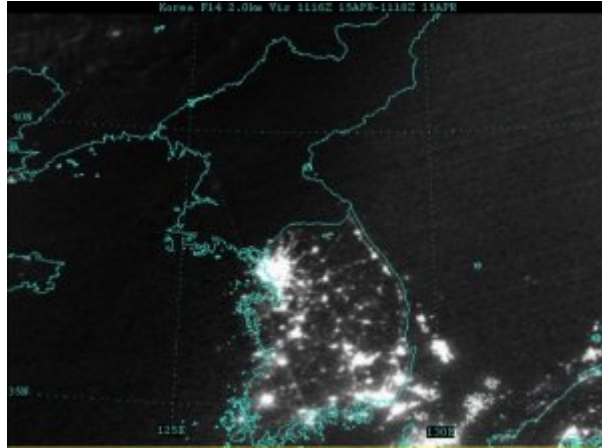


# History 600



## The Korean War

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History 600, Seminar 1, will begin by examining the political and social conditions in Korea at the end of World War II, the partition of the peninsula in 1948, and the outbreak of hostilities between North and South in June 1950. It will proceed to investigate the intervention of the United States, with the support of the United Nations, and the fighting that ensued between the summers of 1950 and 1953. That warfare involved not only the forces of the United States, certain other members of the United Nations, and the two Koreas but also those of China directly and those of the Soviet Union indirectly. Finally, the course will look at the political and social situation within the United States during the period.

I have not yet made the final selection of readings, but students may expect to read approximately the equivalent of two books during the first half of the semester. I shall not give formal tests on the material, but I intend to assess students' contribution to seminar discussions. Individual students will also have to present brief oral reports on parts of the readings assigned to their particular attention.

Each student will earn approximately sixty percent of his or her final grade by writing a research paper of approximately twenty pages in length. Students will select topics during the first half of the semester, and will need to be prepared to make in-class reports on their findings during the second half. They will use both secondary and primary sources in their research, and their essays will follow criteria for documentation that will be explained in class.

The following list suggests just some of the general areas for research relating to the Korean War. No student will attempt to grapple with any of the areas *in toto*, but each will select a focused question within one that can provide insights into broader issues. The goal is to select and pursue a topic suitable for thorough investigation within the parameters of time and paper length afforded by the seminar.

The Beginnings of the Cold War and the Korean Crisis  
U.S. Policy toward the Far East in the Late 1940s  
The Communist Drive into the South, June to September 1950

The Inchon Landing  
The Decision to Cross the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel  
The Intervention by Communist China  
The American Retreat from North Korea  
The Massacre at Nogun-Ri Bridge  
President Truman's Removal of General MacArthur  
The Stalemated War, 1951 to 1953  
The Atom Bomb in Strategic Considerations  
The Peace Negotiations at Panmunjom  
"Brainwashing" and the Prisoner of War Issue  
The Racial Integration of U.S. Forces  
Impact of Korea on American Domestic Politics  
The Presidential Election of 1952  
Media Coverage of the Korean War  
Historical Interpretations of the Korean War

Students desiring to take this course should contact me by email as soon as possible. Before registration week, I would like to have developed a list of students authorized for enrollment. Please include some information about yourself in your email: your name, ID number, and year (e.g., junior) constitute the minimum. I would like contact the first batch of authorized students with news of their admission by 1 November.

If more students apply by 1 November than the seminar has slots, I shall try to select among them on the basis of statement of interest, relevant course work, and GPA. Therefore, if you believe that sharing such information would be to your advantage, please include it in your email. Students may certainly contact me after 1 November, and I shall accommodate them to the extent that seats remain available.

## Bibliography

**The following offers a sampling of articles relevant to problems to be discussed in the course.**

Belmonte, Laura. "Anglo-American Relations and the Dismissal of MacArthur." *Diplomatic History* 19, no. 4 (1995): 641-67. Immediately upon Douglas MacArthur's appointment to command the UN forces in the Korean War, the British expressed their opposition. Britain believed that MacArthur was too aggressive dictatorial, and prone to ignore civilian authority. Also, he had kept Britain out of the occupation arrangement in Japan after World War II. Throughout MacArthur's tenure London continued to express its dismay but its effect was almost nil, the general's dismissal in 1951 coming as a result of US domestic politics and national security concerns.

Brune, Lester H. "Recent Scholarship and Findings About the Korean War." *American Studies International* 36, no. 3 (1998): 4-16. Access to Soviet archives following the fall of communism in 1991 revealed new details concerning the Korean War and the relationship between the Soviet Union, China, and Korea from 1945 to 1953. The records indicate that relations were tense between Moscow and Beijing upon Mao Tse-tung's victory in 1949, that Stalin only reluctantly supported Kim Il-sung's attack that China played an aggressive and significant role in the war, and that the Soviets secretly deployed seventy thousand troops to Asia.

Carruthers, Susan L. "The Manchurian Candidate (1962) and the Cold War Brainwashing Scare." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 18, no. 1 (1998): 75-94. At the time of its release, John Frankenheimer's film *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), based on the 1959 novel by John Condon, defied plot analysis or genre categorization, but the film's subject of US soldiers brainwashed by Chinese forces during the Korean War found particular resonance in US popular culture. Beginning in 1952, popular journalists frightened and titillated their readers with dubious tales of Communist mind-control techniques. Some critics who analyzed the film in 1962-63, however, saw the film as a commentary on McCarthyism - the character of Senator Raymond Shaw bears striking resemblances to Joseph McCarthy. In fact, the film fails to critique cogently Rightist politics and approves authoritarian methods to deal with political extremism. The film's

real target for criticism may be "Momism," since it was the invasive upbringing of the protagonist by his mother that made him a good candidate for brainwashing.

- . "Redeeming the Captives: Hollywood and the Brainwashing of America's Prisoners of War in Korea." *Film History* 10, no. 3 (1998): 275-94. Several American films made during the Cold War years of the 1950's and early 1960's, such as *Prisoner of War* (1954) and *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), portrayed American prisoners of war who were brainwashed by their Communist captors during the Korean War.
- Christensen, Thomas J. "Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The Lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams." *International Security* 17, no. 1 (1992): 122-54. Discusses the Truman-MacArthur debate during US involvement in Korea during the 1950's, using new documents from China, particularly letters and telegrams from Mao Zedong to Joseph Stalin Zhou Enlai, and Chinese field commanders, to shed light on the motivations and goals of the Chinese government during the Korean War and on Sino-American relations.
- Crane, Conrad C. "To Avert Impending Disaster: American Military Plans to Use Atomic Weapons During the Korean War." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 23, no. 2 (2000): 72-88. Though historians continue to argue about the role of American nuclear threats in producing an armistice in the Korean War, by 1953 the United States was moving closer to actually escalating the war with the employment of atomic bombs. While military studies and unsatisfactory exercises during the first two years of the conflict had relegated such weapons to a role exclusively as a last resort to prevent a catastrophe, frustration with stalemated peace talks and the aggressiveness of General Mark Clark combined to produce a set of contingencies envisioning an expanded war involving nuclear air strikes.
- . "'No Practical Capabilities': American Biological and Chemical Warfare Programs During the Korean War." *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 45, no. 2 (2002): 241-49. Much controversy surrounds accusations that American forces in the Far East during the Korean War used biological warfare against North Korea and China. An analysis of declassified documents reveals that, although the United States attempted to accelerate its development and acquisition of such weapons during that period, its efforts to create a viable biological warfare capability were unsuccessful. Plans to similarly expand chemical warfare stocks and capabilities were also frustrated. Technological difficulties, personnel shortages bureaucratic battles between the armed services and policy limitations combined to hold back advances in American chemical and biological warfare capabilities.
- Cummings, Bruce. "Occurrence at Nogun-Ri Bridge: An Inquiry Into the History and Memory of a Civil War." *Critical Asian Studies* 33, no. 4 (2001): 509-26. Examines the background issues and specific events pertinent to the so-called massacre of Korean civilians by American soldiers at the Nogun-ri railroad bridge in South Korea in July 1950 during the Korean War. The events there, and similar events elsewhere in Korea, were due to preexisting social and political situations in Korea, including leftist activity and guerrilla warfare, the nature of the military conflict and racism and condescension on the part of American authorities that created free-fire zones. In many ways, the massacre at Nogun-ri was a precursor to atrocities committed in Vietnam.
- Dingman, Roger. "Atomic Diplomacy During the Korean War." *International Security* 13, no. 3: 1988-89. Evaluates Washington's attempts to derive political rather than tactical military advantages from possession and threatened deployment of nuclear weapons during the Korean War, using declassified documents to examine nuances in this component of US strategy. Language: English Period: 1945-53.
- Flynn, George Q. "The Draft and College Deferments During the Korean War." *Historian* 50, no. 3 (1988): 369-85. Throughout the Vietnam War, critics denounced draft deferments for college students as class discrimination. These deferments were not new however, since programs designed to postpone military service for students had existed since World War II. During the Korean War,

student deferments were frequently viewed, particularly in the face of Soviet aggression and superior military manpower, as an essential means of supporting and protecting American scientific and technological research, and insuring US national security. Disagreements over the most effective and equitable way to defer students were common, however, and many special interest groups, including several national science and education organizations, were actively involved in influencing deferment policies.

- Gartner, Scott Sigmund and Myers Marissa Edson. "Body Counts and "Success" in the Vietnam and Korean Wars." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 25, no. 3 (1995): 377-95. The use of body counts to measure the success of American forces during the Vietnam War was not unique. It was also applied as a measurement during the Korean War following the American decision to return to the antebellum status quo rather than attempt to occupy North Korea.
- Jordan, Kelly C. "Right for the Wrong Reasons: S. L. A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire in Korea." *Journal of Military History* 66, no. 1 (2002): 135-62. In his study of American soldiers in combat during World War II, Samuel Lyman Atwood (S. L. A.) Marshall concluded that only 15% of infantry troops fired their weapons in battle. He later concluded that in the Korean War 55% of soldiers fired their weapons, an increase he attributed to training improvements since 1945. Marshall correctly pointed out the increase in the percentage of soldiers who fired their weapons but he attributed the increase to the wrong reason. The army's organizational reforms of the infantry rifle squad and platoon after World War II better explain the increase. These reforms increased the proportion of crew-served weapons to unit members at the squad and platoon levels a development that produced greater unit cohesiveness and led more troops to fire their weapons.
- Keefer, Edward C. "President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the End of the Korean War." *Diplomatic History* 10, no. 3 (1986): 267-89. When he came to office in January 1953, President Dwight D. Eisenhower had not yet developed a plan for ending the Korean conflict. Although a variety of individuals participated in the formation of foreign policy, Eisenhower alone made the final decisions on all major issues up to the armistice in July 1953. In some instances, the president and administration members discussed the possibility of using atomic weapons to force the Chinese, North Koreans, and even the stubborn South Korean leader, Syngmon Rhee, into accepting a peace treaty.
- Kirkland, Faris R. "Soldiers and Marines at Chosin Reservoir: Criteria for Assignment to Combat Command." *Armed Forces & Society* 22, no. 2: 1995-96. In Korea in 1950 all of the commanders of the US Marine Division and its regiments had commanded units in combat during World War II, but 79% of the commanders of US Army divisions and regiments had no such experience. Both marine and army personnel in the 1950 Chosin Reservoir campaign up through the rank of major had combat experience and performed creditably. The experienced senior marine commanders extricated all of their men and most of their equipment from Chosin. The army force had inexperienced commanders at battalion, regiment, and division levels. It lost all of its equipment and almost half of its men. Army command selection boards in the past decade have sought to emphasize troop experience, but frequently officers with little knowledge of field operations are selected. The rapid deployment concept requires commanders who know what to do on the first day. The army can no longer afford career equity as a consideration in selecting officers for command.
- Lowe, Peter. "An Ally and a Recalcitrant General: Great Britain Douglas MacArthur and the Korean War, 1950-1." *English Historical Review* 105, no. 416 (1990): 624-53. Assesses the British part in the removal of Douglas MacArthur from command during the Korean War, 1950-51. Although there was agreement until the Chinese intervention in October 1950 that Korea should be reunified by military force in accordance with the UN objective of a democratic Korea, policy differences thereafter were considerable and were not solved by the dismissal of MacArthur. Britain and the Commonwealth nations were concerned that MacArthur, driven by ambition and a slipping military reputation, would provoke a larger-scale war with China instead of being controlled by Truman. But the United States was not certain a defensive line could be established and a

negotiated peace effected. Britain feared this could lead to a withdrawal from Korea and the use of economic measures or even military measures, possibly employing Chinese Nationalists from Taiwan, against mainland China.

Medhurst, Martin J. "Text and Context in the 1952 Presidential Campaign: Eisenhower's "I Shall Go to Korea" Speech." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (2000): 464-84. Dwight Eisenhower's "I Shall Go to Korea" speech delivered late in the presidential campaign of 1952 is one of the rare instances when a single address is credited with having a decisive effect on a presidential election. Though Eisenhower's personal ethos played a significant role in the public's reaction to the speech, the response can best be understood in four contexts that formed a major portion of the conceptual, emotional, and interpretive manner by which voters in 1952 perceived and acted upon their world: 1) the Cold War discourse as it had been practiced from 1946 to 1952; 2) the foreign policy debate discourse, especially as it related to Asia; 3) the Korean War discourse as practiced from 1950 to 1952; and 4) the discourse of Eisenhower from 1942 to 1952 particularly the 1952 campaign discourse featuring an appeal to character. Without these contexts, the simple proposal to visit the battlefield may not have been the "magic bullet" that some historians and journalists see in the speech.

Millett, Allan R. "Introduction to the Korean War." *Journal of Military History* 65, no. 4 (2001): 921-35. American historians have ignored the Korean War despite the large loss of life and its significance in defining the role of the United States in Asia. The article examines the roots of the war, detailing the factions in Korea and the different phases of the people's war that preceded the 1950-53 hostilities. The Korean War should be thought of as a war of postcolonial succession, a people's war of revolutionary national liberation, and a war of outside intervention. In these respects, the Korean War can serve as a guide for explaining ongoing wars and those yet to come.

Otsuka, Shuji and Stearns Peter N. "Perceptions of Death and the Korean War." *War in History* 6, no. 1 (1999): 72-87. The Korean War marked a major turning point in the attitudes of America's political and military leaders toward the potential of casualties when plotting military strategy. The Korean experience instilled in leaders the belief that civilian support for protracted and costly conflicts was fragile and that such a view should be factored into any decisionmaking process. Due in great part to media coverage the Korean War arguably became the first instance when the public's revulsion toward death impacted military strategy in a way that would become pervasive in subsequent conflicts. Reporting on Korea in major newsweeklies like *Time* and *Newsweek* moved during 1951-53 toward more emotionally evocative accounts of military casualties that diminished popular support for the war.

Petrov, Vladimir. "Soviet Role in the Korean War Confirmed: Secret Documents Declassified." *Journal of Northeast Asia Studies* 13, no. 3 (1994): 42-67. Presents a series of five documents that reveal the Soviet political strategy in regard to the Korean War. The documents emphasize the USSR's attempts to entangle China as well as the United States in a long and costly struggle, using Kim Il-sung, the North Korean leader, as a foil. These sources date from 1950 to 1993, including materials declassified by Russian archivists in 1993.

Pierpaoli, Paul G. "Mobilizing for the Cold War: The Korean Conflict and the Birth of the National Security State June-December 1950." *Essays in Economic and Business History* 12 (1994): 106-17. US intervention in the Korean War marked a watershed in American attitudes toward national security, fiscal policy, and the role of government in a market economy. The author examines the critical first five months of the war effort, when the Truman administration inched toward a coherent mobilization strategy. The final policy outcome bore little resemblance to the administration's program at the beginning of the war. What resulted was a bona fide revolution in policymakers' approach to national security and mobilization planning. It lasted until the Berlin Wall fell in 1989.



- Robin, Ron. "Behavioral Codes and Truce Talks: Images of the Enemy and Expert Knowledge in the Korean Armistice Negotiations." *Diplomatic History* 25, no. 4 (2001): 625-46. Outlines events that took place during the US-Korean armistice negotiations at Panmunjom between 1951 and 1953 and assesses the influence of "expert" knowledge, specifically the psychological profiles developed by Herbert Goldhamer and his team of RAND Corporation advisers, on the effectiveness of the peace talks. The article uses the diaries of negotiator Admiral C. Turner Joy to illustrate how US dependence on these "operational codes," coupled with ignorance of Korean culture and politics, led to a communication breakdown and the eventual focus on prisoner of war repatriation in an effort to achieve a symbolic victory.
- Roskey, William. "Korea's Costliest Battle: The POW Impasse." *Parameters* 23, no. 2 (1993): 96-106. During the 18 months of the Korean War that followed the January 1952 breakdown of the peace talks because of disagreements relating to the UN Command's return of prisoners of war, 375,000 more casualties occurred.
- Sherer, Michael. "Comparing Magazine Photos of Vietnam and Korean Wars." *Journalism Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (1988): 752-56. Examines combat photographs in three news magazines - Life, Newsweek, and Time - during the Korean and Vietnam wars. No significant differences were found "in terms of who was photographed and the perspective (view) from which they were photographed." However, a clear difference was evident in the prevalence of more combat scenes and death and destruction in the Vietnam War photographs than in the more detached and "contemplative" photographs of the conflict in Korea.
- Weathersby, Kathryn. "The Korean War Revisited." *Wilson Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (1999): 91-95. As archives of the former Soviet Union and China have gradually opened since the end of the Cold War, historians have learned more about which powers were behind the 1950 North Korean attack on South Korea that began the Korean War specifically, that it was the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin that provided support for the attack to keep the Japanese from gaining control of the peninsula and that China not only did not initiate the attack but did not become involved until the North Koreans asked for their help. Language: English Period: 1950. Subject: USSR. Korean War.
- Weigley, Russell F. "The Last Black Regiment." *Reviews in American History* 25, no. 3 (1997): 494-98. Reviews William T. Bowers, William M. Hammond, and George I. MacGarrigle's *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (1996), which attempts to present a balanced account of the combat history of the black 24th Infantry Regiment in the Korean War. Language: English Period: 1950-51. Subject: Military Service. Korean War. Combat. Blacks. Armies. 24th Infantry, US (review article). Entry: 35:14950
- Young, Charles S. "Missing Action: POW Films, Brainwashing and the Korean War, 1954-1968." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 18, no. 1 (1998): 49-74. While the conduct of US prisoners of war (POW's) during the Korean conflict was similar to that of World War II captives, anxiety over the indecisive end of the Korean War and the unprecedented role the fate of POW's played in peace negotiations contributed to a widely held belief in the 1950's and 1960's that POW's in Korea had collaborated with their captors in disturbing numbers. Korean War POW films created between 1952 and 1968 centered on collaboration the ambiguous term "brainwashing" came to explain prisoners' apparent lack of resolve which in turn symbolized the national failure of nerve that prevented a decisive victory. *Prisoner of War* (1954), starring Ronald Reagan was chastised for its graphic brutality. Though lighthearted, *Bamboo Prison* (1954) was likewise unpopular because it did not meet popular tastes about the war. Three other films about POW's were courtroom dramas. Most POW films about the Korean War were not approved by the US military because they failed to reinforce the mythic image of stalwart troops who refused collaboration. The best of such films dealt sensitively with the dilemma of POW's subjected to extreme coercion.

Zweiback, Adam J. "The 21 "Turncoat GIs": Nonrepatriations and the Political Culture of the Korean War." *Historian* 60, no. 2 (1998): 345-62. Discusses why 21 American prisoners of war refused repatriation at the end of the Korean War. The army, government officials, and journalists cited such reasons as Communist psychological "brainwashing," homosexuality, dominating mothers, and fear of prison sentences for collaborating with the enemy. No one could understand why the "turncoats" would refuse to return to America. Left undiscussed were such issues as segregation (three soldiers were African American) and the feeling that the United States had abandoned the soldiers during their captivity. Obsessed with a perceived Communist threat to the mythical American way of life, officials simply ignored more logical explanations about why the soldiers refused repatriation.