded anger and frustration while Buzzell chooses to amplify his exposure by starting a blog. The two memoirs, then, provide a compelling account of the relation between changing technologies of representation and the experience of postmodern war. These lines of sight, all targeting the spectacle of combat, reveal the contemporary intersections among war, media, and agency. (SP)

1677 **Geoffrey A. Wright**, *The Desert of Experience: Jarhead and the Geography of the Persian Gulf War*

The censored media coverage of the Persian Gulf War obscured the region’s geography and erased the suffering of combatants and civilians. In contrast, the literature and film on the war emphasize the human rather than the technological dimension of the fighting. The words and images used to represent the foot soldiers’ deeply personal experiences are bound to the landscape. This essay sets forth a geographic semiotics of Persian Gulf War combat narratives, which entails the study of an array of geographically oriented codes for making meaning out of wartime experience. The study of geographic signs in these narratives revolves around images and descriptions of the desert, which permeate such literary and filmic accounts of the ground fighting as Anthony Swofford’s memoir *Jarhead* (2003), Sam Mendes’s film adaptation *Jarhead* (2005), and David Russell’s *Three Kings* (1999). Practicing a geographic semiotics of Persian Gulf War combat narratives allows us to rethink the war, to reimagine what its stories might signify—morally as well as politically. (GAW)

1690 **Steven Schroeder**, *Mother of All Battles*

In the United States, the best-known antiwar speech of the past decade is not antiwar. Barack Obama’s remarks, delivered at an antiwar rally in Chicago in October 2002, are about timing and the place of “reason” in war. At no time is war’s place questioned: because it is *necessary*, it is, sometimes, inevitable. Combined with the entrenchment of war attributed to Heraclitus, this sets the stage for reflection on war here and now: it is about *timing*, about *centering*, about *naming*, about *reasoning*—about the *politics* of the cities we build and inhabit. The *pervasiveness* of the assumption that war is necessary calls attention to the question that guides this essay: whether and how we might cultivate judgment that is intuitively opposed to war rather than intuitively resigned to it. (SS)