

# RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

## Unpacking the Invisible Military Backpack: 56 Suggestions for Teaching about War

by David Vine



"KIMBERLY RIVERA" BY MAZATL. *WAR IS TRAUMA* IS A PORTFOLIO OF HANDMADE PRINTS PRODUCED BY THE JUSTSEEDS ARTISTS' COOPERATIVE IN COLLABORATION WITH THE IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR (IVAW).

**W**e've failed in teaching about war. Anyone who teaches in the United States must acknowledge that we've failed to teach about war broadly enough, consistently enough, and with the sense of urgency demanded by the death, injury, and destruction that nearly two decades of continuous U.S. warfare have inflicted.

There are many reasons that there's relatively little public awareness about the wars the U.S. military has been waging since shortly after September 11, 2001. The lack of a draft or tax increases to pay for the Post-9/11 Wars, limited media coverage, and government propaganda and lies<sup>1</sup> about the wars have played roles in making the conflicts nearly invisible to most in the United States. Insufficient elementary, secondary, post-secondary, and general public education about the wars is another reason for this invisibility.

I have studied war for almost 20 years and tried to teach about war for the past 14. I know I haven't taught about war often or effectively enough. I know I've lost the urgency I once had. Others surely teach about war more effectively than I. In the spirit of exchanging ideas, strategies, and inspiration so that we can together teach about war more frequently, more broadly, and more effectively—which is to say, in a way that helps end current wars and stop future ones—I offer the following 56 suggestions. The suggestions are based on my experiences, and what I've learned from others, especially from people in my classes.<sup>2</sup> Most of the 56 are based on mistakes and missteps I have made and am still making.

I hope my suggestions help anyone teaching about war anywhere, at any level, in any field—for a year, a semester, a unit, or a single class. Most of what's really a menu of suggestions can be used or adapted to analyze any country and any war(s). Most of the ideas, however, are focused on people teaching in or about the United States. This is appropriate given that the U.S. government has been "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world" since at least the U.S. war in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, when [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) uttered these words.<sup>3</sup>

As a U.S. citizen, I have come to think about the many forms of violence inflicted by war as similar to the invisible knapsack Peggy McIntosh identifies in her classic article "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." McIntosh describes whiteness as akin to an invisible backpack of privileges and "unearned advantage" that white people carry with them and benefit from everywhere they go.<sup>4</sup> War is not the same as whiteness, but war and the larger systems of militarization and militarisms<sup>5</sup> that make war possible shape our daily lives, especially in the United States, in profound but often invisible ways. Why are militarized Army-style backpacks so popular inside and outside our classrooms? Why are military flyovers a ritual before National Football League games and, recently, a way to "honor" Coronavirus health care workers? Why is camouflage so pervasive in fashion? How are these small signs of militarization linked to the estimated \$6.4 trillion that U.S. taxpayers will spend on the Post-9/11 Wars?<sup>6</sup> How are these signs of militarization linked to the \$6.4 trillion that U.S. taxpayers *did not* spend on health care, schools, housing, infrastructure, and other social needs? How are the

military-style backpacks, flyovers, and camouflage linked to the [3.1 million](#) or more who may have died in the ongoing wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, and Yemen, alone?<sup>7</sup>

While my aim is not to overstretch the invisible backpack metaphor, the ability to live one's life with little awareness of the Post-9/11 Wars while others suffer the daily effects of those wars is a privilege. War and the political, economic, and sociocultural processes that make war possible are invisible to most U.S. Americans. Because war and militarization are, as anthropologist Catherine Lutz says, "hidden in plain sight," educators can help make war visible and provide tools to help people (and ourselves) identify the many ways warmaking shapes our lives.<sup>8</sup>

Helping make war visible is an important contribution to movements to end wars. But as McIntosh asks, "What will we do with such knowledge?" What will we encourage people in our classes to do with the knowledge we build together? Especially for those who are, like me, among the most privileged of U.S. citizens—with our combination of privilege and culpability for the Post-9/11 Wars—we must answer McIntosh's call. Her challenge to us applies equally to the war system as to the system of racism: "It is an open question whether we will choose to use unearned advantage ... [and] any of our arbitrarily-awarded power to reconstruct power systems on a broad base."

## TEACHING THE ENDLESS WARS

1. **Teach the Post-9/11 Wars and 9/11.** People know little about the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Somalia, Libya, Yemen, and beyond. Most know less about the history and forces that shaped the 9/11 attacks. The education most have received on these subjects likely has come from mainstream media, nationalist histories, government propaganda, and movies and TV like *Zero Dark Thirty*, *American Sniper*, and *24*.
2. **Assume prior misinformation.** Assume, for example, that most will think Saddam Hussein's Iraq had a role in 9/11. This isn't their fault. Government officials and others suggested as much. In historical terms, the U.S. invasion of Iraq followed so soon after 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan that most will likely assume a causal link. Many will assume the wars were inevitable rather than a choice. Assume most won't be able to distinguish al Qaeda from the Islamic State, let alone how the U.S. government fueled both groups. *Blowback* can be a helpful concept to help understand 9/11 and the actions of al Qaeda and the Islamic State.<sup>9</sup>
3. **Assume the post-9/11 wars have felt insignificant.** While most entering college (and the U.S. military) now have no memory of a time

when the United States wasn't at war, assume that most will have experienced the wars as distant, with little relevance in their lives. This isn't their fault. There is no draft. Taxes have not gone up (debt has). Government officials and journalists have mostly hidden the wars and their effects.

4. **Show them the money.** Show them how much the post-9/11 wars have cost: [\\$6.4 trillion](#) and counting. The National Priorities Project's running "counter" shows the spending as it grows every second. The ticker can silence a room. I often think there's little I can say that's more powerful than the image of the dollars scrolling, and disappearing.
5. **Guns or butter?** Discuss the trade-offs of war spending. Adequate preparation for pandemics like COVID-19 would have cost the United States a small fraction of the \$6.4 trillion. With high school, college, and graduate school students, ask about debt. Compare war spending to erasing student debt and the cost of universal free college. The National Priorities Project's [interactive tool](#) allows you to model other ways the U.S. government could have spent \$6.4 trillion: for example, how far the money could have gone to provide scholarships, health care, Head Start slots, affordable housing units, and green energy jobs.
6. **Show the effects of war.** In their lives. In the lives of those most harmed. The [Costs of War Project](#) has great resources documenting the wars' human and economic impacts.<sup>10</sup>
7. **Build empathy.** Ask them to imagine how it would feel to live in a war zone, to lose a parent or sibling to war, to be forced to flee their home. Be aware and sensitive as some likely will have lived these experiences.
8. **Listen to people in warzones.** While showing how we are all victims of war, focus attention on materials portraying the voices and experiences of those most directly harmed, including military personnel from all nations and their family members.<sup>11</sup>
9. **Discuss "triggers."** From the start, acknowledge the difficult, painful, deeply personal subject matter often involved when discussing war. Explain why the subject matter must be difficult. Offer the freedom to leave class and care for their wellbeing if necessary.

10. **Discuss U.S. citizens' responsibility.** For the wars, the damage, the deaths. Remind people their taxes have funded the wars. Discuss whether silence makes us complicit.

## EXPOSING THE WAR SYSTEM AND STRUCTURES UNDERGIRDING WAR

11. **Critique systems not soldiers.** Given that many people have friends and family members in the military, I find it helpful to say out loud that my aim is to critique the system and policies of war while exploring how most military personnel (and family members) are among war's victims. I note, too, that there *are* people deserving of personal critique and condemnation, beginning with the war system's small number of powerful decision makers.
12. **Read/listen to Eisenhower's "Military Industrial Complex" speech.** Discuss its contemporary significance. It is one of the greatest ever presidential [speeches](#) and should be considered required [reading](#) from junior high school through university.<sup>12</sup> Note that "Military Industrial *Congressional* Complex" better reflects Eisenhower's original idea.<sup>13</sup>
13. **Show the military budget.** Do a poll asking 1) what percentage of the U.S. government's discretionary budget goes to military spending compared to schools, housing, public health, food stamps, diplomacy, and other budget items, and 2) what percentage should go to different priorities? Few realize that more than half of discretionary spending goes to the military industrial complex.<sup>14</sup> U.S. military spending also exceeds that of the next 10 countries combined (most are allies).<sup>15</sup> Total U.S. military spending is higher, topping [\\$1.2 trillion](#) (2019) including money for nuclear weapons, the VA, military spending in other agencies, and interest payments on wars. Note that how one presents military spending data is political and impacts perceptions.<sup>16</sup>
14. **Make capitalism visible.** Discuss the role of capitalism in war and vice versa.<sup>17</sup> In addition to U.S. military spending, U.S. weapons makers lead the world in arms sales.<sup>18</sup>
15. **Ask Who benefits?** And how? Economically, politically, socially, psychologically. Ask people to make a list of beneficiaries. Discuss.

16. **Ask Who suffers?** How? Again, make and discuss individual or group lists.
17. **Warfare state or social welfare state?** Since World War II, the United States has created a “warfare state.” Other wealthy countries have created social welfare states to protect the well-being and physical security of their people. Discuss the consequences.
18. **Show war is neither natural nor inevitable.** Anthropologists have long debunked the idea that war is encoded in “human nature.” All humans may have some capacity for violence, but war is not a human universal, as Margaret Mead showed in her classic “Warfare Is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity.” Because the belief that war is “natural” is deeply engrained, ask for and examine any evidence supporting the claim. Explain that a large body of scientific research shows that the vast majority of homo sapiens do not kill and that most killing and war involves a small, almost exclusively male group of humans.<sup>19</sup>
22. **Use pop culture.** Show how war and militarization have shaped our lives in ways small and large. Discuss the ubiquity of camouflage in fashion, the military’s collaboration with Hollywood films, video games such as *Call of Duty*, pre-game flyovers, and other military rituals and advertising in sports. Ask people to identify examples in their lives.
23. **Use material culture.** Tactile experiences help. Give everyone in class a “toy” soldier.<sup>21</sup> Ask what impact it has in the world (political, economic, social, ideological, environmental). Wear or bring militarized fashion to class. Distribute fashion magazines or clothing catalogs and ask people to find examples. Ask them to discuss the significance of *bomber* jackets, navy pea coats, khaki, cargo shorts, epaulette-laden shirts and jackets, and “military tactical gear” such as backpacks. Ask people to research an example from their wardrobe. Discuss how to resist. Cut off your epaulettes in class.
24. **Assume defensiveness.** This is understandable. For many, you will be the first person to present critical views about U.S. wars, the military, and the United States itself. Many, consciously or not, will experience this as a personal attack, an attack on their identity as “Americans” given how central war is to hegemonic ideas about national identity.

## CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE

19. **Start where people are.** Assume that people in our classes aren’t where we are in their understanding and knowledge about war (especially if you have strong feelings about the subject). Like all good teachers, we should put ourselves in the shoes of people in our classes (especially with a topic as sensitive and difficult as war).
20. **Avoid self-righteousness.** Believing we are right, just, and virtuous will prevent us from understanding and connecting with people in our classes and beyond. Buddhist monk [Thich Nhat Hahn](#) cautions against dividing the world “into two camps—the violent and the nonviolent,” while we stand in one and attack “those we feel are responsible for wars and social injustice.” To build peace, he says, we must recognize “the degree of violence in ourselves. We must work on ourselves and also with those we condemn.”<sup>20</sup>
21. **Start with the personal.** Ask people to explore their personal and familial connections to war, the military, and the Military Industrial Complex. Start, for example, by asking about experiences with military recruiting. Anthropologist Hugh Gusterson asks people to bring in and discuss an item illustrating their connection to war.
25. **Learn from everyone.** Conversations about war are themselves shaped by the war system and our militarized societies. People’s experiences outside class and their reactions to material in class have much to teach us about war and militarization.
26. **Don’t preach or try to convert.** Focus on engaging people and exchanging experiences and perspectives.
27. **Assign materials cautiously.** Be careful using books, articles, films, documentaries, and podcasts that preach to your choir. They’ll work for some but will turn others off. Discuss people’s emotional reactions to material they don’t like. Ask people to analyze and learn from their own reactions (positive, negative, and otherwise).

## REVEALING HISTORY IN THE PRESENT

28. **Make empire visible.** Discuss (and perhaps debate) whether the United States is an empire. This idea will offend many, consciously or unconsciously, because it runs counter to most U.S. Americans’ self-image. Allow people to come

to their own conclusions. As a group, list the forms of power, influence, and control (political, economic, military, ideological, social, even nutritional) the U.S. government and powerful U.S. actors (corporations, elites, others) have over people worldwide. When some still doubt that the United States is an empire, show and discuss this 17-second [video](#) or a series of maps depicting U.S. conquest of Native American peoples' lands.<sup>22</sup>

29. **Make colonization visible.** Show how the expansion of the United States was not natural, inevitable, or the result of "manifest destiny." Connect U.S. wars overseas with the history of U.S. colonial wars against Native American peoples. Discuss the colonial nature of the land underneath our feet. If people don't know who once controlled the land, ask them to find out. Ask why so few non-indigenous people know.
30. **Make Native American peoples visible.** Discuss their invisibility in large parts of the country (despite the prevalence, for example, of indigenous place names). Discuss representations of American Indians in the names of U.S. military weaponry and racist sports mascots, team names, and rituals (e.g., the "tomahawk chop").
31. **Make U.S. overseas colonies visible.** Show the colonial status of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Guantánamo Bay naval base, where people can't vote for president and have no voting representation in Congress.<sup>23</sup> Ask, *Should we call them territories or colonies?*
32. **Make the U.S. "empire of bases" visible.** Show the approximately [750 U.S. military bases](#) that occupy foreign lands and that enable war.<sup>24</sup> Ask, *How would you feel living next to a foreign military's base?* Discuss bases' sociocultural, political, economic, and environmental [effects on locals](#). Show how hundreds of U.S. bases surround China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea. Ask, *How would you feel if a single Chinese, Russian, or Iranian base was near U.S. borders?*
33. **Discuss the threat of future wars.** Many now describe cold wars between the United States and China and Russia. In recent years, the United States has appeared on the verge of wars with Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela. Some politicians and policymakers clearly want actual wars. Discuss how we can avoid future wars that could kill millions.
34. **Discuss the threat of nuclear war.** Nuclear weapons are an existential crisis for the planet

that's even more immediate than global warming. A nuclear detonation or war, accidental or otherwise, could kill tens of millions. Discuss this frightening possibility and what to do to avoid nuclear annihilation.

35. **Make drones visible.** One technique: When you hear an airplane passing overhead, ask how people would feel if it was a foreign military's drone. Note that this is daily life in parts of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen, and beyond. Discuss the ethics of drone assassinations. Ask, *How would you feel if a foreign government used a drone to assassinate someone near our school?* Some drone operators have called the dead "bug splat." Discuss the significance of this language for drone use and related technology.
36. **Make the longer history of U.S. wars visible.** The United States has been at war or invaded another country in all but eleven years since 1776. The Congressional Research Service releases an annual list of these wars and invasions.<sup>25</sup> Discuss the list. Ask, *What wars aren't on the list?* Discuss CIA-backed coups and election interference. Discuss economic violence. Ask how to define *war* and how to distinguish war from peace.
37. **Make wars' human toll visible.** Ask, *How many names are on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC?* (Answer: 58,318.)<sup>26</sup> Discuss why Vietnamese, Lao, and Cambodian vets aren't included. Ask why the wall doesn't have 3.8 million more names including civilians killed.<sup>27</sup> Discuss whether people in the United States have reckoned with the death and destruction of U.S. wars. Discuss what a reckoning would mean.

## EMPLOYING INTERSECTIONALITY

38. **Analyze intersectionally.** Examine how race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and religion, among other forces and identities, interact in complicated and compounding ways to shape war, as well as who suffers and benefits from war.
39. **Make racism visible.** Discuss how racism has shaped U.S. wars from those against Native American peoples to those in the Philippines, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The continuity of racist slurs across the wars may be an effective, if challenging, entry point.<sup>28</sup>

40. **Make women visible.** Ask Cynthia Enloe's classic feminist question about international relations and the daily workings of militaries, *Where are the women?* Make women's lives visible in war and the war system. Make women's labor of all kinds visible (e.g., soldiers' wives, women in the military, women who do the cleaning that allows bases to function, sex workers outside bases abroad, women in the Pentagon).<sup>29</sup>
41. **Make gender visible.** Talk about where and how men are socialized to be men in specific ways from birth, including in the military. Discuss how ideas about gender and *hypermasculinity* uphold militarism and war. Watch USO shows to analyze gender socialization. Discuss why trans people in the military frighten some and what the fear may reveal.
42. **Connect the foreign and domestic.** Discuss the militarization of police forces in the United States, including with discarded U.S. military equipment, and the military-style policing of people of color and poor neighborhoods. Examine the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border and the growth of white supremacist militia movements.

haven't been an option for U.S. presidents since the end of George W. Bush's presidency.

46. **Show transpartisan critiques of war.** In an era of heightened partisanship, people across the political spectrum are increasingly united in their opposition to interventionist wars. A prime example of strange bedfellows: the Quincy Institute, founded in 2019 with funding from prominent donors on the right and left, Charles Koch and George Soros.
47. **Connect to other social movements.** Show and discuss the connections between antiwar struggles and movements for climate justice, universal health care, labor, racial justice, gender equality, and LGBTQI+ rights. The Poor People's Campaign and Racial Justice Has No Borders are examples of movements trying to build these connections.<sup>31</sup>
48. **Develop alternatives.** Ask people to imagine and propose different approaches to U.S. foreign policy, to engagement across nations, to government spending. If this seems unimaginable to some, discuss the consequences of leaving foreign and military policy to "the blob"—a small group of mostly Euro-American male Washington, DC-based elites.

## ENVISIONING ALTERNATIVES, SOLUTIONS, RESISTANCE

43. **Read/listen to Martin Luther King, Jr.** Discuss the contemporary significance of King's 1967 [Riverside Church speech](#). Have them replace the word *communism* with *terrorism* and the names of Vietnamese "enemies" with today's supposed foes. Add patriarchy to the "the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism."<sup>30</sup>
44. **Make dissent and anti-war movements visible.** Focus on today's most active, youth-oriented movements, such as Dissenters, About Face, and Codepink. Show anti-Vietnam War protests briefly. Discuss why campuses haven't seen the same protest in the Post-9/11 Wars. U.S. military dissent dates to at least the War of 1812 and the war in Mexico.
45. **Discuss anti-war movements' successes.** Transpartisan, international opposition stopped a large-scale U.S. war in Syria during the Obama administration. While some think the largest day of protest in human history—February 15, 2003—was a failure because it failed to prevent the U.S.-led war in Iraq, the anti-Iraq war protests helped rapidly turn public opinion against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Large ground wars effectively

## FINDING TEACHABLE MOMENTS AND OTHER CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

49. **Avoid militarized language.** Resist its use. When it appears, discuss how militarized, often euphemistic language shapes attitudes about war. Examples: the Department of Defense vs. Department of War, national security, collateral damage, terrorists, the war on terrorism, interrogate (popular in the humanities and social sciences). Ask about the problems with *war* as a metaphor (e.g., wars on Coronavirus, drugs, crime, poverty).
50. **Question the "homogenizing We."** *We* didn't invade Afghanistan. *We* didn't invade Iraq. *We* didn't invade Vietnam. When people invoke the "we," ask about the accuracy of their claims. Encourage people to be specific naming individual and institutional actors and who does what in the world. Ask what the "homogenizing we" obscures. Similarly, avoid substituting "the United States" for naming actors precisely. *The United States* did not invade Afghanistan. Ask people to find examples of these problems in the media.

51. **Stop cultural generalizations.** Question people when they invoke inaccurate generalities explaining war as “part of who we are,” “in our blood,” or “in our national DNA.”
  
52. **Question “national interests.”** Politicians and journalists often invoke “U.S. national interests” as if an entire nation could share a single set of interests. Discuss whose interests they’re really talking about. Ask what this reveals about the war system.
  
53. **Rethink the names of wars.** Discuss whose lives are erased when history texts refer to the “Spanish American War” (fought in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines). Ask how cold the “Cold War” was if it left 6-7 million dead in Korea, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, alone.
  
54. **Question *America*.** Discuss why so many make the linguistic and geographical *error* of saying *America*, *American*, *Americans* when they mean *United States*, *U.S.*, and *U.S. Americans* or *United Statesians*. Discuss how this pattern might be related to U.S. imperialism and U.S. wars in Latin America.<sup>32</sup>
  
55. **Assign research.** Ask people to investigate the connections between war and their lives, school, and communities. Research local war memorials and monuments; local military contractors; university military contracts; on-campus recruiting by the military, CIA, and contractors; family employment in the military industrial complex and in military “service” (a term obscuring the labor of military personnel and the violence of that labor).
  
56. **Turn classes into “war clinics.”** Use community-based and experiential learning techniques to organize an entire class around work that could contribute to movements trying to end war, reduce violence, and increase peace. My classes have partnered with, for example, Codepink, the Costs of War Project, the Institute for Policy Studies, and the Chagos Refugees Group (representing the people exiled during construction of the U.S. military base on Diego Garcia). Classes could partner with local anti-recruitment groups, anti-war organizations, veterans groups, and anti-military base movements.

## Notes

1. Craig Whitlock, "At War with the Truth," *Washington Post*, December 9, 2019, [www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/investigations/afghanistan-papers/afghanistan-war-confidential-documents/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/investigations/afghanistan-papers/afghanistan-war-confidential-documents/).
2. I avoid the objectification and distancing of calling the people in our classes students thanks to my mother, Marsha Pinson—the best, most dedicated educator I know—and her grounding in Reggio Emilia pedagogy. As she explained to me in a recent email, "Teacher-student implies...the idea that we open the heads of children and pour information in to teach, thus making the recipient, the student."
3. King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence, Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam." Speech, Riverside Church, New York, April 4, 1967. Available at <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/beyond-vietnam>.
4. Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," Wellesley, MA, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1988.
5. Following Catherine Lutz and others, I define militarization as the political, economic, and sociocultural processes through which a military, war, and preparations for war become increasingly important in a society and its people's lives, especially through increased societal spending on the military and war making. Militarism is a narrower term identifying an ethos or spirit of war or what Lutz calls a "glorification of war and its values" ("Making War at Home in the United States: Militarization and the Current Crisis," *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (2002): 723–735).
6. Neta C. Crawford, "United States Budgetary Costs and Obligations of Post-9/11 Wars through FY2020: \$6.4 Trillion," *Costs of War Project*, Brown University, November 13, 2019, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2019/US%20Budgetary%20Costs%20of%20Wars%20November%202019.pdf>.
7. David Vine, "Reckoning with the Costs of War: It's Time to Take Responsibility," *The Hill*, November 13, 2019, <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/470128-reckoning-with-the-costs-of-war-its-time-to-take-responsibility>. See also, Neta C. Crawford and Catherine Lutz, "Human Cost of Post-9/11 Wars: Direct War Deaths in Major War Zones, Afghanistan and Pakistan (October 2001–October 2019); Iraq (March 2003–October 2019); Syria (September 2014–October 2019); Yemen (October 2002–October 2019); and Other," *Costs of War Project*, Brown University, November 13, 2019, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2019/Direct%20War%20Deaths%20COW%20Estimate%20November%2013%202019%20FINAL.pdf>.
8. Catherine Lutz, "US Military Bases on Guam in Global Perspective," *Asia-Pacific Journal* 8, no. 30 (2010), <https://apjff.org/-Catherine-Lutz/3389/article.html>.
9. Popularized by former CIA analyst-turned-scholar Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback* describes the unintended consequences of covert operations whose causes the public cannot understand because the precipitating operations were covert. Put simply, the United States reaps what it secretly sows. Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of U.S. Empire* (New York: Metropolitan, 2004[2000]).
10. *Costs of War Project*, Brown University, <https://www.costsofwar.org>.
11. There are not enough easily accessible materials of this sort, although an online search will quickly turn up documentaries, books, articles, and other resources. Compiling these and other resources in a publicly accessible, perhaps crowdsourced "Post-9/11 Wars Syllabus" or "War and Militarization Syllabus" would be a gift and tremendous resource for educators.
12. Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Military-Industrial Complex Speech, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1961," Avalon Project, January 17, 1961, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/eisenhower001.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/eisenhower001.asp). See also, the many recorded versions online.
13. There is debate about whether Eisenhower used this term in an early draft but shortened the name to avoid offending Congress. See Gareth Porter, "The Permanent-War Complex," *American Conservative*, November–December, 2018, 32.
14. The National Priorities Project has another tool to visualize annual U.S. military spending and the trade offs involved. See <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/interactive-data/trade-offs/>.
15. Ashik Siddique, "The U.S. Spends More on Its Military Than the Next 10 Countries Combined," *National Priorities Project*, April 30, 2020, <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/blog/2020/04/30/us-spends-military-spending-next-10-countries-combined/>.
16. William Hartung and Mandy Smithberger, "Boondoggle, Inc.: Making Sense of the \$1.25 Trillion National Security State Budget," *TomDispatch*, May 7, 2019, [www.tomdispatch.com/blog/176561/tomgram%3A\\_hartung\\_and\\_smithberger%2C\\_a\\_dollar-by-dollar\\_tour\\_of\\_the\\_national\\_security\\_state](http://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/176561/tomgram%3A_hartung_and_smithberger%2C_a_dollar-by-dollar_tour_of_the_national_security_state). On the politics of data presentation choices, anthropologist Catherine Lutz explains, "I have also found it important to teach about the variety of ways in which information about the wars is presented to the public and the politics of those choices of data and data presentation. For example, I show how a variety of news outlets have treated the size of the US military budget since 9/11: at one end, it has been shown as a current year static figure, as a percentage of the entire US federal budget including Social Security and Medicare, or as a percentage of GDP compared with other nations or [at] other points in US history (all of which minimize its impact and growth). At the other end, it is shown as what is the much larger percentage of the discretionary budget that it represents or as a rapidly growing, inflation-controlled total." Email to author, April 21, 2020.



17. The most accessible work on the subject may be Eugene Jarecki's documentary *Why We Fight* (2005). See also, John Bellamy Foster, Hannah Holleman, and Robert W. McChesney, "The U.S. Imperial Triangle and Military Spending," *Monthly Review*, October 1, 2008, <https://monthlyreview.org/2008/10/01/the-u-s-imperial-triangle-and-military-spending/>.
18. SIPRI, "USA and France dramatically increase major arms exports; Saudi Arabia is largest arms importer, says SIPRI," press release, March 9, 2020, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2020/usa-and-france-dramatically-increase-major-arms-exports-saudi-arabia-largest-arms-importer-says>.
19. Mead, Margaret. "War Is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity." *Asia* 40 (1940), pp. 415–21. See also, Sponsel, Leslie E. "Reflections on the Possibility of a Nonkilling Society and a Nonkilling Anthropology." *Toward a Nonkilling Paradigm*, edited by Joám Evans Pim, 17–54. Honolulu: Center for Global Nonkilling, 2009. Available at [http://nonkilling.org/pdf/volume\\_toward.pdf](http://nonkilling.org/pdf/volume_toward.pdf).
20. "If we divide reality into two camps—the violent and the nonviolent—and stand in one camp while attacking the other, the world will never have peace. We will always blame and condemn those we feel are responsible for wars and social injustice, without recognizing the degree of violence in ourselves. We must work on ourselves and also with those we condemn if we want to have a real impact." Hahn 1993: 65.
21. I think I stole this idea or was inspired by a combination of, among others, Ken Guest, *Cultural Anthropology Fieldwork Journal*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2016), and Roberto J. González and Hugh Gusterson, "Introduction," in *Militarization: A Reader*, edited by Roberto J. González, Hugh Gusterson, and Gustaaf Houtman, 1–25 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).
22. SunIsUp, "Native American Land Losses," video, n.d., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZCvUroBpaE>. Accessed May 21, 2020. Many maps are available online. Two animated versions are available at <http://www.openculture.com/2019/06/two-animated-maps-show-the-expansion-of-the-u-s-from-the-perspectives-of-settlers-native-peoples.html>.
23. Locals have written about this better than I, but my argument is available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/09/28/most-countries-have-given-up-their-colonies-why-hasnt-america/>. Washington, DC is also a colony, where people can vote for president but have no voting representation on Congress. Daniel Immerwahr's book *How to Hide an Empire* and his many accessible media appearances are great on making empire visible.
24. Some of my maps might help: <http://www.basestation.us/maps.html>. There are other great ones online. Maps and other resources about the impacts of foreign military bases are available at <https://www.basestation.us/learn-more.html>.
25. Barbara Salazar Torreon and Sofia Plagakis, *Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad, 1798–2018*, (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2018).
26. National Parks Service, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, website, <https://www.nps.gov/vive/index.htm>. Accessed May 21, 2020.
27. Will Dunham, "Deaths in Vietnam, Other Wars Undercounted: Study," Reuters, June 19, 2008, [www.reuters.com/article/us-war-deaths/deaths-in-vietnam-other-wars-undercounted-study-idUSN1928547620080619](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-war-deaths/deaths-in-vietnam-other-wars-undercounted-study-idUSN1928547620080619).
28. Racism was, for example, a pervasive feature of the U.S. war in Southeast Asia. The frequent use of racial slurs, such as "gooks," to describe the Vietnamese followed a long history of racializing enemies in wartime. Racist propaganda targeted "Japs" during World War II, while U.S. troops called Filipinos "n\*\*\*\*rs" and "gugus" during the 1898–1913 war in the Philippines. U.S. wars against Native American nations were characterized by racist, savage scorched-earth-style warfare against supposed Indian "savages." See, e.g., John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607–1814* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon, 2014). On racism and war, see, e.g., Nikhil Pal Singh, *Race and America's Long War* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017).
29. Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, rev. ed. (University of California Press, 2014).
30. King, "Beyond Vietnam." See e.g., Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, "The Giant Quadruplets of Militarism, Capitalism, Racism, and Patriarchy," April 4, 2016, <https://www.wilpf.org/the-giant-quadruplets-of-militarism-capitalism-racism-and-patriarchy/>.
31. See, e.g., Shailly Gupta Barnes, Lindsay Koshgarian, and Ashik Siddique, eds., "The Poor People's Moral Budget," Institute for Policy Studies, June 2019, <https://ips-dc.org/report-moral-budget-2/>.
32. Watch Alfredo Jaar's "A Logo for America," available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jJfNdE1xds>.



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