

We Have Just Begun to Write

Professor Kimball's provocative and aptly titled essay evokes responses on several levels. His claim that "the Second World War stimulated and perhaps created significant, even dramatic, political and social changes in societies everywhere" is one that echoes throughout the war's literature and may be true. Yet, on a comparative basis, and especially with a comprehensive understanding of what constitutes the "social" world, there is much work to be done. Before assessing the social history of a global war on a global scale and its future, and before defining the proper purview of the "home front," let us briefly look at the thesis in the title of "The Incredible Shrinking War" in the light of what is still known throughout popular culture as "the war."

It is worth emphasizing the word *popular*. Books, magazine articles, feature films, television series, and videos have not shrunk in numbers, at least not much. A quick survey of the subject index of OCLC's *First Search* for the war yields somewhat more than 165,000 titles. Some 55 percent of those are in English.¹ Furthermore, while the annual number of books published after 1945 under this rubric reached an ebb of 986 in 1957, it grew from then until the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war with nearly 6,000 titles published. It declined by nearly 50 percent between 1995 and 1998 – to 2,843 (of which 70 percent are in English) and dropped another 40 percent to 1,714 in 1999 (of which 1,425 or 83 percent are in English). Of Anglophone books, the decline has been about 50 percent in the past five years, but still about the same as the number published in 1950, and more than afterward until the 1980s.²

Fifteen books hardly speaks for a shrinking interest in the war, though as Kimball suggests, much of this is war as diversion and nostalgia. He is partly wrong, however, if he is implying that the war is popular only as entertainment. He is right, however, as to how it is treated by our profession. From the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association through that august body's

1. *First Search* undoubtedly favors English language books because of the database source, but probably not by much.

2. Much of this extensive literature is anecdotal "nostalgia" – coffee table stuff – some of which can be mined for historical research, but itself without analytical or systematic importance to the study of home fronts. A similar genre is the many celebratory volumes stressing the contribution of this or that group or place. The drama and tragedy of uprooted lives, unthinkable human suffering, the bewildering loss of lives, and unprecedented despoliation can be safely savored, knowing that the war is over and the unbridled beast is safely caged – all without serious examination of its long-term social, cultural, and psychological importance.

Guide to Historical Literature and on to survey texts, the war, including the war as a series of military events and domestic history, has shrunk. As domestic history it is peripheral, or often limited to consideration of matters such as gender, sexuality, and race.

In forty-eight sections the *AHA Guide* finds no separate section for World War II. That can be found under “International Relations since 1920” with forty-seven entries (nearly half of which are on diplomacy), while the Cold War merits eighty-three. The subject index refers mostly to national histories – there is one entry on “economic aspects”³ (aside from a few entries under national histories), none on “social history.”⁴ Arthur Marwick’s ground breaking comparative *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century* (1974)⁵ finds a place (though not his World War II book), but it stands alone. Worse is the near absence of military histories, except for general texts and a few other studies, but that is another matter.

As for textbooks, among world history texts (which I know best), where one *would* expect a *world* war, World War II is repeatedly referred to as a total war that undermined Europe’s global and imperial predominance. As for the social lives of the majority of the globe’s inhabitants, one finds a curious absence. What remains are the obligatory prefaces to the Cold War, the beginnings of decolonization, and issues of identity politics.

Our profession reflects a curious bias against the study of war. Bruce Porter reminisces that “Once upon a time, the study of war annoyed me to tears. As an undergraduate trying to master the details of European history, I found wars a great inconvenience, a bothersome interruption. . . . Several pages later, history would resume.”⁶

There have been, of course, champions of war as the motive force of social and political development. Among historians, they are mostly concerned with early modern European history. The importance of war in the historiography of the contemporary world largely died among intellectuals after the bloodletting of the First World War, and in the United States after the Korean and Vietnam wars. The consequence for academic history, which Kimball rightly bewails – “World War II was much more than merely a connector” – is that the study of war concentrates on origins and consequences, much as if war only warranted investigation when seen as an avoidable accident on a grand scale. While there might be some value in this view, World War II was an experience of deep intensity for its participants; it shaped so much of the world afterward,

3. Alan S. Milward, *War, Economy, and Society, 1939–1945* (Berkeley, 1977).

4. There is one under Great Britain (“social life and customs”), John Stevenson, *British Society* (Harmondsworth, 1984), which is noted as having “no overall thesis.” There are a few for the Soviet Union.

5. Arthur Marwick, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and the United States* (London, 1974) and *The Home Front: The British and the Second World War* (London, 1976).

6. Bruce D. Porter, *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York, 1994), ix.

that we can never know what the twentieth century and our new century would have been like without it.

The scope of “home fronts” is usually too narrowly defined. The phrase “total wars” points to two realms: the military front and that of noncombatant civilians. Yet, much “home front” historiography is limited to economic mobilization, public opinion and support for the war, domestic politics, and other obvious factors of the conduct of war, extended in the last century in duration and intensity – the “test of war” genre. Recently, gender studies, sexuality, matters of race, and the Holocaust have been added. With few exceptions, most studies are limited to national boundaries with occasional comparisons among societies of Western Europe and the United States.

Other topics relating to home fronts have been researched, but too often inadequately. Even those that exist do not figure in the general literature. I have in mind such themes as intercultural experiences, the colonial world, children, returning veterans, prisoners of war, and the consequences of each of these. Other important topics have practically no discernible literature: the impact of the war on the environment, global migration, or changing geographical perspectives due to the more than five million American men and women torn from their localities and shipped overseas, or the intensified global telecommunications and air travel networks established during the war. Certainly, studies exist of the war in relation to science and technology, of business, of labor, and of individual cities and regions. What is lacking is their integration into other home front experiences. Resistance movements and collaboration are neglected or often seen in isolation from other themes relating to home fronts, and never compared to the experiences of societies that were not occupied by Axis powers. European overseas colonies do not figure in the story either, except for decolonization and the decline of core European powers.

During the past twenty years as the social history of warfare became more popular, scholars showed diverse views on the relationship between industrialized warfare during World War II and domestic social and political structures. Some find little connection. War and its demands are sometimes seen as a break, a catastrophe bringing death and suffering, but one neither reshaping society nor much accelerating prewar trends. On the other hand, it is generally recognized that the capacity to mobilize a population and its economic productivity – that is, war as a test – is a key measure in achieving victory during the war, even to the point of leaving the impression that the Allies won through superior industrial production.⁷ That the war was won by production lays at the basis of the “shrinking” World War II in many survey texts. At one level, it denies a significant interaction between the conduct of war and society. After war, societies resume where they left off, and advanced to where they were destined

7. As, for example, Mark Harrison, *The Economics of World War II: Six Great Powers in International Comparison* (New York, 1998), 2: “Ultimately, economics determined the outcome.” Similar comments could be made of other books as well.

to be, however much international relations and the economic global context may have changed. The need to isolate the war years also reflects a moral interest in keeping the horrendous truth of the war separate from both prewar and postwar society.

The “new social history” and its cousin the “war and society” studies that emerged in the last quarter century turned to the experience of war and the connections between society and war on a new scale, especially in the English-speaking countries and Germany. This was fed by a rising interest in women’s history and the history of African Americans and other minorities (gays, Native Americans, Hispanics, etc.) in the United States – and by imitation in Australia and Britain. Records accumulated by governments during the war provided ready sources for such studies, even if the primary research motivation was not the war, but gender and race, with the notion of war as an agent of social change the assumption. Finally, the Vietnam War highlighted the need to relate war to society in new ways.

The “war and society” school developed in part from frustration with a sterile operational and battle oriented historiography. Not everyone has agreed that that is a good thing, in spite of two very good English-language journals and a German one with that as an integral part of their objective.⁸ It is possible, however, to return the conduct of war to the study of this war without losing the benefits of social history generally.

When defined broadly, the task ahead for a thorough global understanding of home fronts during World War II is a distant vision. The following somewhat capriciously skims the field – and at great risk. A survey, even of English-language material, is necessarily not only selective, but idiosyncratic. A truly international history of global war home fronts must be a collaborative enterprise.⁹

8. *War in History* (1994ff) and *War in Society* (1982ff). Dennis Showalter and Hew Strachan’s “Editorial” in the first issue of *War in History* opined that “the military historian must return to his primary subject matter . . . the study of combat. But it must also go much further. . . . [This journal] will embrace war in its economic, its social, and its political aspects as much as its purely military.” *Militär-geschichtliche Mitteilungen* (1967ff) has also incorporated this viewpoint since its founding. *The Journal of Military History* (1989ff) and *The International History Review* (1979ff) also contain relevant articles, as do, of course, several other journals devoted primarily to nonmilitary themes.

9. An effort was made in this direction with the historiographic essays published in *World War II in Europe, Africa, and the Americas, with General Sources: A Handbook of Literature and Research* (Westport, CT, 1997) and *World War II in Asia and the Pacific and the War’s Aftermath, with General Themes* (Westport, CT, 1998), both of which I edited. In the first volume, especially see the essays by Gerhard Hirschfeld (“German Occupation of Europe, the Axis ‘New Order,’ and Collaboration”); Bob Moore (“Resistance Movements in Europe”); S. P. MacKenzie (“Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees: The European and Mediterranean Theaters”); Geoffrey T. Mills (“Comparative Economic Mobilization in World War II”); Greta Bucher (“Women in World War II”); Otto B. Burianek (“Refugees, Displaced Persons, and Migration as a Consequence of World War II”); and two essays by me (“The War and Social Change in Allied Lands, Occupied Europe, and the English-Speaking World” and “The Domestic Impact of War and Occupation on Germany”). In the same volume, essays by Errol D. Jones (“World War II and Latin America”), John Vander Lippe (“World War II

Charles Tilly famously quipped that “the state makes war and war makes the state.” A corollary maxim might well be “societies make war and war makes societies.” The depth and duration of the two world wars impressed upon some observers the importance of war for understanding societies.

Among the most influential of these were Pitirim Sorokin, Stanislav Andrzejewski (usually spelled Andreski in English), and Richard Titmuss. Sorokin’s *Man and Society in Calamity*¹⁰ discerned war, especially that at mid-century, as an almost unmitigated disaster. He outlined its extensive negative effects on culture, morality, and society in general. In this, he came close to the view that war is an interlude in human progress, a disaster, and one to be exorcized. Who would disagree that the war was probably humanity’s greatest catastrophe. But as a method of investigation this approach overlooks the question as to what extent societies of the twentieth century are the product of, as well as progenitor of, war in both positive and negative ways. Heraclitus, to quote again his oft-cited remark, sensed the ambiguity in war’s creative/destructive powers: “War is the father of all; and some he made gods and some men, some slaves and some free.”¹¹ The question becomes, is war – was this war – an extraneous factor or a formative constituent? Can we imagine post-1945 societies without the wars of 1939–1945?

Andreski¹² developed his “military participation ratio” (MPR) along with an elaborate, arcane schematic to demonstrate the relationship between military power and social organization. His views were less pessimistic than Sorokin’s. While interested in the current and future of these relationships, he ranged throughout history to pick examples. While not ready to pronounce on the superiority of democratic and liberal government (which he noted are not the same), his MPR suggested that greater social equality resulted from wider

and the Middle East”), Ritchie Owendale (“The War and the British Commonwealth”), and Thomas Ofcansky (“Sub-Saharan Africa”) also contain discussions of home fronts.

In the second volume, sixteen (of a total of twenty-nine) essays under “General Themes” treat aspects of home fronts: Shigeru Sato (“Japanese Occupation, Resistance, and Collaboration in Asia”); William M. Tsutsui (“The Domestic Impact of War and Occupation on Japan”); Dieu Thi Nguyen (“European Reconquest and Neocolonialism in Southeast Asia”); Benjamin H. Kristy (“Science, Technology, and Weapons Development”); Stephen Curley (“The War and Film in the United States and Britain”); William B. Hauser (“Japanese War Films”); Judith E. Doneson (“The Holocaust and Film”); M. Paul Holsinger (“The Western Fiction of World War II”); Jonathan W. Bolton (“Lines (In)Formation: Anglophone Poetry in the Second World War”); Brian Foss (“The War and the Visual Arts”); Ben Arnold (“Art Music and World War II”); Gerald L. Sittser (“American Christianity on the Home Front during the Second World War”); Richard V. Pierard (“Christianity Outside North America”); Donald J. Mrozek (“Cultural Background to the War”); and an essay by me (“Propaganda, Public Opinion, and Censorship during the Second World War”).

Despite the length of this list, the gaps are obvious and, it must be noted, most of the literature and research referred to is in English.

10. Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Man and Society in Calamity: The Effects of War, Revolution, Famine, Pestilence upon Human Mind, Behavior, Social Organization, and Cultural Life* (Westport, CT, 1968).

11. Cited in Milton C. Nahm, ed., *Selections from Early Greek Philosophy* (New York, 1947), 91.

12. Stanislav Andreski, *Military Organization and Society* (London, 1954).

participation in the armed forces, which, in turn, led to states providing more resources and benefits for their citizens. Mass armies produced more collectivist – or as we now might say – greater welfare or corporative state-societies.

Richard Titmuss, in an important volume of the official British Civil Services series on the war, *Problems of Social Policy*,¹³ located the origins of the Labour party's welfare state in the domestic experiences of the war, a view soon established as the orthodox interpretation. This opinion is supported by the massive evacuation of civilians, the medical and housing crisis associated with the blitz, and unprecedented conscription of men and women for the military and for civilian wartime production. It was the wartime experience that yielded the unexpected Labour victory of July 1945 and its postwar program.

In British historiography, Paul Addison's *The Road to 1945*¹⁴ greatly deepened Marwick's work and added to Titmuss's by arguing that the war produced a broad consensus between Labour and some Conservatives in establishing a welfare state. David Morgan extended this interpretation into the postwar period, though with less emphasis on consensus.¹⁵ This interpretation has been criticized and substantially revised. Kevin Jefferys's *The Churchill Coalition and Wartime Politics* denies any wartime bipartisan consensus and notes the absence of major social legislation before 1945. Soon Stephen Brooke, having thoroughly examined archival materials for his *Labour's War*, concluded that "The Second World War was not the crucible of lasting political consensus. If such consensus existed at all, it existed after 1945, not before."¹⁶ The revisionists, however, have by no means won the field.

By this time, the 1990s, debate over consensus had gotten embroiled in the ideological conflict of the 1980s. On the right Corelli Barnett in *Audit of War*, a book receiving few academic plaudits, faulted the wartime coalition, among other factors, for producing unrealistic social expectations that bankrupted society and led to Britain's international decline, a theme of several of his books. A similar skeptical reception greeted David Morgan and Mary Evans's *The Battle for Britain*, which argued that far from producing socialism, wartime politics undermined the true left and subverted significant social change.¹⁷

Though focusing on the question of civilian morale, Andrew Thorpe rolled the consensus thesis back to prewar times, finding British society less divided by class than many 1930s observers and later historians believed. The much

13. Richard Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (London, 1971) and *Essays on the Welfare State* (London, 1976).

14. Paul Addison, *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War* (London and New York, 1975).

15. Kenneth O. Morgan, *Labour in Power, 1945–1951* (New York, 1984).

16. Kevin Jefferys, *The Churchill Coalition and Wartime Politics* (New York, 1991); Stephen Brooke, *Labour's War: The Labour Party during the Second World War* (New York, 1992), 342.

17. Corelli Barnett, *The Audit of War: The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation* (London, 1986); David Morgan and Mary Evans, *The Battle for Britain: Citizenship and Ideology in the Second World War* (New York, 1993).

heralded changes wrought by war “could only be limited because, in many essentials, the British people remained the same.”¹⁸

Jose Harris attempted to resolve these differences in “Great Britain: The People’s War?”¹⁹ There is probably consensus in her view that there were comprehensive changes in social administration and in the expansion of state intervention into the economy and society, as well as a significant disruption in the lives of ordinary people. Only a limited reordering occurred in state bureaucracy, in women’s lives outside the home, or in class relations. She rightly points out the need for more research into regional differences and the apparent growth in postwar anti-social behavior. All of this indicates that the notion of the war as a unifying social force needs to be revisited.²⁰

The parallels between the historiography of the home front in the United Kingdom and the United States are striking. Is this because of similar experiences in these societies or a shared historiographic tradition? In both cases, the themes arose during the war.²¹

Postwar scholarly discussion in the United States broke new ground with Richard Polenberg’s *War and Society* (1972) – two years before Marwick’s *Home Front*. “Everywhere the war acted as a catalyst for social change.”²² John Blum’s *V Was for Victory* (1976) soon followed.²³ After a quarter century of research, both studies remain unchallenged in their comprehensiveness.²⁴ In 1992 Polenberg retracted some of his more optimistic views of 1972, while Michael Adams’s *The*

18. Andrew Thorpe, “Britain,” in *The Civilian in War: The Home Front in Europe, Japan and the USA in World War II*, ed. Jeremy Noakes (Exeter, 1992), 14–34 (quote on p. 32).

19. Jose Harris, “Great Britain: The People’s War?” in *Allies at War: The Soviet, American, and British Experience*, ed. David Reynolds, Warren Kimball, and A. O. Chubarian (New York, 1994), 233–59; idem, “War and Social History: Britain and the Home Front during the Second World War,” *Contemporary European History* 1, no. 1 (1992): 17–35.

20. For other recent summations, with references to more detailed studies, see Brian Brivati and Harriet Jones, ed., *What Difference did the War Make? The Impact of the Second World War on British Institutions and Culture* (Leicester, 1993); and Harold Smith, *War and Social Change: British Society in the Second World War* (Wolfeboro, NH, 1986), as well as the many volumes in the official civil and medical histories.

21. Francis Merrill, *Social Problems on the Home Front: A Study of Wartime Influences* (New York, 1948), stressed the war’s negative impact; Agnes Meyer’s title *Journey through Chaos* (New York, 1944), speaks for itself (especially on the “Negro” question and children), except for her comment “Have we learned anything during this world holocaust? If so, the aftermath of this war will not be allowed to culminate in a social retreat on the home front such as took place after the last cataclysm” (p. 361). Also see Robert J. Havighurst and H. Gerthorn Morgan, *The Social History of a War-Boom Community* (New York, 1951), an excellent wartime scholarly study of Seneca, Illinois; and Jack Goodman, *While You Were Gone: A Report on Wartime Life in the United States* (New York, 1946), which mirrors differing ideas on the home front’s impact in 1946 and anticipates later controversies.

22. Richard Polenberg, *War and Society: The United States, 1941–1945* (Philadelphia, 1972), 243.

23. John M. Blum, *V Was for Victory: Politics and American Culture during World War II* (New York, 1976).

24. See the recent surveys with bibliographies in Gerald D. Nash, *The Crucial Era: The Great Depression and World War II, 1929–1945* (New York, 1992); Robert James Maddox, *The United States and World War II* (Boulder, 1992); and John W. Jeffries, *Wartime America: The World War II Home Front* (Chicago, 1996).

Best War Ever somewhat cavalierly found nothing redeeming about the war at all.²⁵

Between Polenberg's book and his reconsideration, writing about the home front challenged the optimistic, generalizing trends of earlier studies. Marc Miller found that the war in Lowell, Massachusetts, set progress back.²⁶ John Jeffries, like Thorpe for Britain, discerned a basic continuity in the Connecticut Roosevelt coalition between the 1930s and the late 1940s.²⁷ Others have found that any wartime progress labor may have made was eroded, as in Britain, after the war.²⁸

Easy generalizations at the national level fail, as may regional ones also under closer scrutiny. Gerald Nash found that the American West was transformed, as did Marilyn Johnson for Oakland, California.²⁹ There have been several regional studies, and quite a few state histories, but as yet, no persuasive synthesis.³⁰

The historiography of women and the war throughout the English-speaking world followed a similar trajectory. The intensive mobilization of women (for the military as well as in industry), especially in Britain, suggested a special impact on women. Most agree that women gained economically during the war; at issue is how permanent these gains were, and what the lasting effects were. Chafe's pathbreaking *The American Woman*³¹ appeared the same year as Polenberg's *War and Society*, with not so different assumptions. Its thesis that the war advanced women's rights, however, has not stood up to closer examination. The

25. Richard Polenberg, "The Good War? A Reappraisal of How World War II Affected American Society," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 100 (July 1992): 295–322. In a similar way A. W. Brian Simpson, *In the Highest Degree Odious: Detention without Trial in Wartime Britain* (New York, 1991), exposed unsavory aspects of British society in the unseemly confinement of British citizens (not to speak of noncitizens, many of whom were refugees from fascist states) held without trial during the first years of the war. Michael C. C. Adams, *The Best War Ever: America and World War II* (Baltimore, 1994).

26. Marc Scott Miller, *The Irony of Victory: World War II and Lowell, Massachusetts* (Urbana, 1988).

27. John W. Jeffries, *Testing the Roosevelt Coalition: Connecticut Society and Politics in the Era of World War II* (Knoxville, 1979).

28. George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s* (Urbana, 1994), argued that the search for social and economic improvement yielded to issues of race and gender under management and government pressure. Howell John Harris, *The Right to Manage: Industrial Relations Policies of American Business in the 1940s* (Madison, 1982); and Nelson Lichtenstein, *Labor's War at Home: The CIO in World War II* (New York, 1982), reached similar conclusions.

29. Gerald D. Nash, *World War II and the West: Reshaping the Economy* (Lincoln, 1990); and Marilyn S. Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley, 1993).

30. Pete Daniel, "Going among Strangers: Southern Reactions to World War II," *Journal of American History* 77 (December 1990): 886–911, concluded that the "war sent tremors of change throughout the South. . . . There would be no return to the rural South that dominated the section's history" (pp. 910–11), a theme less assertively argued in the last chapter of George B. Tindall's *The Emergence of the New South, 1913–1945* (Baton Rouge, 1970). Also see Neil R. McMillen, ed., *Remaking Dixie: The Impact of World War II on the American South* (Jackson, MS, 1997).

31. William H. Chafe, *The American Woman: Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Role 1920–1970* (London, 1974).

literature is vast and continues unabated.³² What is lacking is comparison across national and cultural boundaries.

Exemplary of what needs to be done are the essays in *The International History Review* of February 1997 brought together by Penny Summerfield, whose introduction, while limited to four distinct issues of both the First and Second World wars, also clearly lays out what has been achieved and how recent research might contribute to a larger global perspective.³³

We have gone beyond recognizing that women were around during the war, that they made their contribution and shared in the fates of men. What is clear now is the limit to any idea or realization of “liberation” as understood by feminist scholars of almost any persuasion. Summerfield also noted the universality of negative male reactions to the perceived threat to the gender divide in the military, in the workplace, and throughout the public sphere. D’Ann Campbell compared women in the military for the United States, Britain, Germany, and the Soviet Union, but much more needs to be done.³⁴

The fifteen essays in Scriven and Wagstaff’s *War and Society*³⁵ cover many topics using French sources but deal inadequately with social history. The wartime discontinuities of France compared to the Western Allies may invalidate comparisons, but if so then perhaps war itself is not a suitable category of analysis.³⁶ A significant literature on the German and Japanese home fronts exists, but these studies have neither been compared nor integrated into larger perspectives.³⁷ Inevitably, the experience of war for most Europeans is linked less with mobilization than with the effects of Nazi occupation and its insecurity, lawlessness, brutality, and suffering. That too, however, was the home front.

32. Bucher, “Women in World War II,” 367–82, surveys the literature available in 1995 for the military, POWs, resistance movements, and sexuality, including Europe and the United States plus the limited works available in English on Asia and Africa.

33. Penny Summerfield, “Gender and War in the Twentieth Century,” *The International History Review* 21, no. 1 (1997): 3–15; the other nine essays cover Britain, France, Poland, China, and the United States.

34. D’Ann Campbell, “Women in Combat: The World War II Experience in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and the Soviet Union,” *Journal of Military History* 57, no. 2 (1993): 301–23; and Sarah Fishman, *We Will Wait: Wives of French Prisoners of War, 1940–1945* (New Haven, 1991), which asserts that the war was not liberating for women. More recent is Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps during World War II* (New York, 1996), which explores in greater complexity the issues beyond those of whether the war opened up opportunities for women. Also along this line is Margaret R. Higonnet et al., eds., *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (New Haven, 1987), with its portrayal of war itself as a gendering activity that privileges the male realm (the front) over the female realm (the home front) and argument that wartime gains for women are encoded with subordination.

35. Michael Scriven and Peter Wagstaff, eds., *War and Society in Twentieth-Century France* (New York, 1992).

36. François Bédarida, “World War II and Social Change in France,” in *Total War and Social Change*, ed. Arthur Marwick (New York, 1988), 79–94, is a skimpy outline. In their “France,” J. C. Simmonds and H. Footitt noted that the “creation of a home front during this short period of war . . . was a feeble thing at best,” in Noakes, ed., *The Civilian in War*, 173–94 (quote on p. 173).

37. See Tsutsui, “The Domestic Impact of War and Occupation on Japan.”

In the last decade, study of the Soviet home front has made great strides. Noteworthy here are John Barber and Mark Harrison's *The Soviet Home Front* and Mikhail Narinsky's "The Soviet Union."³⁸ Barber and Harrison's view that the war strengthened the Soviet system is not so different from conclusions reached about Britain and the United States. With the exception of Poland, other east European countries are not well studied. We need more detailed analyses such as Hans Gross's *Revolution from Abroad*, which treats the years of Soviet control between 1939 and 1941, and his *Polish Society under German Occupation*.³⁹

The absence of transcultural syntheses of the wartime experiences of women mentioned above is reflected in the inadequate syntheses of home fronts in other respects. Earl Beck's *European Home Fronts*⁴⁰ is based on then current (1995) research (primarily in English, though he also used German studies for Germany), but only within national contexts and with an unfocused definition of home front. Jeremy Noakes's *The Civilian in War* expanded the view to include Europe, the United States, and Japan.⁴¹ Its ten essays, however, do not follow a common approach, though the expressed theme is mobilization and its effects on civilians. Perhaps because of the variety of national experiences, there is little to compare. Two other works stand out: Arthur Marwick's *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century* and David Reynolds, Warren Kimball, and A. O. Chubarian's *Allies at War*.⁴²

Beginning in 1974 with *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century* Marwick almost single-handedly opened up a systematic, comparative analysis of the social history of twentieth-century war. He disclaimed seeing war as the driving force of social change, but many of his conclusions suggested that to readers. *Allies at War* also contains much of value, especially because its truly international scholarship represented the United States, Great Britain, and the former Soviet Union and included the participation of Russian scholars. As the editors noted in the preface, however, there was no "common view" and only the Big Three were represented. The different states of scholarship in the three countries and the vastness of the issues at hand could only be overcome in initial ways.

38. John Barber and Mark Harrison, *The Soviet Home Front: A Social and Economic History of the USSR in World War II* (London, 1991); Mikhail N. Narinsky, "The Soviet Union: The Great Patriotic War?" in Reynolds, Kimball, and Chubarian, eds., *Allies at War*.

39. Hans Gross, *Polish Society under German Occupation: The Generalgouvernement, 1939-1944* (Princeton, 1979); Joanna Hanson's "Poland" brief summary in Noakes, ed., *The Civilian in War*, 150-72, also explain the difficulty of comparison with other wartime societies.

40. Earl R. Beck, *The European Home Fronts, 1939-1945* (Arlington Heights, IL, 1993); idem, *Under the Bombs: The German Home Front, 1942-1945* (Lexington, KY, 1986). Gordon Wright's much earlier excellent, *The Ordeal of Total War* (New York, 1968); and Norman Rich's *Hitler's War Aims: I. Ideology, the Nazi State, and the Course of Expansion II. The Establishment of the New Order* (New York, 1973-74), remains useful.

41. Noakes, ed., *The Civilian in War*.

42. Arthur Marwick, *War and Social Change*; Reynolds, Kimball, and Chubarian, eds., *Allies at War*.

Wartime collaboration takes various forms that have been carefully studied.⁴³ Like resistance, it sometimes was a harbinger of postwar developments. Some industries underwent modernization under Nazi occupation, with their leaders willing to link their future to a pan-European economy led by Germany. That Nazi rule turned out differently is true, but not necessarily the only point to be made.⁴⁴ European unity and the Second World War can also be examined from this viewpoint, as can be seen in M. L. Smith and Peter Stirk's *Making of the New Europe*.⁴⁵

Resistance in Europe, Asia, and Africa among occupied peoples either of the Axis or of the Allied powers is rarely considered as part of home front history. Its comparative historiography is nonexistent. Resistance appears more often as a political, nationalist act, even though it often had no direct political or military importance. One reason for this is that scholars have focused on national contexts as if resistance was unique to each country or colony. In addition, the linguistic demands are beyond individual historians.⁴⁶

Worldwide decolonization is regarded as a direct consequence of the war, even if its roots go deeper. But there seems to be no agreement on how that was effected, even though many local studies of colonial societies exist.⁴⁷ It is likely that the decolonization in relation to the war cannot be reduced to a binary European oppression and African resistance model, as Ashley Jackson indicates in his study of Botswana.⁴⁸ Botswana chiefs used the war to their own advantage against South Africa, for example. Even though a large number of men served in the British military, Jackson concluded that they had little impact on society when they returned, contrary to many arguments to the contrary for other parts of Africa.

Comparative analysis of resistance for Europe has not gone beyond that of Ralph White's 1975 article, "The Unity and Diversity of European Resistance," in which he concluded, among other things, that resistance often brought together formerly antagonistic groups (Catholics and Communists, for example) and that it could foster both restorative and revolutionary social trends.⁴⁹

43. Hirschfeld, "German Occupation of Europe, the Axis 'New Order' and Collaboration."

44. See, for example, John Gillingham, *Belgian Business in the Nazi New Order* (Ghent, 1977); and Alan S. Milward, *The New Order and the French Economy* (Oxford, 1970) and *The Fascist Economy in Norway* (Oxford, 1972).

45. M. S. Smith and Peter M. R. Stirk, eds., *Making of the New Europe: European Unity and the Second World War* (London, 1990).

46. Moore, "Resistance Movements in Europe"; Henri Michel, *The Shadow War: Resistance in Europe, 1939-1945* (London, 1972) for Europe; and Sato, "Japanese Occupation, Resistance, and Collaboration in Asia," and Nguyen, "European Reconquest and Neocolonialism in Southeast Asia."

47. Ofcansky, "Sub-Saharan Africa."

48. Ashley Jackson, *Botswana, 1939-1945: An African Country at War* (New York, 1999).

49. Ralph White, "The Unity and Diversity of European Resistance," in *Resistance in Europe, 1939-1945*, ed. Stephen Hawes and Ralph White (London, 1975), 7-23.

More recently Jacques Semelin, *Unarmed Against Hitler*,⁵⁰ has compared resistance by civilians in various countries. Women in resistance movements have also received a lot of interesting attention, though again, usually on a local or national scale, not across borders.⁵¹

If home front scholarship has room to grow, at least in a comparative or global way, there are many relevant topics to tackle that are poorly understood or barely explored. Here I have in mind cross-cultural interchanges, societies peripheral to the main belligerent societies, veterans (more than fifty million worldwide), children, the environment, religion, and changing attitudes toward race, including the decline of anti-Semitism.

The paucity of histories of veterans is surprising, as is the fact that they are generally ignored in survey histories. There has recently been a spate of books on analyzing wartime experiences of combatants.⁵² In *Preparing for Ulysses* David Ross explained the politics of the GI Bill of Rights, a sort of socialism for warriors, which gave veterans access to higher education and a few perquisites to help in returning to civilian life, cheap mortgages and other benefits.⁵³ Keith Olson's *The G.I. Bill* explains how this transformed the lives of former soldiers as well as postwar higher education.⁵⁴ James Diehl in *Thanks of the Fatherland* does an excellent job on the politics of one of the Federal Republic of Germany's more important postwar constituencies.⁵⁵ But what of veterans in other areas of life and other societies? Kenneth Coates and William Morrison surmise, but present no evidence, that many U.S. veterans returned to former war zones after the war as "investors, settlers, and developers." They even see the end (they wrote in 1992) of U.S. economic dominance as "in a sense the true end of World War II."⁵⁶

One of the worries of wartime observers of the impact of war was its consequences for children. Yet children rarely figure in the story, and when they

50. Jacques Semelin, *Unarmed against Hitler: Civilian Resistance in Europe, 1941–1943* (Westport, CT, 1993).

51. See, for example, Margaret Rossiter, *Women in the Resistance* (Westport, CT, 1985); Margaret Collin Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940–1945* (New York, 1998); and Paula Schwartz, "Partisanes and Gender Politics in Vichy France," *French Historical Studies* 16, no. 1 (1989): 126–51 for France; and Jane Slaughter, *Women and the Italian Resistance* (Denver, 1995), for Italy.

52. Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War* (New York, 1989); Gerald F. Linderman, *The World within War: America's Combat Experience in World War II* (Cambridge, MA, 1997); Stephen Fritz, *Frontsoldaten: The German Soldier in World War II* (Lexington, KY, 1995), among others.

53. Davis R. B. Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses: Politics and Veterans during World War II* (New York, 1969).

54. Keith Olson, *The G.I. Bill, the Veterans, and the Colleges* (Lexington, 1974).

55. James M. Diehl, *The Thanks of the Fatherland: German Veterans after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill, 1993).

56. Kenneth S. Coates and William R. Morrison, *The Alaska Highway in World War II: The U.S. Army of Occupation in Canada's Northwest* (Norman, 1992), 240, 241.

do, it is usually in anecdotal ways. There seems to be only one recent serious study, William Tuttle's *"Daddy's Gone to War"*.⁵⁷

As can be inferred from the above discussion, societies other than the main participants in the war receive little attention. Coates and Morrison's *Alaska Highway* illustrates the profound social and environmental impact the "invasion" of Americans on Canada's Northwest Territory had during the war.⁵⁸ In an interesting account based on oral histories, and with a well-told story, Beth Bailey and David Farber's *The First Strange Place*⁵⁹ examines the cultural contacts between mainland Americans and Hawaiians, as well as those among Americans uprooted from across the country and thrown into conflict, though they find the cultural changes more sweeping than is probably justified.

Related studies of soldiers interacting with other societies show what can be learned. Coates and Morrison's "The American Rampant" along with books like David Reynolds's *Rich Relations* are prime examples of transcultural changes brought on by the war.⁶⁰ At its peak, there were 5.3 million U.S. servicemen and women overseas. The home front is generally thought of in terms of what went on domestically among the chief belligerent societies, even when intercultural contact – and the spread of U.S. culture in all its manifestations – and conflict is the theme. Rosemary Campbell's *Heroes and Lovers* uncovered significant tension between American GIs and Australian males.⁶¹ In the conclusion of their *Alaska Highway*, Coates and Morrison surveyed the development of the historiography of the war, suggesting that "while North American historians have begun to identify the national and regional implications of World War II, there has been much less recognition of the global nature of societal change associated with the war."⁶²

In Australia and apparently in other places the U.S. presence intensified nationalism, another theme deserving more treatment. The same probably happened for the GIs when they returned home, though that also has not been systematically studied.⁶³ The effect of Americanization was probably greater in peripheral areas with smaller populations and less effective governments. And it was not always negative. In the south Pacific, Papua New Guineans marveled

57. William M. Tuttle, *"Daddy's Gone to War": The Second World War in the Lives of America's Children* (Oxford, 1993).

58. Coates and Morrison, *The Alaska Highway*.

59. Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: The Alchemy of Sex and Race in World War II Hawaii* (New York, 1992).

60. Kenneth S. Coates and William Morrison, "The American Rampant: Reflections on the Impact of United States Troops in Allied Countries during World War II," *Journal of World History* 2 (Fall 1991): 201–22 and the literature they cite; David Reynolds, *Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain, 1942–1945* (New York, 1995).

61. Rosemary Campbell, *Heroes and Lovers: A Question of National Identity* (Melbourne, 1985).

62. Coates and Morrison, *The Alaska Highway*, 238.

63. Peter Schrijvers, *The Crash of Ruin: American Combat Soldiers in Europe during World War II* (New York, 1998). Surprisingly, Bruce D. Porter, *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York, 1994), provides an analysis of war and the state, but does not consider any postwar role of veterans.

at how well American blacks were treated in comparison to the way their prewar imperial white overlords treated them.⁶⁴

Observers occasionally note that church attendance increased in the United States during the war, but surveys of wartime society either make no mention of religion in any of its manifestations or only do so in passing.⁶⁵ What writing there is focuses primarily on institutional religion, the clergy, the theologians, and the ecumenical movement, with some works examining individual Christians in resistance movements, Christian pacifism and conscientious objection, and military chaplains.⁶⁶ What is needed are more careful, in-depth studies like Hall's on Catholics during the Vichy regime, where the Church waffled on its support of the regime, leaving its congregants to swell the pews but listen only to their consciences.⁶⁷ Did the war stimulate popular piety in the United States? If so, why and with what larger consequences? Did it undermine piety in Europe? What happened in Africa and Asia? What about the war and the Islamic world? Or among Hindus and Buddhists in Asia? Here, Victoria's *Zen at War* stands alone.⁶⁸

Despite the great recent interest in the environment, it is nearly absent from the war's historiography. Gerald Nash's study of the American West devotes a chapter to the topic, but from the viewpoint of conservation and the federal government.⁶⁹ The widespread introduction of pesticides during the war, especially DDT, is sometimes remarked upon, but not adequately explored.⁷⁰

Peter Schrijvers begins his *Crash of Ruin*⁷¹ with the U.S. soldier's perception of the world of nature in Europe. And, for anyone who has read personal narratives of veterans, the environment and the war's impact on it is often mentioned. Armies crossing back and forth destroyed much of the fauna, and often left behind a devastated landscape. And, of course, the environmental impact due to economic mobilization, agricultural redistributions, and the extension of the war into previously uncharted regions must have had long-term consequences. See, for example, the telling story of the building of the

64. Lamont Lindstrom and Geoffrey M. White, *Island Encounters: Black and White Memories of the Pacific War* (Washington, 1990).

65. Nash, *The Crucial Era*, briefly mentions the increase in church attendance during the Depression; Maddox, *The United States and World War II*, has no reference in the index, except for Jews, and that on the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust; while in Jeffries's *Wartime America*, religion appears twice in the index, but both references are trivial.

66. See Sittser, "American Christianity on the Home Front during the Second World War," and Pierard, "Christianity Outside North America."

67. W. D. Halls, *Politics, Society and Christianity in Vichy France* (Oxford, 1995). The revival and its associated worker priest movement was short lived, of course, though the antagonism between the church and the anti-clericals eased somewhat.

68. Daizen Brian A. Victoria, *Zen at War* (New York, 1997).

69. Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Bloomington, 1985).

70. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston, 1962).

71. Schrijvers, *The Crash of Ruin*.

Alaska highway by Coates and Morrison and their asking for more attention to environmental history.⁷²

Global migration is a noteworthy phenomenon of the twentieth century that in size, if not in percentage, dwarfs previous human experiences. Refugees and displaced persons, forced migrations, and the like have received attention, but how do these relate to home fronts in general? It is generally recognized that the United States benefited from the migration of European scientists and technically skilled persons in the 1930s, but the full story of migrations worldwide, within, between, and among societies is not well integrated into home front histories.⁷³

Let those who think the historiography of World War II has run dry be warned. There is much yet to be learned on the home front. And no doubt on other topics as well. Whether all the strands of noncombatant experience can be encompassed for any society remains to be seen. The challenge is great, especially for understanding a global war. But the effort merits whatever attention that can be devoted to it.

72. Kenneth S. Coates and William R. Morrison, "Forgotten Warriors: War and the Restructuring of Western Canadian Society," *Journal of the West* 32 (1993): 201–22; idem, *Alaska Highway in World War II*.

73. H. Stuart Hughes, *Sea Change: The Migration of Social Thought, 1930–1965* (New York, 1975), needs to be followed up and the results related to the broad social history.